

PUZZLEMANIA



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UT Odyssey Lecture series

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NEW PUZZLE MENACES

THE CITY'S SANITY

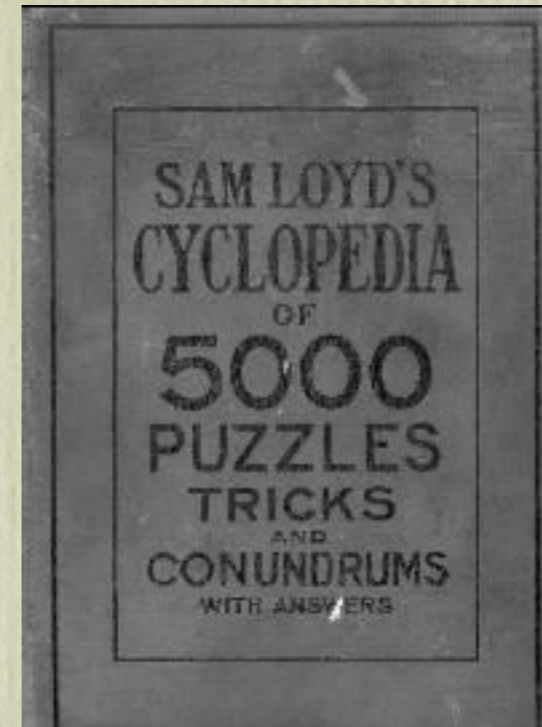
Young and Old, Rich and Poor,
All Hard at Work Fitting Cut-
Up Pictures Together.

SOLITAIRE IS FORGOTTEN

Two Clergymen, a Supreme Court Jus-
tice, and a Noted Financier Among
the Latest Converts to the Craze.

Samuel Loyd

(1841-1911)



New York Times

March 22, 1880

No pestilence has ever visited this or any other country which has spread with the awful celerity of what is popularly called the "Fifteen Puzzle." It is only a few months ago that it made its appearance in Boston, and it has now spread over the entire country. Nothing arrests it. Neither age nor sex is spared by it, and it now threatens our free institutions, inasmuch as from every town and hamlet there is coming up a cry for a "strong man" who will stamp out this terrible puzzle at any cost of Constitution or freedom.

In the presence of this giant evil, all our customary defenses prove valueless. The Police cannot arrest a seller or a victim of the puzzle, since the law knows nothing of it. Mr. COMSTOCK has in vain tried to find something in it which would warrant him in attempting to suppress it. The pulpit and the press set forth its dangerous nature, but no one heeds them, and even the various Societies for the Prevention of Different Things seem utterly powerless.

Meanwhile the evidences of the widespread ruin wrought by this infamous puzzle meet us on every side. Thousands of men who but lately were honest and industrious have yielded to its fatal fascinations, and, neglecting their business and their families, spend their whole time over the demoralizing box. In the railway cars and ferry-boats we meet shameless victims of this fearful vice, who openly take out their boxes and publicly indulge in the maddening moves. In many once happy homes the father of the family spends day and night, seated, with his box in hand, and too often, when remonstrated with by his unhappy wife or children, brutally answers,

“Lemmelone!” The saddest spectacle of all is afforded by the young boys and girls who have contracted the unholy taste for “fifteen.”

- ... some story about the White House ...

It is to be hoped that this story is not true, but at all events it shows us the vast possibilities for evil which the Fifteen Puzzle possesses, and it should arouse us to a perception of the terrible danger with which it now threatens us.

- Older inhabitants of Puzzleland will remember how in the seventies I drove the entire world crazy with a little box of movable blocks which became known as the "14-15 Puzzle". The fifteen blocks were arranged in the square box in rectangular order, but with the 14 and 15 reversed. The puzzle consisted of moving the blocks about, one at a time, to bring them back to the present position in every respect except that the error in the 14 and 15 was corrected.
- A prize of \$1000, offered for the first correct solution to the problem, has never been claimed, although there are thousands of persons who say they have performed the required feat.
- People became infatuated with the puzzle and ludicrous tales are told of shopkeepers who neglected to open their stores; of a distinguished clergyman who stood under a street lamp all through a wintry night trying to recall the way he had performed the feat. The mysterious feature of the puzzle is that none seem able to remember the sequence of moves whereby they feel sure they have succeeded in solving the puzzle. Pilots are said to have wrecked their ships, and engineers rush their trains past stations. A famous Baltimore editor tells how he went for his noon lunch and was discovered by frantic staff long past midnight pushing little pieces of pie around on a plate! Farmers are known to have deserted their ploughs ...

The 14 - 15 puzzle



1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	15	14	

SAM LOYD, PUZZLE MAN, DIES.

**Inventor of "The Donkey" and "Pigs
In Clover" Made a Fortune.**

Sam Loyd, who made a fortune from the devising and sale of puzzles, died yesterday at his home, 153 Halsey Street, Brooklyn. He was born in Philadelphia in 1841, and could claim as one of his ancestors a Governor of Pennsylvania. His mother was a cousin of John Sargent, R. A., the portrait painter, who has made for himself such a name in London. He was himself educated as a civil engineer, and held a steam and mechanical engineer's license from New York City, but there was a curious trend to his brain which turned him toward the ferreting out of mental puzzles.

Mr. Loyd's most profitable idea was "The Donkey" puzzle, of which 1,000,000 were sold, but others, not less clever though hardly so financially profitable, were the "Fifteen Block" puzzle, "Pigs in Clover," "Parchesi," and "Get Off the Earth."

Apart from his puzzles Mr. Loyd was for a time the editor of The Sanitary Engineer and a shrewd operator in Wall Street. In all his financial dealings, however, he steered clear of margin gambling, and operated only with stocks which he had bought outright. He also wrote for a number of magazines.

April 12, 1911

New York Times

September 30, 1899

Stockton's most famous story, "The Lady or the Tiger?" is merely a sort of literary fifteen-block puzzle. It set a lot of empty-headed persons (mostly women) gabbling and guessing, much as the fifteen-block puzzle swept across this country like an epidemic of la grippe some years ago. That puzzle sold by the million. On street cars and ferryboats, at meal time and when it should have been sound asleep, the mindless multitude concentrated its imperial intellect on solving the senseless thing. Yet who at this day even remembers the name of the miscreant that invented it? Nobody.

CHESS: SAM LOYD, BELOVED WIZARD

Loyd's love of mischief as exemplified in his countless sly chess conundrums found other rollicking outlets. He was adept in every form of mimicry. He could perform sleight-of-hand tricks and he was a master ventriloquist, imitating anything from a musical instrument to the cry of an animal.

SAM LOYD DEAD; PUZZLE CREATOR

THE OUTSTANDING EXPERT

**Scorned Crossword Puzzles as
Too Simple — Mathematics
the Basis of His Work.**

Bubble Sorting

http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/3/37/Bubble_sort_animation.gif

Get your goat

<http://www.puzzleworld.org/SlidingBlockPuzzles/goat.htm>

Spin Out

- Invented by William Keister in the early 70's

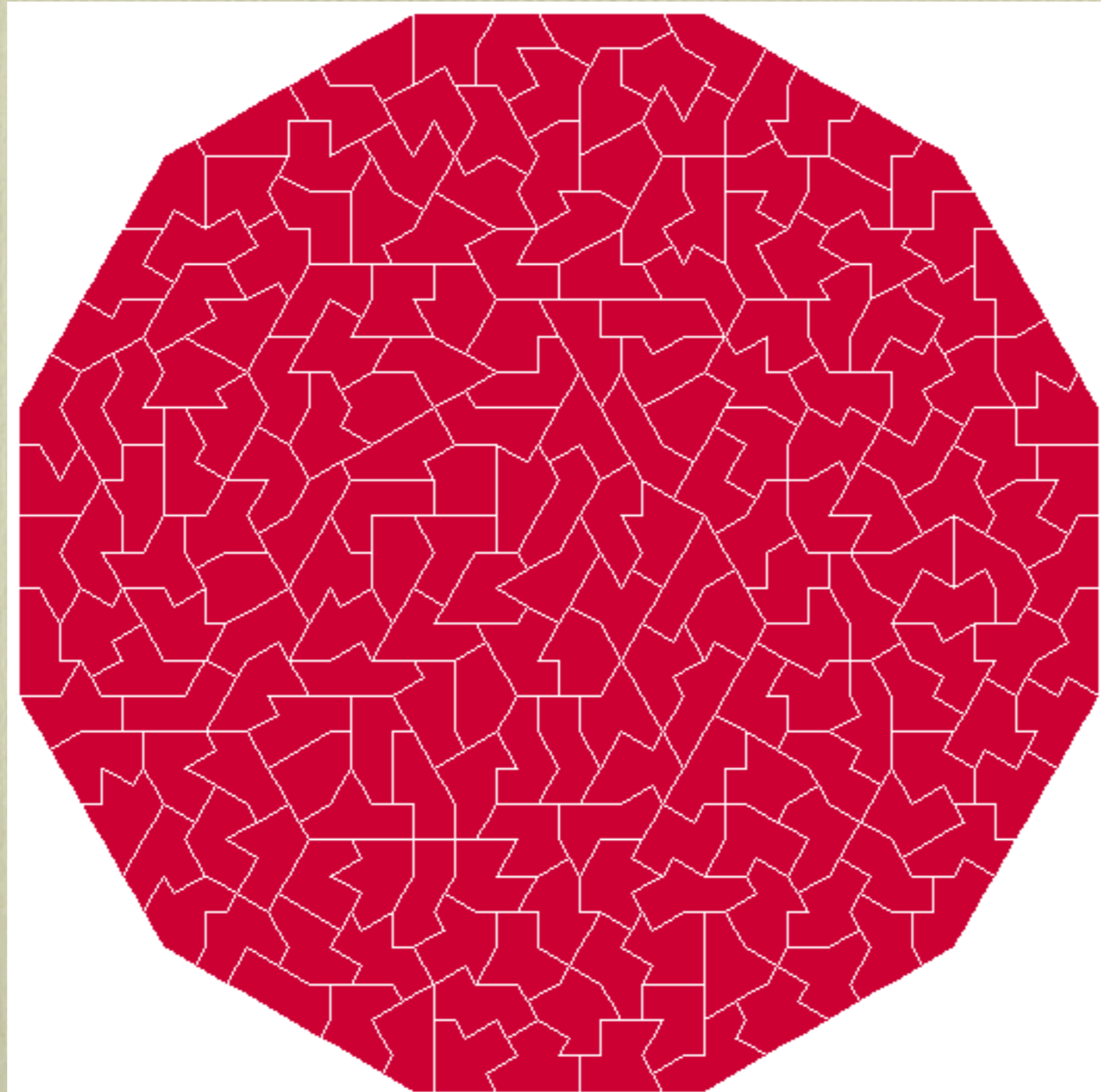


<http://www.geocities.com/jaapsch/puzzles/spinout.htm>

Eternity Puzzle



Solution by Selby & Riordan



Inventor's £1m jigsaw challenge

By Adam Lusher

JIGSAW enthusiasts were faced with the ultimate challenge yesterday - a puzzle that will win the first person to solve it £1 million.

Christopher Monckton, the puzzle's inventor, at the launch of 'Eternity' at Hamley's toy store, London
"Eternity" is thought to have billions of possible solutions, but experts believe that its pieces can be put together in ways which number more than all the particles in the known universe.

Christopher Monckton, its inventor, is gambling on Eternity becoming the Rubik Cube of the Millennium, allowing him to pay the prize from his royalties. He launched the puzzle at Hamleys toy store in Regent Street yesterday.

He said: "It won't be a computer which solves it and it won't be a mathematician either. It can only be done by a human, using intuition and visual skill and awareness. Ordinary people have as much chance as people in Mensa. It could be an eight-year-old child or a granny."

Mr Monckton, 47, was a member of the Downing Street policy unit during the Thatcher era. He said he gave a prototype of the puzzle to the former Prime Minister as a leaving present, and four years later received a telephone call begging for the solution.

The object of Eternity is to put the 209 pieces together to fit a dodecagonal board with no gaps or pieces missing. Mr Monckton, who has taken out insurance to cover the prize money, said the known solution had been sealed by loss adjustors in a vault. He hopes sales of the £29.99 puzzle will be to cover the prize, but said: "We are taking a huge gamble. Someone will solve the puzzle. It could be weeks, it could be months, it may be years."