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## WHY POKER WAS INVENTED

BY JAMES STEVENS

IT WAS in the Summer of the Long Cruise that Politics swept like a plague through Paul Bunyan's camp. So the old loggers say, and they are not to be disputed. Only in their histories is there any account whatever of the measureless seasons between the Winter of the Blue Snow and the Spring the Rain Came Up from China. In their histories alone survive the records of Paul Bunyan, that mighty boss-logger who combed his beard with a young pine tree, of Babe the Blue Ox, who measured forty-two ax handles and a plug of chewing tobacco between the horns, of Johnny Inkslinger, the time-keeper who figured with a fountain pen fed by hose lines from two dozen barrels of ink, and of Hels Helsen, the Big Swede and bull of the woods, who muddled the Missouri river forever with one Spring bath.

Long and varied is the history of Paul Bunyan's camp, as it is related by the old loggers. And certainly one of its most moving chapters is the account of the sinister and astounding events that transpired during his absence, in the Summer of the Long Cruise.

That Summer marked the beginning of the second season of logging in the Leaning Pine country. Paul Bunyan had good reasons for believing that the time was ripe for exploration. He had not given an order in seven months, for orders were not needed

here. The long timbered slopes were as grassy and smooth as a parson's lawn. Every pine leaned gently, almost inviting itself to be felled. There were natural landings all along the burbly river. There were no snags and no tough underbrush; there were only flower bushes—the snowball and the golden pine pansy being the most common—for the swampers' brush hooks. Paul Bunyan would have called it lovely logging, had he used that kind of language. His own term for it was "scallump-tious." The loggers called it mighty fine doings, for the first season in the Leaning Pine country had left them sassy and fat.

The second season began gloriously. Babe the Blue Ox smiled all day long, and he often laughed in his softest moo. His hair shone as bright as the sunny sky. His digestion reached its peak. No longer did the Big Swede have to raise Babe's stable sixty feet a day to clear the refuse; the Blue Ox ate his three hundred bales of hay at a meal, wire and all, and that was the end of them. After the Big Swede had taken his Spring bath all the smells in the land were tolerable and many were appetizing. Hot Biscuit Slim had the great cookhouse, with its vast and intricate system of machinery, elevators and conveyors, operating perfectly. Johnny Inkslinger had all of his ledger entries up-to-date. The Leaning Pine country would

provide the same logging for the entire Summer. So Paul Bunyan considered this the best time for his Long Cruise.

For years he had planned to explore thoroughly Real America, the timber country in which he was the one and only boss-logger, and of which, in consequence, he was the supreme exalted ruler. So he fared forth without a doubt that all would be well among his men. He should have known better, for he was a student of history; and history certainly proves that when a nation loses its ruler, or when an army loses its commander, subjects and soldiers are smitten with dreadful doubts and fears. But Paul Bunyan would have said that loggers were better men than subjects and soldiers. This was true, of course, but his loggers were nevertheless human.

They did not plunge into revolution, to be sure, nor did they retreat from the woods in a panic of flight. They continued at their labor, but they were obviously depressed, for the old-time workday whistling and singing daily declined among the Leaning Pines after Paul Bunyan's departure.

At the end of a week, when his footsteps were heard no more, the loggers began to brood over their meals. There were no more high jinks and monkeyshines in the bunkhouses at night. Long before the regular light-dousing time the camp would be wrapped in darkness and in a brooding silence broken only by the lugubrious sigh or the fitful moan of some logger worrying and grieving in his dreams.

At last even Hels Helsen began to fuss and fume. He thought and thought until he had scratched his head raw, but nothing came of it. Finally he went to Johnny Inkslinger.

"Ay tank something gat to be done," said the Big Swede. "Ay tank ve gat to gat busy noo."

Johnny Inkslinger did not hear him. He had not moved from his stool for five days and nights. In all that time he had not once blinked his eyes as they stared over

his square spectacles. Nor had he once moved his right forefinger from its reflective posture against the rubber eraser attached to the end of his long nose.

Hels Helsen waited half an hour for a reply before he realized that Johnny Inkslinger was giving birth to one of his grand ideas. Then he solemnly withdrew. He tip-toed through the darkness to Babe's stable and went to bed. When it came to ideas the Big Swede knew that he was entirely out of the picture.

Far out and away Paul Bunyan, the master logger, the hero-leader, strode on through the tall timber, his thunderous footsteps at last beyond the hearing of his men. As he cruised the virgin timberlands for future logging operations he had no intimation of the fact that the bacillus of Self-Bossing, with its attendant germs, was entering his camp through the innocent and inspired mind of his time-keeper.

Little did Paul Bunyan think, else it would have been the Summer of the Short Cruise instead of the Long one.

## II

It was Shanty Boy who first suspected that Johnny Inkslinger was up to something. Shanty Boy was chief of the bunkhouse leaders, the bards who had made so many enjoyable bunkhouse nights with their singing, fiddling, story-telling, jigging, and other high jinks and monkeyshines. All of them had fallen so far in the doldrums since Paul Bunyan's departure that they had almost forgotten their pastimes. But one night Shanty Boy called them together.

"Looky here, men," said Shanty Boy seriously, "I got it figgered we're in fer losin' our positions. Yes, sir, that's what I bet. Now, dang it, you all quit yer grinnin'. I order every man to wipe that grin off his face. It ain't nacheral, nor fittin', nor proper, with Paul gone. And the worse is to come."

"Oh, let's be cheerful," protested Little Meery, the fattest and the kindest-hearted

man alive. "Let's look on the bright side."

"I'll tell you why," went on Shanty Boy, ignoring Little Meery. "Johnny Inkslinger ain't moved from his stool since the day after Mr. Bunyan left. Three weeks now he's been a-settin' there. He's havin' one of his grand idies, that's what I bet. You know what *that* means. You know what Johnny Inkslinger thinks of us. He ain't gettin' no grand idy fer high jinks and monkeyshines, I can tell you that!"

"Oh, let's have charity," begged Little Meery.

"Yes, sir," Shanty Boy went on solemnly, "he's figgerin' up something like that census he tried to start once, I bet. I was settin' on Mr. Bunyan's shoulder singin' him a song when Johnny come up about that. He complained that the loggers wouldn't stay put, for in Bunkhouse 76 he'd find maybe a hun'erd and one loggers, then over in Bunkhouse 83,333 he'd find a hun'erd and forty-three, and the next time, like as not, it would all be visy versy. He couldn't keep track of the loggers at all. He declared the bunkhousin' problem had him about run ragged, but fin'ly he'd worked up a grand idy which he called the census.

"Well, sirs, there's no use tellin' you that Mr. Bunyan only grinned through his beard at Johnny.

"'Holy mackinaw, man,' he said, 'when the camp is full of fiddlin', harmonizin', story-tellin', jiggin', and all sech kinds of high jinks ever' night and so many logs are goin' to the landin's, why the hell, Johnny, are you bound to worry, fret, pester, fluster and whee-whaw yourself about figgers? Don't take 'em so serious Johnny! Dod-rot 'em!'

"'Somebody is always dod-rottin' figgers,' Johnny come back peevish-like. 'It makes me feel like I've wasted my whole life. Figgers is all I've ever lived fer. But prob'ly yer right, Mr. Bunyan. I ain't no use. I'm jest a kind of camp ornament, no better'n a bard. I might jest as well be Shanty Boy, a-settin' on yer shoulder and singin' you a dang' song!'

"Well, sirs, if he didn't run on that way right to Mr. Bunyan's face, until I got skeered and yelled to be put down, and when I was you bet I run! I knowed then how serious Johnny Inkslinger took one of his grand idies, and I know now. He ain't meanin' us a particle of good."

"You oughter have charity," insisted Little Meery.

"Now, sirs," went on Shanty Boy, "I've got a notion we oughter take out from camp right now while we got a chance. We oughter foller Mr. Bunyan's tracks until we locate him and tell him how lonesome and sad the loggers are with him gone. We ain't no more use here, and that's a fact. We'll lose our positions sure as shootin', and only the Lord knows what else'll happen. I claim we better git while the gittin's good."

The other bunkhouse leaders were fearfully impressed by Shanty Boy's arguments. They stared woefully at one another and nodded their heads in solemn agreement. All but Little Meery.

"You ain't looked on the bright side yet," he complained. "You oughter——"

Just then Johnny Inkslinger's voice shrilled from the camp office. The bards held their breaths as they listened to the words roll over their heads and up the bunkhouse rows. Johnny Inkslinger was calling for Mark Beaucoup and the other bunkhouse cranks. He was calling them as leaders to the camp office.

"Looks like we're fired, fer a fact," said Shanty Boy grimly. "Well, we'll wait till we know."

Shanty Boy had seen the writing on the wall and read it shrewdly. The bards heard Johnny Inkslinger begin an oration with the announcement that Mark Beaucoup and the other cranks, the serious and sober minds of the camp, were to be the bunkhouse leaders henceforth. The cranks lifted solemn cheers. Then Johnny Inkslinger began to unfold his grand idea. The bards listened until they were addled, and then they gathered about Shanty Boy once more for consolation and advice.

"Well, sirs," said Shanty Boy, "as fur as I can make out this new grand idy of Johnny's ain't no ways loyal to Mr. Bunyan. He's worked up a rig called Self-Bossin' and some kind of mystery he calls Politics, all of which he says will make the loggers their old cheerful selves again. Well, sirs, I doubt it. And I don't see no loyalty in it. I reckon we've got to jest wait and see how it hacks out. Anyway, we're jest common loggers now. We're not leaders no more. Lay low and keep quiet fer awhile, is my advice."

Gloomily and silently the loggers nodded agreement. All but Little Meery. He broke out with rancorous oaths against Johnny Inkslinger.

"You oughter have charity," said Shanty Boy bitterly.

"You go to Hell!" bawled Little Meery. "Damn his eyes anyway!"

### III

In a week, so zealous were Mark Beaucoup and his subordinate cranks in instructing the loggers and educating them to be Voters, that the idea of Self-Bossing and the Politics which attended it were dominating the minds of all the choppers, sawyers and swampers of the camp. Johnny Inkslinger smiled to see lights in the bunkhouses all night long. There were no more lugubrious sighs and fitful moans. The loggers would undress for bed, but instead of rolling into their blankers, they would sit in their wrinkled red drawers and undershirts and talk Politics.

At first they were merely curious. They were puzzled by several questions. "Now, jest what the hell *is* Politics, anyway?" "When we get Self-Bossin' will ever' man in camp yell, 'Roll out or roll up!' in the mornin'? That's what's botherin' me." "Say, jest exactly what is a Constertoo-shun? It shorely ain't something you can eat, now." "Is a Jedge a *thing* or a *man*?" You ain't never described a Jedge yet." "What's a Sennit? I ain't askin' now about nothin' but that there." "Yeah, and a

Congerse? Sounds tough to me!" "What's a President-Logger like? Is it blue, like Babe?"

The new bunkhouse leaders answered the honest questions with orations which were garbled extracts from Johnny Inkslinger's inspired harangue on Self-Bossing and Politics. But they made it all sound fine and rare, and in the end the loggers succumbed. They began to yield to that perilous intoxication which fancy ideas always inflict on simple men. They began to argue. The bunkhouse roared.

Johnny Inkslinger smiled to hear the loggers. They were no longer sad. Men who made so much noise couldn't be sad.

Noise was the order of the night. Under the old régime every night had been replete with sweet and soothing sounds. Until nine o'clock fiddle music, the patter of jigging feet, the boom of singing baritones and basses, and the laughter and side-slapping of story-telling would sound from the bunkhouses and gladden Paul Bunyan's ears as he sat on his private hill and pondered, the while brushing his beard with a young pine tree. From nine until the inviting clang of the breakfast gong the only sounds that mingled with the wind-whispers among the tree boughs were the sighs and snores of simple men comfortably asleep. In the workday the notes of whistled and sung melodies soared above the ring of axes and the drone of saws. Every so often the gay thunder of Hels Helsen's bellow was heard, or the encouraging roar of Paul Bunyan, or the humorous shrill of Johnny Inkslinger, or the contented moo of Babe the Blue Ox. All the sounds were beautiful and laughable to hear.

It was different now. Paul Bunyan himself could hardly have been heard above the roar of political arguments that resounded in the woods by day and in the bunkhouses at night. The fate of all generalizations was visited on Johnny Inkslinger's creation. That is, every logger dressed it in his own individual notions. Thus a team of fallers called Slab and Slivers argued the

Election of Delergates to a Constertooshunal Convention:

"Looky here, Slab, you can say what you please, but I ain't usin' my vote to send nobody like Luke McGlue as a Delergate to rig up no Constertooshun fer *me*! Not much! And I'll tell you why. Jest a-cause I like pickle' pigs' feet and he don't, why, he's got to set acrost the table from me and snicker and sneer to hisself when I pile up a speck more of knuckle bones than anybody else does? Now, I know that pickle' pigs' feet is as honest and edyfyin' a grub as they is, I know Paul hisself would say as much, and I'll tell you that anybody who snickers and sneers at anybody else havin' a extry likin' fer pickle' pigs' feet has got a dark, furrin' streak in his nacher!

"Speakin' smack out, I don't figger Luke McGlue's to be trusted as a Delergate. He don't chaw terbaccer, neither. Maybe Pitch Pitchersen don't wash his socks often as he ought, but he ain't got no dark, furrin' streak in him, anyhow. I'm votin' fer Pitch. Yes, sir!"

"Well, I'm acshuly s'prised, Slivers, at you comin' smack out and *braggin'* about havin' an extry likin' fer pickle' pigs' feet. If they's sech a thing as disgustin' grub in Paul's camp, it cert'nly is them. I can't abide 'em. Never could. If they's anything that'd make me vote for Luke McGlue, it's the fact he can't, neither. I have an idy he'll fix our Self-Bossin' Constertooshun so's to Perhibit 'em. That's my idy of votin' fer him, anyhow."

"Perhibit? Now what in dangnation's perhibit?"

"Why, didn't you hear Mark Beaucoup explain that the main idy of laws is Perhibitin'? It means to stop something you don't like. Laws perhibit this and they perhibit that. They ain't no good unless they do. And I'm hopin' we get one that perhibits pickle' pigs' feet. They sicken me, acshuly, to even look at."

"By grab, jest let 'em try Perhibitin' pickle' pigs' feet! That's a hell of a kind of Self-Bossin', that is!"

"All right. You see if Luke McGlue don't get 'em Perhibited in the Constertooshun. He'll be Elected on that account, if fer nothin' else."

"The hell he will!"

"The hell he won't!"

The arguments over the Election of Delergates to the Constertooshunal Convention were only the beginning. The Constertooshun itself, when published, caused a small war in the camp. Johnny Inkslinger was swamped by the hordes of wounded, and the stock of alcohol and Epsom salts in his medicine chest rapidly diminished. For ten days little work was accomplished in the woods. No team of fallers could bring down a tree without stopping at least three times to argue about the Perhibitions of the Constertooshun. Instead of sawing felled trees into logs, buckers mounted stumps to orate. Swampers threw down their brush hooks to listen and heckle. Work in the woods was demoralized. Yet the choppers, sawyers and swampers who were unwounded went to the woods each morning, for they still put logs before Votes, and regarded Politics as little more than a new bunkhouse pastime. The old routine of logging was gradually resumed.

#### IV

The new bunkhouse leaders, however, became more and more presumptuous as the Summer of the Long Cruise dragged slowly on. First, Mark Beaucoup announced that he felt it his duty to devote all of his time to Public Service. Practice had made him perfect, and he easily wheedled the loggers into believing that Public Service was the finest rig yet, that Self-Bossing could never produce anything better than that, no matter how it strained itself. In the Fourth of July celebration Mark Beaucoup strutted up and down the bunkhouse rows in a sash as though he were already President-Logger.

After the Fourth the other cranks quit work for Public Service. Under Mark Beaucoup, they invaded Paul Bunyan's private



hill and made it the seat of their deliberations. It was rumored that the hill was to become the site of a building for the meetings of Congerse after Election.

Shanty Boy and the other deposed bards had watched all these developments with gloomy eyes. They combated them as much as they dared, but they didn't dare much. If they tried to join in the Political arguments they were sure to be kicked out of the bunkhouses, for seriousness was demanded first of all in these arguments, and the bards simply couldn't be serious. If a bard opened his mouth, a crank had only to bawl, "Hare-brained!" and the bard had to hunt a dark corner. The Conster-tooshun prohibited fiddling and jigging without a license, and there would be nobody to issue licenses until after Election. Finally Shanty Boy called a meeting of the bards to discuss the situation.

"It's shore hard times fer bards," he said mournfully, as he looked over the sea of faces turned up to him in the darkness. "And they're due to get harder mighty soon, what I mean. Election Night's drawin' powerful close, and when it's over Mark Beaucoup and his cranks'll be right in the saddle. They won't give no licenses, I can tell you that! We got to act, and act quick, fer things is comin' to the pass where the loggers wouldn't listen to Mr. Bunyan hisself. The Election's got 'em so wrought up they'd die right now to have Self-Bossin'. Well, what are we goin' to do? Think hard, men, and speak up, fer we've got to the point where Politics is bigger'n loggin' already, and there's a mighty danger of loggin' goin' by the boards altogether. Speak up now!"

"You oughter give 'em the bomb!" snarled Little Meery.

He had the loudest mouth of any man in camp, and he had snarled at the top of his voice. The bards nearest Little Meery tried to hush him up, but it was no use; he was so round, fat and slippery that they couldn't get a grip on him, and he was deaf to their entreaties. He snarled again, in his bawling voice:

"You oughter put the calks to 'em anyway! Walk on 'em! Cave their heads in! Give 'em the bomb, I say!"

Too late Shanty Boy heard a tramp of feet in the bunkhouse rows. The sharp-eared cranks had heard. It was a white-clad host that poured out of the bunkhouses, for red underwear was one of the rigs prohibited in the Conster-tooshun. The cranks and their hellions came for the bards with shouts of "Self-Bossin' and Liberty!" and with clubs. Three-fourths of the bards went down with broken heads. The others escaped to the bunkhouses and sought sanctuary in their blankets. All but Shanty Boy. He took to the hills.

He ran at a furious gallop through the Leaning Pines. Sorrow and anger thumped in his heart as he plunged on. The good old camp, as he saw it, was ruined. No longer did it have a place for him. He would head for the Kingdom of Kansas, he decided, as he drove on. He would start life anew in that horse-racing land. His steps lagged as he made this decision. Then the renewed uproar of arguments on the approaching Election rolled over the hills from the camp and crashed into his ears. Again Shanty Boy broke into a desperate run. Blindly he plunged on. Suddenly he fell six feet and thudded into soft dirt. He was unhurt but he could find no way out of the pit in the darkness. At last he slept.

When he awoke it was dawn. He sat up, stretched, and yawned. Then he opened his eyes. They blinked, then widened, then shone with joy. Shanty Boy sprang to his feet with a happy yell.

He had fallen into one of Paul Bunyan's footprints, and it was *fresh*!

Eventually he found Paul Bunyan in the great logger's work-cave, which was in a mountain remote from the camp. Paul Bunyan was so busy over his work-bench that Shanty Boy had to pound his toe for half an hour before getting attention. The boss-logger's eyes were sad, but he smiled through his beard as he picked up his favorite and set him in the old place on his shoulder.

"I know all," said Paul Bunyan. "Johnny Inkslinger came after me and confessed everything. I alone am to blame. In the beauty and peace of the Leaning Pine country I had forgotten what poison words may contain and how overpowering are grand ideas to simple souls."

"Yeah," said Shanty Boy encouragingly. "What are you goin' to do about it, Mr. Bunyan?"

Shanty Boy asked the question only to be polite. He knew that all was well now. Whatever Mr. Bunyan did would be right.

"Just you look!" commanded the hero-leader, with pride.

Shanty Boy peered down at the workbench. He saw that fifty-two pasteboards, all shiny and white except in spots, each one a dozen feet in length, were strung out in a row. A few of the pasteboards were still blank, but some had red spots like diamonds, others had red spots like hearts, and yet others had black spots of shapes strange to Shanty Boy. But the ones that really interested him were a number that had colored pictures of people in fancy dress, with such letters as K, Q and J in the corners. Paul Bunyan picked up still another pasteboard.

"Just now invented that one," he said proudly. "I call it the Ace of Hearts."

"What are they all for, Mr. Bunyan?"

"They're for poker," the great logger explained amiably. "That's my latest invention, my antidote to Politics. There'll be two kinds, draw and stud. Both will be played with fifty-two pasteboards, which I call the deck or the cards. There'll be blue, red and white chips to count with. This deck is only my model, of course. I'll strike off other decks small enough to fit the loggers' hands."

Shanty Boy was speechless with joy. Paul Bunyan smiled through his beard some more, and went on.

"I'll make a hundred decks for each bunkhouse and as many sets of chips, while you are learning the game. Then you can hustle back to camp and teach it to the

other bards. Election Eve you will introduce stud poker into all the bunkhouses. Election Night you will change to draw. The next morning I'll appear, to call, 'Roll out or roll up!' And I'll bet ducks against doughnuts, by the holy old mackinaw, that my loggers will just about be their old bully selves again!"

"Yore damn' tootin' they will, Mr. Bunyan!" shouted Shanty Boy.

## V

The Leaning Pine country had never been more beautiful and serene than it was on Election Eve. There was a fair breeze at sunset and the grass leaves waved softly before it on the gentle slopes. The September sun sank from sight with a mellow smile and its rays faded from the land like a caress of kind farewell. The purple and velvety twilight drifted down and in it the bunkhouse lights appeared like friendly winking eyes. The night that saw the birth of stud poker was a beautiful night indeed.

But first of all it was Election Eve. After supper the beauty of the land and the time was violated by brawls and battles over Politics. Twilight had hardly given way to actual darkness before Slab and Slivers were laid out in their bunks, bundled in bandages and doctored with alcohol and Epsom salts. In every other bunkhouse fractures and lesser injuries were already in evidence. The uproar was head-splitting. Shanty Boy knew that many loggers had brought axes into camp and hidden them in their bunks. Now was the time to act, else bloody murder would ensue.

Shanty Boy stepped out before the star bunkhouse, threw back his head, and then the signal rang out in the beautiful, troubled starlight.

"Deal the cyards!"

The cry was passed on from bard to bard, while the bunkhouse leaders, assembled in Caucus on Paul Bunyan's private hill, were roaring so at one another that they could not hear.

The first intimation that Mark Beaucoup had of the presence of an antidote to Politics in the camp was upon his return from the Caucus. He noticed that the uproar of argument was broken by lulls here and there, and that in the star bunkhouse it was utterly hushed. An appalling quietness met him as he stepped into the doorway. A frightful sight met his eyes. The loggers of the star bunkhouse were *amusing* themselves!

Each of the sixty-three bunkhouse tables had seven men around it in a ragged circle. There was a feverish flush on every face and a hot glow in every eye. The objects at which all the loggers were staring with such intensity were repellent to Mark Beaucoup, though he had no idea what they were.

He did not know those slick pasteboards which shone in such gay colors under the suspended lanterns. He did not understand the nature of the round blue, red and white chips which clicked musically in pitch-stained hands. More incomprehensible still were the motions of the loggers, as one at a table would pass some cards around, the red backs up, then pass others that revealed vivid faces and spots; while every logger peered eagerly at his first card, concealing it between his paws, and then stared with an air that was innocent and yet mysterious at the next four as they were passed around between tosses of chips into the center of the table. Even more baffling were the words muttered by the loggers:

"Yore anty." "Bet a blue on his nibs." "Tilt you a red one on a red ace." "By me." "Call 'er." "Check 'er to you." "You're high with the K-boy." "I'm up." "Runnin' a whizzer, huh?" "Bet 'em high and sleep in the streets." "I lay down." "Got a ace in the hole." "I've straightened." "That's good, dang the luck."

All was incomprehensible and baffling to Mark Beaucoup, until he observed Shanty Boy marching up and down, pausing here and there to answer a question,

congratulating this winner, consoling that loser, and all the time keeping that blank countenance and the reticence in speech which were to become as much a part of the game of poker as the cards themselves.

In this recovered dominance in the life of the star bunkhouse by Shanty Boy, Mark Beaucoup saw the glory and profit he had imagined for himself completely obliterated. Suddenly he felt himself flushed with rage. Serious and sober political arguments put aside for the frivolities of the bards, and, of all times, on Election Eve! It was outrageous! The voice of Mark Beaucoup thundered indignantly into the quiet of the stud poker game:

"Looky here, men! This ain't nothin' but plain out and out Reverloooshun! That's the dahgundest thing alive, and I ain't a aimin' to have it! You all know infernal well that there truck you're messin' with ain't got nothin' to do with Self-Bossin'! You-all quit it right now! If you don't, you'll git yer Votes tooken away, that's what'll happen, and then where'll you be? I'm a-orderin' you in the name of Self-Bossin' to quit this yere here and now! I *perhibit* it, by doggy!"

To emphasize his bellowed words, he reached over the shoulder of the player nearest him and swept cards and chips to the floor. Mark Beaucoup's eyes popped with surprise as he saw the player's face.

"Why, Pitch Pitchersen!" he yelled. "You, of all! You, a Cannerdate fer the Sennit! You, a framer of the Constertoo-shun! You, *amusin'* yerself——"

Pitch Pitchersen was usually a man of few words. But now he rose up roaring.

"Cannerdate fer the Sennit, hell!" he bawled. "Mark Beaucoup, you ruint my hand! Here I had a straight flush a-comin' up, and there was Luke McGluxe a-settin' with two aces in sight and prob'ly another in the hole, and I'd made maybe a straight flush, a filled somehow anyway, and cleaned him! The first decent hand I've held yet. And you ruint it, Mark Beaucoup! And this is what yer goin' to git fer doin' it!"



He started an uppercut from his boot top, but the hand of Shanty Boy gripped his arm.

"This ain't Politics, Pitch Pitchersen," said Shanty Boy. "It's poker. There'll be no fightin' where I'm runnin' the game."

Pitch Pitchersen growled and swore, but he yielded and returned to the table. Shanty Boy brushed his hands.

"Deal 'em up agin," he said.

## VI

Muttering threats, the political leader retreated into the darkness of the beautiful night. Shanty Boy smiled after him. He was too confident in the power of poker to enchant all the loggers of the camp. He had forgotten that there were other bunkhouse bards who did not have his own superb mastery of the game. There was Little Meery, for example, who had got the habit of being pessimistic and discontented to such a degree during the Summer that he was even pessimistic and discontented with poker. Despite the beating he had received, he had not given up his faith in the bomb. As he half-heartedly dealt the cards in his bunkhouse now, the loggers there gave him only a few curious and hostile glances. They were still arguing the Election. They had no time for the fat bard and his cards.

Mark Beaucoupp peered into Little Meery's bunkhouse, and he felt immensely cheered. He still had a few tricks to play. He'd strike at the weakest point now, and leave the star bunkhouse to the last. In most of the other bunkhouses the sounds of clicked chips and riffled cards were ominously increasing, while the Political bawls and yells were dying down. Quick action was needed to save the situation.

Mark Beaucoup swung bravely into Little Meery's bunkhouse. The quarreling loggers hushed when they saw him, for they still regarded him with reverence and awe. He dispatched some of them to notify the most trusted cranks to gather here in the new night uniform of white

cotton flannel drawers and undershirts. Then he folded his arms and waited. His eyes narrowed to slits as he stared at the bard who had once been the kindest-hearted man alive and was still the fattest one. Mark Beaucoup gloated as he visioned the larded back of Little Meery stripped for the whipping party. But he did not gloat long.

Specks of red began to snap in Little Meery's blue eyes as he returned Mark Beaucoup's stare. The change in his disposition was reaching its climax and an unreasoning fury began to blaze in every bulge and fold of his round form. Suddenly he bellowed, in a voice that thundered all through the camp:

"Poker, hell! I'm goin' to try the bomb anyways! Mark Beaucoup, I'm goin' to blow you into the middle of next week!"

While he bellowed Little Meery waddled with amazing speed to his bunk. With a hand like the bottom of a red plush chair he reached under his blankets and hauled forth a sackful of bombs. Mark Beaucoup turned to run, but he was too late. He had not taken one step outside the bunkhouse before a bomb had struck the ground directly behind him, exploded with a blaze and a roar, and hurled him high into the air.

The bunkhouse cranks, already gathering in their white underclothes, held their breaths as they watched a black streak fading against the stars. Little Meery had fulfilled his promise. Mark Beaucoup was blown into the middle of next week, and tomorrow night was Election time. The cranks sighed hopelessly as they realized that until next Wednesday their political chieftain was gone.

"And that ain't all!" bellowed Little Meery from his bunkhouse door. "You're all goin' to be blowed after him, damn yer eyes! Poker, hell! Me fer the bomb!"

He drew his arm to hurl the first one at the cowering, white-clad crowd, when the bomb was jerked from his hand and a heave from behind knocked him off his feet. Shanty Boy, alarmed by Little Meery's

resounding bellow, had run over and crawled through a bunkhouse window. In the desperation of the moment he had heaved too hard. Little Meery began to roll.

He was the fattest man in the world and he rolled down the bunkhouse row like a huge round rock bounds down a mountainside. From bunkhouse to bunkhouse Little Meery bounced, until he began to curve, and that sent him at last through the yawning door of the star bunkhouse. He thudded to the floor, bounced again, and chanced to light bottom down on a bunk facing the first stud poker table. The players there were so immersed in their game by now that they had heard nothing. At the next deal it was observed that another face was at the table, and that was all. When Shanty Boy, red-faced and panting, appeared on the scene he saw Little Meery gazing with eyes that had the old-time cheerful shine. And he was chortling.

"Lookit!" he sighed blissfully. "Two aces back to back! Yes, sir, I got an ace in the hole! Talk about lookin' on the bright side! If this ain't it, what is?"

"You hadn't oughter tell yore hole card," admonished Shanty Boy.

"Oh, let's have charity," pleaded Little Meery. "I ain't got the heart to fool anybody."

Shanty Boy smiled indulgently. It was beautiful to see that Little Meery was

again the kindest-hearted man in the world. And it was beautiful to gaze out into the starlit night and hear the last of the political arguments subsiding, while the musical click of chips and the rattle of cards mingled with the wind-whispers in the boughs of the Leaning Pines. All was beautiful to see and hear this night, thought Shanty Boy. All was well.

Yes, sir, Politics was licked. It was Election Eve no more. The cranks would never try to hold Election, with Mark Beaucoup blown into the middle of next week, and with the loggers enchanted by poker. If they did try to hold it, they wouldn't get out more than one-half of one per cent. of the vote, he could tell 'em that!

There'd be high jinks and monkeyshines again in the bunkhouses. And the beautiful games of stud and draw beside. . . . Yes, sir. . . .

Shanty Boy's kind thoughts were interrupted by a sight that looked like a cloud rising rapidly from the starry horizon. It had the shape of a mighty hand. It waved toward the fast fading black streak that was Mark Beaucoup headed for next Wednesday, then it was flourished toward the camp in a wide and lordly gesture of benediction.

It was the hand of the good and great Paul Bunyan. Shanty Boy knew peace at last. Truth and beauty had prevailed. The good old times were back.

# WOMEN AS JURORS

BY H. H. SAWYER

WITH the enfranchisement of women have come many changes in our civil and political life, as well as in our domestic and commercial life. Nowhere are these changes more marked and striking than in the courts. Formerly juries were made up entirely of men, and a woman's presence in the court-room was a novelty. From time immemorial the court-room had been a loafing place for all the neighborhood male hangers-on and derelicts. It furnished free entertainment and amusement, to say nothing of scandal, and it also offered an opportunity for learning a smattering of law; in addition, there was a chance of being called as a talesman, juror or witness in a case and thus picking up a few dollars.

Women seldom came to court unless they were litigants or subpoenaed as witnesses. When they did come, the atmosphere was so strange and uncongenial that they left at the earliest opportunity, and in their excitement and fright took away with them only a hazy and indistinct impression of what it was all about. A large percentage of American women had never been in a court-room at all, and when woman suffrage came they were still more dismayed at the prospect of being called for jury service. The average woman's idea of a court was a place to be shunned like a pest-house. This feeling was so prevalent throughout the country that literally thousands of women in those States where they became liable to jury duty at first refused to vote for fear of being called.

In such States, when jury summonses were sent out at the beginning of each term of court, women called in person,

telephoned, or wrote asking to be excused. Any requests with valid reasons were granted without question or quibble—sickness, small children, work that would be seriously interfered with, and so on. One excuse offered by women, and nearly every woman summoned made it, was: "I cannot serve, I don't know how, I don't know the first thing about a court, I have never been in a court-room in my life, I would not know how to act, I am just scared to death of a court." And they were in deadly earnest. The Iowa courts early adopted the rule of suggesting to all these women that they serve two days and get acquainted with the work, and that if at the end of that time they still desired to be excused, they would be allowed to go. Hardly a woman has asked to be excused after the second day without a very good reason. On the contrary, many women have lamented the day when the term was completed and the jury panel had to be dismissed.

Conditions, indeed, have so changed in the seven years that women have served in the Iowa courts that today we usually have more women anxious to serve than we can use and keep any semblance of a balance between the sexes. On some occasions we have had to draw lots to determine which women to excuse. In other States where jury service for women is mandatory, courts seem to have had about the same experience and have adopted similar rules, and with about the same results.

Prior to the adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment to the Federal Constitution in 1920 the question of women jurors had