

CHAPTER VII

FIGURES WHICH DO NOT BEGIN WITH OPENING A (CONTINUED)—PYGMY DIAMONDS—A MOUTH—TWO LITTLE BOYS RUNNING AWAY—A LITTLE FISH THAT HIDES IN THE MUD—A LITTLE BOY CARRYING WOOD—A SECOND WORM—A BRUSH HOUSE—A SIX-POINTED STAR—THE BREASTBONE AND RIBS—A BIRD'S NEST—TWO BOYS FIGHTING FOR AN ARROW—FLINT AND STEEL—THE REAL CAT'S-CRADLE.

PYGMY DIAMONDS

AMONG the African Batwa Pygmies, from the Congo Kasai Valley, at the St. Louis Exposition, was a bright little man, "Ottobang," who taught me this figure.

First: Put both hands through the loop of string, up to the wrists, and take up between the thumb and index of each hand a short piece of the upper wrist string. Then make a small hanging ring in this string, by passing the string held by the right

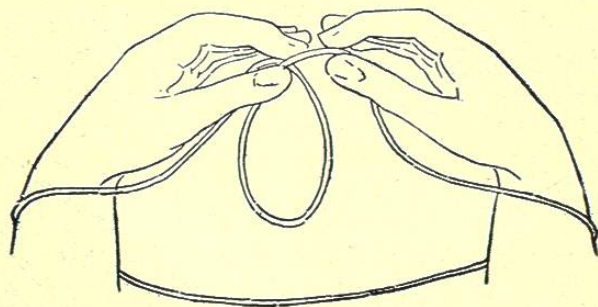
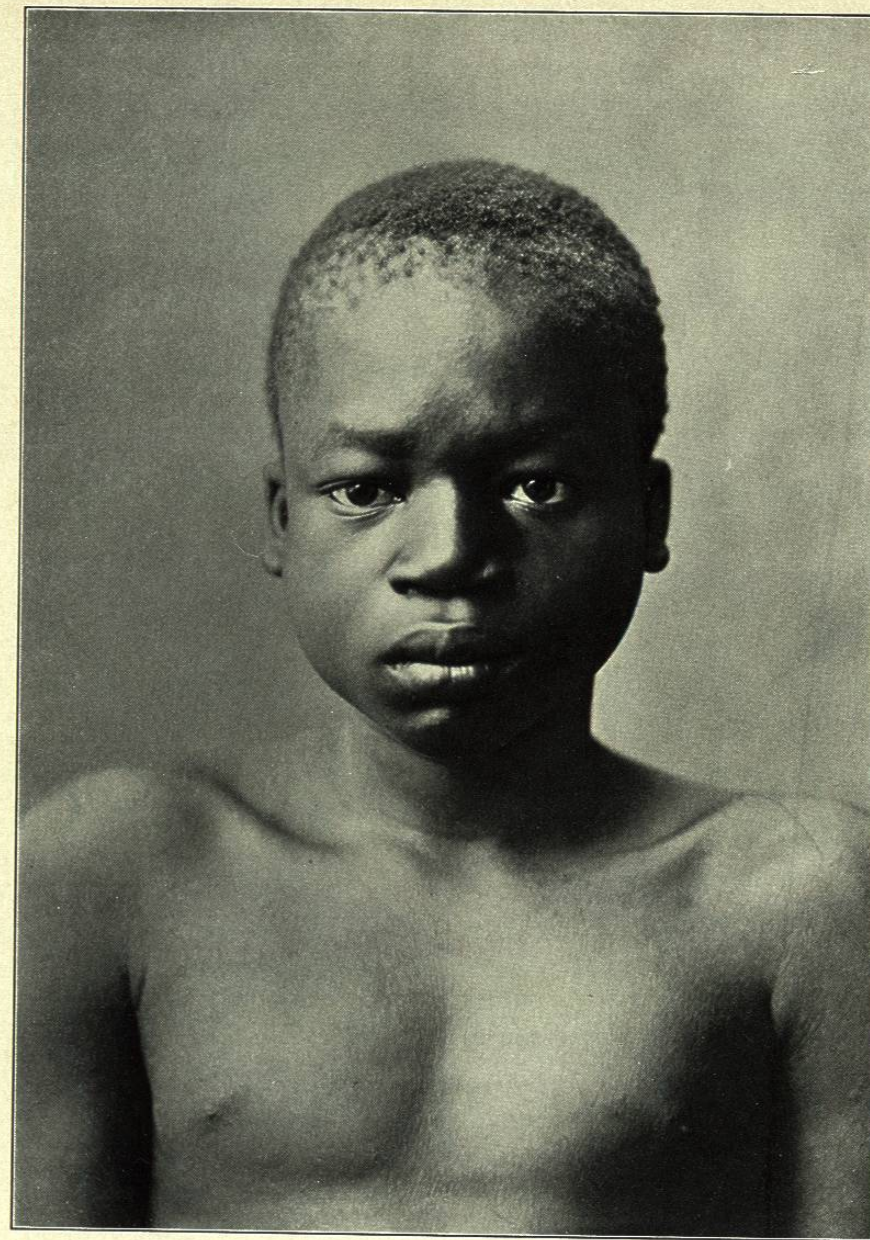


FIG. 632.

hand toward you over the left hand string (Fig. 632). Turn this ring up, and put first the right thumb (Fig. 633) and then the left thumb (Fig. 634) away from you into the ring, and separate the hands (Fig. 635).

Second: Get another person to take between the thumb and index the cross formed in the centre of the figure by the far thumb and near wrist strings, and



OTTOBANG, A CANNIBAL PYGMY, KASAI VALLEY, CONGO, AFRICA.
(Courtesy of Mr. S. C. Simms.)

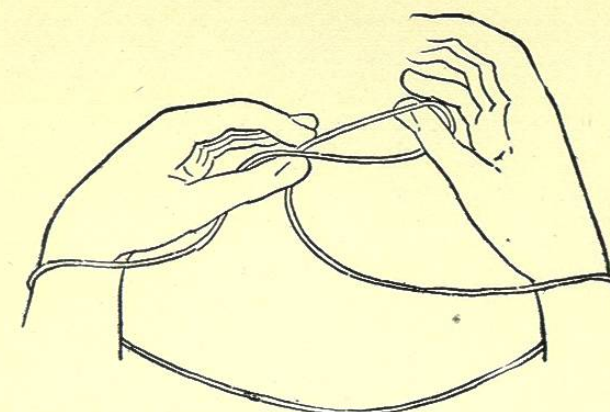


FIG. 633.

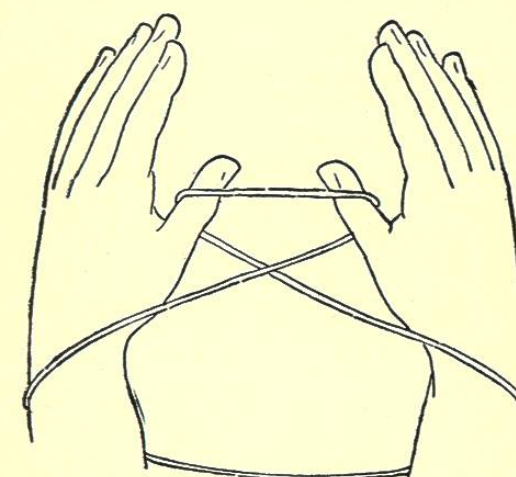


FIG. 634.

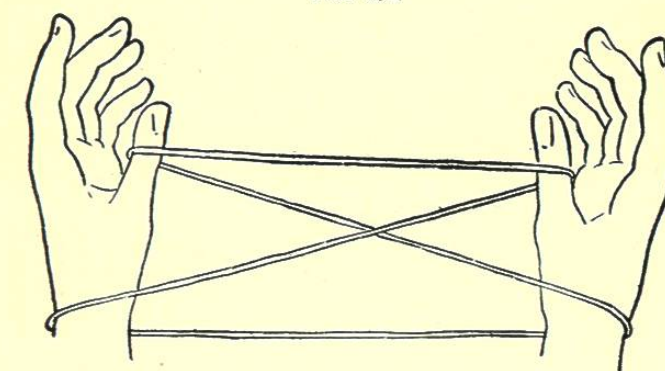


FIG. 635.

holding the two strings firmly, pull them away from you (Fig. 636), keeping them taut, or slightly relaxing them as the movements require, but not letting go until told to do so.

Third: Bend each thumb down, to hold firmly in place the far thumb string, and draw the hands toward you (Fig. 637) through the wrist loops, keeping the loops securely on the thumbs (Fig. 638).

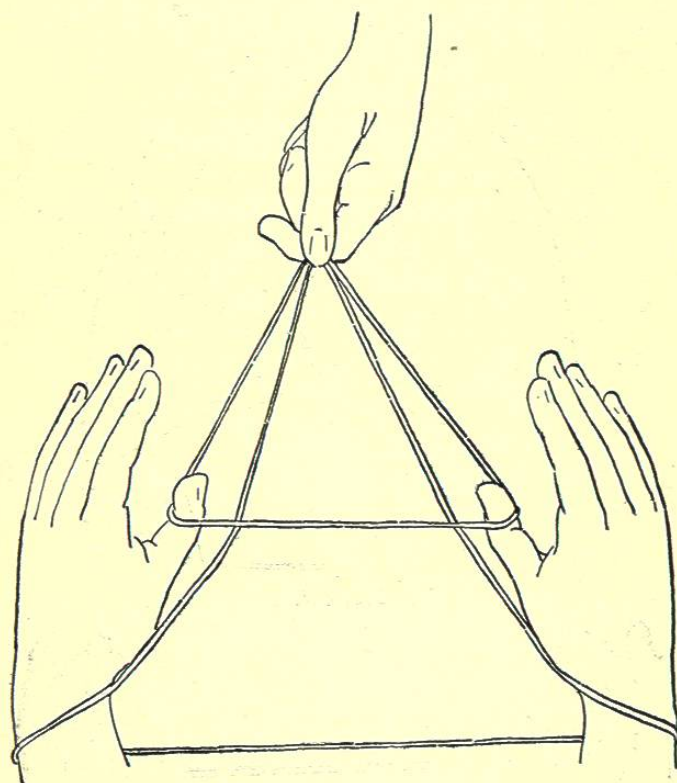


FIG. 636.

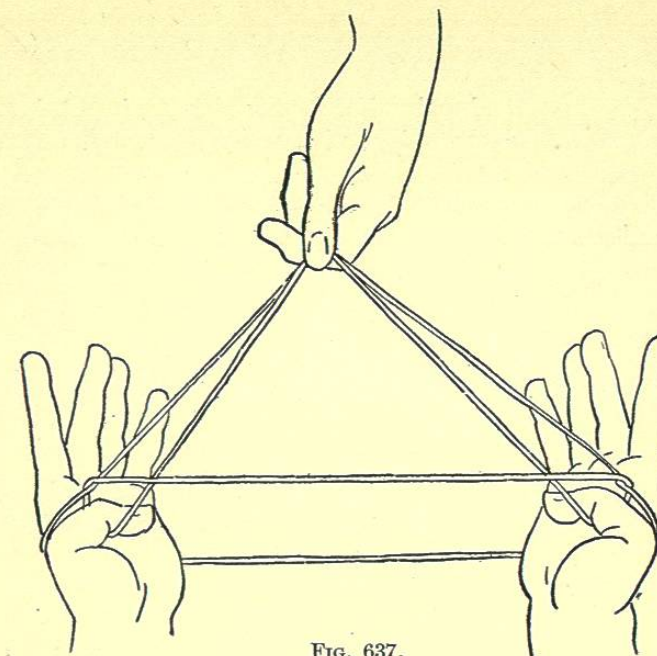


FIG. 637.

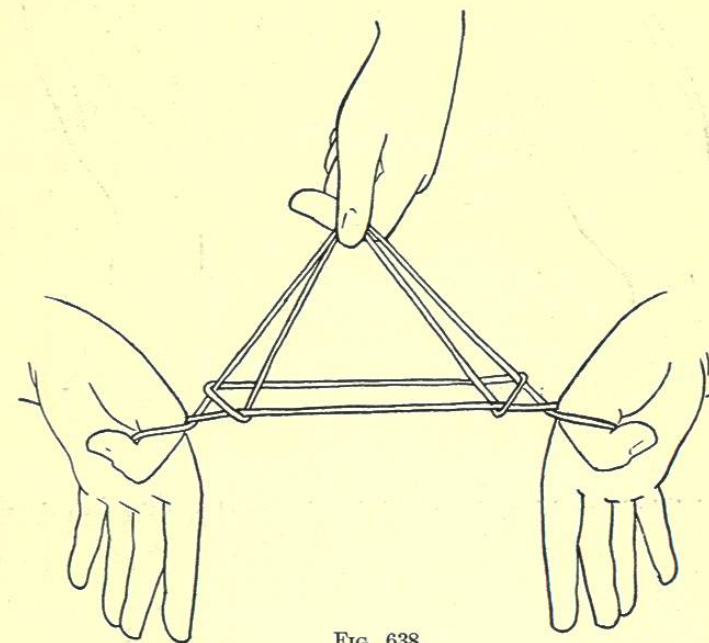


FIG. 638.

Fourth : Turn the hands up with the palms away from you (Fig. 639, Left hand), and slip each hand up through the thumb loop to the wrist (Fig. 639, Right hand).

Fifth : With the back of each middle finger pick up, from below, the oblique string passing around the two strings of the wrist loop, and return the middle finger to its former position (Fig. 640).

Sixth : Turn the palms slightly toward you, and bend each middle finger down over the near middle finger string, and holding the middle finger loop (Fig. 641,

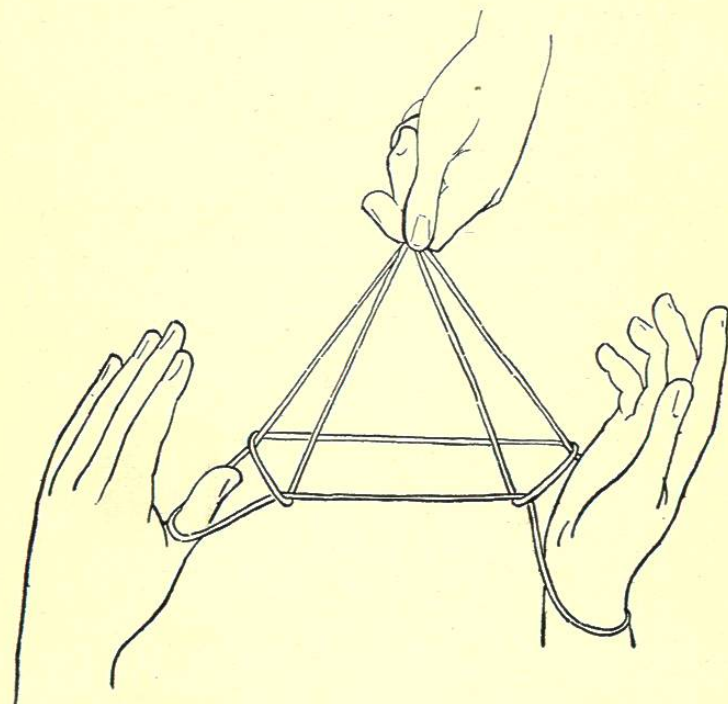


FIG. 639.

Left hand) tightly in position, draw each hand toward you through the wrist loop, which should be caught in passing on the back of the thumb.

Seventh : Turn the palms toward each other; pull each middle finger loop further through the thumb loop, and turning the palm upward, straighten the middle finger outside of the thumb loop (Fig. 641, Right hand).

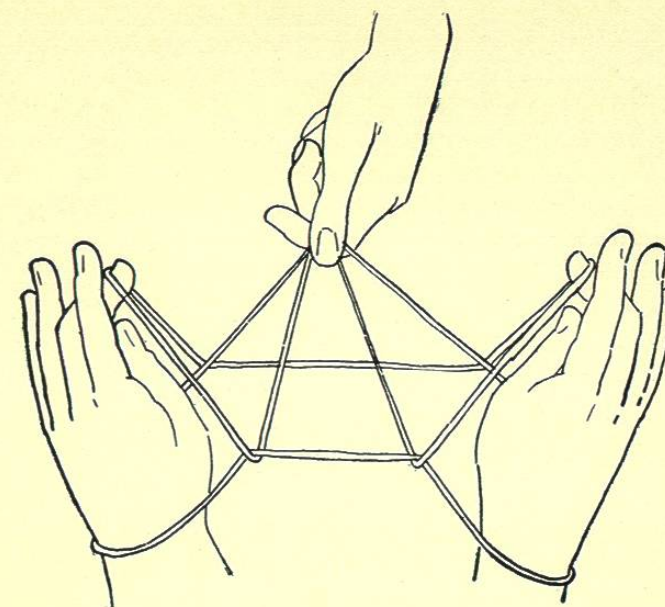


FIG. 640.

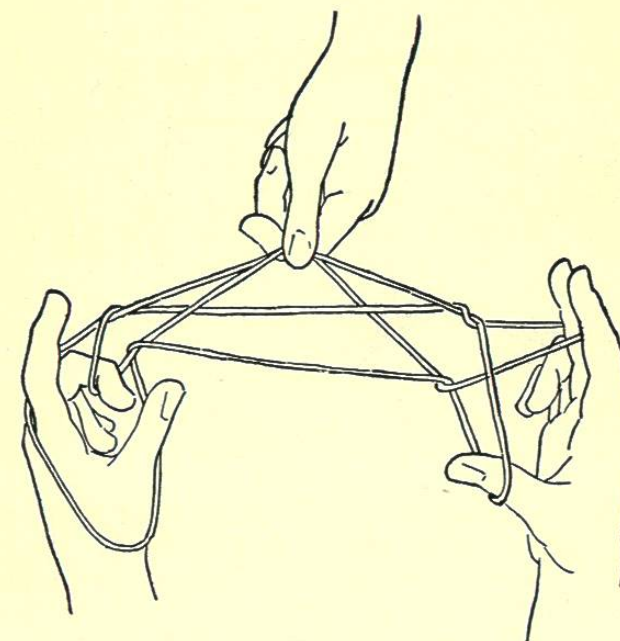


FIG. 641.

Eighth: The figure is extended by spreading the thumbs and middle fingers widely apart and separating the hands (Fig. 642). The strings held by the second person are now released.

So far as I know, this figure is the first African string game that has ever been described. The nature of the Batwas and their isolation in the heart of Africa would not lead us to expect to find among them a relatively complicated figure, and make any resemblances which this figure may bear to other figures doubly

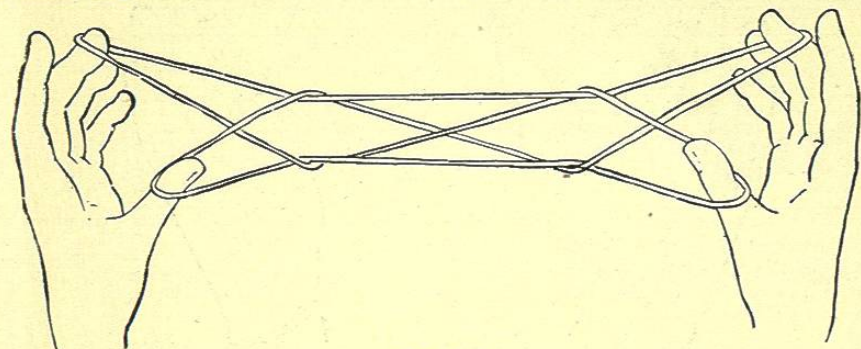


FIG. 642.

interesting. We see at a glance that it has much in common with the "Caroline Islands Diamonds" and the "Turtle." The finished pattern is identical with the pattern formed after the *Sixth* movement of the Eskimo "Mouth"; hence you can go on and finish the "Mouth" from the finished pattern of the "Pygmy Diamonds." This is the only case, in my experience, where the finished pattern of one figure occurs as a stage in the development of another entirely different figure.

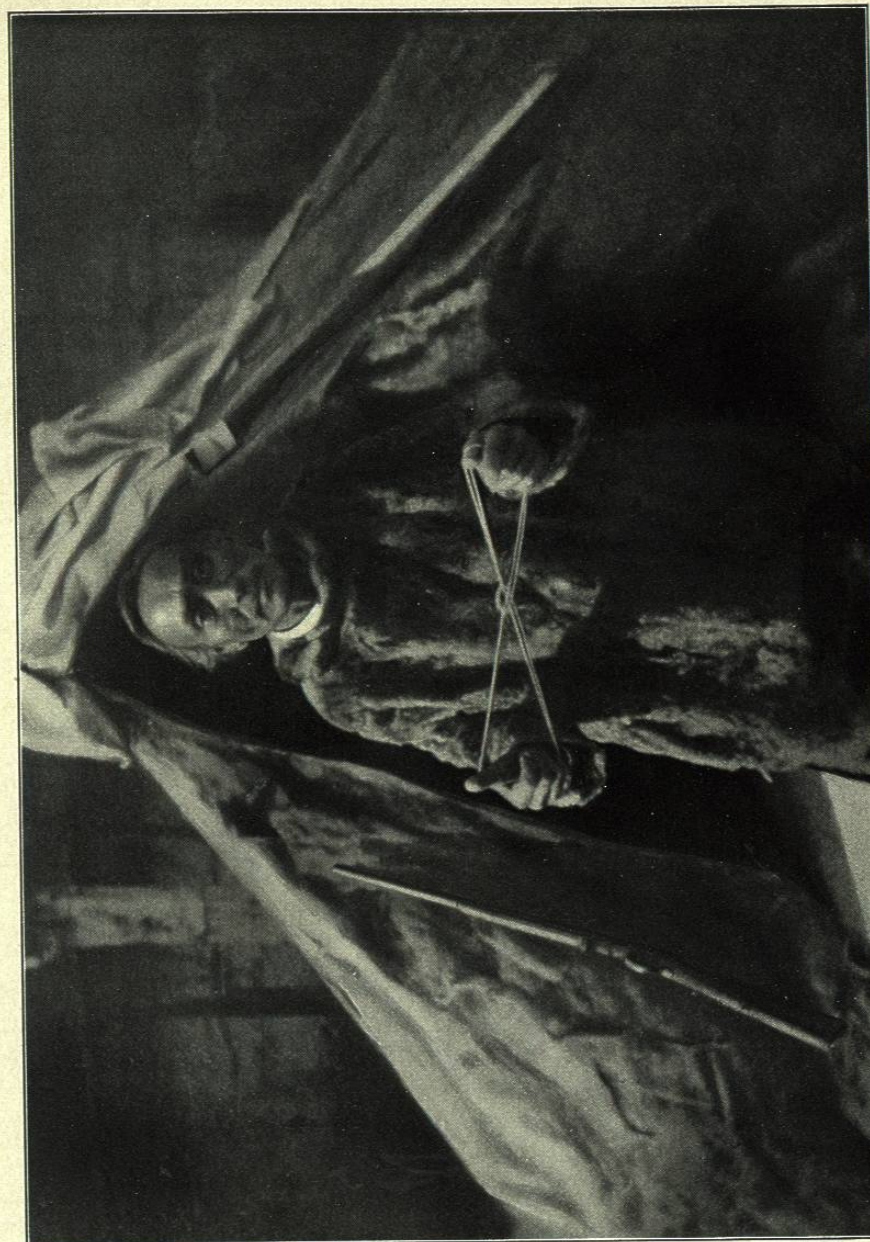
A MOUTH



I obtained this figure from Chief Zaroff, a Topek Eskimo from Alaska, in the Eskimo Village at the St. Louis Exposition. The native name is *Rote* = a Mouth.

First: Put the loop on the hands in the First Position.

Second: Pass the right index from above behind the string crossing the left palm, and as you draw the loop out, turn the right index away from you and upward (Fig. 643), to put a cross in the loop, and also bend the left index down, and pick up from below on the back of the finger the left near little finger string, and return the index to its position (Fig. 644). Release the loops from the little fingers (Fig. 645). You now have a loop on each index and a loop on each thumb.



CHIEF ZAROFF, AN ALASKAN ESKIMO.

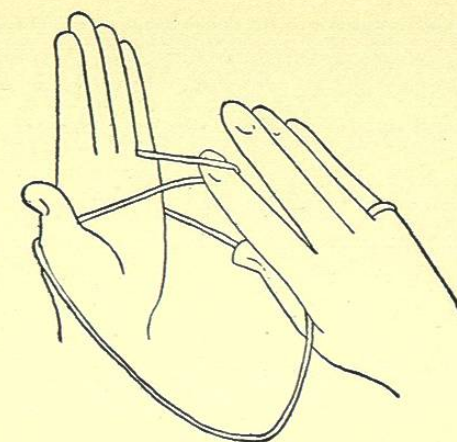


FIG. 643.

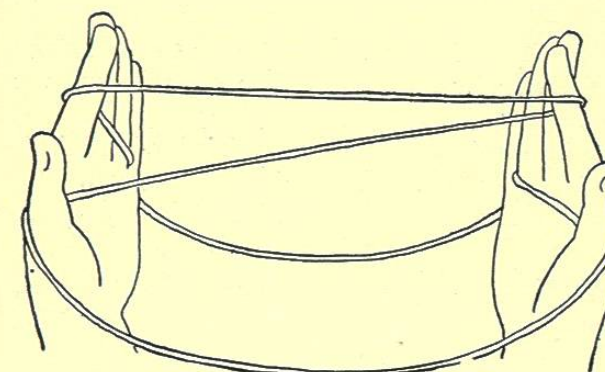


FIG. 644.

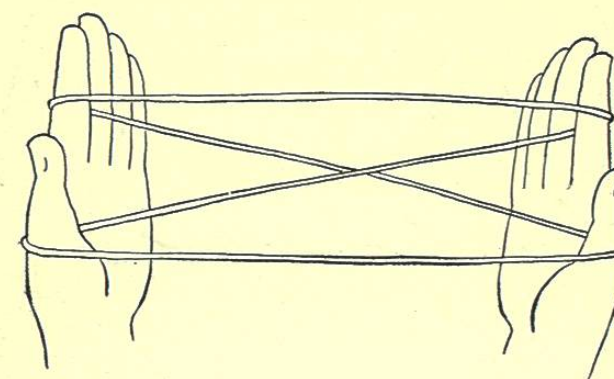


FIG. 645.

Third: Turn the palms toward you, and put the middle, ring and little fingers of each hand, from below, up into the index loop; then bend these fingers toward you down over the near index string, and draw the string down and hold it by closing the fingers on the palm (Fig. 646, Left hand). Now put each middle finger

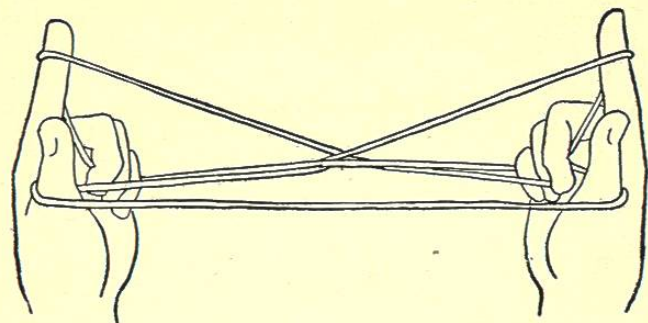


FIG. 646.

from above into the thumb loop, and draw the far thumb string against the ring finger, closed on the palm, by closing the middle finger also down on the palm (Fig. 646, Right hand).

Fourth: Keeping carefully the string on each index, bend the index toward you over the near thumb string (Fig. 647, Left hand); then, by moving the index away from you and upward, lift up on the tip of the finger this near thumb string, while the string already on the index slips over the tip (Fig. 647, Right hand).

Fifth: Withdraw the thumbs from their loops, and let go the string held down

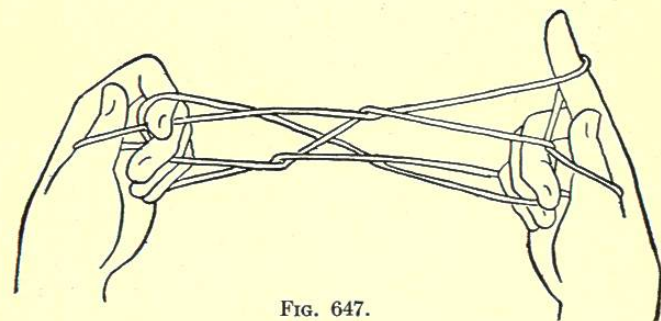


FIG. 647.

by each middle finger (Fig. 648). You now have on each hand a loop around the index and a loop held to the palm by the closed ring and little fingers.

Sixth: Transfer the index loops to the middle fingers, by putting each middle finger, from above, into the index loop (Fig. 649, Left hand), withdrawing the index, and returning the middle finger to its position (Fig. 649, Right hand).

Seventh: Bring the palms close together, and hang the right middle finger loop, without twisting it, over the left middle finger; and hang the loop held on the

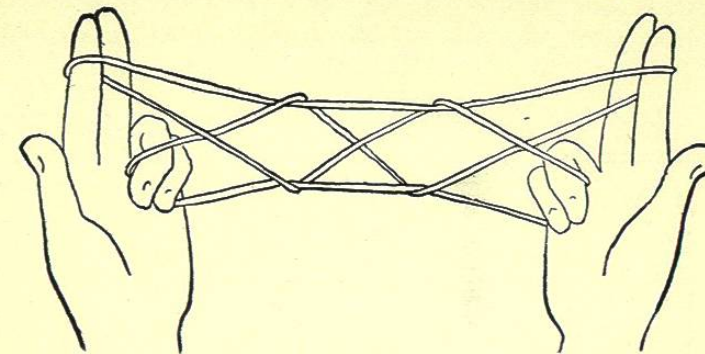


FIG. 648.

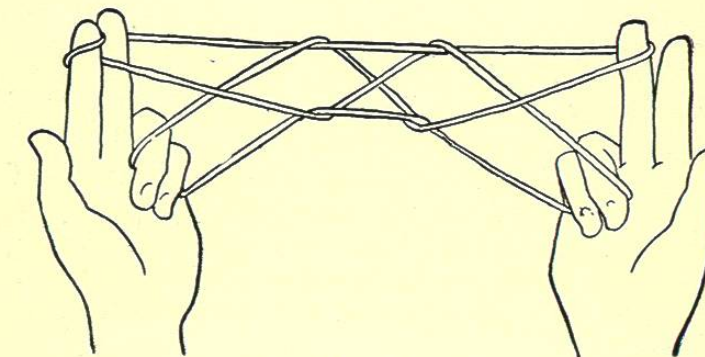


FIG. 649.

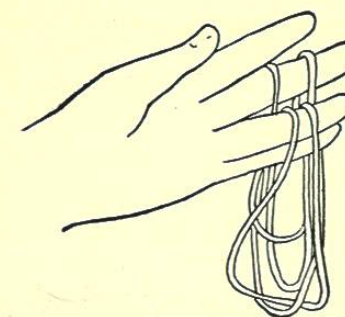


FIG. 650.

right ring and little fingers, without twisting it, on the left ring and little fingers; withdraw the right hand (Fig. 650).

Then put the four fingers of the right hand to the left, through the two loops hanging from the left ring and little fingers (Fig. 651), and closing the right fingers on the palm, take these loops off the left hand. Put the left thumb away from you into the two loops hanging from the left middle finger, and withdraw the middle

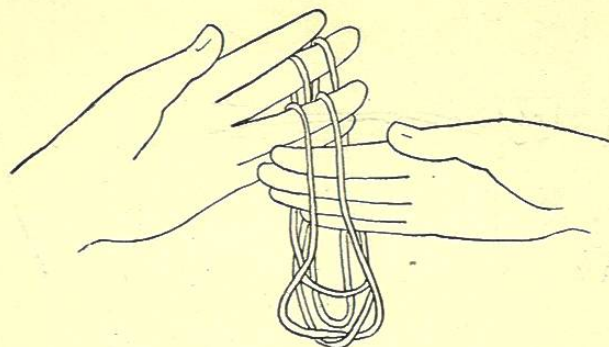


FIG. 651.

finger; now put the four fingers of the left hand toward you into these loops, and close the fingers on the palm, withdrawing the thumb. Draw the strings apart. The "Mouth" can be made to open and shut by rotating the wrist alternately away from you and toward you (Fig. 652).

As I have already pointed out, the arrangement of the string into index and thumb loops, after the *Second* movement of this figure, differs from the almost

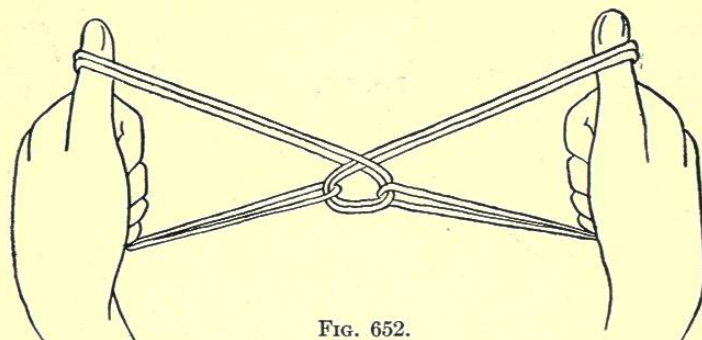


FIG. 652.

similar arrangement after the opening in the "Bow," in that the two straight horizontal strings in this figure are both near strings, whereas in the "Bow" the upper straight string is the near index string and the lower is the far thumb string. If, after Opening A, you release the little finger loops, you get a similar figure, but the upper straight string is the far index string and the lower is the near thumb string. I do not yet know of an instance in which, in a similar figure, both straight strings are far strings.

TWO LITTLE BOYS RUNNING AWAY



This figure was obtained by Mr. John L. Cox, at Hampton, Virginia, from Emma Jackson, the Klamath Indian from Oregon.

First: The loop of string is doubled and used throughout as a single string. Put the thumbs into the loop, and separate the hands. Insert the

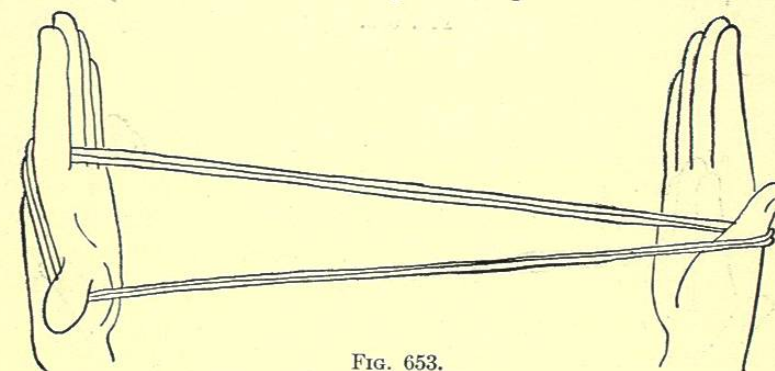


FIG. 653.

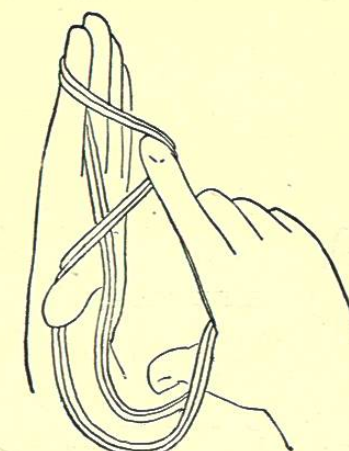


FIG. 654.

left index from below into the loop, and separate widely the left thumb and index (Fig. 653). Put the right index, from above, down behind the strings which pass from the left thumb to the left index (Fig. 654), and draw the

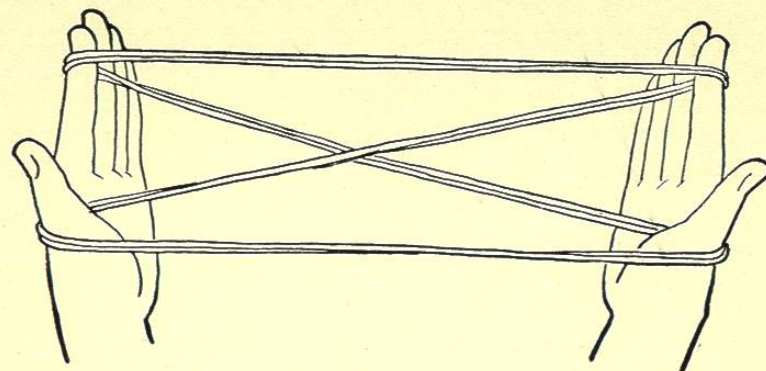


FIG. 655.

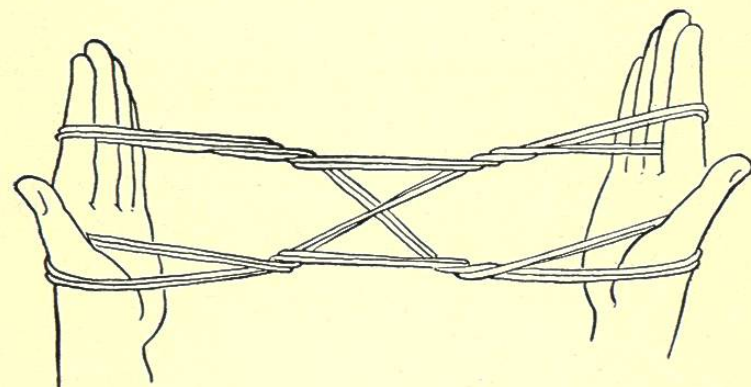


FIG. 656.

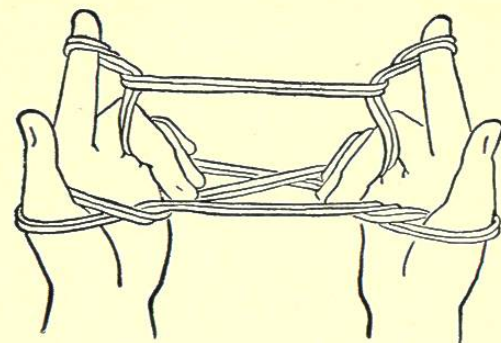


FIG. 657.

loop out, at the same time turning the right index away from you and up to its usual position (Fig. 655).

Second: Give the index loops one twist, by rotating each index toward you, down, away from you, and up again.

Third: Give the thumb loops one twist, by rotating each thumb away from you, down, toward you, and up again (Fig. 656).

Fourth: Put the middle, ring and little fingers of *both* hands toward you through the upper triangle at the centre of the figure, then over the cross strings and down into the lower triangle (Fig. 657), and finally close these fingers down on the palms (Fig. 658).

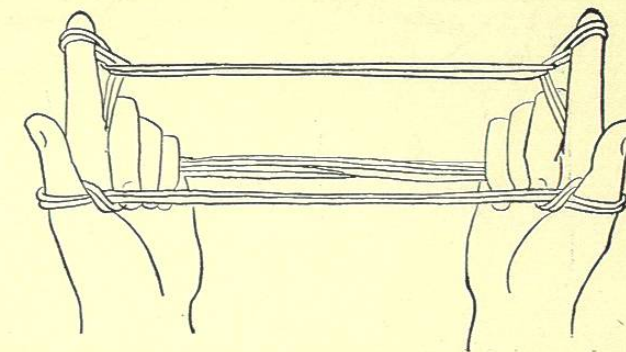


FIG. 658.

Fifth: Put the left thumb from below into the left index loop and enlarge the loop slightly. Bring the left thumb and index close to the right index, and pick up the right near index string between the tips of the left thumb and index (Fig. 659), and, without remov-

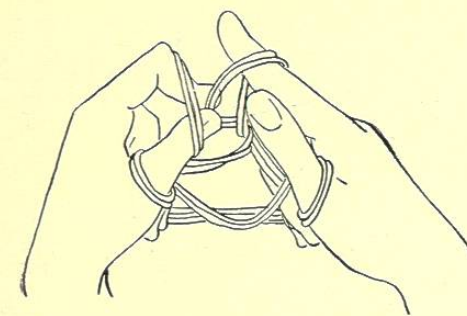


FIG. 659.

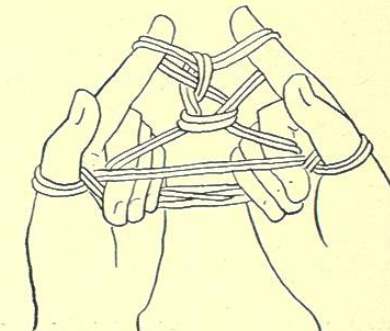


FIG. 660.

ing the right index, draw it through the loop passing around the left thumb and index, which is now allowed to slip off these fingers. Insert the left index away from you through the loop which you have been holding between the tips of the left thumb and index, remove these fingers and leave the loop on the left index (Fig. 660).