

# FAMOUS SHUFFLE AT FARO

## CLAIM TO FAME OF SNAKE-EM-OUT, JIM

The reported inventor of one of the most ingenious devices for cheating at the game of faro known as "Snake-Em-Out, Jim."

A man died in Cincinnati the other day who was known to the gambling fraternity of the last generation as Snake-Em-Out Jim. Although he got his mail under various surnames, sometimes at well hotels, sometimes at cheap restaurants, sometimes at the general delivery, the Christian name upon the envelopes was always James. When he pretended to be staying at the Gibson House or the Emery Arcade and went there by his letters the clerks always smiled good naturedly in asking him: "What letter is it to-day, James?" and James would always reply with the greatest dignity and some show of astonishment: "Why, S., of course," or whatever letter he was temporarily sailing under.

Snake-em-out Jim must have been a pretty old man, because he was the reputed inventor of one of the most ingenious devices known to professional gamblers for cheating at the game of faro—the fifty-three card shuffle, which has been in use since 1850, if not longer.

The way it came about was often told by Jim himself. In the old days, long before the war, Jim made a precarious living by doubling up with men who were better card shufflers than himself; men who could throw three card monte or pull jack strippers from a euchre pack with equal facility.

Like all gamblers, Jim's first thought when he made a haul was to make a play against faro bank, but as he, in common with his kind, almost invariably got the worst of his encounters with the tiger, he readily fell in with the plans of a gang who made a business of touring the country and "snaking" the game.

A snaked game, it may be explained, is one in which certain players have tampered with the cards used in dealing and have unknown to the proprietors of the bank manipulated these cards in such a manner that they can tell better than the dealer whether particular cards will win or lose upon the turn.

The chief difficulty in snaking a faro game is in getting hold of the cards with which the game will be dealt next day. False keys, flies, nippers and dark lanterns are frequently brought into requisition in obtaining admittance to faro banks after the cards are closely locked up; but James soon realized that if he were caught in that part of the transaction the statement of his ultimate object—simply to mark a pack of cards and put them back—would hardly be accepted as an excuse by the judge.

This consideration led him to prefer playing against the game after it had been snaked by his pals. His genius suggested the methods, they carried them out and he placed the money on the layout.

One of his favorite methods of snaking a game, chiefly because it could be done quietly and needed little mechanical apparatus, was to take a pack of cards which had been slightly used and clean the edges of the sixes, sevens and eights with sandpaper. By sitting at the left of the dealer he could watch until it got down to the last turn, and if he saw that one of the clean edged cards remained in the box it was an easy matter to see whether it was the bottom card or the one next to it.

In those days all the cheating done by the bank was done by means of what is called a "braze game," that is, a conspiracy between the dealer and the case keeper. When the cards were dealt two at a time, so as to change the run, the under-dealer card of the fraudulent turn was afterward unobtrusively shown to the case keeper, who marked it up. But when a number of players got into the habit of seeing their cards, the braze game became a dangerous game, especially when two or three determined looking men agreed as to their tab records and differences with the case keeper.

While Snake-em-out Jim was watching for the last turn in a game which one of his pals had snaked just such a dispute arose over the correctness of the cases arose. One man would insist that the duplicate cards in the box, while the case keeper allowed only three. In order to convince the gentlemen that the case keeper was right the dealer turned the box over on this side so that the eyes of the unplayed cards might be counted.

The moment the dealer's eyes fell upon the cards he noticed the difference in the count of the cards and looked inquiringly at the player on his left, and the sudden fit of embarrassment that overcame James verified his suspicions.

Thinking over the unpleasant experience of the next day, Jim decided that one of those sudden flashes which characterize the shuffler's mind, after studying it over with a pack of cards he determined to take the proprietor of the faro bank into his confidence on condition that he would have a percentage of the profits of the game.

His scheme was safer than any braze game, because it needed no confederate, and the case would be kept by the players. All it needed was a good shuffler, and that is an easy proposition when it comes to dealing faro. The only change in apparatus necessary was to use a fifty-three card shoe into the pack and then to shuffle it up so as to make the last turn come any way you wanted it to.

One of the reasons for the success of this simple scheme that Jim might have been a rich man if he could have resisted the temptation to try his luck against other banks. The shufflers and gamblers in the country were victimized year after year, to-day, after sixty years use, one of the safest and surest ways of fleecing the uninitiated in gambling houses which are perfectly square, and in which the dealer who has not been instructed in the shuffle and has not studied it closely enough to recognize the movement even when concealed by the full length of the dealer's fingers.

The idea which James originated was this: One extra card of any denomination being added to the pack, so that it gives two possible positions for that card, one to be disclosed to the players, the other to be concealed. Different cards were taken in different ways, and it is to avoid detection by the constant repetition of the same cards in the last turn.

If the fifth card is an ace the five aces are taken out of the pack and the remaining forty-eight cards are shuffled and shuffled their surfaces very slightly. The two aces which are duplicates are then marked on the backs so that the dealer can tell them from the other cards while he is shuffling the pack.

In shuffling the dealer can easily separate the pack at one of the aces because they are marked on the backs and shuffles until he gets one of the marked aces on the top of the pack. He then shuffles a card on the top of the pack and shuffles the pack again. Any card will do for the top of all, and this "top stock" must not be afterward shuffled, a shuffling of the deck out being used before placing the pack in the dealing box.

Let us suppose that the winner on the last turn before the call is an eight. Immediately under the call is an eight. Immediately under the eight must be one of the duplicate aces and under that, between it and the other ace, must be one of the two cards shown by the tabs as still to come. The dealer will then shuffle cards to be a king and queen and that

# THE QUEEN

## THE QUEEN IN UNDER THE FIRST ACE, THE KING IN HOOD

If the majority of the boys are calling the turn to come ace-queen or ace-king the dealer pulls two cards when he makes the first part of the turn. The upper card that he pulls is the eight and the lower card is the king. The ace observed by the players, is the first ace, leaving the queen to be pulled out as a loser and making the turn come queen-king. The second part of the turn is slightly aside to show the king in hood and to prove that the deal is correct.

But if the big money is calling the turn queen-ace or king-ace or king-queen or queen-king all of which are beaten if the ace should only on the turn, the dealer pulls only one card for the first part of the turn, showing the first ace under the eight as a loser. Then on the second part of the turn he pulls one card, showing the queen as a winner. When he comes to slide the queen so as to show the king in hood he slides the second ace.

In later years, when more expeditious methods for fleecing gentlemen players were invented, such as having operators who would take a card out of the pack through a trap in the table, arranging the next turn according to a signal from the dealer while some piker was bent over to get a bet, and using to turn an honest penny by teaching the fifty-three card shuffle to those who wished to know it when they saw it. Among pupils, the shuffler writes, "Hence, this little tribute to a misdirected genius."

# RUBBER BANDS AND PENCILS.

## Wasteful Use of Them by Government Clerks at Washington.

From the Pathfinder.

"There's only one infallible way to tell a Government clerk," remarks a Washington correspondent, "and that is to see what he is doing. And how's that?" we asked. "Why, it's this way," he went on: "If a man has his vest pockets full of rubber bands you may know he works for Uncle Sam. I can assure you, for I am in a position where I have inside information about it. The Pension Office simply eats up rubber bands faster than a Western threshing machine gets away with grain. Great big bands are needed to hold the papers in the office, and they cost a cent apiece. A cent's nothing to worry over, you'll say, but when the thing goes on at the rate it does, it makes an item in the course of the year that would wreck any private business."

"You're not a bit careless and extravagant people get when they know that it's going to come out of the Government. Every fellow seems to be bent on seeing who can run through with the most, and the rubber band racket is the most striking illustration of this kind of thing. I've called attention to this leak over and over, but the powers that be always reply that such things as rubber bands are too small potatoes to sit up nights over. I don't dare say how much Uncle Sam's total annual bill for rubber bands is, but it's up in the millions, judging from my data."

"Then there's the lead pencil, graft too. Why, President Roosevelt's commission that he appointed to look into the departmental leaks actually found that the Government wastes one lead pencil for every clerk and every clerk a new pencil every single working day of the year. Now any sensible man knows that those clerks can't use up that many pencils. When a man pays his own hard earned money for a pencil he can keep it a week, but when the Government supplies him it's different."

"The Post Office Department, which comes the closest of any departments to being run on a business basis, years ago discovered that it couldn't stand for the profligate use of rubber bands by its clerks. It had to use common string to tie up their bundles of letters. Exhaustive efforts have been made to discover some method of bunching them that would be still cheaper, for even the string item accounts for a considerable part of the clerks' deficit. You can't expect great streamers to get down to figuring on the little items, for that would be 'cheese-paring,' and so the waste goes merrily on."

By the way, here's a dandy pencil—take it along—when the ink runs out, it's a pencil much better than the old cheap kind—and here's a bunch of rubber bands—they'll come in handy—anyway the children can make some rubber balls out of them—you're welcome—Uncle Sam foots the bill, you know, but back when you've used those up. Good-by."

# PIGEONS FOLLOWED SHIP.

## Sea Captain's Stories of Birds That Found Their Home Aboard Vessels.

From the Houston Post.

Capt. Cowdy of the British steamship Capt. Manxwold is a fancier of pigeons, and has demonstrated by actual experience that birds of the homing class will locate for themselves a temporary as well as a permanent loft. Capt. Cowdy has a number of birds of the homing class, and has demonstrated by actual experience that birds of the homing class will locate for themselves a temporary as well as a permanent loft. Capt. Cowdy has a number of birds of the homing class, and has demonstrated by actual experience that birds of the homing class will locate for themselves a temporary as well as a permanent loft.

These ten pigeons are Belgian birds and have travelled with Capt. Cowdy for thousands of miles and have been released in many different countries at times as far as 600 miles in the interior, and in every case have found their way back to their ship, evidently having no trouble picking out their homes among the numerous other vessels that might be at anchor.

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# DRESSING AND MOUNTING SKINS

## How They Are Made Into False Heads With Artificial Teeth.

From the Daily Furrier. If the reports of the furriers are to be believed there is a veritable craze now for rugs made out of the skin of some wild beast. Thousands of skins are now converted into charming and delightful rugs, and the certainly beautiful and varied animal skins from the monkey to the lion and the little Teddy bear to the huge polar.

The dressing and mounting of these skins is at once a strange yet fascinating business. Naturally the most valuable skin to-day is that of the king of beasts. A lion skin, with a well mounted head and flowing mane, will fetch as much as £100 or even £120, though occasionally they can be picked up for £30 or a little less. It depends upon whether it is a lion's head or a lion's tail, and the species and its condition. When first received by the furrier the raw material certainly does not look inviting; but after a fortnight's work upon it, during which period it passes through as many as twelve different stages, it is transformed into a shining and majestic rug, a fitting adornment for any mansion.

First of all it goes into the "pickling" vat, a receptacle containing certain chemical liquids, which it remains for two or three days. It is then scraped with large knives when it is placed in a tub and beaten under foot in sawdust. It now passes to the drying room, where it is suspended on hooks and allowed to remain in a dry but high temperature for a week or more, until it is beaten by two men with long poles. This beating has the effect of making the skin pliable. All that requires to be done now is to make all bad places good, such as bulge holes and rents caused through spear thrusts and other causes. It is then mounted on the pelts with a head the furrier has to call in the taxidermist to his aid.

The skin of the polar bear measures from 10 feet to as much as 12 feet or even 14 feet in length, and from 5 feet to 7 feet in width. A veritable miniature carpet of glossy wool, for 15 to 20 inches deep. These rugs, too, are expensive, running from as low as £25 up to £80 and more. It is only a connoisseur in skins that can tell their real market value. In the case of the polar bear it is very seldom that a perfect specimen is found in the wild. To these animals a slight shade of brown, whereas they should be of a pure silvery white color. It is this whiteness that decides their value.

Most of the heads used on rugs nowadays are made of paper and are not really animal heads, but are made of the animal's own skin. Making good the whiskers, the hair of the eyebrows and getting a life-like pose about the face is a task which only an artist can do. The tiger, leopard and the other great cats go through the same processes. Then the furrier will mount five or six of the smaller animals, such as the lynx, fox, wolf, etc., on one foundation, making a beautiful rug. The skins themselves are obtained by the furriers from the recognized markets. They secure them from the periodical fur sales held at the London docks, Leipzig in Germany, Nijni Novgorod in Russia, Boko-hara in Persia, and so on. To these markets the great fur trading companies send their wares. These in turn obtain them from the trappers and hunters. We have some idea of the enormous trade done in this curious merchandise when we learn that the annual value of the furs and skins sold in the recognized markets amounts to £3,000,000.

# SOUTH SEA ISLANDERS' FEUDS.

## Bash Vendetta That is the Cause of Many Crimes.

From the London Standard.

Miss Young of the South Sea Island Evangelical Mission, who has recently returned to Brisbane after four months among Solomon Island natives, has many interesting stories to tell of the "bash" custom. Native murders, it appears, are of frequent occurrence, but a great many are the result of feuds between different tribes.

Two Christian boys belonging to the mission at Male were brutally done to death, and another Christian native at Piu was also murdered. The crimes were unprovoked, but were committed because the islanders believed in having a life for a life. A man belonging to the island of Piu, who was a member of the mission, was killed by a native of the island of Piu, and the death is avenged, and it generally happens that the most inoffensive man in the offending tribe falls a victim. The native who was killed at Piu left the mission station accompanied by his wife and two children, and shortly afterwards he was killed by a native of the island of Piu, and the death is avenged, and it generally happens that the most inoffensive man in the offending tribe falls a victim.

On another occasion, at Onepu, the head station of the mission, a native came and associated with the Christian boys and shortly before daylight one morning this man secured an axe, struck a Christian boy, and the latter was killed. The injured boy was attended by a woman missionary and subsequently recovered.

Miss Young adds that a young Kanaka of about 18 years was recently brought from an adjoining island, but it was found necessary to return him to his own island. It appears that some years ago had murdered a man belonging to a bush tribe near the station. How the natives got to know of this was a mystery, but they nevertheless became very angry. One day a native who had not been near the mission station for a year suddenly made his appearance. The boy was carefully watched and at night slept in a room occupied by a missionary, who became so terrified that it was necessary to send him elsewhere.

Miss Young says that the authorities are doing all they can to prevent the importation of rifles and ammunition, but for all that the natives are getting on very well. Some of the firearms are of a very old pattern. They are certainly not supplied by white traders, who are too much concerned about their own safety to supply the natives with weapons of destruction. It is alleged that some of the boys ship to New Guinea and while there buy rifles and ammunition. It has happened that some of the boys when searched have had ammunition in their possession.

# Saved His Life and His Rupees.

## From the London Daily Mail.

During the great drought Hyderabad a native banker, overtaken by the sudden rush of water, made his way onto a mound, where he was quickly isolated. The water rose and the banker's legs were covered to his knees.

"Fifty rupees, fifty rupees," he shouted, "if any one will help me, I will give you fifty rupees." The water reached his shoulders he was shouting. "One thousand rupees," when he was asked to give more, he shouted, "I will give you one thousand rupees." When once more he was covered only to his knees an offer of rescue came; but the banker, thinking up his course, cried: "Keep off, keep off! I will not give a rupee!" and succeeded in making his escape free of charge.

# African Village Depopulated by Sleeping Sickness.

## Winston Churchill in Strand Magazine.

Falao as a native town was no more. At hardly any point in Uganda has the sleeping sickness made such frightful ravages. At least 6,000 persons had perished in the last two years. Almost the whole population had been swept away.

Scarcely enough remained to form the nucleus of a new village. The houses were deserted at the entrance to the cleared area of the camping ground. And this was the case with all the other villages. When once more he was covered only to his knees an offer of rescue came; but the banker, thinking up his course, cried: "Keep off, keep off! I will not give a rupee!" and succeeded in making his escape free of charge.

# Coyote Against Rabbit.

## From the Houston Post.

I have been ranching on an island for more than a quarter of a century. There are no carnivorous wild animals on my island but the coyote wolf, and I could get rid of little expense, but if I did the rabbit would soon put me out of business. I can't tell you how many times I know what I'm talking about, and I declare here and now that in my opinion the carnivorous number of the island is the coyote and on many occasions Mr. Russell has been called from his war to climb the steeply all sorts of ways.

# ON WRITING DUTY LETTERS

## FORMS FOR NOTES OF THANKS OR CONGRATULATIONS.

Perplexities of Those Who Have to Compose, to Acknowledge Gifts or to Congratulate—Safe Expressions to Use When the Writer is in Doubt.

Letters of congratulation are a frequent source of perplexity; letters of condolence even more so. Letters of thanks are a stumbling block to the many, whether they are in acknowledgment of wedding presents, of presents of good, of Christmas presents or birthday presents, or whether they relate to thanks for hospitality experienced.

It is easy enough to write a letter of congratulation in response to one from a bride's mother announcing the marriage of her daughter, or from the daughter herself, or from a bridegroom. It only remains to wish the bride pair all happiness and to express satisfaction at the engagement.

The difficulty comes in when the fact of an engagement has been learned from the newspaper columns, and it is uncertain whether the family is pleased or not at the projected marriage. Under such circumstances it is advisable to take refuge in generality and to hope that the engagement is a matter of satisfaction to all concerned.

"I have just seen the announcement of your daughter's engagement to Mr. Blank. I hope you are pleased at it and that I may congratulate you on the event." is a useful form of commencement when the engagement announced reveals merely the name of the bridegroom and no more.

If it is, on the face of it, one that speaks for itself, as to the wealth and position of the bridegroom, the letter may be distinctly congratulatory. Under such circumstances it is advisable to take refuge in generality and to hope that the engagement is a matter of satisfaction to all concerned.

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"I have seen the announcement of your son's engagement to Miss Blank. I trust she may be everything you could wish; she is a very lucky girl to have gained his affections. So good a son is bound to make a good husband," etc., is the kind of letter it is polite to write to a proud and fond mother.

A letter of almost forced congratulations has frequently to be written to a bridegroom when his choice is avowedly unwise and the writer is aware of the fact. "I suppose I must congratulate you on your intended marriage, and I am sure you will prove happy. You have my best wishes. I assure you." This line of argument has to be taken up when nothing more definite can be said under such conditions, the writer being a real friend of the bridegroom.

Letters of thanks are often rather not of necessity onerous, though still or too incoherent and confusing. The right balance should be struck between the two. Much of the one or the other. If the subject is dismissed in a few words and another started which has no connection with the subject, the letter is uninteresting and is little valued; therefore the letter should be as far as practicable limited to a few gracious thanks.

Some of our correspondents entertain the idea that it is quite unnecessary to acknowledge presents of value by notes of thanks. This supposition has its rise in the fact that between neighbors in the country there is a habit of exchanging presents. It is not necessary to write a note of thanks in consequence not written.

It is quite another thing when game is sent to friends living at a distance or in town. The note of thanks should be written by return post. It is one of those letters that should not be deferred. It is of the briefest and should be written without delay. The sender's initials and a few words of praise for the fine young birds is all that is required. Although it is sent in the name of the husband it is well to address the letter of thanks to the wife if acquainted with her, otherwise it should be addressed to the sender.

The hostess who receives the rule that letters of thanks should be written by country house guests to their hosts a day or two after the termination of the visit. The note of thanks should be written by the smartest men and women alike never failed in this point of etiquette. It was considered an obligation, an act of courtesy not to be omitted.

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# ENGLISH EXTRAVAGANZE

## Women of All Classes Still Spend Too Much on Clothes.

A dozen years ago the simplicity of dress, not to say tastelessness, of the average English woman was so marked that she was held up before the women of the whole world either as a model of unobtrusiveness or hideousness. One served the same purpose as the other, for underlying both was the fact that English women expended less money on dress than others.

The tradesman's wife could never by any chance escape detection. Her clothes gave her away. The shopgirl paid no attention; whoever to dress so long as she was warmly clad in the winter and had a white cotton dress or two in the summer. As for the factory girl, she was completely satisfied if she had plenty of feathers to stick in the front of her great hat.

What has happened in the meantime to English women? asks the London correspondent of the Daily Country. The answer is that a tendency in dress which has made them conspicuously eager for self-adornment and increased their spending capacity tenfold.

The woman of the world no longer thinks of dressing as she did formerly. The advent of French dressmakers was simultaneous with the decline of the English dressmaker in London. Now they become millionaires, I could name a dozen or more fashionable establishments of this sort which are now the rage among the English. The more they spend, the more they want, and the more they want, the more they spend.

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# DEER TAKING

## Only Two Estates in England, Where the Sport is Followed.

Parts of certain great parks in England, such as Eridge Park, the oldest deer park in the kingdom, are kept practically wild in their original forest state, while near to the castle is the cultivated home park.

Eridge Park contains 3,000 acres and is the only estate in England, with one exception, where deer taking with hounds is still carried on. The other place is Woburn, the Duke of Bedford's seat.

The Marquis of Abergevenny is the owner of Eridge Park, but he only formed part of the royal chase. It still retains the wild beauty it then had, although there are more than seventy miles of lovely drives in it, not counting those of the home park.

Deer taking is entirely different from deer hunting. The object is to take the animals alive so that they may be transferred to the home park to be fattened and eventually to be sent to the table.

The sport is by no means tame as it sounds. A seven to nine year old red deer is an awkward customer to tackle. He is powerful, agile and well armed with antlers and hoofs.

When there is to be a deer taking at Eridge Park the meet is planned for 11 o'clock at the park keeper's house. The deer are then driven to the park and scattered through the park to head off the stag should he come their way. A field follows