

## LOOKING BACKWARD

By CAPT. J. WALTER MITCHELL.

Crooks of the "three-card monte" class flourished in Washington from about 1878 to 1883. Led by such human foxes as Charles O'Leary and John H. Murphy, these sharpers operated boldly in the daylight hours, seemingly without fear of arrest. In the same period, bold and bedizened women, with their male accomplices, worked the "panel game" here, and their victims included several men of high position. Eventually these confidence operators became so defiant that the leaders were arrested at the instigation of leading citizens and the detective corps at police headquarters publicly investigated. As a result they were "legislated out of office" by Congress.

### Operated as City Guide.

The "monte men," under the guise of being city guides, found many victims and lured them to secluded places where they were separated from their money and other valuables. This crooked work became so extensive and almost in open defiance of the law that it caused a great scandal and was taken up by William P. Wood, formerly chief of the United States Secret Service, who in turn presented the matter to the citizens' committee, then being formed, for the purpose of investigating the old detective force. This committee was headed by the late John W. Thompson, president of the Metropolitan National Bank and the Metropolitan Street Railway Company, now part of the Washington Railway and Electric Company. His letter committee included ex-Mayor Matthew G. Emery, A. L. Barber, R. C. Fox, Thomas Somerville, Crosby S. Noyes, J. E. Fitch, W. A. Cook, T. A. Rover, S. H. Kaufmann, John H. Magruder, Thomas Dowling, Henry D. Cooke, W. W. Burdette, J. W. Boteler, B. H. Warner, William Shuster, A. E. Bateman and Charles Stow.

The former chief of the Secret Service, known familiarly as "Col." Wood, gave an expose of the "monte" workers in a department of the Washington Sunday Gazette, which he edited for a number of years, and Murphy and O'Leary were finally arrested, tried and convicted. While in jail, on appeal, these two men sent for Wood and made certain charges against the detective force. As the result the citizens' committee investigated the "plain clothes men," and some time later the latter, too, were legislated out of office by Congress. The bill also authorized the District Commissioners "to detail from time to time, from the privates of the force, such number of privates, not exceeding six, as may in their judgment be necessary for special service in the detection and prevention of crime." This act was approved by the President, January 31, 1883.

Following the reorganization of the detective force, and the "railroading" of Murphy and O'Leary, the organization of "monte" workers collapsed. About two years later "Slick" Wallace introduced the "panel game" here. After one successful haul, he and his two women accomplices were driven from the city. Their victim, a prominent manufacturer, with much influence, refused point blank to prosecute the trio, and the three trick artists were sent out of town and warned never to return under a penalty of a long term in the workhouse.

**How Strangers Were Fleeced.**  
The business agent or "come-on" of the "monte men" was John Skivington, better known as "Skip" or "Skiv." He was described as a convincing conversationalist with "trick eyes," one gloomy, the other merry. He had several stations where he posed as a guide, and caught the unwary who came here to see the sights of the Capital. One of his stations was on the north side of Pennsylvania avenue, near the Peace

headed, to cause the stranger to believe he was an employee of the money-making plant of the government.

"Is this the Bureau of Engraving and Printing?" the clerical looking man inquired.

"It is, but unfortunately the building is closed to visitors today," the monte man explained. "We have been given a holiday by the Secretary of the Treasury in order that we may attend a most interesting and historical affair just across the Potomac. All the employees are there now, with the exception of a few watchmen."

Asked by the stranger as to the character of the event across the river, "Skip" informed him that a magnificent monument to Gen. Custer was to be unveiled with much pomp and ceremony near Arlington national cemetery. (The Custer monument fiasco was a stock story of the swindlers to induce strangers to accompany them outside the city limits where the game could be worked with more security.)

"The President, members of Congress, and many other prominent men and women will be there," Skivington further explained. "In fact I am about to go over myself, and will be glad to have you accompany me. It will be a great occasion."

The clerical stranger consented to cross the river to witness the monument dedication, and the bogus guide led him through the grounds to a small boat owned by the crooked gamblers and kept there for the purpose of ferrying victims to the monte grounds on the other side of the Potomac. During the passage across "Skip" learned that his victim was the pastor of an aristocratic church in Philadelphia, and had numerous friends in Washington, including government officials and Congressmen.

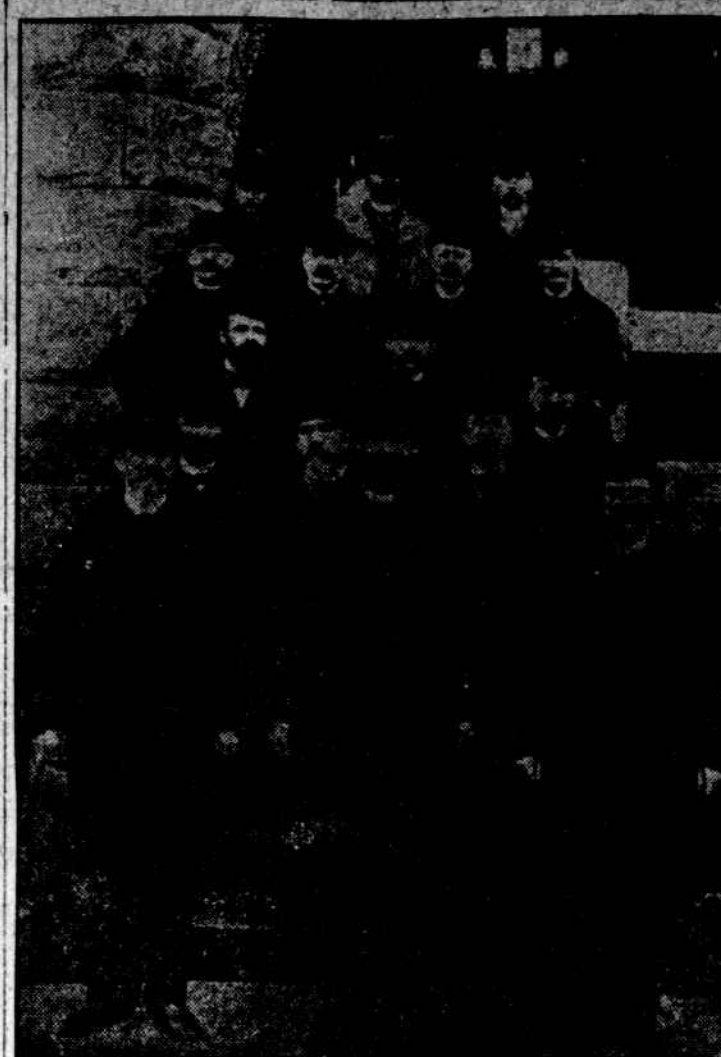
### Skivington the Kentucky Drover.

Reaching a secluded place on the opposite shore the preacher was led through the underbrush some distance to a small opening where a number of men were engaged in what appeared to be a wordy wrangle.

"It's a gang of monte swindlers," Skivington whispered, "and they're fixing to rob some poor fellow."

The minister held up his hands in holy horror.

"I can thwart them," "Skip" declared.



**DETECTIVE FORCE AFTER REORGANIZATION.**  
Headquarters "plain clothes men" who were appointed from the ranks after the old detectives had been legislated out of office by Congress. Front row, left to right—Sergeant W. W. Perry, Inspector and Chief of Detectives L. H. Hollenberger, Sergeant Robert Johnson. Second row, left to right—G. L. Wheeler, Robert Burns, Joseph Carter. Third row, left to right—W. H. Proctor, George W. Boyd, Robert H. Boardman. Fourth row, left to right—Lemuel E. Weedon, John Gallagher, Edward Horne, M. W. Quinlan. Top row, left to right—J. W. Mattingly, Henry Lacey, colored detective known as the "Dark Secret," and M. B. Gorman. Nearly all of these men have passed away.

ed. "I'm from the West and can beat the man who invented monte" at his own game. Let's go forward and intervene."

The two men stepped into the open place evidently much to the surprise of the gang. The dealer, a bull-necked, surly fellow, was behind a sort of stand erected on a tripod, with the three fateful cards before him. Near by stood his assistant dealer. In front of the stand were three hard-looking individuals, and a rather stout man wearing a slouched hat with his trousers tucked into the tops of his high boots. Pointing to the latter "Skip" said:

"He's the mark and he's got a big roll of greenbacks, I'll wager."

After a whispered conversation with the man with the slouched hat, who appeared to be considerably under the influence of liquor, "Skip" returned to the preacher's side and explained:

"Just as I expected. He is a cattle drover from Kentucky. Sold several carloads of fine horses, and these robbers are getting all his money. It is up to us to save him from further loss."

Skivington declared that if he had sufficient money with him to get into the game he would beat the gamblers and win back all the money the drover had lost and return it to him. Unfortunately, however, he had left his money at home, and quick action was necessary to protect the horseman, who was undoubtedly an honest fellow, under the influence of intoxicants and in bad hands. "Skip" then, in a most diplomatic manner, learned that the preacher had several hundred

dollars with him, besides his gold watch worth about two hundred more. He suggested that the minister "stake him" so he could go to the rescue of the Kentucky drover.

"But I am a minister of the gospel," the stranger protested, "and cannot lend aid or sanction to such an unholy thing as gambling."

"It's not gambling, it's robbery," Skivington rejoined. "Lend me your money for a few moments only. It will be like going to the rescue of a drowning man. It surely is not an unchristian act to save a drunken man from being fleeced by such a gang of cutthroats."

The Philadelphia preacher finally consented and handed money to "Skip." The latter played and lost, of course. Then Skivington demanded the preacher's watch promising to win back with it all he had lost and the drover's money besides.

But that watch was presented to me last Christmas by my congregation.

"All the better," said the foxy constable, assuming a benevolent expression. "It will be the means of doing a great service for helpless humanity. I'll win and hand you back your timepiece and money in a jiffy."

**Raided by Constables.**  
The preacher yielded and the watch was put up against all the money "Skip" had parted with since entering the game. Just at that interesting juncture there was a commotion in the surrounding thickets and four men armed with shotguns burst into the opening, completely surrounding the gamblers and their victims.

"Virginia constables," Skivington whispered to the badly frightened preacher.

"Hands up, every danged one of ye," the chief constable shouted, leveling his gun at the group.

All hands went up while the constables gathered in the cash, collateral and paraphernalia.

"Gambling in Virginia, eh?" said the leader in a threatening tone. "It means a year in the county jail, besides a hefty fine when we catch you in the act, like this."

The Philadelphia preacher presented a pathetic picture about this time. He was as pale as a ghost and his legs were trembling violently.

"This is awful," he said. "I will be expelled from my faith and exposed in the newspapers as a cheat and a gambler." And the poor man groaned in agony as he realized his position.

The chief constable held a quick consultation with his deputies, and then turning to the group, commanded:

"We won't arrest you fellows this time, provided you will beat it out of the State and keep out in the future. But I want you to 'beat it' on the double-quick. You, mister preacher, in disguise, turn your head towards Alexandria and don't stop running until you get there, or I'll fill your hide full of shot. Now, go it."

The minister started at a brisk run, while the constables shouted at him to hurry up. As he went he went through mudholes, into marches and bogs, until he reached Alexandria, and took the train for Washington. When he reached his hotel he figured that he was "out" just \$25 in cash and a gold watch worth \$20. But he was "in" several thousand dollars in experience.

After the Virginia constables had watched the flying form of the Philadelphia preacher disappear over a hill-top about a half mile away, they turned to the monte men, "Skip" and the "Kentucky drover" included, and said:

"Come on, boys, and we'll whack up the profits."

Every last man of them, except the minister, was a member of the "monte gang" that had infested Washington so long. The preacher was the guest.

"I am a man of God," he explained later to a friend, "but the devil nearly got me that time."

Police headquarters was located at the northwest corner of Fifth and D streets northwest when the nests of "monte" men and the resorts of other "confidence" operators were finally eradicated. The venerable structure, which has been the scene of so much history, is still there. It is one of the landmarks of Washington.

Only once after the Murphy-O'Leary-Skivington "mob" was put out of business by the law was an attempt made to revive the once prosperous swindling game. George McCauley, who had a most unsavory record as a burglar and all-around crook, with several of his pals made an attempt to "land" a wholesale liquor dealer from Chicago who was a visitor here. The gang was rounded up by the police and McCauley was sent to prison, where he learned the trick of whitening wooden shingles and imitating and placing them in bottles with small necks. After his release from jail I met him in his old stamping grounds, a public house at Twelfth and C streets northwest, and quizzed him about his attempt to restore the "three-card monte" swindle. He was in a moody frame of mind. He said Police Lieut. Ames had notified him to get out of Washington and stay away on pain of being "vaxed" and sent to the workhouse if he was found

on the streets after the day following. "Aw, that 'monte' business is gone a-glimmering," he said. "Murphy and his gang overdid it. I learned a new 'Holy Joe' trick while taking my last dose of medicine in the light house (jail), and I'm going to be honest for a while and work the new thing."

He produced several soda water bottles and some soft white pine wood. In one of the bottles was a full-rigged ship. The trick, he explained, was in constructing the miniature vessel in the bottle.

"But I have a better one than the ships," he said, "I'm going to whistle little wooden figures, put them in 'pop' bottles and peddle them to goody-good people."

## WAR INSURANCE UNDER NEW FIRE

Representative Dallinger Cites More Cases of Hardships on Dependents.

Denunciation of the War Risk Bureau for "inexcusable inefficiency" in handling allotments for soldiers' dependents was made on the floor of the House yesterday. This was the third time in a week that the bureau has been under Congressional fire.

"Thousands of families have to be supported by charity because of the inexcusable inefficiency of this administration, which is a disgrace to the government of the United States," declared Representative Dallinger, Republican of Massachusetts.

"In common with every member of the House, I have been deluged with complaints from parents at home and wives, stating that they did not get their allotments and allowances. Just before election, when I went home, I had not been there twenty-four hours when I was called upon by two different women, who said they had not received a single cent for nine months, and we have a great many similar cases."

One of the "most outrageous cases" which had come to Mr. Dallinger's attention was that of a sailor. This man returned to this country after eighteen months' service in the North Sea, and found that his family had not received "one single cent." He had made an allotment to his wife twelve months before, and for twelve months the money had been taken out of his pay.

"Here is one case. An old man unable to work, sick a good deal of the time, has a sick daughter who keeps house for him. He has three boys in the service. The fourth was drafted just before the war ceased. One of these boys married just before he went into the army, and another married after he got to France. That left one boy in the service to make allotment to the father. Now they found that the old gentleman had a house and land which was assessed for \$1,200. On the strength of that the government took away his allowance."

Representative Taggart, Democrat of Massachusetts, said:

"I know of numerous cases similar to those mentioned by the gentleman. There must be something radically wrong."

"She has a most remarkable accent, hasn't she?"

"Yes, she can't get enough 'r's' in a month to eat oysters," Cartoons Magazine.

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CLEANS anything in the line of wearing apparel, removing spots without a trace or stain. 25c per bottle at dealers.

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## CARRIERS' W.S.S. CONTEST ENDS

Close and Spirited Race for Berberich's \$1,000 Prizes Closes.

The letter carriers' war saving stamps contest, for which the cash prizes offered by Berberich's totaling \$1,000, were at stake, came to a close last night after one of the closest and most spirited campaigns of its kind ever held by the Washington City Postoffice.

Who the winners are is not yet known, although up until a late hour last night a group of clerks was engaged in checking up the returns. It is known, however, that the sales for yesterday alone will be at least \$5,000, three times greater than those of Friday, the previous highwater mark.

This would bring the total for the contest to more than \$30,000, but officials say that this is a very conservative estimate, and the total may exceed even \$50,000 for the ten days.

From early morning until the closing hour, every carrier on the force was working to the utmost, bringing to bear all the salesmanship talents they possessed for the dual purpose of putting the District of Columbia "over the top" in the matter of its W. S. S. quotas for the year and sharing in the distribution of the cash prizes so generously donated by Berberich's.

One man's sales for yesterday alone were in excess of \$5,000. Although no hint was given as to the identity of the man in either case, it also was stated that one competitor annexed to the final results will not be ready for announcement until late tomorrow afternoon. It is planned to award the prizes on the following day.

The work of the contest has been closely watched by Postmaster Merritt O. Chance and his assistant, Mal-

colm Kerin, as well as by D. J. Callahan, director of the District War Savings Stamp Committee, at whose request the event was planned.

Coming directly under the supervision of Clarence V. Schooley, superintendent of carriers, much of the success of the competition is credited to his untiring work among the men. The almost monumental task of tabulating the daily returns has been in the hands of Miss Marie G. Fraeger, of Schooley's office, whose efficiency and accuracy has contributed greatly to the smooth conduct.

### CLUB NOTES.

**Cercle Des Precedentes Ridicules.**

Miss Winsor entertained the Cercle at its current meeting. Following the hour of general conversation, the Marseillaise sung in chorus opened the program. An impromptu causerie of unusual interest in the hands of Miss Marie G. Fraeger, of Schooley's office, whose efficiency and accuracy has contributed greatly to the smooth conduct.

The October meeting of the Washington Readers' Club was held in the home of the College Women's Club, 1822 I street northwest, December 12. Mrs. Edith Hamilton in charge of the program. "An Illustrated Discourse of the Voice," Mrs. Wiley O. Ison read a scholarly paper on "The Sympathetic Voice" in all its phases and it was much appreciated by her representative audience. Miss Leonora M. DeGrange's paper, "The Effect That Being in Tune with the Infinite Has on the Voice," sent conviction to the hearts of those present that her life exemplified her precepts, for both text and tone coloring evidenced the divine touch.

Rev. Earle Wilfley read, by request, Poe's "Bells" and charmed his hearers by the wonderful shadings, of which his voice is capable, and which had full scope in this classic. Mrs. Gertrude Mustain, Miss DeGrange, Mrs. Ison and Miss Elizabeth G. Willson also gave selections.



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What will be your tribute to his accomplishment? All he wants is to be welcomed home as never before—and you'll do that. But be sure to make home more beautiful than ever before—add to its beauty with flowers—put them there fresh on the day he is to return. We have ready for delivery special assortments of

**Cut Flowers**  
Hoosier Beauty Roses  
Black Velvet Red Poinsettia Plants  
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Any of these make excellent Christmas gifts. Flowers are personal gifts.

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**Georgette Waists**

A beautiful line of fine Georgette Waists—all new styles and colors—suitable for gifts. \$6.50 values, at..... \$5

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Correct Dress for Women—801 Pa. Ave. N. W.

**Fine Fur Sets**

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In Ney's December Clearance of Women's Apparel

WHETHER you are buying for your personal use, or for gift purposes, you should profit by the wonderful opportunities this sale offers to save money on new Coats, Suits, Dresses, Furs, Hats, Waists, Silk Underwear and the like.

No Goods Sent C. O. D.—No Phone Orders Filled—No Goods Charged.

Wonderful Values in New		Wonderful Values in	
Dresses, Suits & Coats		New Waists	
\$19.98 All-Wool Serge Dresses, Mostly Navy and Black	\$10.98	Lot of Waists in white and flesh; various styles; some slightly mused; sold up to \$3.98; reduced	\$1.98
\$25.00 Pretty Silk Dresses, Tafeta, Satin and Messaline	\$14.98	Big lot of Georgette Waists—most all sizes and nearly all shades. Also new Striped Tafeta Silk Waists. Desirable styles, sold regularly for \$3.98; reduced	\$2.98
\$29.98 Serge and Jersey Dresses, New Styles, Fashionable Shades	\$19.98		
\$35.00 Fine Silk Dresses, Charmeuse, Satin, Taffeta, Velvet	\$19.98		
\$35.00 Stylish Suits, all Sizes, Mostly Navy, Black and Oxford	\$19.98		
\$24.98 Coats, plain and trimmed, Meltons—Sizes for Women and Misses	\$14.98		
\$35.00 Coats, the New Models, Beaver, Kersey, Velour, Bolivia Cloth	\$19.98		
All Other Coats, Suits and Dresses Reduced from \$5 to \$10			
		<b>Silk Underwear</b>	
		At Reduced Prices	
		Big lot of Satin and Crepe de Chine Camisoles—pink—all sizes; pretty effects; extra special at.....	\$1
		New Crepe de Chine Teddy Bears—pink—trimmed with fine lace; all sizes up to 44; extra special	\$1.98
		<b>Petticoats</b>	
		At Reduced Prices	
		Lot of Changeable Silk Flounce Underskirts that sold for \$2.50; reduced	\$1.98
		New Lot of Flowered Silk Flounce Underskirts that sold for \$3.98; reduced	\$2.98
		<b>Velvet Hats Reduced to \$3.98</b>	
		Big lot of stylish velvet hats; various shapes; all prettily trimmed; values up to \$12.50; reduced to.....	
		Recent Arrivals in Midwinter Hats.	
		The very latest creations in Satin and Fur, Satin and Straw, All Satin, and Georgette Combinations. All fashionable colors	\$5 to \$15
		<b>Wool Dress Skirts</b>	
		Clearance Special	
		Big line of All-wool Burella Cloth Dress Skirts, in navy and black; all sizes. Sold up to \$6.98;	\$3.98
		<b>Real Furs</b>	
		Manchurian Wolf Scarfs in black, taupe and brown; sold for \$29.98; reduced to.....	\$19.98
		Manchurian Wolf Scarfs in black, taupe and brown; sold for \$39.98; reduced to.....	\$24.98
		Manchurian Wolf Scarfs in black, taupe and brown; sold for \$59.98; reduced to.....	\$39.98
		Real Wolf Scarfs in black, taupe and brown; sold for \$75.00; reduced to.....	\$49.98
		Real Wolf Scarfs in black, taupe and brown; sold for \$100.00; reduced to.....	\$59.98
		Real Lynx Scarfs in black and taupe; sold for \$150; reduced to.....	\$100
		Muffs to Match at Reduced Prices	

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3. Massage the scalp daily and once a week use

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