

SPORTS IN COREA.

CURIOUS PLAYTHINGS IN THE HERMIT KINGDOM.

Curious Kites, Toys and Footballs—Spider Nets for Catching Flies—Queer Kinds of Cards—An Odd Game Played with the Flagstaff.

Corea is the land of kites. The business of flying paper kites is understood there as it is nowhere else in the world.

It is a more playful one, but in Asia it is a symbol of the soul. In ancient days the kite bird was an emblem of the immortal spirit of man. As for games,

most of them were not invented at all in the ordinary sense of the term, but are survivals from primitive times, in some cases originating in magic rites.

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The kites of Corea nowadays are made by men specially trained to the craft. They are of various colors and designs.

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When a dragon fly is captured it is customary to thrust a piece of straw through its abdomen and to place it in a small box. This is called "setting into straw."

A favorite game in Corea is that known as "Shinju." The Shinju is a flat ball of cotton cloth filled with clay or ashes having a handle from a pig's bristles.

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PART OF THIS PAGE IS MISSING

WELCOME GUEST

A VISION OF ST. NICHOLOS.

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house, Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.

The stockings were hung by the chimney with care, In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there.

The children were nestled all snug in their beds, While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads.

And mamma in her kerchief, and I in my cap, Had just settled our brains for a long winter nap.

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter, I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter.

Away the window I flew like a flash, To open the shutters, and throw up the sash.

The moon, on the breast of the new-fallen snow, Gave a lustre of mid-day to objects below.

When, what to my wondering eyes should appear, Five white reindeer, with gleaming hoofs so clean.

They came from the west, and they came from the east, And their music was heard 'neath the mistletoe tree.

Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer and Vixen, On, on, on, Captain! on, on, on, Dasher and Vixen!

To the top of the porch, to the top of the wall, Now dash away dash away, dash away all!

As they leave the house, the wind whistles and howls, And the snow on the roof is blown down in showers.

When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky, And the sleigh bells ring out a merry melody.

So, up to the house-top, the courses they trace, With the sleigh bells ring out a merry melody.

And then in a twinkling I heard on the roof, The prancing and pawing of those little hoofs.

As I drew in my head, and as I turned down, Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.

He was dressed all in fur from his head to his toe, And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot.

A bundle of toys he had slung on his back, And he looked like a peddler just opening his pack.

His eyes were like stars, and his nose like a steed, His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a red.

His little mouth was drawn up like a smile, And the beard on his chin was as white as a snow.

The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth, And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath.

He had a round belly and a little round belly, That shook when he laughed, like a bowl full of jelly.

He was chubby and plump—a right jolly old elf, And I laughed when I saw him in spite of my self.

A wink of his eye, and a twist of his head, Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work, And filled all the stockings that turned with a jerk.

And laying his finger aside of his nose, He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a blow.

And away they all flew, like the down of a feather, And I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight—

"Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night!"

—C. C. Moore.

THE TELEGRAPH HABIT.

Cranks Who Use the Wires for the Most Inconvenient Messages.

"All sorts of cranks in the world," said the girl in the telegraph office of a Broad street office, "I think the telegraph cranks are the queerest. Against the rules of the office to give away our business."

"You know there are lots of men who have the telegraph habit? It is like the habit of the cranks in the office. When they have a message to send, they come in and tell the operator that they have a message to send."

"Next time, half an hour later, he comes in to tell me that he will leave New York on Monday. After a while he comes in to tell me that he will leave New York on Tuesday. The next morning he comes in to tell me that he will leave New York on Wednesday."

"He comes in to tell me that he will leave New York on Thursday. The next morning he comes in to tell me that he will leave New York on Friday. The next morning he comes in to tell me that he will leave New York on Saturday."

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