

T-BONE SLIM DISCUSSES



TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Speaking about technique, and assuming that 16 bankers are working on a "tongs-gang" relaying steel, I wish to say that it would keep six lawyers busy tellin' 'em how to do it and not cripple themselves. I do admit that lawyers have a degree of ability. Coming as it does from me, I hope the legallists will be able to hang onto their 'frayed' modesty.

On the other hand, technique of a locomotive engineer is high indeed. It takes years and years of coal shoveling before they are trusted with a locomotive. It fairly appalls me (to think) what they must know. Colored hostlers must work six weeks around a roundhouse, before they are even allowed to run an engine into the shed. I know firemen that have shoveled coal ten years without learning all the "in and outs" about an engine, to say nothing about finding the 57 oil holes.

I don't know why "technique" is so called, why "skill" is so called—I've always called it work—but I do know that man can learn to swing a spike maul with his teeth and drive a spike, if some one will hold the spike . . . otherwise he must do it with his hands. Last night I saw a dog climb a seven-foot post and take down a hoop. Would you call that technique, trick, or work? Any dog can do the same, the stunt is accomplished by taking a running start and continuing up the post the same way.