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Miss O. S. Allen's Tested Recipes

No. 147

Apricot Cobbler

(A delicious baked dessert that is always in season)

1 egg, 1 cupful sugar
2 tablespoonfuls melted Crisco
3/4 cupful milk
1/2 teaspoonful vanilla
1/2 teaspoonful salt
1 cupful flour
1 teaspoonful baking powder
2 cupfuls apricots, cooked and drained

Beat egg, add sugar, beat until creamy. Sift flour, salt and baking powder, add alternately with milk. Last add vanilla and Crisco. Put apricots in a Criscoed baking dish, pour batter over. Bake in moderate oven one-half hour. Serve hot with apricot sauce.

Apricot Sauce

Put through sieve 1 cupful apricots, add 1 tablespoonful lemon juice and 1 cupful apricot juice, 1/2 tablespoonful corn starch. Cook until thick.

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He that wants hope is the poorest man alive.

MAH JONGG

By **G. M. LE HAIN**
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193. Do not get into the habit of holding on to a long string of mixed Honors and Winds; you can see at once that you would have to shake over your entire hand to make these honors and winds of scoring value. The ratio of chances is against you. Another point, the earlier in the game you discard an Honor or a Wind, the less chance there is for any other player having two of such Honor or Wind, and claiming it for a "Pung."

194. You can gamble on an odd honor, or one of your own Winds for a few turns round the table, but if you have only one, do not hesitate to discard it for a tile which you need to make your hand nearer "game." 195. You will find that as a general rule it is not advisable to call "Chow" on the first few discards, at the opening of the game, unless of course, you are playing for a quick "Mah Jongg." As you know, a "Chow" has no scoring value in points. It is quite possible that after the players have drawn and discarded a few times and you have had a chance to draw; the whole aspect of your hand may be changed, and you may then regret that you have perhaps spoiled the possibilities in your hand.

196. For instance: Suppose you fill a "Chow" in characters at the beginning of the game. After a few turns around the table you may have drawn several "bamboos," and some of the other players may have discarded "bamboos," which you could "Pung" or "Chow," and your hand begins to shape up for a far for all "bamboos." You will then regret that first "Chow" in characters which you cannot get rid of. Of course, if you draw the tile which fills a sequence in your hand, you might keep it, for a while, because if you find that you have to alter your tactics and break up your hand, this sequence may be useful. As you get more familiar with the game, you will be surprised how quickly hands may be completed by a few fortunate plays.

197. You will have to figure out the merits of each hand as it stands, and reason according to your own ideas the best line to follow.

198. You must try to figure out a safe game for yourself according to your hand, because one of the other players may have a streak of luck and be rapidly completing a big hand. If he has "declared," or has a big score of Honors and Winds on the table, sacrifice your hand to go "game" on any score, however small.

199. If you figure out that your chances are too slim to go "game," then you have the option of getting as high a score as you can filling "Pungs" (therefore, in discarding break up pairs last of all), or else you can try to make the game a "draw," by discarding tiles which you think will not be of any value to the other players.

200. You already know that you must watch carefully the discards and plays of the other players, but do not overlook the fact that they are watching you also.

201. It is not possible in this book to relate the endless little bits of "bluff" the Chinese get into their playing. It is impossible to figure out from their discard what they are working for. They rarely discard the tile they draw, unless it be obviously no use for instance: the fourth honor when three are exposed on the table, etc.)

202. If you could watch a Chinese building up his hand it is the most complex affair; generally the suits not even sorted out—all mixed up—but don't worry he knows exactly what the hand contains. (I really believe the reason for this is to confuse an onlooker in case he wanted to signal to another player what the hand contained.)

203. He will draw a tile and put it in his hand, move it around, and change the positions of several others, ending by discarding a tile which you perhaps figured was part of a completed play, concealed in the hand.

204. For instance: He might place three tiles together, slightly separated from the rest of his hand. This may be a completed "3 of a kind" or "sequence" but in any case the intention is to make it appear so. But it may not be. If all at once he draws a tile and adds it to the three, and then discards one of the three; any idea of it having been a "completed three" is badly upset.

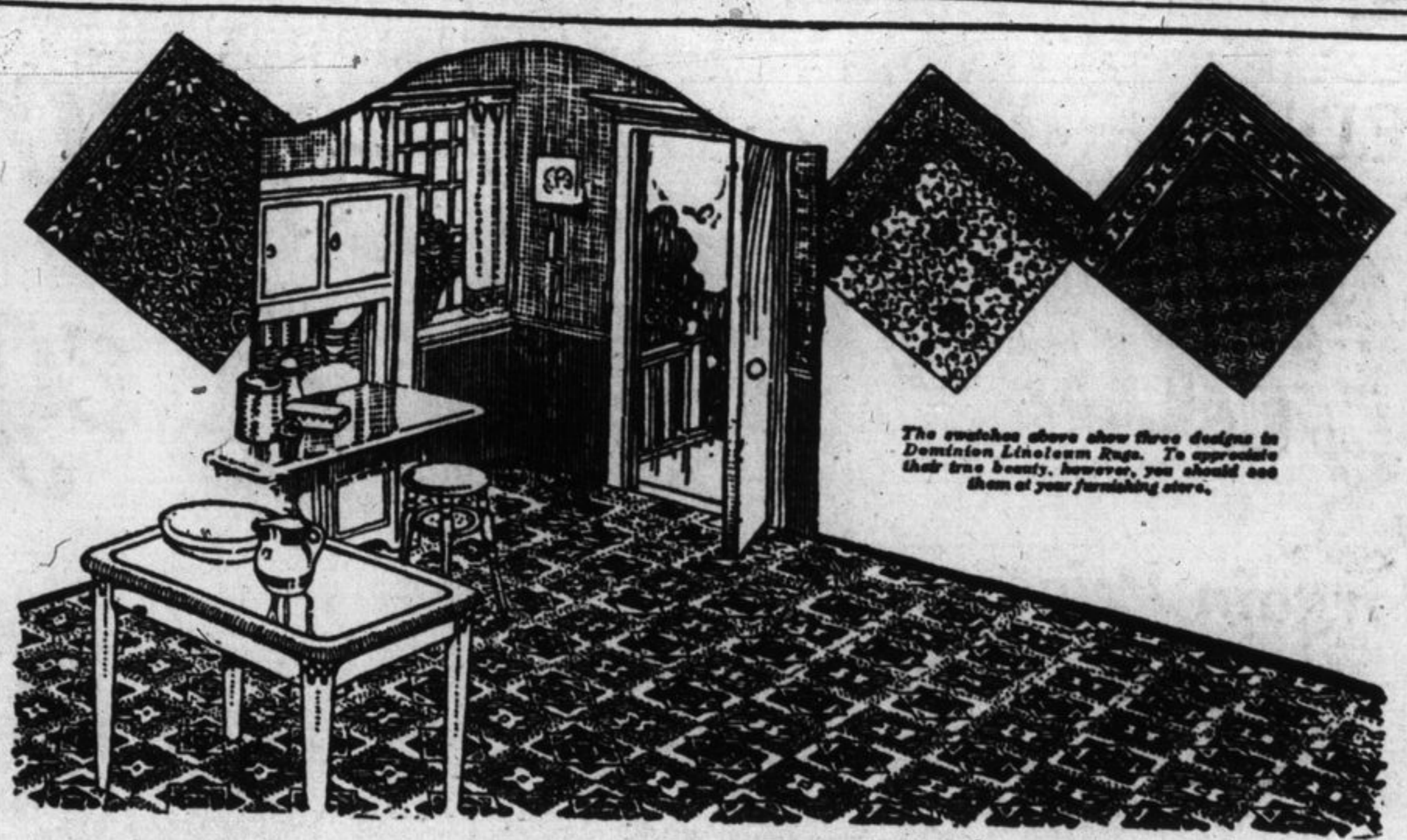
205. Another very effective bit of Chinese play is to expose a certain number of the tiles in the hand. It would seem reasonable to suppose that if one can see about half the tiles in a players hand, some sort of idea might be formed as to what is going to happen. I know one Chinese who will sometimes expose all his tiles except two. The two he holds in his hand are, as it were, the "key stones" of the hand, and if he goes "Mah Jongg" the completed hand is generally a surprise, not at all what one might figure out from the exposed tiles.

Question.
May a player pung or chow own wind to make one pair?

Answer.
A player may claim from the discard a tile of his own wind to make a pair, and he call "Mah Jongg." The word "chow" is the call made when a sequence is completed by claiming a discarded tile.

Question.
A player has no claim on a tile of his own wind if he has only one in his hand, unless to call "Mah Jongg."

Answer.
In Section 151 c you say that a closed "Kong" can be robbed to complete the "Thirteen Unique Wonders" hand. Does this mean that you may rob the kong to get your thirteenth different tiles, and then may proceed to pair up to any of the thirteen, in order to finally complete your hand of one of each wind, honor and terminal plus one tile to pair in with any of the above. Unless this is meant I do not see how you can collect a complete hand, for if



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You have, say, your twelve different tiles for the "Unique Wonders," plus one useless tile which must be discarded in due course, and then another player discloses a "kong" (which means that he had collected three of a kind privately and the fourth was still in the wall) and this kong is in the tile you are still lacking for your thirteen different ones, then your hand is useless unless you can rob his "kong" for your thirteenth tile and then draw or claim from the discard the 14th tile for the necessary pair and completed hand. Kindly clear me up on this point.

Question.
You cannot "rob a Kong" at all unless the tile claimed enables you to call "Mah Jongg." In the case of the "Thirteen Wonders" you would have to have your hand complete all but one tile. Say for example: You have a pair of one circles, and a tile of each of the winds, of each of the honors, and of each of the terminals, except a one bamboo. Now, if another player declares a closed Kong of one bamboo, you can "rob that Kong" to complete your hand. But you can do nothing if your hand is not complete except for that one tile—you cannot claim the tile just to complete the "thirteen" different tiles and then wait for your chance to complete your hand by matching up any one of them for the necessary pair to call "Mah Jongg."

Answer.
There must always be some definite arrangement as to the value of these exceptional hands even though you do not play with a limit for the general run of the game. As a matter of fact these extreme hands are so rare, that you may never see one completed, or even hear of one. I would not advise you to bother about them, but you have the rules in case such a hand did ever happen.

Question.
Regarding the scoring: does a completed one suit hand score 3 farns for the value of any of the groups in that hand or do these single and triple farns for cleared hands apply only to the necessary hand?

Answer.
The farns for "all one suit" hands do not apply unless the player goes "Mah Jongg." In settling up the scores, after paying the winner, the

player with a hand all one suit has the value of his "Pungs or Kongs" only—there is no doubling because the player did not go game. The mere fact of holding thirteen tiles of one suit gives no farn at all to a losing hand.

Question.
If playing without a limit what would these different special hands score? For instance: The tiles in the 13 Unique Wonders are not granted and have no face value. Presumably the other special hands mentioned take the face value of the different groups, plus the farns for honors, winds, etc.

Answer.
There must always be some bonus decided for these extremely rare hands, whether you pay the rest of

the general run of the game without any limit. The face value of the "Thirteen Wonders" is really nothing, unless the pair happens to be a pair of honors, or a pair of winds either of the round or the player's own wind.

(To Be Continued Next Saturday)

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