

# Focas'le Yarns



**PROPOSITION—Can you solve Neptune's conundrums?**

**S**PEAKING ABOUT stock jokes and the nerve not to say phenomenal genius, required to get them off repeatedly in a way that preserves a resemblance of freshness and impromptu originality, I suppose that comparatively few of our readers have had the luck or occasion to cross the equator, so as to witness the jolly pranks which the jack tars are prone to indulge in when "crossing the line."

The first time I witnessed it I expressed to the captain my un-

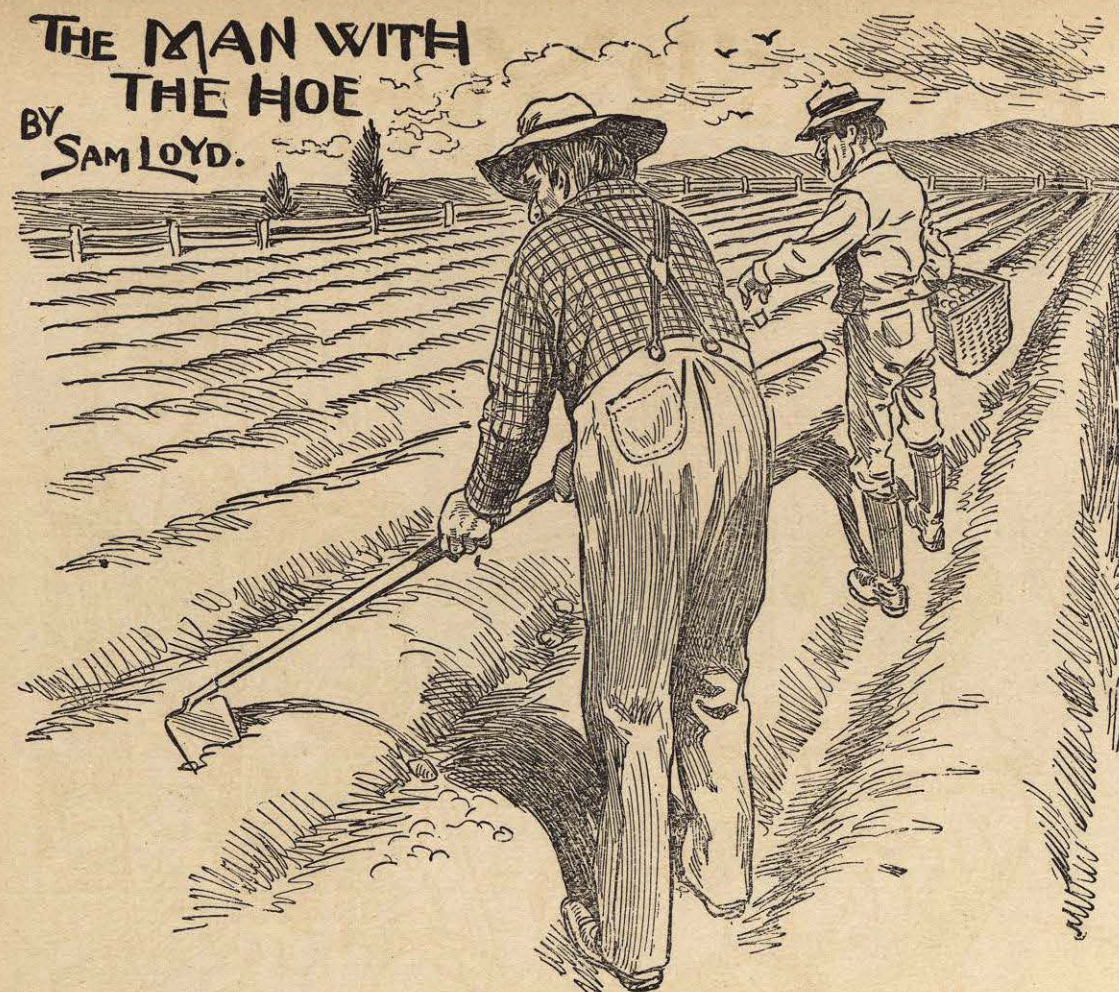
bounded appreciation and admiration of the humor and ready wit of the old salt who represented King Neptune, as well as the lubbering 'out whose main duty was to be knocked about and soused with buckets of water. I laughed at Neptune's ready reply to the droll conundrum: "What would you do if all the seas were dried up?" And the equally good one: "Why is a man as is lookin' for the philosopher stone like Neptune?" and the more up-to-date one, "why are wash-women great navigators?"

The captain looked a little quizzical as I complimented the men so lavishly, but I did not realize how green I must have appeared until, many years afterward, I crossed the line on several occasions and heard the same old stock jokes rehearsed, with all the former vigor and freshness!

As I said before, some of our younger folks have not yet crossed the line, so they are given this opportunity to ponder over the two conundrums as propounded by Father Neptune.

# THE MAN WITH THE HOE

BY SAM LOYD.



**PROPOSITION—Tell how two hayseeds divided their earnings.**



**A**S SHOWING HOW intuition, or a practical knowledge of farming, will sometimes solve a puzzle which might baffle those who revel in figures and calculations, I ask for an answer to the following simple proposition, which is really so devoid of all semblance of mathematical difficulty that I hate to introduce it as a puzzle and yet, without offense to Edward Markham, the recognized authority in hosiery matters, I believe that, like his celebrated poem, it opens the doors for an interesting discussion, as

"Bowed by the weight of centuries he leans Upon his hoe and gazes on the ground."

It appears that Hobbs and Nobbs agreed to plant a field of potatoes for Farmer Snobbs for five dollars. On testing their respective abilities they find that each one excels in a different branch of their profession. Hobbs, who can drop a row of potatoes in twenty minutes, can drop two rows while Nobbs covers two.

The puzzle is to tell how the money and work should be divided so as to equalize matters.

Mr. Hayseed says his "college-bred boy doesn't know nothing, while the other one does." The question is to tell which knows the most.

What keys will open the doors of civilization? The Yan-kees.

Why is a coach going down a steep hill like St. George? Because it's always drawn with the drag-on.

Which of the reptiles is a mathematician? The Adder.

Why is a thing purchased like a shoe? Because it's sold.

Why is a man who will only wager a penny likely to get well? He is a little better.

What relation does the soap-bubble bear to the boy who blows it? It is his air.

When is a sewing machine a great comfort? When it's used to sew lace.

What two female names express a chemist? Ann Eliza.

How would a leopard change his spots? By moving to some other spot.

Why are young ladies like arrows? Because they are all in a quiver until they get a bow.

Spell eye-water with four letters. Tear.

How would you divide seven eggs among seven persons so that one egg remains in the dish? One takes the dish with the egg in it.

What is often brought to the table, always cut but never eaten? A pack of cards.

When is a thump like a hat? When it is felt.

What is the best word of command to give a lady crossing a puddle? Dress up in front, close (clothes) up behind.

Why do hens only lay in the daytime? Because at night they are roosters.

What fort has been stormed the oftenest? The Piano-forte.

Take two letters from money and there will be but one left, but if a thief takes money from two letters there would be none left.

Why is a loafer like a weather-cock? Because he is continually going round doing nothing.

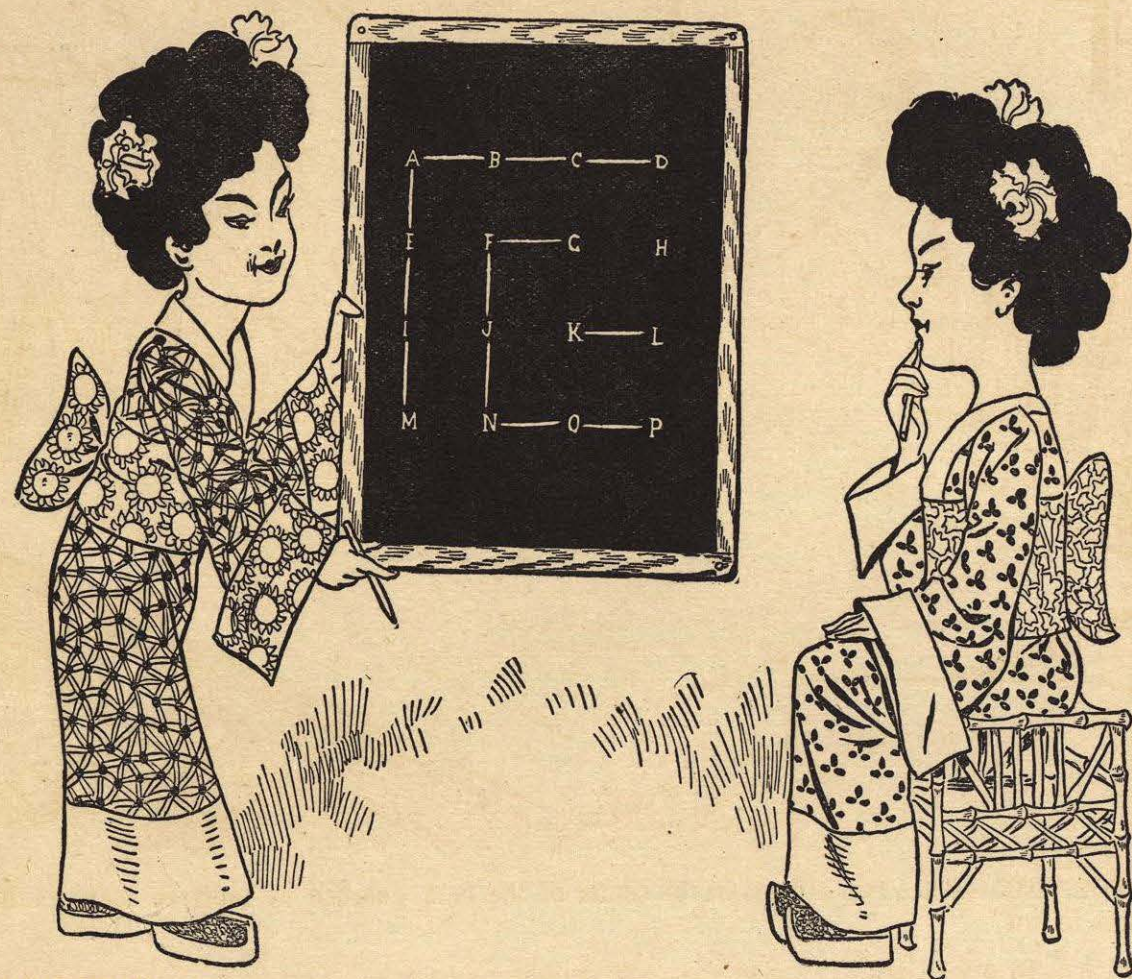
When does a man rob his wife? When he hooks her dress.

Why are dairy maids happy? They have their own whey.

Why is matrimony like a besieged city? Because they who are in want to get out, and those who are out want to get in.



# THE BOXER'S PUZZLE



**PROPOSITION**—Show the best play and tell just how many "boxes" it should win.

**HERE** IS AN ODD little puzzle-game from the East which is played upon lines very similar to the well-known game of "Tit, Tat Toe, three in a row." One of the Chinese girls writes sixteen letters on a slate in four rows, as shown, and after marking a straight dash, which connects A to B, passes the slate to her opponent, who connects E with A. If the first player should now connect E with F the other player would connect B with F and score "one box," and have the right to play again. But they have played so well that neither one has yet scored a box, although each has played six times, but the game is reaching a critical point where one of them must win, for there are no draws in this play, as in other games. The little maiden sitting down has to play now, and if she connects M and N her opponent could score four boxes in one run, and then having the right to one more play would connect H and L,

which would win all the rest. What play would you now advise, and how many boxes will it win against the best possible play of the second player?

Remember, that when a player scores a "box," he plays again. Suppose for example a player marks from D to H, as the game shows on the slate. Then the second player marks from H to L, and then no matter what mark the first player makes, the second player scores all nine boxes without stopping. It is a game that calls for considerable skill as you will discover after trying a few games. But in the game shown on the slate, where each player has made six marks, you are asked to tell what is the best play now to be made and how many boxes will it surely win?

What's the difference between a bee and a donkey? One gets all the honey, the other gets all the whacks.

Why is the letter N like a pig? Because it makes a sty nasty.

What must you add to nine to make it six? S, for IX with S is six.

Twice ten are six of us,  
Six are but three of us,  
Nine are but four of us,  
What can we possibly be?  
Would you know more of us?  
I'll tell you more of us:  
Twelve are but six of us,  
Five are but four, do you see?

If you asked the Alphabet to come to dinner, which letters could not accept your kind invitation till later in the evening? The last six, as they couldn't come till after T.

What kind of a cravat would a hog be most likely to choose? A pigs-tye, of course.

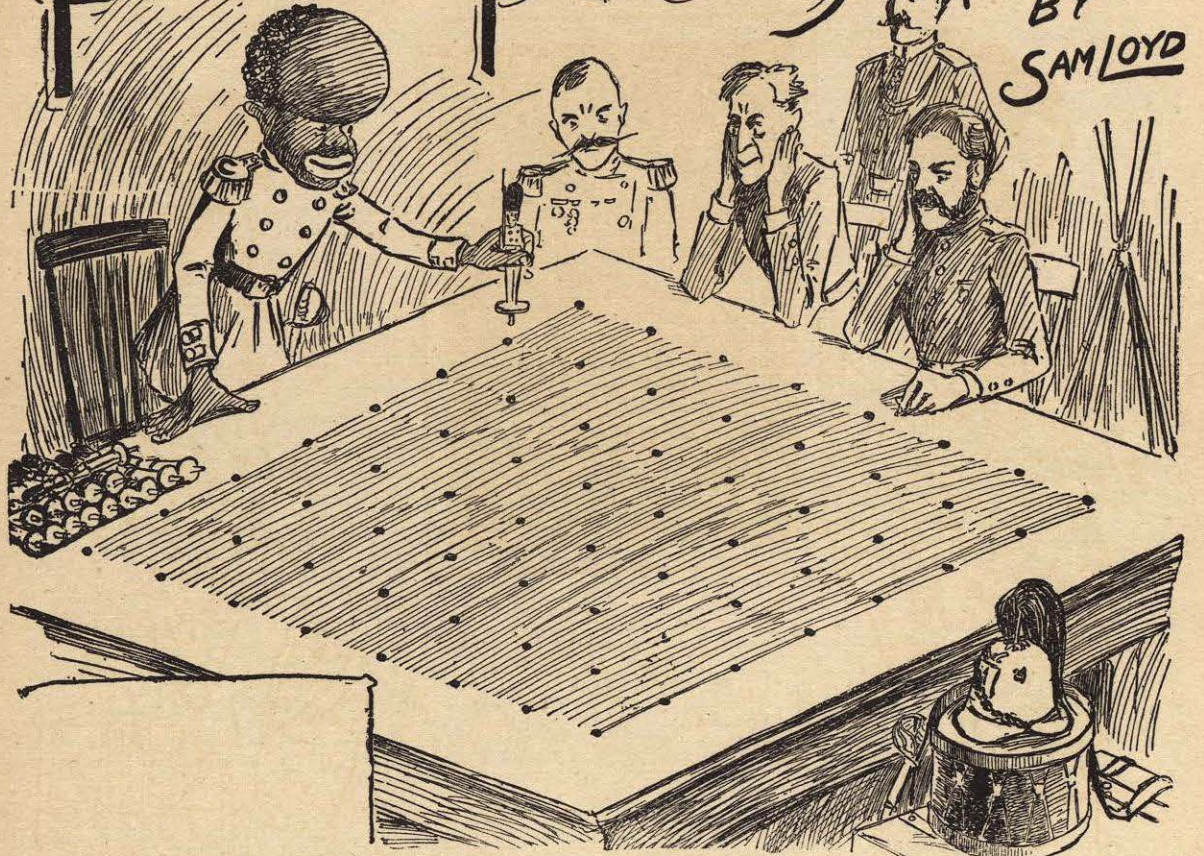
A man bought two fishes, but on taking them home found he had three; how was this? He had two—and one smelt.

Why is a room full of married people like an empty room? Because there is not a single person in it.

Which one of the United States is the largest and most popular? The state of matrimony.

# PICKET POSTS

A PUZZLE  
BY  
SAM LOYD



**PROPOSITION**—Place two officers in the center of the field, guarded by fourteen men, so that there are no three in line.

**HERE** IS AN ODD little problem in military tactics which can be worked out advantageously upon an ordinary checker-board of sixty-four squares, the puzzle being to place sixteen checkers upon the board so that there shall not be more than two in a line in any possible direction. In the puzzle given, however, it is stipulated that we begin by placing two officers upon the spots as near as possible to the center of the field. This makes the puzzle less difficult, as we have two of the men placed properly to begin with, and the problem is then merely to post the other men so that there shall be no three in a line. In other words, after the sixteen figures are posted correctly a cannon ball coming from any possible direction could not hit more than two men. It is a pretty and interesting puzzle, somewhat akin to the famous problem of placing eight queens upon a chessboard so that none can be taken by another. It yields readily to a system of exhaustive analysis which may be introduced upon a simple

plan, but will try the patience of such as attempt to master it by hap hazzard experimental methods. The theory of analysis by exhaustive trial, enters largely into puzzle practice in the construction as well as guessing of problems and pertains to an invaluable training of the mind. First place the officers in the center of the board, and then devise a method of exhaustive analysis which will ring every possible change of the placing of the fourteen men so that the same trial positions never recur a second time.

Why does a minister always say "dearly beloved brethren," and not refer to the sisters? Because the brethren embrace the sisters.

In what liquid does the Queen of England take her medicine? In cider (side her).

Why is a restless man in bed like a lawyer? Because he lies on one side, then turns around and lies on the other.

Why do tailors make very ardent lovers? Because they press their suits.

What is the difference between a rejected and an accepted lover?

One misses the kisses and the other kisses the misses.

Why is a lover like a knocker? Because he is bound to adore (a door).

In what colored ink should we write our secrets? In violet (in-violate).

Why is a young lady like an arrow? Because she can't go off without a bow (beau), and is in a quiver till she gets one.

If a young lady fell into a well why couldn't her brother help her out? Because, how could he be a brother and assist her (a sister) too?

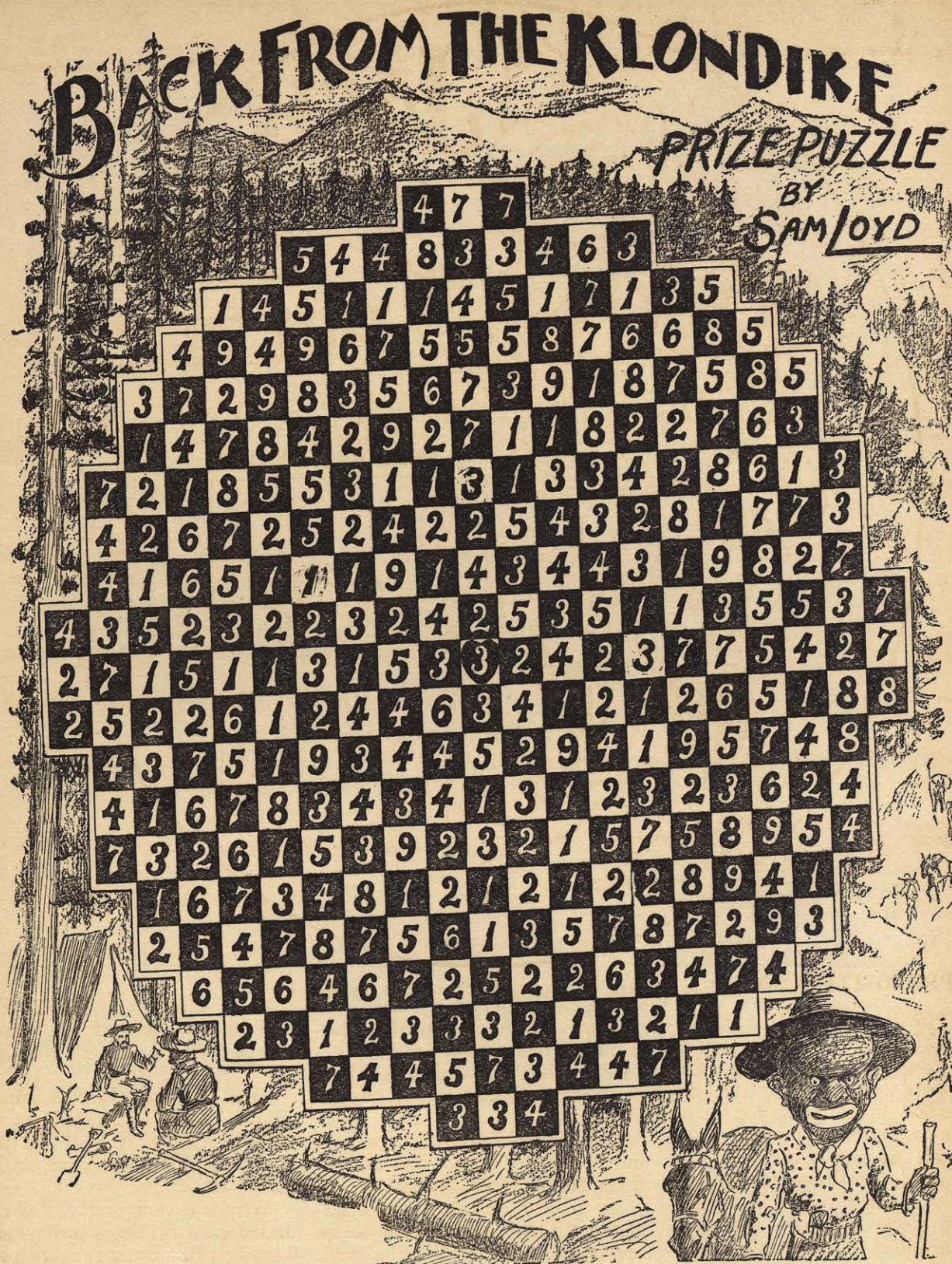
Why does a Russian soldier wear brass buttons on his coat, and an Austrian soldier wear steel ones? To keep his coat bottomed.

What is the difference between an old penny and a new dime? Nine cents.

How is the best way to make a coat last? To make the trousers and vest first.

What word of four syllables would a man utter if he should eat his wife and wanted to express his approbation of the deed? Gladiator (glad I ate her).





Euler, the great mathematician, discovered a rule for solving all manner of maze puzzles, which, as all good puzzlists know, depends chiefly upon working backwards. This puzzle, however, was built purposely to defeat Euler's rule and out of many attempts is probably the only one which thwarts his method.

Start from that heart in the center, and go three steps in a straight line in any one of the eight directions, north, south, east or west, or on the bias, as the ladies say, northeast, northwest, southeast or southwest. When you have gone three steps in a straight line, you will reach a square with a number on it, which indicates the second day's journey, as many steps as it tells, in a straight line in any one of the eight directions. From this new point when reached, march on again according to the number indicated, and continue on, following the requirements of the numbers reached, until you come upon a square with a number which will carry you just one step beyond the border, when you are supposed to be out of the woods and can holler all you want, as you will have solved the puzzle.



PROPOSITION—Make a square out of an irregular hexagon.



THIS PUZZLE ILLUSTRATES the old story of Jack the Clown, who lived in a square box. As the box is not square in this case he must make it so by cutting it out with a pair of scissors, then cutting it into two pieces which will fit together so as to form a square piece of paper. Take the outside line of the box, which represents a rectangular figure with two corners clipped so as to form an irregular hexagon, and cut it into two pieces, which will fit together and form a perfect square.

How could you say in two letters that you are twice as big as me? I W.

What is an old lady in the middle of a lake like? She is like to be drowned.

When is love deformed? When it's all on one side.

Why is a flirt like an india-rubber ball? Because she's empty, but full of bounce.

What is the difference between a butcher and a flirt? One kills to dress, the other dresses to kill.

My first is the cause of my second, and my whole ought never to be broken, though unless it be holy, and be kept so, you can't keep it at all? Sunday.

Why is a field of grass like a person older than yourself? Because it's past-you-age (pasturage).

Spell enemy in three letters. No, it's not N M E; you're wrong; try again; it's F O E.

How can you tell a girl of the name of Ellen that she is everything that is delightful in eight letters. U-r-a-bu-t-l-n.

Why is the letter P like a Roman Emperor? Because it's Nero (near O).

Why is the letter D like a squalling child? Because it makes ma mad.

What thing is that which is lengthened by being cut at both ends? A ditch.

Why is a very pretty, well-made fashionable girl like a thrifty housekeeper? Because she makes a great bustle about a small waist.

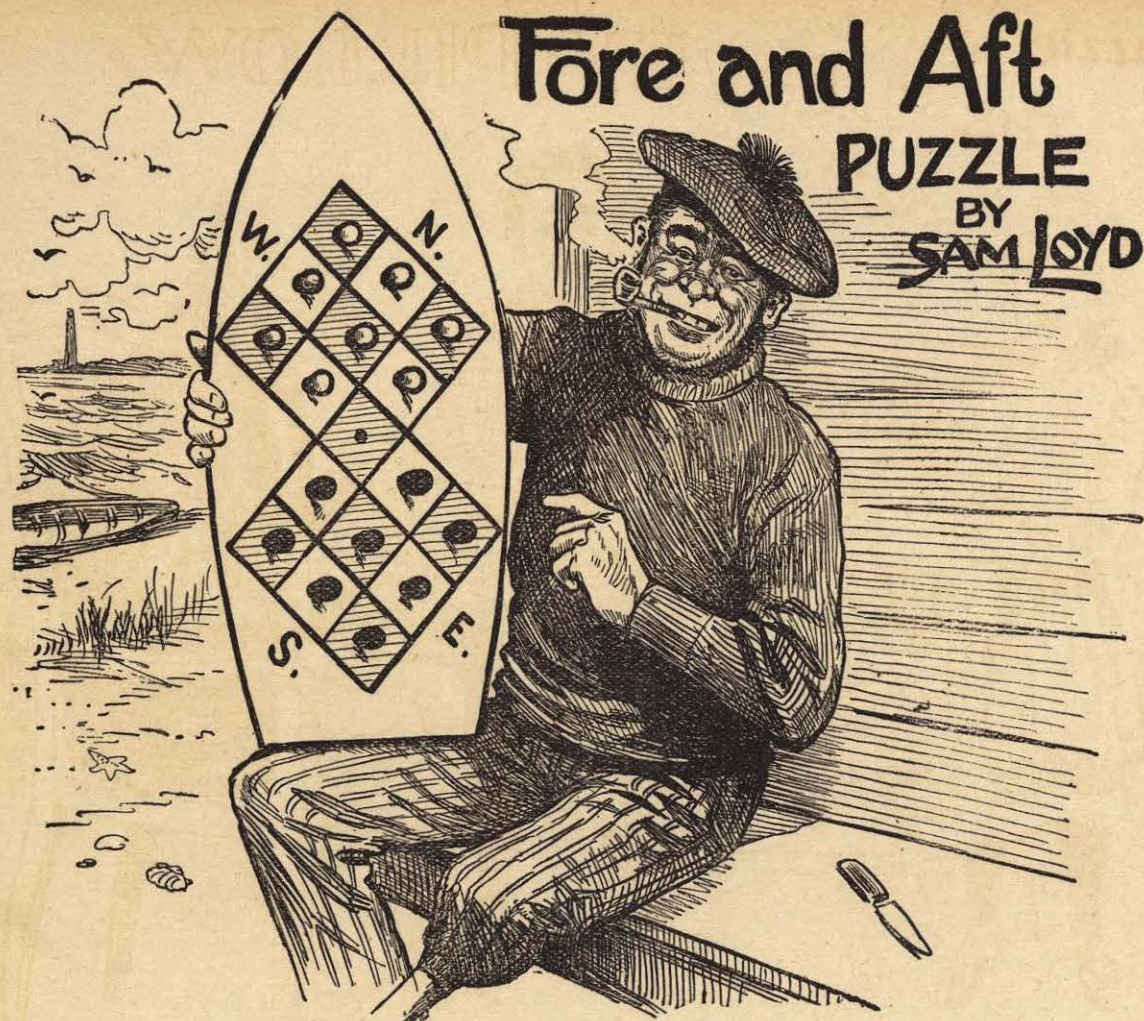
Why are sentries like day and night? Because when one comes the other goes.

When does the eagle turn carpenter? When he soars (saws) across the woods—and plains.

What do ladies look for when they go to church? The Sams (psalms) and hims (hymns).

What part of speech is kissing? A conjunction.





## Fore and Aft PUZZLE BY SAM LOYD

**PROPOSITION**—In how few plays can you move or jump the pegs from the north to the south and the others from the south to the north?

**T**AKE OCCASION to call attention to the origin of a pretty puzzle game, or species of solitaire, which became quite popular in Europe. It is an English invention, in that it was originated by an English sailor, who spent forty years of his life at Sailor's Snug Harbor, on Staten Island, and whose proud boast was that he had sailed under Captain Randall, the founder of the institution.

The old sailor used to pick up quite a little bit of extra "baccy silver," as he termed it, by selling the puzzles to visitors as fast as he could whittle them out with a jack-knife. The game was brought out in London and enjoyed quite a run under the name of the English sixteen puzzle, but was never marketed on this side of the pond.

The object of the puzzle is to move the set of pegs from the right to the left and those on the left over to the right, like in the old 14-15 puzzle, from one square to another, with the additional privilege of

jumping over a peg to a vacant hole, to expedite matters. The problem is to transpose the positions of the black and white pegs in the fewest number of moves, and the board is marked North, South, East and West, to enable puzzlists to record the sequence of their plays.

According to an eye witness, the old sailor was very proud of his expertness, and used to give purchasers a rule to perform the feat in the fewest number of plays. He was mistaken, however, in his rule, or it must be classed along with the lost arts, or perhaps the world has advanced since his time, for the methods given in the English puzzle books, as well as mathematical works, to be the shortest, are defective and may be shortened by several moves.

Remember that the pieces move squareways, so as to change to an opposite color each time, and not like playing checkers.

Who was the most successful financier mentioned in the Bible?

Noah, because he floated a limited company when all the rest of the world was in liquidation.

Why is a schoolmaster like the letter C? He forms lasses into classes.

Why are authors who treat of physiognomy like soldiers? Because they write about face.

I went into the woods and caught it, I sat down to look for it, and then I went home with it because I could not find it. A splinter.

How did the whale that swallowed Jonah obey the divine law? Jonah was a stranger and he took him in.

Why is the polka like bitter beer? There are so many hops in it.

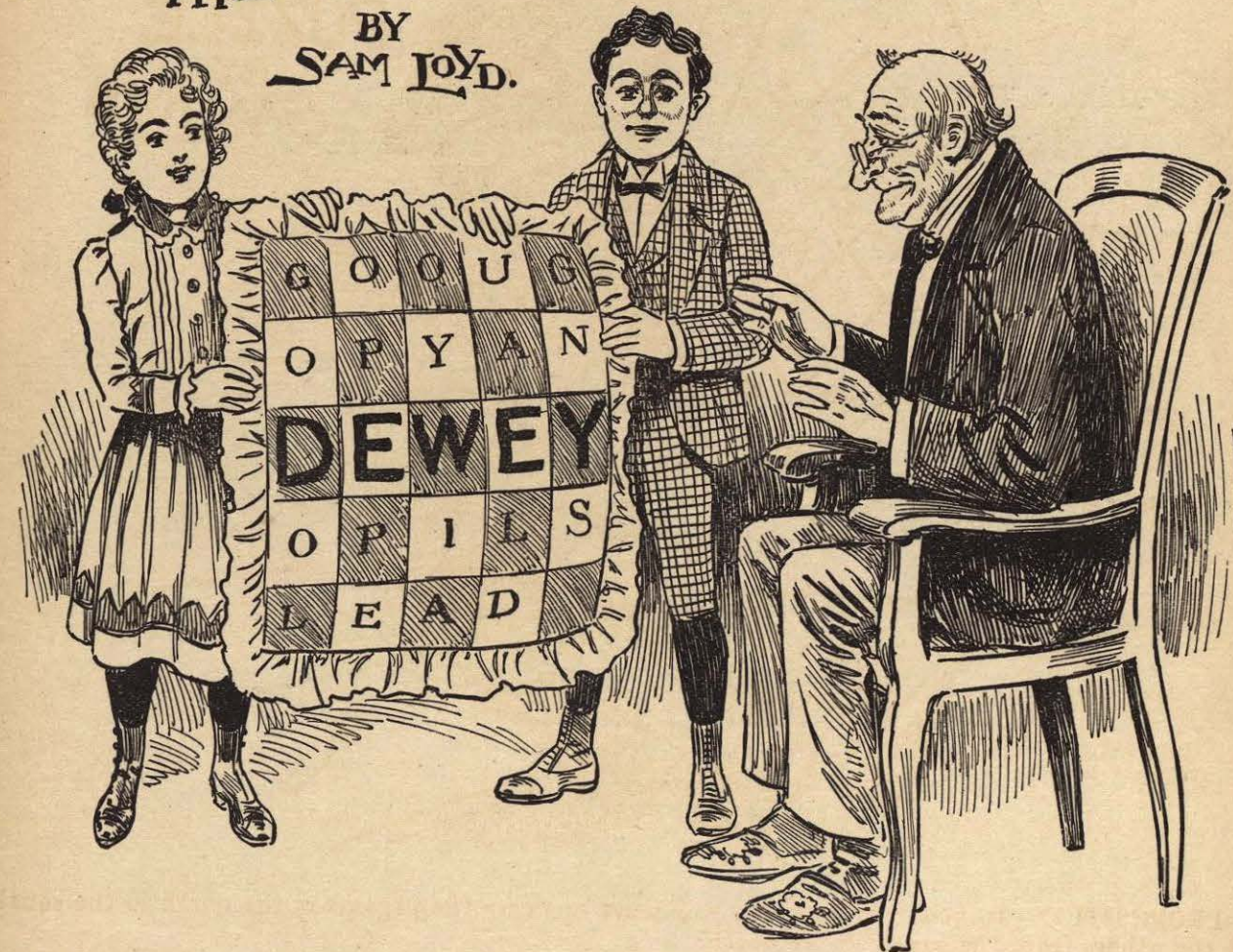
Why is your nose in the middle of your face? Because it is the scenter.

When may two people be said to be half witted? When they have an understanding between them.

Why is a jailer like a musician? Because he fingers the keys.

Why is a field of grass like a person older than yourself? Because it's past-your-age (pasturage).

## Puzzle of THE DEWEY PILLOW. BY SAM LOYD.



**PROPOSITION**—Commencing with the left hand upper corner, G, decipher a continuous sequence of twenty-four letters which reveal the intended motto.

**S**PEAKING ABOUT appropriate and timely presents, I wish to tell the young folks how Harry and his sister

Nelly sprang a brilliant surprise upon their grandfather. It was his 93d birthday, and the children presented him with an elegant "sleepy pillow," as they termed it, for his sofa. He was an old navy officer, so they had to make him happy by introducing the name of Dewey in the middle of it, but in accordance with their own plan of working in a secret cryptogram which would conceal an appropriate motto, they raked their young brains to find a sentiment which would be suitable for the occasion.

Of course, mistakes are liable to happen in the best regulated families, especially when the moving spirits are so young, and it would be misleading if I should intimate that the motto was as appropriate as it might have been; nevertheless,

if our puzzlists exercise their brains over this problem as much as Harry and his sister did, they will deserve prizes if they succeed in unraveling it. Commence at the G on the upper left-hand corner, and move in any direction to adjacent squares, so as to spell out a continuous sequence of the twenty-four letters, which reveals the intended motto.

If from a reasonable quantity of my second, I frequently but judiciously take my first, it will materially contribute to my whole? Support.

When do we see cannibalism? When a rash man eats a rasher, or when the cook fries a little Indian meal for you.

Why does a poor tailor spoil your disposition? He gives you bad habits.

Why are tottering houses like false reports? They are stories without any foundations.

When is a skein of thread like the

root of an oak? When it is full of knots.

Who has a mouth but never speaks, and a bed but never sleeps in it? Mrs. Sippi.

Why are children like castles in the air? Their existence is only in fancy.

What is higher and handsomer when the head is off? A pillow.

Why is a proud girl like a music box? She is full of airs.

Why is a short negro almost white? Because he is not a tall black.

Why are discontented people easily satisfied? Because nothing satisfies them.

Why are ripe potatoes in the ground like thieves? They should be taken up.

Why is a man going to town like one prepared to parry a blow? He is going to ward it.

Why is swearing like an old patched coat? It's a darned bad habit.