

The Pinehurst Outlook

Published Every Saturday Morning, During
the Season, November to May, at

Pinehurst, Moore County, North Carolina

(Founded by JAMES W. TUTTS)

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The Outlook Publishing Co., - Pub's

One Dollar Annually, Five Cents a Copy.
Foreign Subscriptions Fifty Cents
Additional.

The Editor is always glad to consider contributions of descriptive articles, short stories, narratives and verse. Good photographs are especially desired.

Editorial Rooms over the General Store; hours 9 to 5. In telephoning ask Central for Mr. Jilison's office.

Advertising rate folder and circulation statement on request.

Make all remittances payable to
THE OUTLOOK PUBLISHING COMPANY.

Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at Pinehurst, North Carolina.

Saturday, December 18, 1909.

The Milkman's Hour.

Between the dark and the daylight,
When the footpad's beginning to cower,
Comes a start in the day's occupations
That is known as the milkman's hour.

I hear in the alley beneath me
The clatter of horses' feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
And a voice neither low nor sweet.

From my chamber I hear, in the gaslight,
Ascending the steep back stair,
Grave Alex or whistling Rufus,
Or Edwin with tousled hair.

I whisper a prayer for silence;
Yet I know by their raucous cries
They are plotting and planning together
To open my sleepy eyes.

A sudden rush up the stairway,
A rattle of glass in the hall!
From the fourth floor down to the basement
An avalanche seems to fall!

Their noises get into my turret,
Marcelling my golden hair;
If I venture to snore they still hound me;
They seem to be every where.

I almost devour them with hisses,
But their noises about me entwine,
Till I wish that their lacteal fluid
Would suddenly turn into brine.

Do you know, O wild-eyed banditti,
As you over the banisters leap,
With a milk-curdling yell to your horses,
It's good-by to my beauty sleep!

Notwithstanding, you enter my fortress,
And here you are likely to stay,
Until I arise and cremate you
And scatter your dust away.

I'm afraid we must keep you forever,
You fiend with the cloven hoof!
Till we stable a cow in the laundry,
Or a nanny goat on the roof!

—Manchester Mirror.



Pickaninny Jim's Foresight.

Listen, Mistah Santy Claus,
To what I has to say;
I's had a heap o' anxiousness
'Bout dis nex' Christmas day.
Dem stockin's I's been standin' in
Is shrunk an' mos' wore th'oo,
Foh holdin' gif's dey wouldn' be
A bit o' good to you.

An' so I went, an' got a sack
An' emptied out de corn;
I's hung it by de chim'ly place
To wait for Christmas morn.
I's made de 'rangements so's you'll find
Of room dar is no lack.
Don' bother wif de hostery,
But jes' fill up de sack.

—Washington Star.

THE AGE OF PASTIMES



THE oldest game known to man is chess. The origin of this game, or mimic battle, as Goldsmith called it in his translation of Vida, dates back to 3000 B. C. It is rich in legendary anecdotes, and its venerable nomenclature has been transmitted through all changes in language from the earliest tongues of the Indo-European to the latest.

A peculiar thing about chess, with its combination of idle amusement and extreme mental toil, is that it is the only game sanctioned by priesthoods of all beliefs. The principal piece in the game derives its name, king, from the Persian Shah, or ruler.

Many men whose names have gone down to posterity, such as Charlemagne, Tamerlane, Frederick the Great, Charles XII., Voltaire, Rousseau, and Ben Franklin, have been devotees and students of the game.

Chess is Asiatic in origin, and originally more attention was paid to it by Asiatic students and philosophers than by men of western countries. Of late years, however, its popularity has greatly increased among western nations, and national chess tournaments are now held by experts from nearly all countries.

The history of chess may be divided into three periods: The age of the primeval Indian game, extending from its origin down to the sixth century A. D.; the age of the medieval chess, from the sixth century to the sixteenth century; and the age of the modern chess, from the last of the sixteenth century to the present day. Of course, many changes in the method of play took place in the course of development of the game, and as it is played now it is different from the game the ancients knew.

Chess has been played in nearly every country. Chess-boards have been found among the ruins at Pompeii, and in the Roman Forum one may still see the outline of a checker-board roughly scratched on the stone walk by some senatorial page of Caesar's time. In the Orient both games have been played from time immemorial.

TENNIS

Tennis was first played in the early part of the sixteenth century in England and France. Matches for considerable wagers were frequently held, and rather than give up the game many men played for parts of their wearing apparel after their money was gone.

In England toward the last of that century, covered tennis-courts were erected, and nearly all the nobility played, including the women. Henry VII. was a devoted follower of tennis, and Henry VIII. was also fascinated by the sport.

The first royal tennis match was played between this monarch with the Emperor Maximilian for a partner, against the Prince of Orange and the Marquis de Brandenborow. Charles II. was the

first person to adopt a tennis costume.

COCK-FIGHTING AMONG THE GREEKS

The sport of cock-fighting seems to have originated with Themistocles of Greece. When he was leading an army against the Persians he noted two cocks in a desperate battle.

To stimulate the courage of his soldiers, he pointed out the bravery of birds, and having won his battle with the Persians, he ordered that an annual cock-fight should be held to celebrate his victory.

In England the records show that the first cock-fight took place in 1191.

GOLF

Our game of golf, or goff, as it was formerly called, was a popular sport in England and Scotland about the beginning of the seventeenth century. It was played by the nobility, and was the favorite pastime of Prince Henry, son of James I.

Golf sticks were then called "bands," and golf balls were made of leather and stuffed with feathers. The principle of the game was practically the same then as it is now.

BOWLING

Bowling is one of our games that originated in the Middle Ages. The exact date of its introduction is obscure; but it has been clearly traced to the thirteenth century.

The first bowling-greens were made in England. In bad weather these could not be used to advantage, and this led to the construction of covered bowling-alleys.

HORSE-RACING

Horse-racing originated in England in the reign of King Henry II. Our forefathers were captivated by this pastime, and large wagers were often won and lost on favorite horses.

Later, about the time of James I., the betting fell away from horse-racing and the contests were run for prizes of various sorts.

HAND-BALL

Hand-ball is among the oldest of our games.

According to Homer, it originated about the time of the fall of Troy, and though it has passed through many changes, its principles are much the same as when it was played by the ancients.

FOOT-BALL

A kind of foot-ball was first played about the time of Edward III. in England. Shortly after its advent, however, it was prohibited.

Later it was again revived, but in the reign of James I. it was suppressed as being rough and brutal.

POLO

The game of polo was played centuries ago in Persia and India. Even the natives of Bokhara play a similar game of ball on horseback.

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