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INDIAN PUZZLES.

There are some things that the North American Indian is able to do which are beyond the skill of any white man. It is quite generally believed that he surpasses his pale-face brother in strength, agility and endurance: but I think this belief is unfounded. I have in mind one old-timer who tells of outstripping a whole band of Indians in a foot-race; another who found, after it occurred to him to turn his toes in, that he could keep at the head of a party throughout one all-day march after another: a third who could not bend an Indian bow at all when he first tried, but as soon as he had learned the "slight" of it could send an arrow through a buffalo with the best of them. As to endurance, the Apaches were long supposed to be incomparable in this regard: but when the time came, Dr. Leonard Wood and the late General Lawton wore the Apaches out at their own game.

There are, however, certain lines in which the Indians have acquired a skill which seems not to be communicable to white men; and about all of these there is something *queer*, as if the ordinary facts of our knowledge were not adequate to explain them.

Snakes.

The Shoshonien tribe called the Moki apparently have the power, common to all the men of the tribe, and hereditary, of handling venomous reptiles without harm. Once a year they gather snakes indiscriminately from the surrounding country, and thirty or forty of the priests spend a week with them in an underground room. The ceremonies end with a public parade, in which each man carries in his hands and mouth all the snakes for which he has accommodations. This yearly snake-dance is described by those who have witnessed it as a most wonderful thing to see, and one quite past accounting for.

Stones.

Professor Hewett of Las Vegas once showed me two peculiar stones, which had the singular property of becoming luminous when rubbed by an Indian. They were some five inches in length and two in diameter, rounded and perfectly smooth, and appeared to be of simple quartz, being clouded or milky to look at, like ground glass. One side was flattened, and in one of them slightly hollowed. They were so shaped that they could conveniently be held in one hand and rubbed with the thumb, and the flattening or hollowing of the one side had probably been effected by such rubbing, continued through no one can guess how many years. An Indian—or at least some Indians in the Pueblos of New Mexico—would take one of these stones in his hand, without any preparation or treatment whatever, and after holding it and rubbing it gently for a time it would begin to glow with a distinct light. A certain sacredness is attached to these stones in an Indian's eyes, and