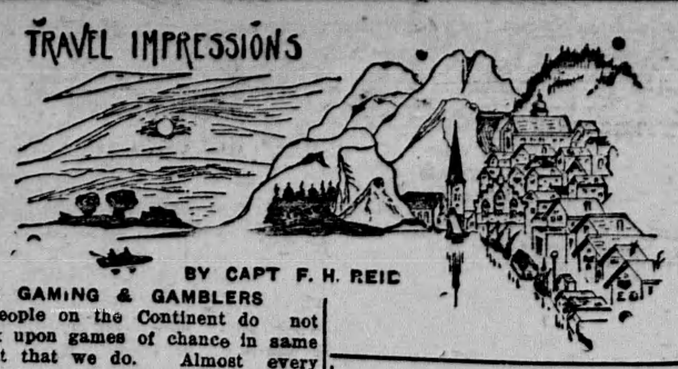

BY CAPT F. H. REID

GAMING & GAMBLERS

People on the Continent do not look upon games of chance in same light that we do. Almost every country has, at one time or another, a government lottery; some of them, in fact, have them throughout the year. I have already written an article about the Irish Hospital Sweepstakes; this is but one form taken, under government patronage, to raise money. Then there are the gaming palaces -- casinos or kursaals —which dot the continent at various points.

Perhaps the best known of all gambling palaces is the Casino at Monte Carlo. Some of you will remember the music-hall song, so popular in the "gay 90's."

"The Man that Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo." You may not have known what the "bank" was but there was a lilt and swing to the song anyway.

Principality of Monaco

This tiny little country, with an area no larger than that of a good sized farm (370 acres) has a population of 25,000. It is situated on the Mediterranean Sea just east of Nice and is surrounded by the French Department (or district) of Alpes-Maritimes, except on the seafront. The capital is Monaco, a seabathing resort and the seat of an international hydrographic bureau established in 1921. This was started by Prince Albert, who had a hobby of studying the movements of deep-sea fish, plants, etc.; he established one of the finest museums of its kind in the world. The rest of the 370 acres is practically occupied by two other towns, La Condamine (population 11, 787) and, a mile to the east, the famous Monte Carlo (population 11,055) — a collection of hotels and villas with the Casino established in 1860.

A Country Without Taxes

The Casino of Monte Carlo provides virtually all the revenue of the Principality — there is a little export of olive oil, oranges, perfumes and citrons. This revenue has steadily increased, so that in 1937, under the terms of the gaming concession, there will be an income from the tables of over half a million dollars. Until 1911 the reigning Prince was absolute, but the Constitution, formed at that time, has been more or less suspended by the present ruler Louis II. The coinage (100 franc pieces) has been current since 1876 in all states of the Latin Union. There are special postage stamps and a national flag.

The Gaming Tables

Almost everyone passing through Monte Carlo visits the halls of chance in the gorgeous Casino. The admission charge is 10 francs per person. The tables are located in huge rooms ornately decorated with gold leaf and plastered and there is a tenseness in the atmosphere that is fascinating.

Like huge billiard tables, with green baize on the top, these centres of activity are surrounded by men and women who show, in their faces, the strain of their occupation. Some of these women have been frequenting the tables for many years and wear the long dresses, large hats and veils of the late Victorian days. They live on the excitement of the game, carried on, I have no doubt, by means of remittances from home. Many a suicide has found the "game" too strenuous on brain and nerves and many a tale could these halls tell if given the gift of speech.

The Games

Roulette — (Little Wheel) — is the principal game of chance indulged in. A small ivory ball is thrown off a revolving disc into one of thirty-seven or thirty-eight compartments surrounding it, and numbered 1 to 36 with one or two zeros. The players who have staked upon the number of the compartment, into which the ball falls, receive thirty-six times their stake; unless they have staked upon more than one number. Money is not used on the tables but counters of various colors and denominations are purchased from the cashier and thrown on the green top. At each end and at the sides of the long tables sit the croupiers, men who draw in the counters with small wooden rakes and otherwise assist the banker in charge of the table. Some of the tables have a minimum hazard of 5 francs while at others the hazard runs as high as 100 francs minimum.

Baccaret, the other favourite game, is played with cards, any number of participants playing. These players, or rather betters, are dealt two cards each by the banker, who deals two to himself and covers the stakes of each player with an equal sum. Payments are made on the scores of the cards.

A Floral Fairyland

Monte Carlo is beautiful — lovely gardens with palms and other tropical vegetation, the blue waters of the Mediterranean and balmy air attract many who are not interested in games of chance. Then there is the air of gaiety, band- concerts, dancing and Riviera nights — beauty maintained by the tears and heartaches of those who are enmeshed in the lure of getting something for nothing.

"Back to Blighty" for next week's story — dear old London.

Those Magic Isles

This is a title which has been given to Great Britain and Ireland. The "high spots" of these wonderful islands are to be visited this summer by a select party under the capable guidance of Capt. E. H. Reid whose "Travel Impressions" have appeared in this paper for many weeks past. This year is a good year to see the British Isles; travelling by motor makes your land journey one continuous round of sightseeing; routes, quite off the beaten track are included in the itinerary and you will have an opportunity to familiarize yourself with the Homeland in a unique and glorious summer vacation. The Cathedral cities; the lakes of England, Scotland, and Ireland and Wales; the homes and haunts of famous writers; castles; scenery that you can see nowhere else — all these and much more is included. All the "ravel" taken out of "travel"; congenial companionship; all-inclusive cost; finest accommodation; a real chance to realize the longings and ambition of years. Why not do it this summer "Another year never comes." Such a vacation will enlarge your horizons, make your reading more pleasant and above all, it will build happy memories that can never be taken away from you. Write to Captain Reid at 710 C.P.R. Building, Toronto; it will cost you nothing to enquire and you will find that he will be glad to help you in this, or any other travel plans you may contemplate.

Are We Civilized?

They buried Lilyan Tashman, screen star, in New York recently.

Men and women crowded about the funeral chapel. Women fainted. Men climbed lamp-posts for a better view. Thirty police could not keep order.

When Mary Pickford left the chapel by a side entrance the crowd engulfed her, women pushed her up her sable coat. Miss Pickford sobbed.

Women were trampled and scratched. "Why can't we get in?" the crowd shouted. "We're the fans." Famous persons were applauded as they arrived.

Ten thousand persons pushed into the cemetery. When the body had been lowered hysterical women rushed the police, knocked over headstones, tore to shreds floral tributes piled beside the open grave.

Are we civilized?—Ottawa Journal.

Less Criminals During 1933

Notable Decrease — 21,421 in 1930 — 14,538 in 1933

It is frequently supposed that poverty combined with concentrated population breeds crime, but figures issued by the Provincial Secretary would lead to a contrary conclusion.

In the year 1930 the population of this province was 3,366,000 and the number of persons sentenced to prison was 21,421. This exceeded all previous records of the number of persons sentenced to prison in a single year in the Province of Otario. It amounted to 649 persons per 100,000 of population.

In 1933, the population rose to 3,510,000, an increase during three years of depression of 144,000. But in the course of the past year only 14,538 persons were sentenced to prison. This amounted to 415 persons per 100,000 of population. This last figure, although higher than those of the war and immediate post-war years, is a considerable improvement over the figures for 1913 and 1914 when 440 and 548 persons to 100,000 of population respectively, were sentenced.

Such statistics pay a tribute to the qualities of our people, and show the sanity and firmness with which law and order has been maintained and the beneficial effects of making provision for those in distress.

Many funny bones are in the elbow, but some go to the head.

Latest Findings Of Science

The Amazing Termites — Their Highly Efficient Society Described In Scientists' Book

"Termites and Termite Control," a report of a committee organized by the University of California and the wood-using industries and has just been published by the University of California Press. Although primarily intended for biologists, architects, engineers, building inspectors and users Lof wood, there are chapters here as fascinating as any novel of adventure Strange as it may seem in view of the depredations of one kind of termite ($37,141,000 is their estimated annual cost) this is about the only volume of its kind in print. Termites are not ants. They are more like cockroaches. In fact, ants are their deadly enemies.

HABITAT OF TERMITES

We usually associate termites with the tropics. They are common enough in the United States, ranging from the Gulf of Mexico to Michigan, and even further north. If we hear more of them than we used to—some of New York's buildings were eaten away by them recently—it is because of the advances of civilization and the greater use of wood.

There are two major types of termites. First we have the wood-dwelling species (some live in damp wood and some in dry) and secondly, the earth-dwellers, which do most of the damage in the United States.

In a developed colony there are reproductives (a king, a queen and winged individuals called alates), soldiers and workers, not to mention nymphs or undeveloped insects in various stages. Unlike ants, each caste is made up of males and females A colony is self-perpetuating. If the queen and king die, substitutes are developed from ordinary members of the colony.

CONTROL OF POPULATION

The king and queen found the colony. They do not reproduce too rapidly at first because they must care not only for the eggs but for the young. When the young are able to do the housekeeping, the queen lays more rapidly. Both eggs and queen are then cared for by newly developed workers.

Work means work in a termite colony. Boring tunnels, caring for eggs and young nymphs, feeding a helpless queen and equally helpless nymphs and soldiers, keeping the galleries clean and in repair, ventilating every passage, regulating humidity—there is no end to the duties of the workers.

The soldiers are even more specialized than might be supposed. There are no cowards among them. In fact they are so constructed that retreat is sure to end in death. For the rear end of a soldier is soft and vulnerable. But the front end! A strong box-like structure which can plug up a runway against an invader and which usually has enormous jaws with an irresistible crunch and a rattle to give an alarm. It is because of his huge fighting head the soldier is so helpless in peace. A tank must be fed with gasoline. A soldier termite must be fed too. His fighting is confined largely to ants. Out of the head comes a poison. It is deadly.

When the time comes for the reproductives to swarm in the nuptial flight, the workers open up the galleries. The alates press out and take flight in a cloud. Wings are shed, males and females (now kings and queens) pair off and seek new colony sites. Only a few survive the nuptial flight. Puddles, birds, ants take their toil. Even those that enter some chosen crack in wood, bore a cell for themselves and seal it up with plaster, have a hard time in the first year. Those that do survive may live to the ripeness of fourteen years.

PROTECTION FOR WOOD

What makes the termites so destructive is their liking for cellulose —wood. Especially wood invaded by fungi. The microscope reveals the protozoa in the digestive apparatus of termites breaking up wood in a form that can be digested. Without the protozoa termites would starve to death.

All these facts about the ways of termites must be known if their depredations are to be prevented. An architect must build with a knowledge of chemistry and of termite habits. But they are expensive. Wood is still the cheap building material par excellence. If it cannot be kept from contact with the ground it should be treated with some unpalatable compound.

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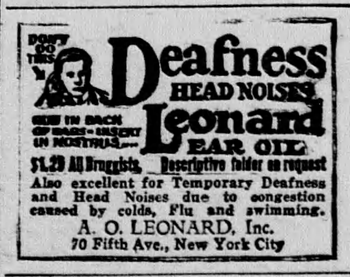

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