

was a gambler asked Pascal what were the chances of turning up a black or red card in cutting a pack a given number of times. Pascal replied that as all the cards were either red or black, the chances would be expressed by the formula $\frac{x}{2}$, by which statement he meant that when two events were equally probable, they will occur equally in the long run.

Now, in life, we cannot know whether things are equal or unequal, and so assume them to be equal, which means that in the end our haps and mishaps will balance each other.

What we call our luck is not the blind happening of fate, it is the result of certain causes or events. Luck is often another name for the unexpected. We receive an unexpected legacy, but it has likely been left as an acknowledgment of a kindness.

Even in gambling houses there is little, if any, luck. The cards are stacked, the dice loaded, and the balls weighted so that "luck" falls more often to the banker. Only "flats" believe that the "sharps" are fair.

People who are nimble-brained are apt to be more lucky than dullards. History gives no more striking instance of this than the case of William of Normandy, who tripped and fell on the sand as he stepped on the shore of England. He had come to conquer the British, and his followers held this fall to be an evil omen, and so they shrunk back in terror. But the intrepid Norman seized a handful of clay, and cried, "Thus I grasp this earth, and by the splendor of God, I shall keep it," thereby turning the dark augury into one of promise.

Charles James Fox, the inveterate gambler, said once that "the next best thing to winning is to lose." And he was right. What is called "a run of good luck" has been more disastrous to men than a sequence of misfortunes, because loss and uncertainty of the future are the goads which stimulate them to exertion and greater heights.

There are some folk who are always talking of their bad luck. The burden of their conversation runs along the line of the old negro song, "I'm a-rolling through an unfriendly world, I'm a-rolling, a-rolling." They think Providence has not done the

square thing with them. Like Louis XIV., when he was defeated in Flanders, they secretly murmur, "Has God forgotten all I have done for Him." Melancholy marks them for her own, and all the rest of us avoid them as far as is compatible with the dictates of politeness.

We have noticed that the person in "bad luck" all his life, is generally an eye-servant, one who is afraid of giving a dollar's worth of work for fifty cents.

The fifty-cent man is always whining about the luck of the dollar-man. He will tell you that the other fellow had a "pull." Of course he had, but it was a long, strong pull, one that included courage, civility, and hard work.

While the fifty-cent man was waiting for something to turn up, the dollar-man was turning up his sleeves. The dollar-man didn't believe in being the sport of Destiny. He was Destiny himself. He didn't lie in bed in the mornings wishing the postman would bring him a legacy. No, sir! he turned out at six o'clock, and with heavy anvil or rapid pen, laid the foundation for a competence.

Fifty-Cents whines: Dollar whistles.

Fifty-Cents relies on chance: Dollar on character.

Fifty-Cents slips down to indigence: Dollar strides up to independence.

The dollar-man is always "lucky." He has a way of turning the inevitable to his own advantage. He would not trade off his circumstances for anybody else's circumstances. He treads on many sharp thorns, drinks from many a nauseous cup, looks into many dark skies, but all the while he plucks roses from thorns, extracts sweet from bitter, and sunshine from the storm.

He knows that Fortune always has something up her sleeve, but that it has to be shaken down.

He knows, too, that something is waiting just round the corner for the man who goes ahead—and he's going.

And should he, once in a while, turn a corner and run up against a loaded gun, well, he takes it philosophically, for he knows it is just as painful to be shot in the back, and doesn't look as well.