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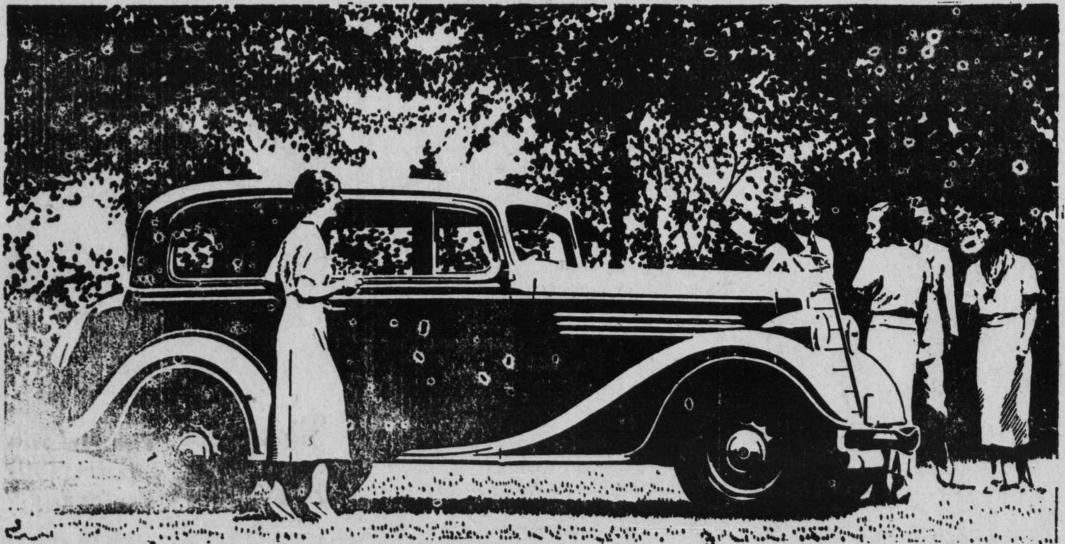
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NBSERVATIONS

LEE SHIPPLEY

Lee Shippley is the writer of a daily column in the Los Angeles Times, "The Lee Side 'o L. A." I have long considered him one of the cleverest writers on The Times, with powers of keen observation and a kindly, muhorous and entirely human outlook on life.

So when, in his column in the isues of The Times of July 7, 9, 10 and 11, he comments on his visit to Las Vegas and his experiences here, it is done pleasantly, without the obviously bitter tone of criticism with which so many writers seek to display their own high morality.

COMPARING CONDITIONS

Somebody has written "Comparisons are odious." Perhaps it would have been just as well to say, "Comparisons are odorous." Nevertheless, I cannot refrain from occasionally comparing Las Vegas with other cities—Los Angeles for example, in the matter of morals.

I have known and loved Los Angeles since I first saw her as but little more than a sprawling, overgrown Mexican villiage in the summer of 1887, all puffed up with the inflation of a real estate boom, then in the painful process of being deflated. Being a young fellow of enterprising disposition, I soon learned where Alameda, Sepulveda and Apablasa streets were; and Macgumess' cigar store in the Downey building where the Los Angeles Federal building now stands.

My first contact with gambling came when a fellow showed me how to go out through the back door of the cigar store; around a court to a certain door; thence into a room in which you were subjected to the cold scrutiny of a guard behind a peephole; thence, if permitted, into a larger room in which faro bank, roulette, stud poker and all the favorite gambling games were catering to the business men of the

And so it has been that during all these years, Los Angeles, despite her angelic name, has harboured her own share of gambling and vice. In truth it is probable that there never has been a day when Los Angeles did not, on the sly, operate more gambling than the whole state of Nevada.

The chief difference is that in Nevada we do not shut our eyes to the fact that gambling exists. We recognize it by law, provide for the payment of stiff license fees and insure the operation of the games honestly and fairly for those who wish to play.

As a matter of fact, if the gambling houses of Las Vegas had to depend upon the patronage of Las Vegas people for existence, they would promptly quit business. They are supported by strangers, mostly from California, who come here looking for a little entertainment, but who do not wish to submit themselves to the certain fleecing they would experience in the "hideout" gambling joints of Los Angeles. And, as for the other forms of vice, I am quite sure that Las Vegas would not suffer through comparison with the hundreds of dance halls, beer joints and off-color night clubs which Los Angeles hides in her ample bosom.

I once had occasion to remark to the mayor of an eastern city who was publicly expressing his holy horror of the open gambling in Las

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