

THE WHEELMAN'S WORLD

Public sentiment as expressed by the newspapers is a unit in commending the action of the assembly of the League of American Wheelmen on the question of Sunday racing. The issue was not voted upon directly, but was embodied in the proposition granting state assemblies local option in the matter, provided a majority of the membership favored it. The proposition failed to secure the necessary two-thirds vote. Had local option prevailed it would remove much of the ill-will generated by concentration of power in league officers, but it would not promote Sunday racing. Public sentiment would not tolerate it very long. It is doubtful if western states would sanction it if put to a vote.

It is intimated in some quarters that the league will abandon control of racing. If there is any foundation for the report, it was not conspicuous at St. Louis. On the contrary, the feeling among the members assembled there was that race control was a handsome financial snap, and snaps are not thrown away voluntarily nowadays. It is all well enough to talk good resolutions and the groundings with hotel discounts and concessions. They are side issues, and are not to be mentioned as sources of revenue with the income from "sanctions" and the "penalties" thereto belonging. The revenue from race control will be materially increased this year by the provision requiring professionals to register \$2 worth. All of which will accrue to the benefit of the Co., giving them money to throw at the birds.

The bicycle face, bicycle humps and bicycle hands were among the attractions seen by those who attended the annual meeting of the League of American Wheelmen at St. Louis. Although the season of '98 is decidedly young and fringed with frost, it is announced that low-legs will be the affliction of this year. This is the way the wheels are to be built, according to the Washington Post expert: "The saddle of the bicycle has a tendency to slant the legs outward, and if they have to be brought in at the lower ends to narrow track, a curve will be produced sooner or later, usually sooner. The prevailing style of bicycle costumes to which the gentle sex display a marked partiality affords exceptional opportunities for a study of this question. When a leg takes a curve it generally starts from the ankle, and the short dresses worn by women bicyclists make it possible for the casual observer to learn of non-existence of the curve.

"The fact that the curve does exist removes the necessity for any learned dissertation on the advantages of the narrow tread. There are no advantages sufficient to overcome the one disadvantage of the curve. It is a common sight any place where a crowd of people ordinarily be a ravishing bicycle costume made hideous by a view of a curved and glaringly obvious pair of pant-legs. In other words, there is a tendency to look at a rear view, to prevent one from thinking that a Comanche Indian is walking up the street in front of one.

"There is no choice in the matter of sex. The curve is in evidence in the male rider as well as the female, and male dress is fully up to the standard of the female, as affording a chance for the casual observer. It is, of course, possible that the bicycle of narrow tread is not to blame for this. There have been low-legged people always. Whether there has been any improvement would be a question, but it would seem that narrow-tread bicycles cannot but assist in the production of curved legs."

A Kansas Judge has decided that a bicycle is a tool, and cannot be levied on for a debt. The point is well taken, O, wise Solomon, may your tribe increase.

If you have occasion to take your bicycle to a repairer for a trifling repair just watch how he does the thing, if he will permit it then if the repair should ever again become necessary you will know how to proceed to remedy it yourself. This of course refers to small matters only; there may be many cases where the repairer should not attempt to put right, but should leave to a competent repairer.

"A story of the benefit of cycling is told by the authority of Dr. Oscar Jennings, author of a treatise on the relationship between cycling and health," says a contemporary. "He tells of a youth who was refused by the medical authorities, when offering himself for conscription, on account of his suffering from advanced consumption. He took to cycling, under advice, and even indulged in carriage racing, and today is in excellent health, although part of one lung is absolutely destroyed. This is not the wild claim of an enthusiast, but a fact recorded by a reasonable and qualified expert in tubercular disease."

The annual report of the League of American Wheelmen complains that only one bicycle manufacturer in the country contributed any money to help on the league's race roads bureau. No cause for complaint there. The fact seems to have been that the makers of bicycles needed all the money they could command in order to keep their establishments going. The riders will plainly have to support this literary bureau and make it up in buying wheels of foreign closure sales.

The freedom which Massachusetts cyclists have enjoyed regarding the use of lamps is endangered. A bill has been introduced in the legislature which would change the carriage of lanterns at night. The Associated Cycling Clubs of Boston have taken action and will appear in opposition to the bill. At present the use of lamps is left to the discretion of the rider and he usually will not to have one on his wheel.

It is noticeable that in chains the three-eighth inch size seems to be gaining in favor over the broader pattern of one-fourth inch, and the high grade wheels now appearing are equipped with three-sixteenths inch chains. This is especially true regarding the product of those makers who are putting out enclosed chain models. As the chief cause of chain breaking is the extra strain upon them caused by an accumulation of mud, this tendency indicates that the narrower and lighter pattern of chain has been found strong enough when kept clean by means of a gear case. Owing, probably, to the advent of the chainless wheel, there is a general improvement all along the line in 1898. They are being out more accurately as to pitch and hardened better. Because of the bound into popularity made by the gear case the bolt-locking device on diamond chains is also in demand, as it does away with the nut on the chain bolt, thus reducing the clearance necessary for gear cases, as well as relieving the mind from worry about the bolt working loose. Devices for repairing chains on the road, some of them excellent, are beginning to appear at the rate of one a week.

When riding against a stiff breeze every bit of resistance tells. For such a journey, with the wind in the rider's teeth, the handlebar may be dressed a couple of inches below the level of the saddle with considerable advantage. If this cannot be done the saddle may be brought up, but care should be exercised in seeing that the rider is able to reach the pedals with ease. These alterations, of course, cause a stooping posture and should not be made unless the wind is strong.

Sunday racing they would lose all of these members, probably 2,000 or more in number, would be left to support the league. If the professionals in the country were to join and there are doubtless many who would not. So when it came to a vote it, of course, was not a success. The league will have to wait for a professional amendment. I am quite sure that this division does not want Sunday racing, but I should like to see professional racing made a part of the league. It is not in our state are gentlemen and would do credit to many amateurs who are now league members. But the only way I see for the league to get anything like a vote is to increase its membership enough so that the oat cannot control the assembly.

"There was quite a lengthy discussion on good roads during the meeting. The fact that the league will devote a great deal more time to this question and efforts will be made to have macadam used all over the country. The league will also endeavor to have cycle paths constructed along the principal roads throughout the country.

W. F. Sager, the popular western professional rider, came to this city from Denver last fall, he received a tempting offer from Dave Shaffer, Jimmie McCall's manager, to join the Michigan team of pacemakers during the coming season. Sager accepts the offer, which he doubtless will be well paid for New York March 1. It is Sager's intention to put Sager on a tandem with his old-time tandem mate, Swanborough of Denver. This pair has for two years unopposed tandem records from two to four miles and would be a fine team to pace for the Welch Rarebit that should pull him over the tape a winner.

Charles Ashley, a prominent Iowa racing man from Sioux City, has been in the city during the last week. Chairman Mott of the national racing board has again placed the Charles Street park track of this city on the blacklist and no more sanctions for races will be granted until the managers rectify with the racing board.

It is quite likely that Floyd McCall will not be seen on the pavement during the season. He has accepted a position with a local hardware concern as traveling salesman and announces that he will devote his entire time to the hardware business during the coming season.

A local wholesale hardware concern that handles a line of bicycle goods has had a racing team for advertising purposes during the coming season, has announced the personnel of its team in a cycling paper advertisement. Among the names are: one of this city's most promising young amateurs. If the "ad" happens to come into the view of Chairman Mott of the racing board this young man will be in a bad way, standing in a hurry, and be transferred to the professional class. Since the league has adopted professionalism the makers' amateur is a thing of the past.

President Hartley of the Tourist wheelmen of Omaha has fitted up rooms in the rear of his store and will have a good team of Tourists for pool quarters. The quarters consist of a pool room, smoking and card room, and reading room and make ideal club rooms.

"The registration of professional racing men was another important matter decided upon, and I think will prove a good thing as it will prevent professionals going a thousand miles or so away from home, where they are not known and competing in and winning greater races than they would. I think was made in the league not compelling amateurs to register as well as professionals, for it would be very easy for an amateur to go where he wanted and compete in novice races under an assumed name after he has won perhaps a dozen races elsewhere. Hereafter members of the racing board will be in a check upon the power given him furnished the pretext for his conduct. Lee had under him such men as Lafayette, Wayne and Morgan's famous riflemen.

A MILITARY PUZZLE. The conduct of Lee on this occasion is a puzzle to the student of human motives. At one moment he seemed in earnest and determined to win the war, and then he was tating and uncertain. In the council of war held at Hopewell Lee advised against the attack, and showed a very faint heart throughout the battle. When the British began to move he made a feeble attack, which was followed up by half a dozen blunders in rapid succession. Lee's instructions to the army were too late for him to get out of the British army, and weakened Wayne's forces by withdrawing from him some of his best troops, and finally he was forced to retreat along the line. Along a narrow pass, with a morass on either side, the American Red on that hot June day, pursued by the British, was driven to a desperate and excessively warm that many of the soldiers perished from sunstroke. Washington, who was bringing up the main army to attack the British in such a way as to cut off the rear of the victorious British and the occasional musket shot fell on his ears, and with a feeling of distrust, he galloped forward, accompanied by his entire staff. They met the head of the retreating army under General Lee. Just at this point, according to tradition, Washington did his "quacking." History records the first words uttered by Washington, as:

"Sir, I desire to know what is the reason, and the cause of this disorder and confusion?" Tradition says that the sentence began with "By God, sir."

"According to tradition, Washington, after seeing the British in the distance, he galloped and open on the enemy; that he then galloped down toward the advancing enemy, and fired his holsters at them, wheeled his horse about, and then he should be retreating hosts into a line of battle to meet the foe. Without doubt the father of his country was greatly provoked at Lee, and the evidence of his anger is shown in the angry words passed between them. But it is still a matter of doubt whether General Washington was angry.

MILD SWEARS OF THE TIME. Such terms and colloquialisms as "Egad," "By gad" and "Zounds," a gentle sort of profanity, were in common use in those days, but Washington has never been accused of using them. In the midst of the excitement and confusion attending a battle, and the rallying of routed hosts under the heavy fire of a victorious enemy, it is doubtful if any soldier would use such words, and some other word may have been used by Washington, which his enemies distorted into "By." Is it not more probable that another of his country's law, instead of swearing, made use of some sort of supplication? White with anger, and boiling over with disappointment and chagrin, what would he more natural than that he should on meeting Lee, cry out: "My God, sir, I desire to know what is the reason, and whence arises this disorder and confusion?" The words were said to the ruler of the man who had rebuked him on the battlefield. It is not probable that he would use such words, and "By" and "Zounds" and such change the whole tenor of Washington's remarks. This theory is certainly the most reasonable as well as the most charitable, and after an interval of almost 120 years, it ought to be adopted.

After Washington, at the risk of his life, had brought order out of chaos, and formed the routed troops into an invincible line of battle, he rode back to where Lee sat on his horse in a bad fit of sulks, and pointing to the rallied troops, asked: "What, sir, do you mean by that place?" "I will," Lee eagerly exclaimed. "Then," said Washington, "I expect you to check the enemy immediately. If you do not, you will be ordered, and I will not be the first to leave the field," returned Lee.

The advancing foe was held in check, and the routed troops were rallied into the army and all that long Sabbath day the battle raged, but the British and their allies were defeated and stole away during the night. After it was all over Lee demanded an apology, but Washington, instead of apologizing, placed Lee under arrest. He was held in custody for some months, and was not released until he had served his term of confinement. He never entered the army again, but walked through the war and died in Philadelphia October 2, 1797.

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Some Statistics on Shaving. The statistician who had been busy with his pencil looked up at the man who hates figures and said: "Did I have anything to do, and I thought I'd figure a little. You know that if I were cast on a desert island with a bundle of lead pencils and plenty of paper I wouldn't care a cent whether a sail blew to right or left, or if I saw that you needed a shave and that set me to thinking. Why do you shave, anyway?" "Well, sir, you might as well ask me to eat my own hair. Look here. I suppose that you have been shaving at 18 years of age and that you keep it up until you are 70. That makes fifty-two years. Electric Shavers is an invention of the east, and you shave twice a week. It costs 15 cents a shave and you get rid of one-eighth of an inch of hair. That will be a quarter of an

inch a week, or one inch a month. To get rid of that inch you pay \$1.25. An inch a month is twelve inches a year, costing you \$14.40.

"Now"—and the statistician drew a long breath—"twelve inches a year for fifty-two years is 624 inches, or fifty-two feet. It costs you \$74.88 to get that amount of whiskers out of your system. Then suppose you give a nickel tip every time to the man who shaves you. That makes \$10.40. But the fellow who hates figures had died.

SOME LATE INVENTIONS. A new ruling pen has a sliding pin set in the side of the holder to drop down on a level with the pen and slide along the ruler instead of pressing the pen against it, thus preventing the ruler from blotting the paper. A recently patented attachment for bicycle handlebars consists of a pneumatic cushion formed of a piece of rubber sheeting folded around the handle and cemented to make a cushion on the upper side of the bar, the valve for inflating being placed close to one end of the pocket.

To prevent waste water pipes from getting clogged a new device has a yoke frame set in the upper portion of the pipe to carry a rod by which a spiral wire basket is suspended from the ceiling and is used to catch all foreign substances and allow the water to pass freely.

A new method of fastening door knobs on the shanks is to cut notches in the shank and place a spring catch inside the knob to engage the notches as it is pushed on, the pressure of an awl or pin on the rear end of the catch releasing the knob.

Pulverized vulcanized rubber is being placed inside pneumatic tires to gather around a small drop of cement introduced through the puncture and confine the cement to a small spot around the hole and mend the puncture, the quantity of rubber being large enough to mend a number of punctures.

To assist a man in keeping cool in summer a new hat has a water reservoir in the crown having a small opening at the top of the under side, below which is a piece of absorbent material, which is thus kept damp and cools the head by the circulation of air passing through it.

A simple burglar alarm just placed on the market has a spring wedge to slip under the door or between windows which closes an electric circuit as soon as the door or window is pushed open, the wedge being of such shape that it will also ring the bell if pushed out by a foot before the door is tampered with.

A hammer with a puller has an ordinary hammer head pivoted on the section of the double-spring crank which carries it, the other section being used to press against the crown having a small opening at the end of the double shank, causing them to grip the nail and draw it when the handle is lifted.

In a new index for books the front edges of the leaves are brought tightly together, and the contents or chapters are stamped thereon, with the tips of arrows which point to the proper page number ending at the page, so that if the book is opened at the point of an arrow the chapter shown on the index will be found.

Trolley wheels are prevented from slipping off the wire by a new device, consisting of a frame extending inward on each side of the wheel and fitted with fingers which spring together and catch the wire as soon as the pressure is taken off by the wheel slipping, the fingers springing back into position to place the wheel on the wire.

Oil can be automatically fed to rapidly revolving shafts and pulleys by a new attachment for the shaft, consisting of a tube curved the way the shaft runs, with a screw cap at the inner end, the outer end being left open to receive air as the wheel turns, thus forcing the oil through the cap instead of letting it run to the top of the cup from centrifugal force.

The Curious Heavens. Washington Star: "Your religion," asked the intelligent heathen, "commands you to love your neighbor as yourself?" "Exactly," answered the missionary. "I do not err, then, in presuming that you have invented all these long-range, rapid-fire guns to prevent the obnoxious heathen from approaching close enough to be deemed a neighbor."

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