

THE APACHE STICK GAME.

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(Abstract.)

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The Apache stick game is played only by the women. It is played in the winter when there is no farm work to be done; also at any other time when the women are not employed in the daily toil. At this game the women are experts. It is a gambling game, and the women often bet and lose all they have on it, even the clothes on their backs. Most usually, however, only beads and such-like trinkets are staked. Below is a description of the game and the requisites: The game-field, including its rock-circle, the counting sticks, and the three "Setdilh" sticks used in playing the game.

THE GAME FIELD.—This field is a level, circular spot, six or seven feet in diameter. This circular area is inclosed in a circle of cobblestones, forty in number. These rocks are arranged in groups of ten each, that is, ten to each quadrant of the circle. The rocks are the tallies; an entire circle of forty tallies constitutes a game. Besides the rocks in the circle, a large flat rock occupies the center of the field. On this rock are hurled the setdilh sticks on their mission of chance, as we shall see later.

THE COUNTING STICKS.—These are small sticks used in marking the tallies gained. One of these is placed between the last rock tally and the next rock in the circle in the direction the player is moving it.

THE SETDILTH STICKS.—These are three in number. Each is a foot in length and is the half of a green limb or a willow shrub of about an inch in diameter. The bark is left on the round face; its split face is marked by a broad diagonal charcoal mark across the center. These sticks are all held in the hand in a vertical position at the same time; and are hurled endwise upon the center rock to fall with whichever face up chance may direct. Counting the points then begins.

COUNTING THE POINTS.—The points in the game are decided by the faces of the setdilh sticks that are up after the sticks have fallen. If

one split face is up it counts two points; if two split faces, three points; if all three split faces, five points; and if the three rounded faces are up ten points and the player has the privilege of playing again before passing the sticks to the next player.

MARKING THE POINTS GAINED.—Usually four persons play this game. The opposite players are partners. One set of players move the counting



The Setdith Game—Sticks falling after having bounced on the center rock.

sticks round the stone-circle in one direction (Each player has her own counting sticks whether a partner of another man or not); and their opponents move in the opposite direction. For the points gained in hurling the sticks an equal number of rocks in the circle are counted and the counting stick is moved forward to the position between the last rock tally and the next cobble-stone in the direction the counting stick is being moved. In moving the counting stick, should it chance to be placed in the space between two rocks that an opponent's counting stick is occupying, the

opponent's counting stick, that is, the first stick occupying the space is taken up and its owner must begin the game again. Two skilled players will often throw each other back in this manner time after time. This makes the game quite interesting. When a counting stick has completed the entire circle, that is, when it has marked forty successive tallies its owner has the game. A transfer of the staked property follows. Then the betting begins for a new game.

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