

Why did the habit of counting by tens finally get the better in all civilized societies of the still earlier habit of counting by twenties? Simply, I believe, because civilized peoples tend more or less to wear shoes; and shoes obviously interfere with freedom of action in getting at the human toes for purposes of calculation. Bare-footed savages naturally enough reckon by twenties; but booted civilization does its decorous counting by tens alone. Writing and the use of the slate and pencil strengthen the decimal impulse, once set on foot; for you write with your fingers (unless you happen to rival Miss Biffin), not with your toes; and our children nowadays, while they count on their fingers with great unanimity, would probably be shocked and scandalized at the barbaric notion of anything so rude as counting on their feet.

But why is twenty called a score? Only because it represents a whole man, and is therefore scored or marked down on the tally or counting-stick as one person. In its original signification, of course, to score means merely to nick or cut a mark, especially on a short piece of wood. The word is etymologically much the same as scar; and we still talk (when poetically inclined) of a mountain-side scored by the ceaseless torrents, or of a brow deeply scored by the ravages of time. In these degenerate days, to be sure, the score at cricket is duly entered in a ruled book, together with an analysis

of the bowling, a record of the overs, and a general commentary as to who was bowled, caught, or run out. But I can myself remember, in a very remote neighbourhood, when I was a boy, seeing the score kept in the true primitive fashion by another boy seated on a fence, who cut a notch with his knife for every run on one of two sticks, green-barked and brown-barked, each representing one of the two sides.

A sort of sanctity was attached to the proceeding—the sanctity that results from ancient usage. For that was the sort of swing that gave the score its present name: it was a real survival from an antique savagery. Just so the primitive arithmetician, while yet the whole world was young, counted up to twenty on a man's fingers and toes, and then made a notch on a stick to denote "one man up," or, in other words, twenty. It was a safer and easier way of reckoning than counting by men alone; because, in the first place, one man (for example, the reckoner himself) would serve as a numerator over and over again; and, in the second place, the score once marked on a stick remains forever, while the men are apt to get up and walk away, which is as disconcerting to the ardent arithmetician as the action of the hedgehogs in Alice's croquet to the enthusiastic player.—*Lippincott's Monthly.*

(To be continued.)

THE EXAMINATION MACHINE.—It is possible to provide machinery on a great scale, and yet to accomplish little. In the last century it was remarked how little good came of the rich endowments of our universities, and how they were surpassed by much poorer universities in other countries. Machinery thrown away! In this century we have tried machinery of a different kind. Have we always had success? We set up the examination system; we extended it over

the whole country; and what do we think of the result? Is this machine so decidedly better than the other? I think few persons will say so. Emulation turns out to be a rude and coarse motive; competition proves to be an exhausting, unhealthy process. It is complained that those who have been trained under this system imbibe low views of culture; that this sort of education has disappointed results and can scarcely be called liberal.—*J. R. Seely, in Nineteenth Century.*