L. A. W. TO RETURN TO FIRST PRINCIPLES.

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THE officials of the League of American Wheelmen are about to start a crusade to regain the membership which the different state organizations have lost during the past year, and also to carry out in a more vigorous manner the objects for the accomplishment of which the members were first banded together.

Every member of the organization, as well as a good many riders unaffiliated with it, is aware that during the past few months the depletion in the ranks of the national body has been very large. Of course the late war was responsible for the loss of a great many members, because a very large percentage of the volunteers are wheelmen, and a good many were members of the league. The spring and early summer months are the ones in which most of the new recruits join the ranks of the L. A. W., and the war at that time occupied their minds to the exclusion of almost every other topic. But there were other reasons for the falling off in numbers, and it is the aim of the officials to formulate plans and change their methods so as to remedy the matter. Mr. Isaac B. Potter, the president of the league, has been devising means to work in conjunction with the state divisions. One of the main features in the new programme is a radical change in the policy of the L. A. W. One of the greatest objects of the organization has been the improvement of our roads, and in the past the league has spent at least $200,000 in printing and disseminating literature bearing on this subject and in other ways trying to improve the condition of our highways. That most of the work done in this direction in recent years throughout the country is in a great measure due to its efforts every one will admit.

The officials recognize, however, that notwithstanding all their work the results attained do not compensate for the money and labor expended. In the past the L. A. W. has not been in favor of building cycle paths, believing that it would better attain its object by confining its efforts to the improvement of roads in general.

Finding these efforts in many cases ineffectual and sometimes even antagonized by misguided opposition, it has been decided in future to advocate and build cycle paths. Because many people are blind to the usefulness of good roads there is no reason, it is argued, why bicyclists should on that account suffer. "Good roads for all" is still the ultimate end of the league's work, but cycle paths will be substituted as an auxiliary to the greater cause.

Mr. Potter, in furtherance of this move, has published a volume for the L. A. W. Good Roads Library entitled "Cycle Paths," in which he defends the change of front as follows:

"Every cycle path is a protest against bad roads, a sort of public notice that the public wagon ways are unfit for public travel, a wit sharpener to every highway officer who has seven holes in his head, and a splendid example of the charming relations which the wheel and the roadway may be made to sustain to each other. It is a declaration of independence which for the time being lifts the bicycle out of the mud and puts the wheelman on a firmer ground of argument for good roads, takes from his critics the charge that the cyclist's warfare is a selfish one, and supplies to every traveler an impressive exhibition of the value of a good wheelway.

"I believe also that the general interests of cycling will be best promoted in the United States by the construction of these paths. The bicycle, with all its marvelous possibilities, can reach its full measure of usefulness only when the public highways are made fit for its use. I venture the assertion that three-fourths of the cyclists of this country know nothing of the full utility of the bicycle and that such knowledge can never be acquired by them nor demonstrated to their neighbors while cycling travel is hampered and hindered by the streaks of rooted soil which in so many parts of our country are now called 'roadways.'

"The right to make a cycle path along the public road, while properly the subject of statutory regulation, rests upon the ground of neither privilege nor concession. The willingness of cyclists to undertake this work and in most cases to pay for it springs from a purely emergent condition, brought about by the swift growth of cycling and the sluggish conception of the average American statesman. It is the fundamental right of every person to travel the public highway by his own selected mode of conveyance, and whenever a new and improved vehicle has come so fully into popular use as to comprise two-thirds of all the wheeled carriages used upon the country roads an obligation is clearly imposed upon highway officers to maintain these roads in a condition fit for the passage of all vehicles in common use. It is true that a general ignorance of this fact has laid hold upon the public mind and that the average highway officer cannot reconcile new conditions with his fixed notions of official duty, but these facts, while they supply a text for the patient cyclist who builds his own road and battles for good wagon roads at the same time, betray a violation of equity which ought to stop. The bicycle has added wealth to the country and has become a strong factor in its social and commercial growth. In hundreds of communities the cyclists include large taxpayers, who pay heavily to maintain a wasteful system of mere mudways, and whose every effort for improvement is opposed by the 'old settler,' who insists that the road is good enough. The old settler is not easily converted, and we may wait for centuries before he or his ilk will shout for better roads. He has never seen a good road, and his torpid imagination can weave no fanciful idea."

The movement for cycle paths has been taken up in no state with more enthusiasm than in New York. Mr. Milo M. Belding, the newly elected chief consul of New York state, is enthusiastic as regards it, and thinks it will help wonderfully in building up the league. It may be mentioned here that the pioneer work of building cycle paths, accomplished at Lockport, N. Y., was due in a great measure to the efforts of Mr. Charles T. Raymond, of that city. Under his leadership the local wheelmen constructed a fine path in Niagara county.

If the plans of Mr. Belding are ably seconded and carried out by his associates, there is no doubt that New York state at least will soon be in possession of a series of cycle paths and good roads stretching in all directions. Mr. Belding's plans are very broad. As he himself says, he does not believe in one man power in cycling affairs, and so he is preparing to surround himself with a band of workers and advisers. He intends to appoint committees of representative wheelmen, who will have charge of the different objects and aims of the league in the state.

The chairmen of these committees will be men located in or near New York, so that Mr. Belding may be constantly in touch with them. Local organizations are to be established wherever possible, and on this he relies in a great measure to recoup the membership. The building of cycle paths will be one of the principal departments, and wherever the co-operation of farmers or local authorities cannot be secured for the construction of good roads efforts will be made to have these substitutes.

The new chief consul also wants the board of officers of the division to meet quarterly instead of half yearly, and in other ways he intends to infuse new life into the organization.

He is in favor of an annual May day parade of L. A. W. members in every city and town of the state, to be followed by good roads meetings or banquets and entertainments. He regards this plan as one that will be a great factor in gathering recruits to the ranks of the league.

There is not a state division or local organization in the Union that could not profitably gather valuable hints from the plans of Mr. Belding. An enthusiastic believer in the future of the organization and a veteran wheelman himself, Mr. Belding inspires confidence in every one with whom he comes in contact. He is a believer in the motto that "Whatever is worth doing is worth doing well." Although he has many important business interests, he devotes much of his time to the welfare of his fellow wheelmen. While of course he will look more especially to the building up of the league in his own bailiwick, he is broad minded enough to know that if the organization is to continue its usefulness to wheelmen in general the work must be carried on with vigor in every state, and he hopes to see the good example taken to heart and practiced the country over. There is no more able worker in the ranks of the L. A. W. or one who more thoroughly understands and can carry out its objects and aspirations. Should his reform as chief consul of New York culminate successfully his friends predict that he will be a strong candidate for presidential honors next year.

The pictures of different prominent cycle paths given herewith are taken from Mr. Isaac B. Potter's new book, "Cycle Paths."

LEO ETHERINGTON.

AN EXCITING FIGHT.

One Rat Killed Four Rattlesnakes Before a Fifth Killed It.

Chicago Inter Ocean.

"Rattlesnakes charmed me once," said John Gilbert, the traveling groceryman, "and it cost me $35. It wasn't intended that the snakes should charm me. It was expected that they would charm a rat, but they didn't charm the rat a little bit. They charmed me; that is, if you call it being charmed to standing gazing steadily at snakes, with no inclination or desire to take your eyes off and go away. I was under the spell of just such a fascination, and there is no telling how long I would have remained there staring like a hypnotized victim at those snakes and that rat if the spell hadn't been suddenly broken.

"It was up in a village among the Allegheny mountains, where a great many rattlesnakes abound. Somebody at the hotel where I was stopping got to talking about rattlesnakes, and a traveling man who was also a guest there said:

"'I would just like to see a live rattlesnake once. I don't knew of anything I am more curious to see.'

"'Is that so?' said the landlord. 'Well, we don't have 'em on the bill of fare, but I guess we can accommodate you. Hello, Jake.'

"A wiry looking little old man who was sitting on the piazza got up and came in at this call.

"'Jake,' said the landlord, 'I want to use a live rattlesnake. Can you get me one right away?'

"'Sure,' said Jake, and went out. He wasn't gone more than fifteen minutes when he came back with five nice, big yellow rattlers in a bag, all fresh from the freedom of the adjacent hills. The guest who said he was so anxious to see a rattlesnake turned out to be a liar. He didn't want to see a rattler at all, for when Jake came in with his choice specimens, which were rattling like a lot of click reels in motion, the guest jumped out of his chair, grabbed his grip and left. But the landlord took the man's discourtesy all in good part and turned the rattlers loose in a bay or show window in front of the house, where there were some ferns, a small turtle and a number of stones and shells, and shut them in.

"'I'll keep 'em there,' said the landlord, 'so I'll have 'em handy and won't have to waste any time sending out for one for the next guest who says he would like to see one.'

"I got through with the little I had to do in the place, ate my supper, paid my bill and started to get the first train for Pittsburg, where I had an important engagement. As I was leaving the office the landlord came along. He had a big rat.

"'I'm going to put him in with the snakes,' he said. 'It will only last a few seconds, but you'll see some fun while it lasts.'

"I had plenty of time, so I stopped to see the fun. The rat was dropped in with the snakes. The snakes were lying at one end of the window, apparently listless and sleepy, but the moment the rat dropped in every snake was up. Each one coiled quicker than a flash. Every rattle sounded a loud alarm. Five big and ugly heads were raised from the coils. Five black, forked tongues darted out and quivered with the excitement of their owners. The rat crouched down in one corner, apparently paralyzed with terror. Ten glittering eyes glared at it, as the rattles sounded, and the tongues quivered in and out. I forgot all about the train and my engagement. I gazed at the strange scene spellbound. Presently the rat moved, turned faced the snakes boldly and then made a dash for one of them, biting it in the neck and jumping back in time to get beyond the reach of the reptile's vicious strike. The offensive tactics of the rat filled the snakes with rage. Two of them uncoiled and made a rush for it. I have an indistinct recollection of some one near me saying: 'That's something new for a rattler to do,' but I paid no attention to it. I did not move, so utterly fascinated was I with the spectacle. The rat showed fight to the two snakes that had rushed toward it. One of the snakes stopped with its face within three inches of the rat, where it lowered its broad head, turned the terrible glare of its eyes full upon those of the rat and shot out its tongue rapidly at it. I supposed the rattler was using its alleged power of charming things upon the rat, but it failed to get the animal under its power, for the rat darted forward and bit the snake's tongue off, spitting it out on the bottom of the window. A tremor ran through the snake as if the nipping off of its tongue hurt it from sneut to rattles, and it quickly retreated and huddled up in one corner of the inclosure. Now the other snake that had advanced upon the rat made a vicious pass for the sprightly little animal. The rat sprang up, jumped clear over the snake, turned, and, with a movement so quick that it almost made me dizzy, fastened its teeth in the snake's neck and bit it through. The rat held onto the snake for a while, and then released it. The snake keeled over on the floor and although its glaring eyes and convulsive movement along its entire length showed that it was alive, it did not rise again, and took no interest in the subsequent proceedings. The success that had attended the rat's maneuvers seemed to inspire the rat with still further boldness, and with what seemed to me a dangerous indifference, it began to tread about the inclosure as if it owned it. The three snakes that remained defiant had scattered. The rat would make a dash toward one, elude its strike, and then rush at the others in succession, worrying the snakes until their fury was terrible to look at. I felt myself shuddering more than once, but not a thought of taking myself away once entered my mind. I stood there with my nose flattened against the glass, entirely oblivious to everything but the snakes and the rat. I have an indistinct impression that I heard my train come and go and after a time another one, and some time later a third one, but I can't say positively. I know that I never took my eye off the snakes and the rat. The rat had worried and drawn the fire of the snakes, so to speak, I don't know how long, when the rattlers themselves had recourse to strategy. They had, perhaps, seen that singly they were no match for the cunning rat, and, after a good deal of rattling to and fro and hissing and darting out of tongues, the three snakes massed themselves at one end of the window. They were in a row, covering that part of the field absolutely. The rat was too good a general not to see that it would never do to assail that phalanx of ferocious and deadly serpents, for if one of them missed one of the others would be sure to succeed. So the rat rested in its corner a moment and pondered.

"A gas pipe ran up that corner on the top of the window and then across it to the side where the rattlesnakes were grouped in defensive front. The result of the rat's pondering was that it ran up the gas pipe and along it until directly over the snakes and six feet above them. The snakes were not long-headed enough to figure out what this move of the rat meant and they did not change their position. The rat eyed them a few seconds from its perch and then leaped down upon them, landing behind their bristling heads. It quickly nipped one through the neck with its long teeth. The other two were panic-stricken and glided to the other end of the window. The snake the rat had bitten through the neck lay down in a paralyzed condition, as the one had done early in the battle. The ruse had worked so well that the rat seemed gleeful. It frisked about in aggravating proximity to the two remaining active snakes, rousing them to fury. By and by something was dropped in the window upon the snakes. I don't know who dropped it in, but I saw that it was a piece of cheese. It lay between the two snakes and partially on one. The rat soon scented the morsel, and with a bound went clear over one snake and seized the cheese. The snakes glided away to the other end of the window. The rat nibbled at the cheese until it had eaten it all. Thus refreshed, it turned its attention to the snakes again. Its luncheon seemed to have made the rat bolder than before. It rushed suddenly and fiercely upon one of the rattlers and seized it by the neck. The other snake moved away a short distince, but quickly turned. The rat held its last victim by the neck. The remaining snake coiled, shot out its deadly head and struck the rat squarely behind one of its forelegs. The stroke told. The rat dropped the snake it was biting and, with a sharp cry, sprang at the one that had struck it.

"This rattler shot out its head again and this time sank its fangs deep in the rat's nose. The rat tumbled, rose, ran about in a circle a few seconds and fell again. It gave a few convulsive kicks and was as dead as any rat could be with a load of rattlesnake venom in him. The snake that had conquered the rat stretched itself out in a corner and seemed to fall instantly into a contented sleep. Then the spell that had held me there with my face against the window was broken. I turned to move away and to my intense surprise found that I was wedged in by a crowd of others who had been fascinated, I suppose, as I was, although I hadn't noticed that before. I squeezed through, and when I looked at my watch I almost fainted. It was 9 o'clock. Three hours I had flattened my nose against that window and taken no note of time. The last train was gone. I had to remain there all night and missed my important engagement. By missing it I lost an order that would have netted me $350. A rather expensive snake-charming seance, I have always thought. But I am satisfied now that rattlesnakes can charm, providing you have enough snakes and put a rat in with them."

THE FUNERAL OF GORDON.

G. W. STEEVEN'S ACCOUNT OF THE IMPRESSIVE CEREMONY.

Witnessed by Motley Crowd—Four Chaplains Officiate, Pipers Play a Dirge and the Soudanese Band Follows With "Abide With Me."

G. W. Steevens, the nimble English globe-trotter, who takes mental snapshots here, there and everywhere, and does them into lively and knowing books, accompanied the English army in the Soudan as correspondent of the London Mail. He will be remembered in this city as the man who described Chicago as "the cynosure and cesspool of the world." This was in a volume on America. Last spring, close upon the war between Greece and Turkey, he had a book printed on that contest within a very short time after the cessation of hostilities, but that was nothing by comparison with the present work of himself and his publishers. They are actually bringing out a book by telegraph, which may be considered the most up-to-date thing in literature.

The Soudan dispatches are to be printed immediately, substantially as they were sent, but as it is impossible to put the book in form and distribute it with telegraph rapidity the "immediately" must be taken with some qualifications. The newspaper is ahead of the promised volume, and its latest issue to arrive in this country contains the chapter on "The Funeral of Gordon," which reveals Mr. Steevens under his usual high pressure. It reads as follows:

"The steamers—screws, paddles, sternwheelers—plug-plugged their steady way up the full Nile. Past the northern fringe of Omdurman, where the sheikh came out with the white flag, past the breach where we went into the khalifa's stronghold, past the choked embrasures and the lacerated mahdi's tomb, past the swamp-rooted palms of Tuti island. We looked at it all with a dispassionate, impersonal curiosity. It was Sunday morning and that furious Friday seemed already half a lifetime behind us. The volleys had dwindled out of our ears and the smoke out of our nostrils; and today we were going to the funeral of Gordon. After nearly fourteen years the Christian soldier was to have a Christian burial.

All Kinds and Colors.

"On the steamers there was a detachment of every corps, white, or black or yellow, that had taken part in the vengeance. Every white officer that could be spared from duty was there, fifty men picked from each British battalion, one or two from each unit of the Egyptian army. That we were going up to Khartoum at all was evidence of our triumph; yet, if you looked about you, triumph was not the note. The most reckless subaltern, the most barbarous black, was touched with gravity. We were going to perform a necessary duty, which had been put off far, far too long.

"Fourteen years next January—yet even through that humiliating thought there ran a whisper of triumph. We may be slow; but in that very slowness we show that we do not forget. Soon or late, we give our own their due. Here were men that fought for Gordon's life while he lived—Kitchener, who went disguised and alone among furious enemies to get news of him; Wauchope, who poured out his blood like water at Tamai and Kirkbekan; Stuart-Wortley, who missed by but two days the chance of dying at his side. And here, too, were boys who could hardly lisp when their mothers told them that Gordon was dead, grown up now, and appearing in the fullness of time to exact ten thousand lives for one. Gordon may die—other Gordons may die in the future—but the same clean-limbed brood will grow up and avenge them.

"The boats stopped plugging and there was silence. We were tying up opposite a grove of tall palms; on the bank was a crowd of natives curiously like the backsheesh-hunters who gather to greet the Nile steamers. They started at us, but we looked beyond them to a large building rising from a crumbling quay. You could see that it had once been a handsome building of the type you know in Cairo and Alexandria—all stone and stucco, two-storied, faced with tall, regular windows. Now the upper story was clean gone; the blind windows were filled up with bricks; the stucco was all scars, and you could walk up to the roof on rubble. In front was an acacia, such as grow in Ismalia on the Ghezireh at Cairo, only unpruned—deep luscious green, only drooping like a weeping willow. At that most ordinary sight everybody grew very solemn. For it was a piece of a new world, or rather of an old world, utterly different from the squalid mud, the baking barrenness of Omdurman. A facade with tall windows, a tree with green leaves—the facade battered and blind, the tree drooping to earth—there was no need to tell us we were at a grave. In that forlorn ruin, and that disconsolate acacia, the bones of murdered civilization lay before us.

Raising the Flag.

"The troops formed up before the palace in three sides of a rectangle—Egyptians to our left as we looked from the river, British to the right. The sirdar, the generals of division and brigade, and the staff stood in the open space facing the palace. Then, on the roof—almost on the very spot where Gordon fell, though the steps by which the butchers mounted have long since vanished—we were aware of the two flagstaves. By the right hand halliards stood Lieut. Staveley, R. N., and Capt. Watson, K. R. R.; by the left hand Bimbashi Mitford and two other officers.

"The sirdar raised his hand. A pull on the halliards, up ran, out flew the union jack, tugging eagerly at his reins, dazzingly gloriously in the sun, rejoicing in his strength and his freedom. 'Bang!' went the Melik's 12½-pounder, and the boat quivered to her backbone. 'God Save Our Gracious Queen' hymned the Guards' band—'bang!' from the Melik—and sirdar and private stood stiff—'bang!'—to attention, every hand at the helmet's peak—'bang!'—in salute. The Egyptian flag had gone up at the same instant; and now, the same ear-smashing, soul-uplifting bangs marking time, the band of the Eleventh Soudanese was playing the khedivial hymn. 'Three cheers for the queen!' cried the sirdar; helmets leaped in the air, and the melancholy ruins woke to the first wholesome shout of all these years. Then the same for the khedive. The comrade flags stretched themselves lustily, enjoying their own again; the bands pealed forth the pride of country; the twenty-one guns banged forth the strength of war. Thus, white men and black, Christian and Moslem, Anglo-Egypt set herself once more, forever, on Khartoum.

"Before we had time to think such thoughts over to ourselves the bands were playing 'The Dead March in Saul.' Then the black band was playing the march from Handel's 'Scipio,' which in England generally goes with 'Toll for the Brave.' This was in memory of those loyal men among the khedive's subjects who could have saved themselves by treachery, but preferred to die with Gordon. Next fell a deeper hush than ever, except for the solemn minute guns that had followed the fierce salute. Four chaplains—Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian and Methodist—came slowly forward and ranged themselves, with their backs to the palace, just before the sirdar. The Presbyterian read the fifteenth Psalm. The Anglican led the rustling whisper of the Lord's prayer. Snow-haired Father Brindle, best beloved of priests, laid his helmet at his feet and read a memorial prayer, bareheaded in the sun. Then came forward the pipers and wailed a dirge, and the Soudanese played 'Abide With Me.'"

Perhaps lips did twitch just a little to see the ebony heathens fervently blowing out Gordon's favorite hymn; but the most irresistible incongruity would hardly have made us laugh at that moment. And there were those who said the cold sirdar himself could hardly speak or see as Gen. Hunter and the rest stepped out according to their rank and shook his hand. What wonder! He had trodden this road to Khartoum for fourteen years, and he stood at the goal at last.

"Thus with Maxim-Nordenfelt and Bible we buried Gordon after the manner of his race. The parade was over, the troops were dismissed and for a short space we walked in Gordon's garden. Gordon has become a legend with his countrymen and they all but deify him dead who would never have heard of him had he lived. But in this garden you somehow came to know Gordon the man, not the myth, and to feel near to him. Here was an Englishman doing his duty, alone and at the instant peril of his life; yet still he loved his garden. The garden was a yet more pathetic ruin than the palace. The palace accepted its ruin mutely; the garden strove against it. Untrimmed, unwatered, the oranges and citrons still struggled to bear their little, hard, green knobs, as if they had been full ripe fruit. The pomegranates put out their vermilion star flowers, but the fruit was small and woody and juiceless. The figs bore better, but they, too, were small and without vigor. Rankly overgrown with dhurra, a vine still trained over a low roof its dwarf leaves and limp tendrils, but yielded not a sign of grapes. It was all green and so far vivid and refreshing after Omdurman. But it was the green of nature, not of cultivation; leaves grew large and fruit grew small and dwindled away. Reluctantly, despairingly, Gordon's garden was dropping back to wilderness. And in the middle of the defeated fruit trees grew rankly the hateful Soudan apple, the poisonous herald of desolation.

"The bugle broke in upon us; we came back to the boats. We were quicker steaming back than steaming up. We were not a whit less chastened, but every man felt lighter. We came with a sigh of shame; we went away with a sigh of relief. The long-delayed duty was done. The bones of our countrymen were shattered and scattered abroad and no man knows their place. None the less Gordon had his due burial at last. So we steamed away to the roaring camp and looked back at the moldering palace and the tangled garden with a new and great contentment. We left Gordon alone again—but alone in majesty under the conquering ensign of his own people."—Chicago Post.

WON A NEWSPAPER ON DEUCES.

Poker Game in Which Jerry Baxter Got the Nashville American.

"When I lived in Nashville, Tenn., some years ago," said Banks Winter, the minstrel, "I saw $20,000 and the Nashville American, a big daily newspaper, change ownership on a pair of deuces.

"Dunc Cooper owned the controlling stock in the American, and was considered quite wealthy. He was one of that class, who are numerous throughout the state, who, as the saying goes, 'have money to burn,' and who enjoy nothing more than sitting behind a fine horse, unless it is sitting behind several stacks of blue chips.

"When the legislature was in session there were plenty of games going every night in the Maxwell and the Duncan, the two swell hotels of the place, in which thousands of dollars changed hands during a single night.

"Dunc Cooper was one of the boldest players of the state, and next to him, perhaps, was Jerry Baxter, a leading citizen and politician and a very wealthy fellow. Both were good at bluffing, and when they raked in a good pot it just seemed to tickle them immensely.

"One night Cooper and Baxter got into a game with a number of the rural lawmakers, and I chanced to be in the room. Things went along at a pretty good gait for a while, but honors seemed to be nearly even. Cooper and Baxter, I could see, however, were laying for each other, and as they never played with a limit, the prospect was that if they did lock horns there would be some pretty tall betting before the hands were turned up.

"It was not very long before the opportunity showed and the two got at it hammer and tongs. It was a big pot, and by the time cards were drawn and the betting commenced there were four in. The bets started at $100, but the thing did not get around before Cooper made a plunge and Baxter gave it a boost that made the other two drop out.

"Baxter's bet was $5,000, and it hadn't got cold before Cooper came back hard. He raised the bet $8,000, and then remarked in a half jesting way, 'that's all the stuff I've got here, but I'd like to bet my stock in the American.'

"Without the least show of nervousness or anxiety, Baxter retorted, 'Put up a due bill for it.' Cooper took him at his word, wrote a due bill for the stock, and put it in the pot. Baxter thought a minute, drew a card from his pocket, and wrote on the back of it:

"'I O U an amount equal to the value of your stock in the American.'

"He pushed the card into the pot and called.

"'I've got a bobtail,' said Cooper.

"'I thought so,' retorted Baxter, 'I've got just a little more,' and he turned over his hand, showing a lone pair of deuces.

"Somebody asked Baxter how he came to risk so much on a pair of deuces, to which he replied, 'I got a hunch that he was bluffing, I set him down as drawing to a bobtail, and I couldn't get the idea out of my head. Dunc Cooper is the last man on earth I'd let run me at a poker game.'"

One Trick of a Hotel Beat.

New Orleans Times-Democrat.

"The strangest type of hotel beat I ever encountered," said a veteran New Orleans boniface, "walked into our house one evening about ten years ago, registered, and went directly to his room. I was at the desk and noticed casually that he was a stout, good-looking man, and that he wore a handsome fall overcoat. He had no baggage and paid in advance, remarking that he had merely stopped over en route to Galveston and his things had gone on. Next morning there was a terrific uproar. The stranger, it seems, had been robbed. According to his story he woke up to find the room in disorder and his coat, vest and shirt gone. He claimed to have had a gold watch, several hundred dollars, and a number of valuable papers in the pockets of his coat and vest, and three diamond studs in the shirt. I felt sure the loss was exaggerated, but there was no doubt about the things being gone, and I was on the point of compromising the claim when my lawyer—poor fellow, he's dead now—insisted on holding him off until we investigated his record. We soon found some of his statements as to his antecedents to be false, and he thereupon took the alarm and quietly departed. I never saw him again, but a hotel detective of my acquaintence encountered him in Chicago, and he told him how the scheme was worked. The beat had on neither coat, vest, nor shirt when he registered, and had merely pinned a collar and cravat inside the lapels of his overcoat. It was as simple as A, B, C, and made out a clear case when he raised the row in the morning."

'Tis Different Now.

In days of Rome, when me beheld
The gladiators vie,
Thumbs up became the chosen sign
That he who lost must die.

Now times are changed and things like this
Are differently put;
I know I've lost the day whene'er
My wife puts down her foot. —Judge.

Sunset Coal.

The Co-operative Mining Syndicate is meeting with fine sales on its Sunset coal, and so far the demand from stockholders alone has taken the entire output. This coal is a true bituminous coal and gives intense heat, makes a splendid grate fire. Parties using it in furnaces and ranges report it superior to any of the lignite coals on account of the saving it makes, being fully 25 per cent. —adv.

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