

"Get Off the Earth" is Still a Puzzle. Sam Loyd, the Inventor, Awards the Prize Bicycle and Also Offers Additional Prizes.

Nobody, of all the thousands of people who have vexed their brains trying to solve the world-famous "Get Off the Earth" puzzle, has yet offered the correct solution of the mystery.

The perplexing questions, "Which Chinaman gets off the Earth?" and "Where does he go?" remain for a time longer unanswered. The only persons living who carry the secret around with them are Mr. Sam Loyd, who devised the puzzle, and the secretary to whom he intrusted the personal solution of the puzzle.

The Columbia bicycle which the Sunday Journal offered some time ago to the person who should offer the best and clearest answer to the puzzle by September 1, has, however, been awarded.

The lucky winner is C. Maynard Evans, of No. 215 East Front street, Plainfield, N. J.

His answer, which was submitted August 1, was as follows:

"New York, Aug. 1, 1896.

"Mr. Sam Loyd, P. O. Box 1821, New York:

"Dear Sir—After studying your 'Get Off the Earth' puzzle, which came with my Journal of July 15, I have concluded this to be the correct answer to the same: If required to answer the two conundrums—

which man vanishes? and where does he go? I simply reply: The long mustached quarremsome, thirteenth fellow opposite the outside man, is the one who vanishes and runs away to it and night some day.

Where does he go? He goes to the place where that twelfth fellow left his leg ball.

The mechanics of the trick can be explained upon the old X "raise" dodge of taking twelve \$10 bills and getting a small contribution from each so as to raise a thirteenth, each one then consisting of twelve-thirteenths of a \$10 bill.

The figures move on a spiral volute, each man rotating on the Ferris wheel plan, so as to retain his perpendicular. I consider the scheme can best be illustrated by stretching a 12-inch piece of rubber one inch longer.

You get that thirteenth neck when you stretch it, and also the same when it contracts. Respectfully,

C. EVANS."

Here is the inventor's letter announcing Mr. Evans as the winner:

W. R. Hooper, New York Journal:

I have had a competent and impartial judge look over upwards of 60,000 letters in order to determine as to the relative merits of the different answers and explanations to the "Get Off the Earth" puzzle submitted in contest for the Columbia bicycle, which was to be given for the best answer (whether it was correct or otherwise) received on or before September 1, 1896.

Knowing what I claim to be the correct theory of the puzzle, and having looked over all of the answers, he states that the true principle of the puzzle has not yet been discovered by any one, and so far as the public is concerned remains as great a mystery as ever.

I can only therefore approve of his making the award of the bicycle to be given for the best answer received by January 1, 1897, at which time the author's full explanation will be forthcoming.

Respectfully, SAM LOYD.

P. S.—Not to prolong the suspense of such as may be entertaining hopes of riding a free bike, I have given the important part first, which relates to the reward, and then adopt the ladies' plan of giving the body of my communication in a postscript. It being a mere question of when or how, I first award the "wheel" and will then talk about the "whom."

Ever since the fifteen-block puzzle was sprung upon the public it has been a study of running up against another "gold brick" problem, but in this case a bicycle was to be awarded for the best answer—whether correct or otherwise. From my point of view, all the answers submitted are "otherwise," therefore I am called upon to face the difficult problem of giving a bike to the answer which is the least "otherwise." I am debarred from giving my own explanation before January, 1897, as other prizes are still in abeyance, and the prize is still on, and my mail daily increasing.

The public took kindly to the tantalizing puzzle, and the offer of a high grade wheel for the best answer brought upward of 60,000 letters from every part of the United States, and as a matter of fact from almost every part of the habitable globe. The contest has been characterized throughout by the best of good feelings, and poets, mathematicians, philosophers, puzzlers and cranks have joined in the chase after the fugitive little Chinaman, and have so completely snowed me under with a diversity of views and explanations that it has resulted a vast amount of labor to even give them a cursory examination.

Some of the poetical effusions are very unique, telling in rhythmic numbers

That the Chinaman so bold
Near the pole does lose his hold,
While others make guesses which cover the entire group of thirteen, like the one who tells us that

To point out the man
Who makes the one more,
Count down from the four,
He stands number four.

Some of the epistles are logical and mathematical, but, as probably suggested by the grotesqueness of the figures, all are humorous—many of them highly so—and well worthy of publication if space permitted. The general consensus of opinion points toward that fellow—the unlicked thirteenth man—described by many as a D. B. Bill east of countenance, who lays down his sword and retires from the fray.

A traveller through Kashmir recently found in practice there a novel method of putting fodder up for winter use.

The country lies in a valley among the Himalayas. The chief industry of the people consists in raising fine wool and in making this into fabrics which have carried the name of the country all over the world.

"A curious custom in some places," he says, "is that of hanging quantities of hay up among the branches of trees. Why it was done was more than I could guess, till my guide informed me that in winter the snow lies six or six yards in depth, and that the sheep, which are not allowed to graze as they were meant for, are then easily reached by the flocks of sheep which abound there."

lucky number of thirteen, all being partially on and off of the earth, has been criticised and argued as being important factors in the puzzle. No such principles were in my mind when I made the drawing. I drew the circle as a sort of exclusion act, to which I should like to call the attention of Li Hung Chang, and I placed the Chinamen so that not one of them has a firm foothold on the earth, and so that with every revolution of the globe we could have the gratification of seeing one less.

The answers submitted were all examined very carefully and impartially, and whereas I do not feel justified in giving my own explanation before the first of the coming year, I will take occasion to say that I approve of the award made which gives a bicycle to what I consider the best answer received, and which carries out the intent and good spirit of the offer as made.

For instance, it is calculated that a good bicyclist could ride round all the people in the world in four hours. There are only

3,480,000 inhabitants of the globe. If they were put close together they could all stand on an island fifteen miles long by fifteen broad, and there would be just room left for a wheelman to make a tour of them. At the comparatively moderate speed of fifteen miles an hour he could make the journey in four hours.

When the average man realizes this he has advanced as far beyond his grandfather in knowledge as the father had progressed beyond his forefather, who believed the world was flat. The grandfather had no idea of the population of the world, and if he thought at all believed that it was indefinitely enormous. Learned geographers only reached their estimates of the population by guesswork. The experience of seeing half the nations of the earth was reserved for a very few great travellers, and they spent years in gaining that experience.

Now the thoughtful bicyclist realizes that the greater part of the world is accessible to him at small expense. When a few more roads have been made the entire land surface of the earth will be within his reach.

These, after flowering, shrivel, and become so hard that they form convenient toothpicks. After they have fulfilled this purpose they are chewed, and are supposed to be of service in strengthening the gums.

The spines of *Behnococtus visnaga* are in common use among the Mexicans for the same purpose. The number of these spines upon a single plant is something enormous. A comparatively small plant was estimated to have 17,000, and a large specimen could have no fewer than 53,000.

A French Cruiser Succeeds in Hitting the Flagship Three Times.

The new American navy has not yet produced any such incidents as one which is reported from Toulon concerning some French naval manoeuvres.

The new cruiser *Yavout* began to carry on target practice in the presence of the fleet. Instead of hitting the floating target she sent three shots into the Admiral's ship, the *Brenna*. The first two only struck the bridge on which the Admiral was standing; but the practice improved, and the third shot brought down the steersman, Admiral Gervais thought this was getting close enough, and gave the signal "Cease firing."

KASHMIR SHEEP.

Their Fodder is Stored in Tree Tops Against the Heavy Snows of Winter.

A traveller through Kashmir recently found in practice there a novel method of putting fodder up for winter use.

The country lies in a valley among the Himalayas. The chief industry of the people consists in raising fine wool and in making this into fabrics which have carried the name of the country all over the world.

"A curious custom in some places," he says, "is that of hanging quantities of hay up among the branches of trees. Why it was done was more than I could guess, till my guide informed me that in winter the snow lies six or six yards in depth, and that the sheep, which are not allowed to graze as they were meant for, are then easily reached by the flocks of sheep which abound there."

No attempt is made in the statistics to distinguish between educated and uneducated persons who commit suicide; it seems, however, that the view of the educated Japanese is that he has a right to die if he is weary of life, or if he is only as they are meant for, are then easily reached by the flocks of sheep which abound there."

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Posner, a German by birth, is a large, well-built and comfortable-looking person of forty or thereabouts, who is master of all the dog knowledge that twenty-two years of experience as a dog barber can acquire. He maintains a staff of dog barbers bigger than many a barber shop has for the shaving and hair-cutting of its human patrons.

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SCOTLAND'S VICE.

The Illegitimacy Statistics of That Country Are Very Startling.

Scotland, the home of rigid piety and strong whisky, has one very noticeable moral weakness. The percentage of illegitimate births in that country is very high.

Recently published figures for 1894 show that 1 child in every 14 was born out of wedlock in the principal town districts, 1 in every 17 in the large town districts, 1 in every 15 in the small town districts, 1 in every 10 in the mainland-rural districts, and 1 in every 20 in the insular-rural districts, the rate for Scotland being 1 in every 14. As regards the towns, the highest rate occurred in that ancient seat of learning, Aberdeen, where 9.62 per cent of the total births were illegitimate and the lowest in Coatbridge (3.57 per cent). The rate in the counties varied from 14.04 per cent, the highest, in Wigtown, to 1.91 per cent, the lowest, in Shetland. But then Shetland folk say that they are not Scotch.

Some BICYCLE FIGURES.

A Man Could Wheel Round the Population of the World in Four Hours.

The bicycle is making the world look smaller. It produces this result in a hundred different ways.

For instance, it is calculated that a good bicyclist could ride round all the people in the world in four hours. There are only

3,480,000 inhabitants of the globe. If they were put close together they could all stand on an island fifteen miles long by fifteen broad, and there would be just room left for a wheelman to make a tour of them. At the comparatively moderate speed of fifteen miles an hour he could make the journey in four hours.

When the average man realizes this he has advanced as far beyond his grandfather in knowledge as the father had progressed beyond his forefather, who believed the world was flat. The grandfather had no idea of the population of the world, and if he thought at all believed that it was indefinitely enormous. Learned geographers only reached their estimates of the population by guesswork. The experience of seeing half the nations of the earth was reserved for a very few great travellers, and they spent years in gaining that experience.

Now the thoughtful bicyclist realizes that the greater part of the world is accessible to him at small expense. When a few more roads have been made the entire land surface of the earth will be within his reach.

These, after flowering, shrivel, and become so hard that they form convenient toothpicks. After they have fulfilled this purpose they are chewed, and are supposed to be of service in strengthening the gums.

The spines of *Behnococtus visnaga* are in common use among the Mexicans for the same purpose. The number of these spines upon a single plant is something enormous. A comparatively small plant was estimated to have 17,000, and a large specimen could have no fewer than 53,000.