surprising that it should find credence in responsible publications.

The Western league averages, recently issued, give McBride of St. Paul the head of the batting column with an average of .387. Duggan of Detroit is second with .378, and Wood of Indianapolis third with .375. Kid Fear ranks well up among the leaders with .323, and Merles, Campau, Crooks, McVickar and Genins are all in the .300 list. McFarlan of Columbus heads the pitchers in fielding and "Scrappy" Hollingsworth is awarded the distinction of being the best third baseman in the league as far as figures go. Indianapolis leads the league in batting and Columbus in fielding.

Diamond Dust.

Minneapolis has made good its claim to Perry Werden and the fans breathe easier.

Harvard university has twelve candidates for pitchers and half as many for backstops.

Quincy has at last secured a manager in John S. Ray. There is also a deal to get Bill Klusman from Manning.

The Philadelphia club has won a $40,000 damage suit against the city on account of a change of grade on one of the streets adjoining the ball park.

Sam Dungan of the Detroits has been sued for $20,000 for alienating the affections of a married woman of that city. Being a masher is not what it used to be.

Monk Cline is said to be hankering after a chance to get into a uniform again. He is now a ladderman in the Louisville fire department, but finds the life too slow for him.

St. Joe stock seems to be pretty nearly unsalable in the base ball market. Manning has had only one offer for the franchise and that is from Topeka. It has been expected that the St. Joe people would pull themselves together and make a bid, but they evidently think it is a good thing to let alone.

SAME OLD GAME OF TALK GOES ON.

Pugilists Keep Their Jaws in Constant Training.

The controversy which is now running in serial form between Corbett and Fitzsimmons has had another chapter added to it during the last week. This occurred when Corbett stepped before the footlights of a St. Louis theater and offered to add $10,000 to a $25,000 purse in case that Fitz met him. Corbett says it is the last proposition he will make to the champion, and that he will now allow the American sporting public to force Fitz to another fight with him. It is to be hoped that he will adhere to this determination.

The other day John L. Sullivan was informed of Fitzsimmons' refusal to sign the articles which were presented to him by Dan Stuart, and gave expression to the following good sense: "Fitzsimmons has taken the wrong attitude. He's got no right on earth to dictate terms to Corbett by saying 'go fight Maher first.' If that had been said to him when he landed here from Australia, where would he have been?"

American sporting writers seem to be coming to the point where they believe that there is something behind Fitzsimmons' refusal of another meeting with Corbett, when there is such a lot of money in sight for him. It is hard to believe that it is a case of afraid, for the general impression still prevails that the champion would have an easy time with the long-haired Californian.

In this connection the following four letters are of considerable interest:

Sharkey has this to say:

VALLEJO, Cal., Jan. 4.—I do not see why I should be called upon to meet Corbett again. I whipped him in three and a half rounds in San Francisco. The police then stopped the fight, as I had him beaten. After that contest Corbett and I signed to fight to a finish, and we both put up deposits for five months. Corbett kept "standing me off" and then withdrew his deposit. The result was we did not meet. Corbett evidently must be afraid of me, anyway. In justice to my standing in the profession, I could not meet Corbett again until he whips somebody, say Maher, Goddard or Choynski, as Fitzsimmons wants him to do.

THOMAS J. SHARKEY,
Undefeated Champion of the World.

Maher writes as follows:

PITTSBURG, Jan. 4.—I am ready to meet Corbett before or after he gets a match with Fitzsimmons, and will put up $5,000 if necessary to show I mean business. If Fitz whips Corbett I will challenge him. In fact, I have $1,000 posted already. So far as the championship muddle is concerned, I believe I am the best man today. But in view of the fact that Fitz has whipped both Corbett and myself, I think the best thing to be done is for Corbett and myself to fight and let the winner fight Fitz. There are too many typewriters and not enough fighters at work just at this particular time.

PETER MAHER.

Choynski writes:

CHICAGO, Ill., Jan. 5.—I am ready to fight McCoy, Corbett or Fitzsimmons. I prefer to take on McCoy first. He promised in New York to make a match with me. Nothing was then said about weights. When he fought Creedon, McCoy weighed close to 168 pounds, and for him to quibble about weights now looks like an effort to get out of a match. In standing off Corbett and telling him to go whip somebody of reputation, Fitzsimmons is merely following the precedent set by Corbett. I think Fitz is right, although it hurts pugilistic interests. As for myself, I want to fight myself to the front. This is why I want a match with McCoy first, and then with the other two in the order named.

JOSEPH CHOYNSKI.

McCoy's letter is as follows:

CINCINNATI, O., Jan. 9.—No, I won't fight Choynski at catchweights. If I meet a heavyweight it will be a top-notcher. At present I am only a middleweight and will be content with the championship. Yes, I am after Fitzsimmons or anyone else who attempts to claim the middleweight championship. I have $1,000 posted with Sam Austin of the Police Gazette to bind a match with Fitz. "KID M'COY."

From the last epistle it can be seen that McCoy has receded from his agreement to meet Choynski before taking a shy at Fitzsimmons. McCoy is now after that middleweight championship, and it looks as if he would get it. Nothing additional has been heard from Tom O'Rourke, who expressed a willingness to post $5,000 as backing of an unknown whom he wished to pit against the Kid.

After trying hard without success to get on a match with some of the prominent lightweights of England Spike Sullivan has finally arranged a go with Tom Causer, whom he will meet in a twenty-round bout for $2,500 a side and the largest purse offered by any of the clubs in England. Causer, although having been beaten in one round by Dick Burge two months ago, has a large number of admirers in England who are confident he can beat Sullivan, and they are willing to bet Sullivan as much as $5,000 that Causer will surely get a decision over him. The victory which Sullivan secured over Jimmy Curran at the National Sporting club of London recently has sent his stock up with the English sports, and they will no doubt be ready to cover every bet made by Causer's admirers when the contest takes place. They will box at 134 pounds, weigh in at 3 o'clock on the day of the contest. Both men have agreed to let the clubs over there make bids for the contest up to January 24, and the club which makes the best inducement will secure the match.—New York World.

Now that Dave Sullivan has been successful in arranging another match with Pedlar Palmer he will no doubt try hard to turn the tables on the clever English lad. Sullivan claims he knows Palmer's tactics thoroughly, and as he gave the English boy such a stiff fight in their first contest, he will fight harder this time than before. Sullivan fully realizes how popular a victory over Palmer would make him with the people in this country, and as it is Sullivan's ambition to be looked upon as the first boy who ever defeated Palmer he will fight hard from the moment the contest starts. Sullivan expects to bet over $1,000 of his own money, outside of the $2,500 side bet, which a number of English sporting men are putting up for him in this match, that he will win.

All talk of a fight between Charley Mitchell and Kid McCoy is off. Tom O'Rourke some time ago offered a purse of $6,000 for such an event, but this was answered by Mitchell to the effect that he has left the ring forever. Too much fat is the trouble, for Mitchell now weighs in the neighborhood of 275 pounds. Mitchell said, however, that he would back Dick O'Brien against the Kid to the extent of $1,000.

Tommy White, who returned from England recently with Jimmy Barry of Chicago, in speaking about the chances Ben Jordan, the English featherweight, would have with either George Dixon or Solly Smith, said: "If Jordan ever boxes Dixon or Smith at 122 pounds, or even at 124 pounds, he will surely be defeated. Jordan would have no show with the colored lad, for Dixon would simply punch him when and where he pleased just as easily as I did until he landed a wild right swing, which he floored me with in the nineteenth round of our contest. If Jordan comes to this country I will do everything in my power to arrange another match with him, as I am extremely confident that I can beat him. If I am not successful in getting Jordan to meet me I will urge Tom O'Rourke to match Dixon against him, as I am sure Dixon will surely beat him."

RACE MEETS FOR THE SUMMER.

Omaha to Have Its Dates in the Transmissouri Circuit.

During the last week the old transmissouri light harness racing circuit has been reorganized and has been considerably decreased in size. This was done because it is believed that points near Omaha during the coming year would not be able to hold successful racing meets on account of the attraction offered by the exposition. As now made up the circuit includes only this city, Denver, Colorado Springs and St. Joseph. It is to be called the Western Circuit.

Omaha secured the dates for which it made application some time ago, June 30 to July 3 inclusive. These are considered very advantageous. At that time it is believed that the horses from California on their way to the circuits in the east can be induced to stop here, while the city will undoubtedly be able to attract entries for the grand and other circuits which will open during the following week. The dates are considered the choicest of the lot. The circuit will open at Colorado Springs, the dates being May 30 to June 5. Denver will have its meet from June 11 to June 25 and St. Joseph will close the circuit with dates from July 4 to 7.

At the meeting, which was attended by representatives from the three other cities in the circuit and by the Omaha Fair and Speed association, it was determined to fix the purses between $600 and $1,000, although smaller ones will probably be offered for colts. It was also decided that the money should go to the winner of the best three out of five heats. At the meet in this city last year every heat was made a race, but this proved to be unsatisfactory all around. All the meets will occur under the rules of the American Trotting association, which is more in touch with western tracks than the National association. In the circuit last year Denver was the only city which adopted the National association rules.

A program of races and purses is to be issued in a few days by Palmer Clark of St. Joseph, who was elected secretary of the circuit.

One of the attendants at the meeting was Oliver P. Updegraff of Topeka, Kan., secretary of the Colorado Springs association. He officiated as starter at the meet held by the local speed association last spring and proved to be a crackajack. An attempt was made to secure him again last fall during the fair, but previous engagements prevented him from coming here. It is almost settled now that he will officiate at this year's meet. He is a breeder and horseman known all other the west. Last fall he was starter in a Star Pointer race at Indianapolis when the champion chipped off a piece from the record.

Following the lead of the Kentucky Breeders' association, two other organizations have lately gone on record in favor of the proposition to bar hoppled horses from all trotting tracks. In California the Pacific Coast Breeders' association adopted a resolution against the straps on motion of Adolph Spreckles, who is said to have been the first turfman in California to introduce the unsightly and dangerous contrivance. Spreckles is the owner of Hulda, 2:08½; Dione, 2:14, and other crack trotters, and is a member of the Pacific district court of appeals of the National Trotting association. At the meeting of the owners of Charter Oak park last Saturday a week a resolution was adopted requesting the National Trotting association and the American Trotting association to pass a rule limiting the use of hopples to the season of 1898, afterward barring them on all tracks in membership with either association. Immediate abolition was deemed to be unfair to certain horsemen, who have recently paid high prices for pacers that cannot, it is claimed, be driven without the extra set of harness.

Stable Gossip.

At Jefferson, Ia., a meeting will be held July 4 and 5.

The Indian-bred pacer, Prince Albert, has been a mile below 2:04.

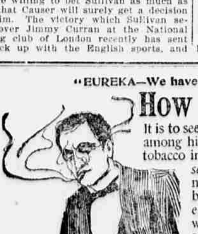
The meeting at New Orleans seems to be getting more prosperous as the season goes on.

The Illinois State Board of Agriculture is settling all claims against the Chicago horse show at 66⅔ cents on a dollar.

A Russian colony of fifty-six breeders has just arrived in Missouri to engage in breeding stock, chiefly horses and cattle.

The European record for trotting teams is held by the American horses, Autrain, 2:16¾.

"EUREKA—We have found it!"



How Ridiculous!

It is to see a business man fumbling among his papers with a cigar or tobacco in his mouth. He cannot *see*, he cannot *hear*, he cannot *think*. He is stunned by nicotine and his mental edges are slowly blunting while he nervously sucks or chews away! The situation would be laughable if it were not pitiful. His business capital—health and money are slowly oozing away and clearer business brains are taking the advantage.

But Don't Stop Tobacco SUDDENLY and wrench the nerves, permanently injuring them, take

An absolute and kindly vegetable cure for the tobacco habit, a kindly antidote for tobacco poison. Use the tobacco you require and take BACO-CURO, it will notify you when to stop by removing the desire. IT GENTLY WEANS.

We give a Written Guarantee to cure permanently any case with three boxes, or refund the money. 50c. or $1 a box, three boxes (guaranteed cure) $2.50. Druggists, or EUREKA CHEMICAL AND MNFG. CO., LA CROSSE, WIS.

Baco-Curo

and Chatsworth, 2:24, who trotted a fourth heat (of a mile and a furlong) at Milan, Italy, in 2:48¾, a 2:20 rate for the mile.

LOCAL SPORTS GETTING WARM.

Tug-of-War Teams Engender Some Heat and Fun May Ensue.

Before this winter season is entirely over there may be some fun here in the tug-of-war line. This is all the result of the entertainment which was given in Turner hall last Thursday night under the auspices of the Turner Wheel club, which was incidentally a very successful and enjoyable affair.

The chief trouble arises from the result of the contest between the teams of the Tourist Wheel club and the Turners, which was won by the former. The turners are insisting that they did not pull against a wheel club team, but against one made up of the best strong men picked up about the city. As evidence of this they cite the statement made by one of the team when they protested against a member that there is no longer a Tourist Wheel club in existence. The Turners, therefore, insist that they have not been beaten by any wheel club team.

But whatever the merits of this contention the Turners now say that if the lists are thrown open to anybody they will beat anything in the way of a tug-of-war team which can be gathered together in the city. In such an event, however, they propose to pick a team from the entire ranks of the turnverein and not of the wheel club alone.

As a result of the entertainment, also, there is another aspiring team—the Union Pacific freight house boys, who pulled against the team of the B. & M. Wheel club. Although it looked on the surface as if they had a cinch, the Burlington lads held them to a standstill and the contest was declared a draw. The Union Pacific contingent say that this is due to the fact that they never pulled together before, but they have given it out that they will practice from now on, and will stand ready to run up against any team which wants a go with them for money, marbles or chalk.

Otto Giesene, the strong boy, was also on the program. Incidentally he has a grievance and to wipe it away he wants a contest with Swoboda, another of Omaha's strong men. He says that he stands ready to compete with the latter in a contest of lifting, muscular development or general athletics.

It has developed that there are no official world's bicycle racing records. Chairman Mott of the League of American Wheelmen racing board has received a letter from Henry Sturmeier of England, secretary of the International Cyclist union, informing him of this fact. Mr. Mott began an investigation of the matter at the time Edward McDuffie of Boston tried for records on the Willow Grove track at Philadelphia. McDuffie's remuneration depended somewhat on whether he succeeded in breaking or equaling world's records. He did some remarkable riding, tieing Stock of England at 1:35 2-5 for the mile. Several other records were clipped and then McDuffie claimed pay for world's records.

Mr. Mott allowed the records and recorded them as official for this country or within the jurisdiction of the League of American Wheelmen, but when asked whether he would certify officially that they were world's records he said he could not do so. He believed them to be world's records, but had no documents to sustain his belief. Mr. Mott wrote to Secretary Sturmeier to inquire whether there was not some way of settling the matter.

Mr. Sturmeier suggests that each organization send him its official records on January 1 of each year. He will then compile them and send copies to racing board chairmen or similar officers throughout the world so that each may decide for himself what are world's records.

Jack Prince, the veteran racing man who practically introduced professional cycle racing in America and who was at one time the fastest rider in the world, now has a coliseum in St. Louis and gave the first of a series of meets to be held in it during the winter season last night. Prince built the Coliseum in this city which is now used as the Den of the Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben and conducted many successful races in it. He left Omaha in 1891 and since that time has built coliseums in many of the southern cities, including Nashville, Memphis and Jacksonville. It is his intention to hold meets regularly in these places during the coming season.

WHIST AND HOW IT IS PLAYED.

Arbitrary and Private Conventions and the Evils Flowing Therefrom.

Considerable space is devoted in recent whist literature to the subject of "arbitrary conventions," in which it is feared there may be danger of bringing the game into disrepute. The executive of the American Whist league has defined as allowable any system of play which is not secret and the adherents of the plan mentioned believe that in accordance with this rule that previous explanation to the adversaries is sufficient excuse for the system. There is no doubt at least on the subject of "secret conventions" and no complaint of that nature has ever been entered against any club in the league. A "private convention," however, is more uncertain. It is defined as one remote from the generally accepted conditions of play and something that one must be introduced to and that must be explained to the partner in advance or it will be totally meaningless to him, no matter how often he has seen it at the whist table. It seems to be generally agreed that such play is illegitimate and not in accordance with the true idea of whist.

The theory of whist adopted by modern players has undergone a distinct revolution in the memory of the older players. A player who was once the intimate, constant partner of Deschapelles in Paris has recently stated that the chief strength of Deschapelles' play lay in the adroit management of the trump suit. Upon first taking up his hand he would study its possibilities and glance at the score to see what he had to hope or fear. If he thought his hand would be better if there were no trumps to interfere with it, he would lead trumps. It is seemed on the other hand that his trumps would be necessary for self-protection, he would lead a plain suit. As his partner followed the same principle, it was Deschapelles' plan when he was not the original leader to govern his play by his partner's opening. If his partner led trumps, Deschapelles made every effort to assist him in getting them out, and the contrary being the case, it would require very great strength in his own hand to justify him in running counter to his partner's game. In this example of the master's play his old partner asserts that we have the essence of a very simple principle of whist—making the earliest practical inference as to the partner's hand.

There seems to be a turn in the tide of new conventions. Several whist editors are denouncing the numerous "fads" that are invented merely to mystify the adversary. When so level-headed a player as C. D. P. Hamilton states over his signature that any convention, no matter how arbitrary, is fair, provided the play is explained beforehand, it is time to call a halt. Let us see what this might lead to. Suppose there are forty teams at the next whist congress to play for the American Whist league trophy, and that each has prepared a series of arbitrary conventions to govern its play and that these conventions are all different. A few days before the contest the captain of each team sends printed explanations of these separate methods. They have now fulfilled all the required conditions, and, according to Mr. Hamilton, it is all fair. Now, will anyone pretend to say that whist under such circumstances, is recreation or a pleasure to the majority of the participants? Does it tend to improve the game? "Faddists," when taken to task for their private conventions, answer with only too much truth, that all conventions are private conventions. The trump signal, American leads, echo, and Albany are pronounced as arbitrary conventions.

This statement is not strictly in accordance with the facts, for a large number of the conventions are developments from well understood methods of play that have been taught by experience. Still, many are undoubtedly arbitrary, and the question is, Are these arbitrary conventions necessary for the best interests of the game? In the writer's opinion they are not, as nearly all of the information sought can be obtained by shrewd whist players without them. Therefore, if a committee of our best writers on the game, say Fisher, Ames, Trist, Foster, Hamilton and Miss Wheelock, were authorized to get up a system of whist in which every convention purely arbitrary and not a development of a principle should be tabooed it would at once shut out faddists and restore the game to the position it held some fifteen years ago. As a basis for leads Foster's "Whist Manual," second edition, might be taken. They would hold good till we come to the lead of jack from king, queen, jack and two others. This is purely arbitrary and useless. The second round would probably proclaim the jack, and the missing small cards the number. Some claim that the four best is an arbitrary convention. Not so; it is developed from two penultimate and ante-penultimate, which in turn are developments from the lowest of an interior sequence, as the lead of the seven from K, 9, 8, 7, 4, 2, etc., a truly common sense opening.

Every one knows the origin of the trump signal. While it might be dispensed with, it is none the less a development. So with the echo from four trumps, a development from the unblocking rules. Ace, then queen, from ace, queen, jack and others is the natural method of opening such a suit, but ace, then jack, from same combination is purely arbitrary and could be dispensed with. In this manner the whole game might be simplified and those who insisted on private conventions should be excluded from clubs in which the majority of members are gentlemen.

Reed's team of the Omaha Whist club was again successful on Saturday night, beating Jones' team five points. Their next antagonists will be Stebbins' team, the other members being Bushman, Thomas and Boulter. The scores for last Wednesday night were as follows:

North and South—	
Reed and Beindorff	191
Burrell and Sumney	188
Meikle and Jones	184
Shea and Lawrence	182
Bird and Scribner	178
Redick and Morsman	171
Bruner and Pope	167
Average	181
East and West—	
Rinehart and Scribner, G. O.	197
Crummer and Joplin	191
Peters and Jordan	184
Stebbins and Boulter	182
Cahn and Shipley	181
Stubbs and Henritzy	179
Bushman and Thomas	170
Average	170

About twenty-five members of the club went to Lincoln last night to have a match with the Lincoln Whist club. The last match between the clubs was played at Omaha and resulted in a victory for Omaha. As this was the only time Omaha had been successful, they are not oversanguine of success.

The ten highest scores for the month of January are now held as follows:

Name.	Score.	Name.	Score.
Scribner, G. O.	32	Sumney	13
Beindorff	29	Bird	11
Rinehart	24	Scribner, A. W.	11
Reed	23	Allee	10
Bruner	13	Meikle	7

Chess.

In a study of openings used by leading chess players in recent tournaments it is noticed that conservative openings, those which do not involve any sacrifice in material, are generally adopted. Although the attack gained from such beginnings is less lively and interesting to the observer, it is more fruitful of results when the players are careful and somewhat evenly matched. In the Evans gambit and the different king's gambits the black is almost assured of a winning end game if he succeeds in neutralizing the attack, as he has the advantage in material. In more conservative openings such as the Ruy Lopez, Giucco piano and the various queen's pawns' openings, the attack takes but little risk. If the defense is correct such openings lead to an even game with a small handicap against the black. In the great majority of recent tournament games the last named openings were used, though the gambits are by no means unsupported. In a tournament which St. Petersburg is at present playing with the Vienna Chess club the former chose the Evans gambit, notwithstanding the claim that the defense can stand the attack and come out one pawn ahead. If such an opening can be supported in correspondence play by leading chess clubs it is certainly premature for amateurs to abandon it.

The following game from a conservative opening, though daring and radical in its later stages, was played between Prince Dadian of Mingrelia, one of the most brilliant players in the world, and M. Bitcham. The score is from the British Chess Magazine:

TWO KNIGHTS' DEFENCE.

White—Dadian	Black—Bitcham.
1—P to K 4.	1—P to K 4.
2—Kt to KB 3.	2—Kt to Q B 3.
3—B to B 4.	3—Kt to B 3.
4—P to Q 4.	4—P takes P.
5—Castles.	5—Kt takes P.
6—R to K sq.	6—P to Q 4.
7—B takes P.	7—Q takes B.
8—Kt to B 3.	8—Q to B 5.
9—B takes Kt (ch.)	9—B to K 3.
10—B to K Kt 5.	10—B to Q B 4.
11—Kt to Q 2.	11—Q to R 3.
12—Kt to Kt 3.	12—B to Kt 3.
13—Kt to Q 5.	13—P to K R 3.
14—Kt to B 5.	14—Q to Kt 4.
15—R takes B (ch.)	15—K to B sq.
16—Kt to Q 7 (ch.)	16—K to Kt sq.
17—Q to Kt 4.	17—P to K R 4
18—Kt (Q 5) to B 6 (ch.)	18—P takes Kt.
19—B to R 6 (dis. ch.)	19—Q to Kt 4.
20—Kt takes P, mate.	

An international three-move problem contest is now open with prizes from 100 francs down offered by the St. Petersburg Zeitung. A two-move competition under the direction of the Birmingham, (England), Daily Post will be open until January 31. There are five prizes ranging down from £1.

Problem No. 8, by R. G. Thomson; White to play and mate in two moves.

BLACK.

WHITE.

Problem No. 7 is done by B to B sq. Solved by H. B. Hammond and J. R. Letty, Wymore, Neb. Proposed solution of W. H. N., St. Paul, Neb., cannot be carried out after P takes P.

Questions and Answers.

OAKLAND, Neb., Jan. 14.—To the Sporting Editor of The Bee: How much wheat in bushels was raised in the United States in 1860 and in 1897? How much corn? How many hogs were there in the United States in 1860 and 1897, and how many cattle?—Yours truly, C. S. Lucas.

Ans.—There are no reliable agricultural statistics back of 1866. In that year it was estimated that 65,867,946 bushels of corn and 151,999,906 bushels of wheat were raised in this country. The Agricultural department has not completed the figures of the crop of 1897, but in 1896 2,283,875,165 bushels of corn and 427,684,000 bushels of wheat were raised. In 1868 there were 11,942,484 head of cattle and 24,317,258 hogs in the United States. In 1897 there were 30,508,408 cattle and 40,600,276 hogs.

OMAHA, Jan. 17.—To the Sporting Editor of The Bee: What were the weights of Fitzsimmons and Corbett in their fight at Carson City.—A Reader.

The fighters were not weighed in, but Fitz tipped the scales at about 165 and Corbett at 185.

SIOUX CITY, Ia., Jan. 16.—To the Sporting Editor of The Bee: In what year was Captain Brown killed at Garfield Park, Chicago.—J. L. Warwick.

Ans.—In the fall of 1892, I believe.

OMAHA, Jan. 21.—To the Sporting Editor of The Bee: A young lady, 16 years old, wishes your opinion in regard to a marriage with a man of means between 36 and 40 years. She does not love him, but has great respect and esteem. If you are capable of giving advice will confer a great favor upon the young lady.—Yours respectfully, S. S. Smith.

Ans.—You bet I am capable of giving the necessary advice. But it would be indelicate to publish one's inmost thoughts on so sacred a topic. Ask your heart something and be guided by its answer.

IN THE WHEELING WORLD

President Potter of the League of American Wheelmen has practically routed the opposition to his re-election. The hope of the opposition rested on bringing out Gideon of the Pennsylvania division as a candidate for president of the league. But Gideon hesitated and wrecked his chances. At the beginning of the campaign Gideon declined to enter the race. Thereupon the Pennsylvania division appointed a committee to negotiate for a place on the Potter slate, tendering the vote of the division for the position. Potter effected a deal with this committee, promising to make T. J. Keenan of Pittsburg first vice president. All efforts to break the combination were fruitless. At its meeting last Tuesday the Pennsylvania delegates, by a vote of 64 to 36, affirmed the action of the committee. This action makes the election of the Potter slate at St. Louis a foregone conclusion and proves that Mr. Potter is a much more effective politician than Sterling Elliott.

The National Cycle Board of Trade has "troubles to burn." It was organized to regulate the business and incidentally dictate how it should be conducted. One of the ukases issued by the board last fall was a prohibition of cycle shows. It would have nothing to do with such projects in the future and intimated that any upstart daring to disobey its orders would be visited with the blight of the board's displeasure. But Philadelphia cycle dealers have just concluded a successful show and booked sufficient business to make them indifferent to the threats of the combine. The result of the Quaker City revolt is the starting of several fires in the rear of the board and enough heat is being generated to threaten its existence. Small dealers in New York and nearby cities insist on a show and they propose to have it whether the board approves or not. Every move in the nature of a kick at cycle combines is to be welcomed. They vary the monotony of cycle life in midwinter and indicate that there are a few Patrick Henrys in the business.

All kinds of guarantees are offered this year by the various manufacturers, most of them covering a period of sixty days after the purchase of a machine. It is argued that any defect in construction is sure to be demonstrated by that time. Therefore the life of the guaranty has been shortened all along the line. Individuality marks some of the guarantees, but, generally speaking, their intent and scope are about the same. One notable departure from the regulation guaranty is in the case of the Western Wheel Works, which has adopted a double guaranty for this year. In addition to its agreement to make good or replace any defective machine, it also guarantees the price of Crescent bicycles as given in the 1898 catalogue for the period covered by its agency contracts, which expires October 1, 1898.

It now appears that manufacturers are not running after racing men to ride their wheels for a salary during the 1898 season. The falling off of the trade's support of racing men, says the New York Sun, began in 1896. In 1897 the lack of support was marked, and this year there are precious few racing men who can boast of being salaried by a maker. Many who last year drew salaries and expenses cannot this year get even expenses. In this dilemma the speed merchants are going back to first principles and actually buying their racing wheels according to their judgment, with the idea of first proving themselves good performers and then waiting for the various makers to come to them with offers to change their mounts. Whether or not these tactics will succeed in bringing any considerable number of manufacturers to make terms may well be doubted. It was practically in this way that the trade first began to support teams, when nearly all the crack-a-jacks now riding were amateurs. Times now are very different, and makers have not the money to spare for this kind of advertising. The change may have some interesting effects upon the sport. At present only a few of the very best men can win enough in cash prizes to pay their necessarily heavy expenses of training and traveling, and finish the season with a profit. A host of lesser lights in the professional class can make practically no showing when out against the real stars. Their only chance to get an occasional piece of prize money is to avoid the tracks where the first-raters are entered. With no factory salary to depend upon, the army of middle-raters must get into races with only their peers or get out of the business.

The demand of the American racing men that the League of American Wheelmen should take some steps to provide for representation in the international championship races, which will be held in France this year, is likely to come before the national assembly next month. At the annual meeting of the league held last year G. D. Gideon, the retiring chairman of the racing board, suggested that the league take some steps to send riders over to the championships. The suggestion received no attention, and America was one of the few nations unrepresented in the big races at Glasgow. There seems a likelihood that the question of American representation at the world's championship races this year will receive serious consideration at the hands of the league officials.

To the many expressions of opinion as to the future of the bicycle as influenced by bevel gear, an electrical journal adds the statement that the advent of the chainless wheel is especially interesting to electrical engineers, as it is a reminder of a most important chapter in their own experience. Van Depoele, one of the pioneers of the electric railway, ran his first electric street car by means of a sprocket and chain gear, the motor being fixed on the front platform of the car. But troubles developed too rapidly, and the sprocket and chain finally made way for the double reduction gear, which in turn was superseded by the single reduction, the form still in use. It is thought the bevel gear will pass through much the same experience, and that when once its merits have been demonstrated the chain will have to go, just as it did in the case of the electric car.

Prospects for summer cycling camps in this country are promising this year. Hitherto very little attention has been paid to this particular feature of bicycle life, a feature which is enjoyed to the utmost in England. But reports from various parts of the United States indicate that such camps are to become popular and numerous during the coming summer. Generally speaking, the camps are to be conducted by bicycle clubs, and so arranged as to provide certain comforts as well as mere protection against wind and weather. The subject of such a camp is now under discussion in several of the leading cycling organizations of New York, and several expeditions of the kind will undoubtedly be arranged for.

Efforts to solve the brake question continue. Just now the special attempt is to make a brake working on the rear axle or hub, which can be operated by the process of backpedaling. In behalf of one of the recent inventions in this line it is declared that while the brake is in a sense self-setting, the movement is always a gradual one, so that there is no danger of too sudden a stopping through the quick action of the brake. This is an important matter, however, and, anyhow, many riders would not care for a brake that began to set itself, even very lightly, as soon as they began to backpedal. If a brake of this kind can be made to work satisfactorily, it will have advantages over any brake acting on the tire since it will be wholly out of sight and the weight is insignificant, in one case being stated to be only seven ounces. A bicycle expert who has given some attention to this style of brake says, however, that he cannot give it his approval, since he thinks there is too much friction caused at a place in the bicycle where there ought to be as little as possible.

President Potter of the League of American Wheelmen reports the receipt from the Department of State of a communication inclosing official correspondence concluding arrangements in behalf of the League of American Wheelmen so that any member of that organization may enter Italy at any point on the frontier by simply exhibiting to the customs officials his membership ticket and signing a card of identification. Negotiations for similar concessions in France are now under way.

One of the novelties of this year in the cycling world is a new sprocket, which on a casual examination does not present an unusual appearance. If it is examined closely, however, it will be noticed that a large number of the teeth have been partly cut away, so that the chain gets no purchase on them as the sprocket goes around. The idea is to reduce the friction by having the chain impinge on only one tooth in five. In a sprocket with twenty-five teeth there will be only five teeth that actually engage the chain; the others are bevelled off so that they simply act as guides to keep the chain in place. It is asserted in behalf of this device that it is especially effective in hill-climbing and also when the chain gets foul on a muddy road. A bicycle equipped with it is said to respond very readily to pressure on the pedals. Some severe tests have been made with it, and it is declared to have given complete satisfaction. To offset the introduction of the chainless type of wheel it is fair to expect that other "improvements" in chains and sprockets will be forthcoming this season.

The experiment of putting policemen on bicycles, which was made in New York some time ago, has been so satisfactory that the number of officers on wheels has increased from two to seventy, with prospects that it will soon be made an even 100.

There is a decided movement in France in favor of roller chains. If the bevel-gear machine does not supersede the chain machine the latter is likely to know no other kind of chain but the roller. The roller chain behaves better in wet and muddy weather, so its makers and many of its riders say. The riders report that the roller chain is not so good as the ordinary chain with block links for getting up speed quickly in a sprint race on the track, but they recommend the roller chain on occasions when that item is not needed. One model has its teeth on the links of the chain and its rollers in the sprocket.

A man who prefers to ride on the handle bars of his bicycle rather than in the saddle and who is happier when suspended over the front wheel of his machine than when properly balanced over the pedals is something of a degenerate among wheelmen, but a degenerate whose example is not likely to be followed too extensively.

This eccentric rider is Willian Shields, better known as "Rube." He is a professional cyclist and a trick rider, but he doesn't confine his performances to indoor audiences. Shields is doubtless the best acrobat wheelman in this country. March 31, 1897, he rode down the steps of the west front of the capitol building at Washington, D. C. Dozens have ridden down the east steps, but Shields is the only wheelman who has successfully made the descent of the west flight, which has seventy-four steps and three landings. He made the descent in fifteen seconds and did not touch one of the last sixteen steps. In Cincinnati last July he electrified a crowd of spectators by riding out of a second-story window on a ladder. The crowd expected to see him dashed senseless, if not dead, at its foot. He shot down the rungs, however, and landed safely in the street.

BEATING BRITAIN AT HOME.

American Wheels More Popular Abroad Than British Makes.

British versus American bicycle trade is the subject of a report by Consul Parker at Birmingham, England, in which are shown the great inroads made by the bicycle manufacturers of this country. The report in part is as follows:

"The one marked development in this district during the past year has been in the cycle trade. From July 1, 1896, to January 1, 1897, this was very rapid. Productive power was immensely increased. Small establishments developed almost without notice into large ones, with an unsuspected capacity for turning out bicycles. The result was an overdevelopment not only of manufacturing facilities, but of company promoting. This induced some neglect of selling effort and a disposition to underrate the possibility of competition, especially from the United States. In spite of the increased use of bicycles all over the world the result of this was soon apparent in the comparative decline of exports. This did not affect the trade with the United States, because hardly any complete bicycles have been sent since the beginning of 1894. There was a determined maintenance of prices, but very little effort to make a good bicycle at such a cheap price as would bring it within the reach of workingmen.

"The British foreign trade in bicycles for the calendar year 1895 was $6,747,012.93; for 1896 it was $9,056,420.23; for 1897 the returns are not yet complete, but from January to September inclusive, the most important portion for the bicycle trade, there was a falling off of more than 13 per cent. If this rate should continue over the whole year the exports would amount to about $7,877,275.27.

"This was coincident with a remarkable export movement from the United States. During the past two years, ending in each on June 30, the total exports of cycles and parts from the United States and those to the United Kingdom are shown in the following brief table:

Description	1896.	1897.
Total	$1,898,612	$7,005,323
To the United Kingdom..	613,392	2,375,675

"Not only has the total export of American cycles increased by nearly 300 per cent in one year, and that to the United Kingdom in about the same ratio, but the demand from British colonies or markets, heretofore held almost exclusively by British manufacturers of cycles, was greater by more than 175 per cent during the period named. Thus the export of bicycles from the United States, insignificant two years ago, has grown to proportions almost as great as those of the United Kingdom in spite of its earlier development and immense capital and facilities. There are indications that the conditions are now fairly appreciated by the British manufacturer and that he will not so easily be caught again; but, as the manufacturers of the United States are not likely to surrender without a struggle the advantages incident to two years of successful trading, the former must now fight to retain what he has, to say nothing of getting back what he has lost.

CYCLING CHAFF.

Puck: He—I suppose the chainless wheel is fast?

She—I suppose so. I wonder how long it will take it to reach the bargain counter.

Somerville Journal: Money that a man pays for having his bicycle tires pumped up he ought to charge to his fresh air fund.

Judge: "Yes, a wheelwoman ran me down, but I suppose it was my own fault."

"How?"

"Well, I ought to have known enough to let a woman have her own way."

Indianapolis Journal: Grinning, the madman shook his chain.

"Well," said the wheelman, "if I could do that, instead of having to stick to my '97 pattern, I think I'd smile a few myself."

Chicago Record: Ned—That Miss Nickerson is a pretty good sort of a girl, isn't she?

Jack—First rate. You can always depen

on her. Why, she even does her fair share of the work on a tandem bicycle.

Washington Star: "I think," said the physician to the new patient, "that what you need is fresh air."

A worried look swept over the patient's face.

"Great Scott!" he exclaimed. "Are my bicycle tires flat again?"

Whisperings of the Wheel.

There is every indication that Omaha will get a taste of middle distance racing during the coming summer. Since Jimmy Michael came to this country this class of racing has steadily increased in popularity until the general race going public all over the country is beginning to demand it. This city has a number of professional racing men who would show up particularly well in middle distance contests, among them being A. E. Proulx, the French Canadian; W. F. Sager, the former Denver flyer; George Meierstein, Charles Hall and the old time favorite "Dad" Holton, who will be seen on the path again during the coming season. One of the large local hardware jobbing concerns that handle bicycles extensively has arranged to have a triplet and quadruplet here for pacing purposes, while a like concern in Council Bluffs will have a couple of triplets. These big machines together with the many tandems that will be in use by local retailers will furnish pacing machines enough to make the new distance contests interesting. This city is well provided with riders who, while able to line out a pretty warm pace, yet not fast enough to win races, can be utilized as pacemakers and will be used to man the big pacing machines. The new distances are ten, fifteen, twenty and twenty-five miles. There will of course be the usual number of short distance contests.

H. C. Gadke the promising young local professional rider who came to the front very rapidly in western racing circles during the past few years, promises to give a better account of himself than ever next season. He is taking the best of care of himself during the winter months and is preparing his system for a hard course of training upon which he will start early in the spring. Gadke has an unlimited amount of speed but at times seems to lack nerve and loses frequently on this account. He is particularly good upon large tracks where he can have plenty of room to let himself out.

It begins to look as though Omaha will find itself without a track on which to hold bicycle races at the opening of the coming season. The old fair grounds track on which all of the important contests have been held during the last few years is to be turned into the Midway of the exposition, while the only available track, that at Charles Street park, is in too dangerous a condition to permit of holding any races upon it, the foundations of the board track having rotted almost entirely away, and in many places the boards of the track are so rotten that they will hardly hold a man's weight to walk upon. There is some talk of a track being built in East Omaha by the Street Railway company, but as yet nothing definite has been decided upon. A good track properly managed should pay well here during the exposition and someone with capital might make a good investment of it by building a good one-third mile track. The birdseye views of the exposition grounds show the plat of a track which may be used for bicycle racing, if completed in time, but as near as can be learned it will be used almost exclusively for horse racing of different kinds during the exposition.

It is very doubtful if Omaha people will have the pleasure of seeing a cycle show this winter. The abandoning of the two large eastern shows for this winter has had a tendency to discourage local shows, although it was the manufacturers' intentions to support the latter and make exhibits at them through their local agents. Last year Omaha had a cycle board of trade, and there has been an effort made to reorganize the board again this year, but it has met with indifferent success, and but a very few of the dealers will have anything to do with it. Therefore, it is a pretty sure thing that there will be no bicycle show in Omaha this season.

The Tourist Wheelmen celebrated their victory over the Turners in the recent tug-of-war match by holding a smoker at Colonel Hartry's place on North Sixteenth street last evening. A regular club meeting was held, after which the colonel, who is captain and manager of the tug-of-war team, furnished the assemblage with specially built cigars, together with a lunch and just enough of the amber fluid to wash it down with. Everybody had a good time and went home happy.

Owing to his inability to secure Turner hall for the proposed big League of American Wheelmen smoker, Chief Consul O'Brien has decided to postpone the affair until some time in February, when he hopes to make it enough grander than was at first intended to pay the members and their friends for their long wait.

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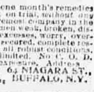

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