

QUEEN OF GAMBLERS.

It is a long time ago that Donna Paquita ruled at Paso del Norte, Mexico, over the cowboys, outlaws and gamblers. It will be much longer time until her successor appears. Gambling is a fine and all-consuming art which women is not so marked as in the old days, when ladies were fewer and crimes were commoner. Women play at games of chance, perhaps, just as devotedly as of yore, but the days have passed when it was not an extraordinary happening for a woman, fair and gentle, to outplay cowboys, outlaws and gamblers, and not only win all their money, but also drain the bank. Donna Paquita often did this.

And who among the old timers of Texas, New Mexico and Arizona does not remember Donna Paquita? She of the black hair and laughing eyes, whose cheeks were bright as morning, whose smile maddled the brain and sympathized with the losers as the queen of gamblers gathered up her winnings when there was nothing left with the others to lose. True that Paquita has been dead these twenty years, but the oldest gambler will stop his play to tell you of her, and his hand will still relay and his voice will soften as he tells of the woman he acknowledged as his mistress in his art.

Donna Paquita, or as she was known, the Paquita, was born in Chihuahua about 1850. No one knew or who her parents were. When a child about

entire border. Quator and the Paquita traveled from town to town, playing in all of them, and usually winning. They quarreled eventually, however, and in 1870 the Paquita, then a beautiful girl of 20, came back to Paso del Norte alone. She again appeared at Garretson's. Her old-time luck seemed to have deserted her, for she lost heavily, and a week later went away.

She was next heard of in New Mexico. She had allied herself with a gang of the worst characters in the southwest, and in a short time became their leader. Under her the outlaws traversed New Mexico, stealing and plundering. When the climate got too hot for them they slipped across the line into Texas. The Paquita forsook this life after a year of exciting adventure and turned up in El Paso with Sam Brinsley, the handsomest and most depraved gambler of his time. Brinsley crossed the Rio Grande river and opened up Garretson's place, the latter having been killed by young Mungay, his dealer. Brinsley prospered. The Paquita lent the attraction of her presence to his place, sometimes as dealer, but usually as a player.

She played any game. Her popularity was apparent from the first. The game she played, whatever it might be, was always the popular game of the house. The table at which she played was always crowded. The players, in games where it was possible, duplicated her bets, placing their money on her favorite cards. In such cases the Paquita usually lost, the house, otherwise Brinsley, winning heavily. In poker and kindred games, where each player looked out safely for himself and cards, the house got a percentage. The Paquita seldom lost then. She was a wonder at the cards. Her small white hands could manipulate them with a rapidity and skill that defied the watchfulness of the keenest-eyed gamblers. Many attributed her success to her good luck. But the old hands knew better. They knew that mere luck could not



STRUCK VICIOUSLY AT BRINSLEY.

12 years old a gambler named Quator found her homeless and friendless in the city in which she was born. She was then remarkably pretty. Quator taught her all his tricks with cards. He spent hours in instructing her in the intricacies of Mexican monte. She learned rapidly, soon equalling Quator in skill and dexterity.

None of the old-timers have forgotten her first appearance at Paso del Norte. She was 16 years old and small for her age. She came with Quator, who said she was her uncle. When Quator was there to gamble, he practically lived at Lark Garretson's. Garretson ran the biggest gambling house on the border. His game was practically without limit. The Paquita appeared, clinging close to her alleged uncle. The bank expected Quator, who was a heavy player, and had made proper arrangements for his play. As Quator played the Paquita stood beside him, silent and observant. Luck was against the Mexican, and he lost heavily. Finally when his pile of gold had diminished to a few coins, he turned to Paquita, and, showing the money before her, said: "Here, child, win with them."

The dealer and players smiled sympathetically, thinking Quator had quit backing his luck for the night, and desired to let the child amuse herself a moment before he went away. The Paquita seated herself at the table, with her hands supporting her chin. The play went on. The child won. As she played the dealer eyed her in wonder. It was not strange that a child understood how to gamble, but never before had a child played with such skill and judgment. The bank lost rapidly. The Paquita won bet after bet. The heaps of gold grew on the table in front of her. Decks were changed, but without avail. The bank continued to lose. A new dealer was tried, but with no better success than the first. The Paquita's luck was amazing. The other players dropped out one by one. The dealer and the child faced each other. The bank lost. Then Garretson himself took the cards. He was famed as the shrewdest gambler on the border. But he could not beat the child. Finally he said: "Here is what is left in the bank. It matches your winnings. Win or lose, the next draw loses it." The Paquita nodded. A king lay on the board.

"I play a king in the door," she said in Spanish.

The spectators gasped. Such risk was folly. There was still half a deck against her. Even Garretson smiled. He dealt. The king stood in the door. The Paquita had won. Garretson's bank had been broken, and broken by a child. The Paquita turned to Quator, "I am tired," she said.

The gambler gathered up her winnings, handed them to Garretson, asking him to put them in the safe for the night. Then he and the Paquita went out. The fact that a child had beaten the Garretson bank spread along the

continually break them at their own games and enrich one particular player. They realized that the Paquita was better at the game than they.

Yet the Paquita was never caught cheating. And unless she was caught she could be no competitor. When a player got sullen and ugly over his losses no one noticed it sooner than the Paquita. She was the first to lose to him; to smile with him, to joke with him; in short to restore him to a good humor, only to win back what she had given to him with as much more as he possessed. If a player squirmed or whined in a game with her, the Paquita invariably dropped her cards, pushed the money at stake across the table to the player, and quit the game. A player she had once treated in this way could never play with again. And similar treatment from all her brother gamblers. It was best to swallow your feelings and lose, if lose you must, with a smiling face and cheery air.

There are numerous shootings growing out of trouble over the Paquita. Man after man sought her favor. All appeared to find it, with none possessing more than any other. She treated them all alike, save, perhaps, Brinsley. She quarreled finally with him. It came about thus: The Paquita was playing whiskey poker with a rich cattleman who knew little of the game, and played it principally for the opportunity it afforded to chat with the Paquita. Brinsley became impatient over Paquita's seeming slowness in breaking her opponent.

One word led to another. The Paquita quit the game to argue with Brinsley. At length her temper broke loose. Grasping a knife she struck viciously at Brinsley. The blade caught his up-thrown arm, inflicting a long wound. As the blood gushed forth Paquita turned and fled. Brinsley pursued her unsuccessfully. He returned eventually to his gambling house. When asked about the Paquita he was wont to say:

"I took her for a rose but she proved a thorn."

He never forgave her, however, and vowed vengeance on her. His opportunity came in 1876. The Paquita, after leaving him, had returned to the New Mexican country and gathered up the remnants of the old gang of thieves. Their plundering became so bold that days as if there had been no change. Brinsley led the party that captured the Paquita. She had heard that he was pursuing her, and it is said that she permitted her pursuers to overtake her. She greeted Brinsley with her old-time cheerfulness. She talked over the old days as if there had been no change. Finally she proposed a game of cards to decide whether she should go free or should die. Brinsley agreed, the game was played, and the Paquita lost.

Almost before the last card fell she drew a knife and stabbed herself through the heart. Brinsley committed suicide three weeks later.

SEVEN KINDS OF CUTICLE.

Successfully Grafted on a California Sufferer from Fire.

Within the past few months the medical fraternity of San Rafael, Cal., have been carefully studying and experimenting with the case of Miss Jessie Proudfoot, who in the early part of last summer had a narrow escape from accidental cremation. As it was, her clothing, which had caught fire, was consumed on her breast and the skin and flesh on the right side of her body was badly burned. For many days the life of the girl was despaired of and even when danger of immediate death was averted it was thought nothing could be done to prevent her from becoming a cripple. When the fire had touched the body the skin had peeled off in large flakes in many places, leaving the raw, inflamed flesh exposed. Should this heal up of its own accord, which would be a very slow process, as the doctors unanimously agreed, the tissues would so contract that the girl's limbs would be much shorter than the other. Besides this there was the absolute certainty that she would suffer pain continuously. At this juncture Dr. W. F. Jones resolved to try the virtue of grafting. Repeated but unsuccessful attempts were made with the skins of rabbit and other animals. Then Dr. Jones and two of his medical brethren decided that the sufferer had just one more chance. Human cuticle, could it be obtained, would grow on the raw flesh, scar tissues would form naturally, and the patient would be sure of retaining full use of her limbs. The only trouble they foresaw was the difficulty of getting healthy people to make such a sacrifice. On communicating their wish to Miss Proudfoot's family, the doctors were surprised and gratified to find that she had never seen a relative at once offered the use of her limbs. The knife in order to save the 12-year-old girl they all loved so well. This was over two months ago. In that time pieces of skin have been stripped from a half to an inch and a half in width and from four to five inches in length. These living strips, tingling with nerves, were placed on the tender flesh of the sufferer and bound firmly in place with rubber tissue, and in every instance the grafts have been successful. All the while Miss Proudfoot's body touched by the flames have been covered over with the skin of her relatives except one patch on the right hip. This will be attended to some time early in December and Dr. Jones states that judging from the progress made in the other grafts, it will be long before Miss Proudfoot is as well and as free limbed as ever. The sufferer, seemingly doomed to be a cripple for life, will soon be up and about, a flesh and blood monument to the devotion and self-sacrifice of her nearest of kin.

VALUABLE GRAVEL WALK.

Man Gets a Fine Avenue Out of False Weight in Coffee Bags.

It has been left to a St. Louis business man, says a correspondent in an exchange, to construct a gravel walk, neither long nor strikingly beautiful, that is a modern, if comparatively humble, rival of these glistening highways of fiction and fable, for it represents \$15,000 in hard cash. The manager of a St. Louis coffee company is the proud possessor of this unique walk. It is composed of several tons of Brazilian pebbles, that came to him in an ordinary business way during the last few years. This firm are heavy importers of Brazilian coffee. Before the berries are ready to be roasted for the market the sacks are opened and the contents carefully examined for twigs, leaves, and other impurities, the latter generally taking the shape of small pebbles about the size of a coffee berry. These came with such regularity and in such quantities that long ago the idea that they were accidentally in the sacks was abandoned, and the conclusion reluctantly reached that they were purposely placed in the bags to make weight. The daily discovery of these Brazilian pebbles, which are paid for as coffee, will fill an ordinary bucket. They are still added to the gravel path as they come in.

SHORT AND SWEET.

The call to arms—"John, take the baby."

Contentment is better than money and just about as scarce.

An earthquake is responsible for many ground rents that are not collectable.

The editor who "violates no confidence in saying," frequently wears a black eye.

One form of toothpick is where a dentist allows a person to select his own false tooth.

A man is like a razor, because you can't tell how sharp he can be until he is strapped.

A religion that does not stick to a man doing business, is no good after business hours.

A female lake smuggler has been arrested in New York. By the way, what is female lake?

This world is all a stage, but it is a long step from the man of property to the property-man.

If a praying machine were invented man would use it if it did not take too much time from business to wind it up.

George Washington never told a lie! Just think of it! He never skulked out of the back door when the mercury was hugging zero, without overcoat or muffler, coming back six hours later, with purple face and pinched features, to declare in chattering accent, "I—ah—cold—one—mile." George never did this! What a funny boy George was, wasn't he?—Texas Siftings.

The widow's cap is as old as the days of Julius Caesar. An edict of Tiberius commanded all widows to wear the cap under penalty of a heavy fine and imprisonment.

FOR LAND AND WATER.

AN AMPHIBIAN VESSEL ACCOMPLISHES WONDERS.

Launches and Reaches Itsself—Gildes Out of a Lake onto the Rails. Where It Becomes a Locomotive—Invention of a Clever Swede.

"An amphibious boat," now in practical operation in Denmark, would pave the way for a solution of the problem involved in the operation of boats on the upper Nile, the headwaters of the Missouri or other streams that are at times un navigable by reason of shoals and cascades. The idea of a boat that could be used as a carriage or run on rails over dry land was broached many years ago, but the scheme was looked upon as impracticable. The latter-day "amphibian," of which an illustration is given, is no longer an experiment. It is a commercial success, and carried during the past summer 20,000 persons, rather than a carriage, over a road of dry land was broached many years ago, but the scheme was looked upon as impracticable. The latter-day "amphibian," of which an illustration is given, is no longer an experiment. 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