

**GAMING TABLES OF MACAO.**

**Portuguese City Has a Rival to the Casino at Monte Carlo.**

Quaint and picturesque is the old Portuguese city of Macao, which, though a decaying and almost moribund settlement from the commercial point of view, is, says Mr. Eutace Reynolds-Ball, the seat of a highly lucrative gambling industry, over a score of licensed gambling houses paying a tax in the aggregate of some \$170,000 a year to the government.

Macao has been, and is still, chiefly celebrated for its gaming tables, which are crowded by Chinese and Portuguese, and from Saturday to Monday by Britishers from Hong-Kong, who prefer having a flutter at the game, if it can be so called, of fan tan, instead of going to the service at the Hong-Kong cathedral. The gambling hells are in the Chinese quarter, and are by no means attractive as regards exterior or interior. They are, of course, licensed by the Portuguese authorities—indeed, the taxes imposed on these gambling dens constitute one of the principal sources of revenue of the city.

These gambling houses are usually of one story only, and on the ground floor (which you enter at once from the street, there being no hall or anteroom) you find an ill-lighted and ill-ventilated room, some 30 feet by 50 feet, the sole furniture of which is a table about 6 feet square by 4 feet high. Before the croupier, usually the proprietor, is a small pile of cash. In the middle of the table is a large slab of zinc, divided into four sections, numbered 1, 2, 3, 4. The punters stake their stakes on one of the sections, but the richer players are careful not to indicate the amount of the stake, and wrap their money up in rice paper, though even the most skilled croupier would find it difficult with so many eyes watching his manipulation of the cash to add to his legitimate profits by cheating.

The ground floor room is crowded with lower class natives and a sprinkling of foreigners, but in the balconies which surround the gambling hell are collected the members of the Chinese "haute monde," mandarins and other functionaries, who can join in the game unperceived by the common herd below.

They pass their stakes to the croupier in small reed baskets, which are lowered and raised by cord. When all the stakes have been laid down and the zinc tablet by this time is quite concealed by little heaps of coins and little pill-like pellets which contain the stakes of the more cautious gamblers, suspicious of the dexterity of the croupiers in manipulating the cash—the croupier calls out the Chinese equivalent of "Messieurs, le jeu est fait." He indicates this as well by covering his own heap of cash with a brass bowl and begins slowly and deliberately to draw out four cash at a time, with a chopstick in each hand. His movements are purposely deliberate, so as to impress

the punters with the fact "that there is no deception." Ultimately the heap is reduced to one, two or three cash, or nothing remains. The winning stakes are at once paid in proportion of three times the stakes (less the banker's commission of 10 per cent.) to those who have backed the winning numbers 1, 2, 3 or 4, the latter number only winning when no cash remains in the heap after division.

**Short and Long Days.**

The day is longer or shorter as you go north or south of the equator. Off Cape Horn, 56 degrees south latitude, the days in mid-winter are about nine hours long. The longest day at London is 16½ hours; at Stockholm, 18½ hours; at Hamburg, 17 hours; at St. Peterburg, the longest day has 18 hours and the shortest 5; at Tornea, in Finland, the longest day has 21½ hours and the shortest 2 hours; at Spitzbergen, the longest day is 3½ months.

**RED BANANAS AGAIN.**

**Have Long Been Scarce—Fast Fruit Steamers Help Trade.**

"Red bananas once more are plentiful in the New York market, and are likely to be so for some time," said a fruit commission merchant to a New York Press reporter. "I can remember the time when there were more red bananas than yellow ones, 15 or 20 years ago. Then they got scarce. Six years ago only a few bunches came to New York for the Christmas trade, and they went to dealers at \$75 a bunch, the highest price ever paid here for such fruit.

"The red banana was the first to come to this country. Then it was found that the yellow fruit was more easily raised, kept longer and clung better to the stalk. This last factor was an important one, as a great loss comes from bananas dropping from the bunch. More yellows grow on a bunch. For these reasons the red bananas practically disappeared from the markets and only a few bunches were brought here.

"The fast fruit steamers have been responsible for lowering the price of bananas. When we had to get our fruit from the sailing vessels we never knew whether we would have enough to supply the market, for the vessels would be delayed by storms and might come in with spoiled cargoes. Today these fruit steamers are as regular as passenger ships, and we know almost to a bunch how much the cargo will amount to."

**LOSS FROM ROBINS.**

**New Jersey Fruit Grower Claims Birds Do Enormous Damage.**

The amazing statement is made on what seems to be the best authority that the law protecting robins enabled those birds to destroy \$10,000,000 worth of fruit in New Jersey during the last season, says the New York World.

This is the complaint of Henry Jeroloman, of Hilton, N. J., who is known throughout the United States as "king of strawberry

**Gasoline and Coal Oil**

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## Alex F. Meyer

**AT UHLIG'S STAND.**

growers." In urging a repeal of the state law protecting robins from slaughter Mr. Jeroloman says:

"I have been a fruit grower for more than 30 years, only in a small way, having about eight acres in fruit, one-half being in strawberries. Each season for more than 25 years I netted between \$3,000 and \$4,000 from the four acres of strawberries.

For the past ten years, or since the law was passed protecting the robin, I have received little more than one-half of that amount. This season (1903), although I had the same amount of land in strawberries, I did not receive over \$1,800, although I had one of the best crops for the past 15 years. Fully one-third or more of my finest and largest fruit was picked by this bird.

"I have watched a single robin at work; he would run along a row, picking at the largest fruit only, and in less than two minutes I have known a single bird to destroy two quarts of my largest fruit.

"They never stop to eat up a single berry, only hop along each row, making a hole in each large berry that has commenced to turn red on one side, thus destroying the fruit for the market.

"My loss this season, at a very low estimate, was fully \$500 on strawberries alone, and caused by the robins. This is not the only fruit the robins destroy.

"As soon as the cherries showed a red side the robins went at them. From 10 to 20 birds could be seen from daylight until dark all the time, in each tree, and in less than three days they did not leave me a single quart of good fruit; all you could find would be the stem, pit and the green side of each cherry still hanging to some of the trees."

**School of Few Pupils.**

The little islet of Nordstrand-schmor, in the North sea, boasts what is probably the smallest school in the world. Oceanic upheaval has wrenched the islet

away from the island of Nordstrand, and the action of the sea is continually wearing the earth away. A century ago there were 50 inhabitants, who lived by fishing and rude husbandry, and in 1836 a little school was erected, capable of providing for about a dozen children. With the dwindling of the islet, however, the population has thinned, and now numbers no more than 15 souls. For five years past the school attendance has varied from nothing to half-a-dozen children.

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**John L. Cleaver**

INSURANCE AGENT

Falls City, Nebraska

**Missouri Pacific Railway**

Time Table, Falls City, Neb.

**NORTH**

No. 51 Omaha and Lincoln Express .....	A 2:25 a m
No. 9 Omaha and Lincoln .....	8:35 a m
No. 57 Omaha and Lincoln passenger .....	A 2:48 p m
No. 233 Local Freight, Auburn .....	A 1:10 p m

**SOUTH**

No. 52 Kansas City and St. Louis and Denver .....	A 3:47 a m
No. 58 Kansas City and St. Louis and Denver .....	A 2:48 p m
No. 50 Worlds Fair special .....	8:45 p m
No. 232 Local, Atchison .....	10:30 a m
No. 220 Stock Freight, Hiawatha .....	A 9:52 p m

A. Daily. B. Daily except Sunday. J. B. VARNER, Agent.

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