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ALL THE WINNA

All the Winners

By

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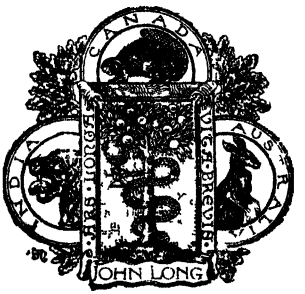
"Pink Papers," "Bits of Turf," "Cakes and Ale," "The Flowing Bowl,"
"The Great Game," "Turf Tales," "A Mingled Yarn,"
"Pick-me-ups," "Dead Certainties," etc.



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ALL THE WINNERS

A COSTLY SCRATCH

A TALE OF THE TURF

"YES," said Mr Fairlie Besthead, as he arose from the breakfast-table. "I'm bothered if I'm going to keep horses for the benefit of the public. The public don't buy the horses, they don't pay my trainer's bills, and they don't settle for me with the bookmakers on a Monday. I won't run the horse—that's flat."

"A flat's game, you mean, old man," rejoined the Honourable Street Portugal, Fairlie's toady-in-chief. "Only think what they'll say about you in the papers."

"Bosh! What do I care for the papers!"

"And the stewards of the Jockey Club have had their Argus eye upon you for a long time."

"Damn their Argus eye! There's a squint in it strong enough to stop a train."

"Very well; do as you like, of course," said the Honourable, rising. "So you're not going to Sandown to-day? I'm just off there. See you to-night, I s'pose. Got a cigar? Thanks; you don't mind my filling my case?" and off he strolled, humming, as he went, the soft, sweet

strains of "*He's* all right," the last new ditty with which Mr Charles Coborn had succeeded in capturing the public taste.

Fairlie Besthead was a young man who had not yet reached his third decade. Both his parents had died at a very early period of his existence, and the large and accumulated fortune which Fairlie had come into the possession of on attaining his majority he was now doing his level best—so the world said—to squander on the racecourse, in the boudoirs of the groves of the Evangelist, and at the card-table. A large stud of horses in training at Epsom certainly made a large hole in his income; and the front row of the chorus are not wont to bestow their smiles and their favours upon the gilded youth for love alone. Baccarat at the Solomon Club or at the Screechowls is more often than not an expensive amusement, more especially with a Jew banker and a crowd of "lumberers" hanging around you "all on the mak'" (as the late Colonel North said). Yet Fairlie was not altogether a fool, True, he had many of the characteristics of the "fly flat"; but, although not altogether a pronounced man of the world, he was possessed of a considerable amount of shrewdness which occasionally astonished those who sought to make him their prey. He was an excellent judge of a horse, and of a handicap; and during his short career on the Turf had more than once been held up to the execration of his fellow-man in the columns of a "reptile press."

He had the most sublime contempt for the stewards *pro tem.* of the Jockey Club,

whose decisions he frequently declared would disgrace a chandler's shop; yet he had, so far, managed to keep strictly within the limits of racing law. True, many nasty things were said when, a few months before this story opens, it was announced that he had sold the favourite for the All Fools' Stakes to go to China, and when the horse still remained in England, running, and occasionally winning, in the colours of Foo Ling, the world said that the horse was really the property of some bookmaker to whom Fairlie was indebted; but then, you know, the world is so censorious, and is always saying a great deal more than its prayers.

Grenadier, who had won a good race at West Hartlepool, had been "jumped" to a very short price for the Great Muddleham Handicap, to be run in a fortnight's time at Marlow-in-the-Dyke, without a penny of his owner's money having been invested; and this fact gave rise to the conversation at the commencement of my story.

"I'll scratch the horse this very day," mused Fairlie, when the sound of his friend's retreating footsteps had died away. "I won't go to Sandown, but I'll drive up to Weatherby's myself this afternoon, and put the pen through Grenadier's name. It's an infernal shame that I can't get £3000 on a good thing as well as anybody else. And Grenadier would win by the length of a street, if I'd only allow him to run. The idea of their saying that he's not a boy's horse! Well, at all events they'll soon know he's a *man's* horse, for out of the Great Muddleham Handicap goes Grenadier, this very hour. My

boots, Thompson," he added to his valet, who had just entered with some letters on a silver salver.

"Why *will* people bother me with letters?" continued Fairlie, as he opened some of those atop of the pile — "'Dear sir, knowing your charitableness of disposition, I venture to apply for a subscription towards a new organ—'

"Blow his new organ!

"'Honoured sir, herewith we beg to forward patterns of our new Scotch homespuns, direct from the mills, guaranteed all wool—'

"All rot!

"'Dear old chappie, you couldn t lend me a tenner till Saturday—'

"No, I'm damned if I could!

"'Beast'—holloa, here's one from Daisy—'you promised to take me to Sandown. Now I shall go with Street just to spite you—'

"You may go with Old Nick if you like. Now, once more I ask why *will* people write to me?" and scooping up with both hands his entire correspondence, opened and unopened, Mr Fairlie Besthead consigned the lot to the flames of the very excellent fire at the moment burning within his grate.

"And now for a canter in the Park," he continued. "Stay, there's one thing to be done first. Don't see why I shouldn't make a bit out of my own horse as well as anybody else. Old Flybags, my commissioner, is sure to be at Sandown. I'll send him a wire. Here, where the deuce is the code?"

A protracted search in every drawer of his writing-table at length produced a neat little

volume, containing different cipher words for telegraphing. Fairlie turned over a page or two, and then filled up a telegraph form as follows:—

"To JELLYBAGS,
"Tattersalls' Ring,
"Sandown Park

"Half pokers, wisdom, muddle bag.—FAIRLIE."

"There," said he, when he had despatched the message by the trusty Thompson to the telegraph-office, "that'll give him the office to lay the favourite for me to lose fifty thousand. And if that doesn't give some of these forestalling merchants fits, my name isn't Fairlie Best-head."

Half an hour later our hero was cantering gaily up the Row, mounted on a dappled grey cob, for whom he had only two days previously refused £250 from an exalted personage. Thanks to careful training and skilful handling, Cock Robin's action was the very poetry of motion, whilst the slightest pressure on his mouth would either turn or stop him at the will of his rider, and Fairlie enjoyed his ride immensely, and that enjoyment was not a little heightened by the reflection that the precipitancy of public backers would eventually prove the means of lining his own purse to a pretty tune.

A cigar and two glasses of the old Curaçoa in the smoking-room of his club, just three rubbers at *écarté* afterwards with a friend, whom he managed to hit up for the best part of a monkey, and

then it was time for Fairlie to enter the well-appointed brougham which had been sent to the club for him, and to bowl off to Weatherby's to scratch Grenadier for the Great Muddleham Handicap, ere the office had closed. That scratching was eventually announced as having taken place at "4·50 p.m."—just two hours and fifty minutes after the commencement of racing at Sandown Park.

Betting on the first race on the Esher slopes was progressing fast and furious. There was a very strong ring present, as is usually the case at Sandown, and the members' enclosure, with those devoted to members of Tattersalls' and spectators of less importance, were crammed to repletion. Leaning over the railings, between a gentleman with a most pronounced Hebraic cast of countenance, and another gentleman whose bright eye and ruddy cheeks betokened a healthy life devoted to outdoor sports, was Mr Jellybags, the great bookmaker and commission agent. To be able to "bow to Jelly" was the ambition of every young sportsman of fortune or expectations; and it was said that it took five clerks the whole of Sunday to make out his account for the following day's settling.

"Well, the feeald a monkey!" shouted Jellybags. "The feeald a monkey! Will anybody back one?" And as no noble or gallant sportsman appeared desirous at the moment of doing anything of the kind, the bookmaker seized the opportunity of opening some of the telegrams which reposed in his left hand. The topmost telegram, when drawn from its envelope, read as follows:—

All the Winners

"To JELLYBAGS,
"Tattersalls' Ring,
"Sandown Park.

"Half pokers, wisdom, muddleback.—FAIRLIE."

"Well, I'm damned!" exclaimed the bookmaker to himself. "It's a strong order—a very strong order, and the horse don't go so well in the market, either. 'Back the favourite for the Muddleham to win fifty thousand!' By gosh! it *is* a strong order. But I suppose it must be done."

A veritable Triton amongst commissioners was Jellybags. Ten minutes later he had stationed his agents all down the line, and, during the interval between the first and second races, Grenadier had been backed to win the best part of £20,000 for the Great Muddleham Handicap, at prices ranging between 8 to 1 and 5 to 1.

And yet the horse went badly in the market. Despite the large sums for which the horse had been backed that day and previously, there still appeared to be plenty to lay.

"Can't make it out," said Bob Free. "I *know* the Honourable Street was a-breakfastin' with the owner this morning; yet he comes to me and lays me two points over the odds—what he calls his hedging money. I don't believe it *is* his hedging money. There's some blooming error somewhere. The Honourable seems to be a-laying for the owner, and old Jelly a-backing for him. Well, we shall all be wiser in an hour or two."

And they all were—sure enough.

Before four o'clock that afternoon a lot more

money had gone on Grenadier, who at length, through sheer weight of metal, touched 5 to 2. The last of the Honourable Street Portugal's hedging money was laid to Mr Jellybags himself.

. . . . . .

When Fairlie returned home to dress for dinner that evening, he found a telegram on his hall-table. The message was from his commissioner, and was to the following effect :—

"To Besthead,
"2 Rose Street,
"Mayfair, London, W.

"Niagara wheel snakes hunter orange jelly."

Hastily turning to the code book, Fairlie translated the above thus :—

"Could not get all on, but you stand £38,000 to £8000."

"Great Heavens!" shrieked the young man, filling up a large glass of brandy and swallowing it at a draught. "What horrible mistake is this?"

. . . . . .

Late that evening Mr Jellybags called round.

"Mr Besthead, what's the meaning of this, sir?" and the excited and enraged bookmaker waved in the air a copy of the *Special Standard* of that evening, announcing the scratching of Grenadier.

"My God! That's the question I ought to ask *you*," said the other. "What infernal foolery have you been up to? I wired to you to lay the horse—"

"You *didn't!* Here's the telegram, and it distinctly says '*back.*'"

"Why, I wrote 'bag'—the code word."

"Phe-e-ew-w!" and the bookmaker gave a long whistle. "Then it's the fault of them bloomers in the telegraph-office!"

"Apparently. And their fault has cost me a fortune!"

"And me, too," said Jellybags. "I backed it for a lump as well."

. . . . . .

Next morning's papers positively teamed with articles and paragraphs calling for the immediate warning off the Turf of Mr Fairlie Besthead. The Honourable Street Portugal made a nice little thing out of his "hedging money"; and on the following Saturday, as Fairlie descended the steps leading from the sanctum of Mr Mossy Abrahams, the eminent financier, he bitterly reflected that this last was the costliest scratch he had ever perpetrated.

"AN OWDACIOUS YOUNG 'UN"

THE town of Malton, situate between York and Scarborough, has not deteriorated within the last hundred years in the way of trade, population or sport; but it is no longer the important centre for training racehorses which it was for more than half of the nineteenth century. The first great Malton trainer mentioned in history was John Hutchinson, who exercised his charges on Langton Wold, taking them to Hambleton when the ground got too hard for galloping. But a greater than Hutchinson was shortly to take his place, in the person of John Scott, familiarly known as "The Wizard of the North"; a man who, thoroughly conversant with every detail relating to his calling, was destined to make a great deal of Turf history.

"Scott's lot" were inquired after almost with bated breath, for most important races which were run during at least four decades of the nineteenth century; and although his methods were somewhat slow and severe, there has never been a horse-trainer more respected, nor one who could command a larger or more substantial *clientèle*. In the long ago it was customary to give a horse, during his preparation, long gallops in heavy clothing, and to let blood from his neck periodically. With the sweating gallops omitted, a similar system was employed, at the same period, by the medical

faculty with the human race. Scott's system does not commend itself to modern trainers, whilst modern owners would chafe at the delays which took place in testing the merits or otherwise of the trainer's charges; but old John Scott's charges won races galore; the veteran—to employ American phraseology—"got there just the same."

His employers were select, aristocratic, and, for the most part, wealthy. When, after the Derby of 1838, Mr Harvey Combe, a well-known Surrey sportsman, dissatisfied with the running of Cobham in that race, removed him by force from the care of the Yorkshire trainer, the popularity of the last-named evoked the following testimonial or memorandum on the part of John Scott's other employers:—

"JOHN SCOTT,—We have read the statement of correspondence you have sent us, and we are perfectly satisfied that you have done all that is necessary for your justification, and, having no reason to doubt your integrity, shall continue our countenance and support as heretofore.—We are, etc.,

"WESTMINSTER. GEORGE ANSON.
"CHESTERFIELD. JOHN BOWES.
"WILTON."

Three years before this occurrence, the signatory "John Bowes" had, almost immediately after attaining his majority, carried off what Benjamin Disraeli described to Lord George Bentinck as "the Blue Riband of the Turf," a prize which has never before or since fallen to so young a man—although Lord Rosebery, as a minor, ran a horse

in the race—and which has been coveted by the noblest and richest amongst us ineffectually. Yet it is on record that the owner of one Derby winner went through the Bankruptcy Court ere the close of the same year.

The name of Mr Bowes's first Derby champion was Mundig—an appropriate one, being German for "of age"; and when the horse was entered by the young heir's trustees, he was only nineteen years old.

There has been no more eccentric or original character connected with the Turf than John Bowes, to whose lot fell four Derbies, three Two Thousand Guineas Stakes, and one St Leger. For thirty-five years his "black jacket with gold braid" was more or less familiar on the racecourse; the last horse to carry his colours being Taraban, winner of the Northumberland Plate and Goodwood Stakes in 1871. This was a horse who required a little encouragement before entering into the fray, which encouragement took the form of port wine. A special brand had been laid down in the cellars of Mr Bowes's Durham mansion, and a bottleful was administered to the animal by means of a sponge before every race. And a censorious world whispered that George Fordham, Taraban's jockey, usually had the first suck at that sponge.

As mentioned above, Mundig had been entered for the Derby by Mr Bowes's trustees, the Duke of Cleveland and Lord Strathmore—the last-named the forebear of an amateur steeplechase rider of the "fifties," who subsequently owned some racehorses of note, including Saccharometer, one of the speediest of his day. Wagering on the Derby

was fast and furious in the "thirties." In fact, gambling of all sorts was, if not actually encouraged by the law of the land, let severely alone. To shake the dice, cut the cards, and take the odds, were all fashionable recreations of the age. And Mr Bowes's trustees were, both of them, very heavy bettors.

In the early spring of 1835 a close observer of the betting market might have noticed that, although it had been given out freely that Mundig was only a "moderate" horse, a good deal of money was being invested upon his Derby chance, by men who, as a rule, worked commissions for Scott's stable. And as nobody at the time was prepared to connect young Bowes with the transactions, the knowing ones assumed that his horse was being backed by one or more "in the know," helping himself, or themselves.

But J. B., like Joey Bagstock in *Dombey and Son*, was "sly, davlish sly." In emulation of "Ole Brer Rabbit," he "lay low, and said nuffin"—until the Derby day arrived within measurable distance.

By that time Lord Jersey's Ibrahim, who had won the Riddlesworth — a classic race in days of yore—and the Two Thousand Guineas Stakes in a canter, stood at 2 to 1, and Mundig at "sevens," whilst "straight from the stable" itself came the information that Mr Bowes's son of Catton was nearly 2 stone behind Queen of Trumps. The last-named won the St Leger later in the year, and, as Mundig did not finish within the first three for that race, this information was possibly correct.

Anyhow, somebody was "helping himself." And when Mundig had touched 7 to 1 in the market, the young heir thought the time had arrived for him to act on his own responsibility. A letter to his trustees procured him an interview without delay. Addressing the Duke of Cleveland, young Bowes asked quietly,—

"I should be glad to know how much money has been invested for me, on my horse's chance for the Derby?"

That usually pallid nobleman flushed up, and replied that nobody connected with Scott's stable had backed Mundig for a shilling.

"Then," further inquired the youngster, "on whose behalf were those extensive wagers taken within the last three months by Mr James Bland?"

And he produced a lengthy list, which showed a number of bets on Mundig, at odds ranging between 40 to 1 and 8 to 1.

The trustees persisted angrily, both at once, that the young heir was labouring under a misapprehension. No bets whatever had been made upon Mundig on behalf of the stable.

But the faces of those trustees "bewrayed" them. They had been fairly driven into a corner, and there was no course but "bluff" left for them.

Young Bowes was as cool as a cucumber all the time.

"Then," quoth he, "my course is clear enough. I have been forestalled, and I shall now proceed to Messrs Weatherby's, and strike Mundig out of the Derby."

Then the trustees, now thoroughly aroused to the situation, tried what bluster would do. It was not, they protested, in the young man's power to scratch his horse, who had been entered by those who had charge of his affairs during his minority.

"Very true," remarked the heir. "But now I am of age, and can do what I like with my own."

In the result, all the long-priced bets were turned over to the precocious owner, who won nearly £20,000, besides the stakes, by the result of his first Blue Riband. And the astute wire-pullers of Scott's stable — including the aforementioned trustees—had to be contented with such short odds as 6 to 1 and 7 to 1. The cream of the market, in fact, went to young Bowes, whose advisers had to fight for the skim milk. Pretty good strategy, this, for a youth just beginning life.

When this story was told to John Scott on his arrival in London *en route* for Epsom, he threw up both hands in amazement and exclaimed,—

"What an owdacious young 'un!"

Eight years later Mr Bowes landed the Two Thousand Guineas Stakes and Derby with Cotherstone, one of Touchstone's best sons, and, like Mundig, out of the famous brood-mare Emma, and in the previous season his Meteor, by Velocipede, had won the Two Thousand. Both Meteor and Cotherstone were ridden by "Bill" Scott, a brother of "The Wizard of the North," and a jockey about whom many strange tales have been written. His riding of Cobham in the Derby of 1838, already alluded to, was certainly not above suspicion;

whilst it is on record that, on the morning of another Derby, Lord George Bentinck took the betting-book out of this jockey's hand on the steps of the "Spread Eagle" at Epsom, and proceeded to read out certain wagers therein recorded for the public benefit or otherwise. In these "reformed" days of the Turf, when its atmosphere is professedly clear as crystal, the idea of a jockey in the possession of a betting-book reads like sacrilege.

Good judges averred that Frank Butler could have won on any one of the first three for the Derby of 1852. Fortunately for Mr Bowes the "black and gold braid" colours were once more placed first by the judge in that race, but the victory was a fluke. Of very different metal was West Australian—still affectionately alluded to in the North as "The West"—who was the fourth Derby winner owned by the "owdacious young 'un." In all probability there was never a better specimen of a racehorse than West Australian. The Two Thousand and Derby were won easily enough by the son of Melbourne; but there were serious monetary difficulties in his path before the decision of the Doncaster St Leger. In those days a favourite for a great race ran a great risk of succumbing to the drug or the mallet of the "nobbler," and it was an open secret that "The West" was to be "got at" through the instrumentality of some person or persons who were "bad against" him from a monetary point of view.

Thanks to the acumen and watchfulness of Mr Frederick Swindell—who, having an extensive and peculiar knowledge of Turf matters, had been

called into council—it was at length discovered where the danger to the favourite lay, and the necessary precautions were taken to avoid what used to be euphemistically called "accidents."

But there was yet another danger which threatened "The West" during the course of the race. A horse named Scythian, ridden by John Wells—afterwards first jockey to Sir Joseph Hawley and at that time, literally, "tiny" Wells—was started for the express purpose of knocking over the favourite. Frank Butler subsequently gave a very graphic description of the race to Lord Derby, who trained with John Scott at the time. The "Rupert of Debate" was very fond of interviewing jockeys, and Butler had audience of the peer the same evening.

"He comed hat me once, m'lord," said the jockey, "and then he comed hat me again, and when he comed hat me the third time, close to the Red House, I see what he was hup to; so I hups with my whip and I says, 'You dam' young devil, if you comes hat me again I'll knock your dam' heye hout!'"

It is not recorded in history what sort of effect this recital had upon the great Tory statesman, who during his innings as steward of the Jockey Club managed to spare some time from political work to legislate for the welfare of the Turf. He was a truly "great" man this, and there was general disappointment when his horse Toxopholite was just beaten for the Derby of 1858.

Two years after Mündig had won the Derby, Mr Bowes was the owner of a three-year-old colt named Epirus, one of the best-looking horses,

according to John Scott, that had ever occupied a box in his stables at Whitewall. Being a delicate horse, and a difficult one to train, Epirus did not face the starter until the St Leger of 1837 came on for decision. With William Scott on his back, the bookmakers would only offer the short odds of 2 to 1 against Mr Bowes's horse, whilst the ultimate winner, Mr Greville's Mango, was quoted at 7 to 1.

"The first attempt to get away," wrote a reporter of the time, "was no go; the second was one of the finest starts ever seen. In a short time, however, an accident effectually disposed of the first favourite, and was well-nigh disposing of the crack north-country jockey as well, for good and aye. Bill Scott had taken his place near the leading horses, close, and, as was soon made apparent, too close to a ditch which borders the course. As they passed from the gravel road over the hill, something made Epirus hang nearer to the ditch than his rider intended; so near, in fact, that the bank gave way under his fore feet, and he fell into the ditch. As the horse struggled to extricate himself from his difficulties Scott was thrown into the course. At that moment Alderman Copeland's Prime Warden came up, and, narrowly escaping a fall himself, struck Scott on the collar-bone, which was literally smashed. As a necessary consequence both horses took no further part in the race. Bill Scott was carried home on a hurdle, and was found to have sustained a compound fracture of the collar-bone."

But where was the owner of Epirus all this time? Tearing his hair, wringing his hands, and

drowning his sorrows in the bowl? He was doing none of these things. He did not even utter the "splendid groan" which, according to Disraeli, was emitted by the Napoleon of the Turf in the library of the House of Commons after Surplice had won the Derby. There stood young Bowes, calm and impassive, with one eye applied to a long telescope, which he was resting against one of the iron supports to the Jockey Club stand at Doncaster. All around him were in a high state of excitement; and as he seemed to be obtaining a better view of the contest than anybody else, the young gentleman of twenty-three was appealed to for a description of the catastrophe. It was given without the slightest sign of agitation or excitement, for the benefit of all and sundry.

"Epirus has fallen into the ditch; Bill Scott is lying prostrate, and unable to move; I think he is killed. Another horse is down, or has been pulled up; I think it is Alderman Copeland's Prime Warden."

Some years later an analogous exhibition of coolness and nerve was given by Lord George Bentinck. But this time there was a considerable amount of spite mixed with the narrative. Mr Charles Greville, Lord George's first cousin, had been his racing confederate, although such a partnership was not at all likely to be a lasting one, both being by nature hasty and suspicious, and Lord George having the most unforgiving, most "damnably disinheriting" (to quote "Charles Surface") of dispositions. At all events, after a desperate quarrel between the two on the subject of Preserve, the One Thousand Guineas Stakes winner of 1835,

the confederates separated, never to speak again; although Mr Greville was not averse to a reconciliation.

Ten years after this quarrel between the two magnates, thirty-one candidates for Derby honours were mustered at the starting-post, including Mr Greville's Alarm. One of his opponents, The Libel, appeared, on a sudden, to go mad; and it was said afterwards that some miscreant lad had contrived to pour a charge of snipe-shot into one of the horse's ears, just before. Whether this were true or not—and doubters might reasonably ask what was The Libel's jockey doing at the time that his horse was being loaded for snipe—The Libel, after kicking, rearing and "bucking" like any "Waler," took the bit between his teeth, and overpowering George Calloway, his jockey, "went for" Alarm like a tiger. In the result Mr Greville's horse was driven over the cords—there were no railings at that far-off period—and Flatman became unshipped.

Within a few yards of his first cousin, during this incident, was stationed the "Napoleon of the Turf." He was intently watching the scrimmage through a telescope of abnormal length, and probably had John Bowes in his mind as he drawled out in loud, raucous tones,—

"There is a tremendous row at the post. Mr Hill's Libel has just savaged another horse. I think it is Mr Greville's Alarm." (A pause). "It *is* Mr Greville's Alarm. Now Mr St Paul's Mentor is joining in the fray. Between them they have forced Alarm over the ropes. Nat Flatman is lying on the ground. It looks as

though he had broken one arm, which he is nursing with his other hand. He seems unable to rise."

Harking back to the "owdacious young 'un," the downfall of Epirus at Doncaster most certainly lost Mr Bowes the race. According to John Scott nothing would have been near the horse had he only kept on his legs. He had been, in fact, very highly tried, and his youthful owner, who described the *contretemps* with so much coolness, had many thousands of pounds dependent upon the result. But, unlike most millionaires, young Bowes was no money worshipper, and as long as the supply of coal beneath his Durham estate did not give out, he was never likely to come to poverty.

Another St Leger was lost to the owner of the "black and gold braid" when Cotherstone, the Derby winner, was sacrificed to Lord Chesterfield's Prizefighter, about whom Colonel Anson (Lord Chesterfield's brother-in-law) had taken long odds to a large sum, before Prizefighter had beaten Nutwith for the Great Yorkshire Stakes at York. But it was a case of abandoning the substance and grasping the shadow, as at Doncaster Nutwith turned the tables upon the great Yorkshire winner.

Apropos of Cotherstone, his youthful owner is said to have won the best part of £50,000 in bets over his Derby. And history records that young Bowes dined by himself at Crockford's the same evening, and, so far from betraying the least excitement over his success, was rallied by more than one friend upon being "down in

the dumps." A much more modern celebrity, a Mr Wells, the ready-money "plunger" of the seventies, is said to have taken success in the same peaceful, matter-of-fact fashion. After landing a "stoater" at Ascot on the Hunt Cup day he proceeded to his favourite eating-house, a cheap restaurant in Camden Town, run by a foreigner. Mr Wells's modest meal consisted of a chop and "chips," a pint of bitter ale, sweets and cheese, and the bill came to one shilling and eightpence. Presenting the waiter with a florin, the successful "plunger" left the change down on the little marble-topped table.

For years before his death Mr Bowes had not visited a single English racecourse. In fact, to the majority of Turfites his face was as unfamiliar as that of the Grand Llama of Thibet. It was said that Fordham, the jockey, knew his employer by sight, but had hardly ever exchanged a word with him. The collieries, which yielded the subject of my sketch the bulk of his income, were said to have "turned in" upwards of one million sterling during his lifetime, so that he could never have been particularly short of cash.

Take him for all and all, Mr Bowes was a most remarkable, if not a particularly lovable, man. And in the "owdacious young 'un" the Turf had a follower which it could ill afford to lose.

A RACE FOR A HUSBAND

"YES," sighed little Mrs Digby Brabazon, "to-morrow must decide it."

A piquant study she made whilst undergoing the operations of hair-brushing and toe-toasting, without which no well-regulated lady ever thinks of going to bed. Her shapely form, half buried in the cushions of the cosiest of arm-chairs, her flaxen tresses — now, alas! none too luxuriant, whilst, to betray a secret, her other flaxen tresses are now reposing on the dressing-table, preparatory to being "fixed" for the morning's toilet —being brushed out by Fifine, deftest and lightest-handed of *femmes de chambre*, two tiny feet, shod in the wickedest little embroidered slippers, tapping the fender impatiently, Blanche Brabazon sits regarding her *chic* little countenance in the opposite mirror.

"To-morrow must decide it," she repeats. "I've been fooling away my time here too long; and, thanks to that little chit of a Clara, he's no nearer a proposal now than when he drove me down to Sandown to see Orbit win the Eclipse Stakes. I'm still decent looking"—here she smiled triumphantly at her reflection—"and there's no present necessity for posing with my back to the light, whilst Fifine is a treasure at painting out partly-developed wrinkles. But the money—

there's the rub! How am I to pay horrid dress-makers and people and travel about everywhere on a paltry jointure of five hundred a year?"

And the little widow pouted as she added, "Thank goodness I can ride, and no fence is too big for me, and if hounds will only run to-morrow I'll make him my slave for life. It was only last night he told me in the billiard-room that he'd never marry a woman who couldn't ride to hounds. And if I don't cut down Miss Clara Graham to-morrow I'll never get on a horse again. You can go, Fifine; my coffee at half-past seven," and with a yawn she dismissed her attendant.

Pleasant enough quarters were those at Elmhurst Park; but after a week's sojourn beneath the Squire's hospitable roof, Blanche Brabazon had begun to tire of the usual round of country sports and gaieties. The wily little widow had come down with one main object, the ensnaring of that particularly valuable bird, Sir Algernon Barclay, one of the great "catches" of the past season. Thus far he had not spoken on the subjects of love or marriage, in fact he appeared to be dividing his attentions between Mrs Brabazon and the only daughter of his host, Clara Graham, the reigning beauty of Camfordshire, and as good and as plucky as she was beautiful. It was perfectly intolerable, so the widow thought, that this simple little country girl should be able to carry off so rich a prize without an effort, and the woman of the world as she laid her head on her pillow ground her teeth viciously together as she muttered, "I'll beat her yet!"

There were no laggards at the breakfast-table

next day. It was truly a glorious hunting morning.

"All nature looked smiling and gay."

And the Squire remarked, as he passed his plate for a second helping of grilled pheasant,—

"There's a brace of foxes at the very least in Headborough Gorse, and if hounds don't run on such a scenting morning as this, may I never ride again over the most glorious country in the world!"

A true type of a healthy, hearty, thoroughly English girl is Clara Graham, and more than one admiring glance is cast in her direction by the young men of the party. She is seated opposite her rival, though quite unconscious of any existing rivalry. Since her mother's death, some twelve years before, Clara has had her own way in everything. The idea of another woman getting the better of her is too ridiculous a notion to entertain for one moment; and the little puss has already made up her mind that Sir Algernon Barclay will propose to her before the day is out. A bright, lovable picture she makes in her dark blue habit, buttoned lightly up to the shapely throat, her brown hair deftly coiled at the back, and helping to support the sweetest little chimney-pot hat in the world. And, as she glances through the massive lozenge-paned window, looking on to the gravel drive, her great velvety brown eyes flash triumphantly as she sees her favourite grey mare, Lady Bab, ready saddled for the fray, being led about by her own particular groom.

Mrs Brabazon affects a somewhat "louder"

style of apparel. Her habit is bottle-green in hue, the jacket, which is double-breasted, and fits *à ravir*, just partially concealing from view a snow-white vest with tiny gold buttons. And there is a lurking devil in her eye as she cries across the table to her fair young adversary,—

"A challenge! My dear Miss Graham, let us show these gentlemen how we can negotiate a stiff country to-day. I will back myself to be in at the death before you."

"Agreed!" eagerly responds Clara; and for a few moments excitement reigns supreme, as hats, whips and covert coats are sought for by the sterner sex.

"And what are to be the stakes?" inquires Sir Algernon.

"Oh, anything you like," remarks Mrs Brabazon, carelessly tapping her boot with her hunting-crop. "He little thinks," she murmurs to herself, "that *he* is to be the stakes." And then, turning to the girl, she adds, "My chestnut, Sir Galahad —he's thoroughbred, you know—against your mare. First up at the death to take both—how say you?"

Clara hesitates for a moment. To lose her favourite mare would be nothing short of a disaster. But in the lexicon of youth, we are told, there is no such word as fail. So, with a little laugh, she agrees to the terms of the wager, and the cavalcade moves merrily away to the trysting place.

The meet was at the Green Man, Splasham, and the hounds were to throw off in famous Headborough Gorse, a covert which, within the memory

of the oldest member of the Hunt, had not once been drawn blank. Far away as the eye can reach, on all sides, stretches a magnificent open country, hundred-acre pastures, with a due complement of fallow, sufficient to test the mettle of the stoutest hunter, as much and as varied fencing as the veriest glutton could desire, and a very good chance of a cold bath, if nothing worse, in the swift flowing Merle, the river which winds in and out in serpentine fashion, here, there, and everywhere, in the picture.

H-ssh! A whimper—then another.

"Hark to Monitor!" shouts the huntsman.

"To him, there, little betches!" And then the chorus swells into a roar, as, with a burning scent, breast high, the leading hounds dash out of the covert, the little red rascal having been viewed away at least three fields in front of them.

"Gone away!" shouts Sir Algernon.

"Hold hard, gentlemen, if you please, and give the hounds a chance!" screams the huntsman, as the too-impatient horsemen urge on their headlong career.

"He's heading for the big covert at Ashington," cries the Squire. "I hope to goodness they've stopped all those earths."

"Gone away-y-y!" is still the cry; and hearts leap with joyous emotion as the gallant steeds, snorting defiance to the world in general and foxes in particular, lay themselves down to their work. The pace is terrific.

Clara and the widow have both got well away, and for the first twenty minutes they sail over their fences almost side by side. Then the little

chestnut horse, steered with consummate tact and pluck, begins to steal away from the other. Weight and blood are beginning to tell, and it is with a feeling of infinite rage that Clara sees the fair Brabazon land safely over a difficult drop fence some five lengths in front of her.

Dig, dig, goes the vicious little spur into the flank of Lady Bab, who answers nobly to the invitation.

"Hold hard, Miss Clara, for the love of the Lord!" shouts the groom, close behind her. "The next fence is the river, and it's every bit o' twenty foot wide, and right out o' your depth in the middle."

"Pull up if you like, James," shouts back his mistress, "*I* am going on." And stern and determined, her face set as that of a statue, the Squire's daughter follows in the wake of her adversary.

The excitement is terrific. The widow is urging Sir Galahad with hand and heel, and the river is approached at a wild gallop.

"He'll never do it!" yells a hard-riding young farmer close alongside.

"*Won't he?*" replies his rider, now pale as death with rage and excitement.

Whack, whack! comes down the hunting-crop on the quarter of the brave horse, who, with a desperate effort, all but clears the obstacle. But there is a shrill scream, as he is observed to falter on the landing-side, and roll back with his fair burden into the swollen stream. Two seconds later Lady Bab bounds over the stream, and in another Clara is out of the saddle, ready to render assistance.

Help is soon at hand; and a very damp and particularly angry widow is fished out of six feet of water, dripping like a naiad. But worse remains behind. The gallant little chestnut has crawled out lower down the stream, and is now making the best of his way home to his stable. And attached to the pommel of the saddle is the skirt of that fetching bottle-green riding-habit!

It is only ridicule which kills some people; and a ridiculous enough figure looked Blanche Brabazon, a loose flaxen plait hanging suspended from a solitary hairpin adown her back, whilst very much in evidence were two symmetrical little riding boots very much splashed, and a pair of the daintiest little kerseymere bree——. But why pursue such a melancholy subject further?

A linsey skirt, supplied by the keeper's wife at the lodge, served to cover up some deficiencies; and, with anger in her soul and a fearful cold in her head, Mrs Brabazon made the journey back again, mounted on the groom's horse, led at a walking funereal-like procession by the invaluable James.

At an early hour next morning Blanche Brabazon transported herself and belongings away from Elmhurst, leaving the coast clear for her more fortunate rival; and they do say that the wedding of Sir Algernon and Clara will be one of the smartest ever solemnised at St Peter's, Cranley Gardens.

"THE ADMIRAL'

"ADMIRAL ROUS?" I once heard an occupant of the smoking-room at the "Rutland," Newmarket, exclaim—"Admiral Rous? You talk of Admiral Rous? An old fossil, sir, who is, and always has been, a foe to every kind of reform, and has stuck fast in one groove all his life! Admiral Rous? He deserves to train with old John Scott, for ever and ever!"

The speaker was one Captain Jones, formerly of the Indian Army, and well known on the Turf in the "sixties," "seventies" and "eighties" by the nicknames of "Mandarin" Jones and "The Old Castilian."

In these more enlightened but less poetic days, he would have been called a Progressive; and with most of this brand he would on occasion, like the Player Queen in *Hamlet*, "protest too much."

If ever there was a Turf legislator who deserved well of his sporting countrymen it was Admiral Rous. The man who had steered His Majesty's ship *Pique*, practically rudderless, home from Quebec, in the autumn of 1835, was soon destined to perform an almost similar feat with one of the institutions of Great Britain, the Turf, which at the time of his accession was also practically rudderless.

Disgusted with the scurvy treatment which his services had received from the Admiralty, Rous determined to retire altogether from the Navy. In 1838 he was elected a steward of the Jockey Club, and after five years spent in Parliament, as one of the members for Westminster, he devoted himself entirely to the interests of the Jockey Club. He found the club seriously embarrassed financially, and at once applied his keen and shrewd intelligence to putting that body right in its exchequer. How thoroughly he succeeded in the labour may be gathered from the fact that the revenue of the Newmarket property which, when he first took office, was barely £3000 a year, had in 1875 become multiplied by six.

In his early days, as Jockey Club steward, the training grounds at Newmarket were leased from the Duke of Rutland at 5s. per acre, or something like "prairie value." On the termination of the lease this rent was increased, and eventually got up to £1 an acre. The Admiral, anticipating a much higher rise, or, possibly, having to deal in the future with a landlord who might refuse to let his land for the training of racehorses, thereupon offered 30s. per acre, on condition that a lease of ninety-nine years were granted to the Jockey Club. This lease was granted, and at a later period the July Course became the property of the governing body of the Turf. "No wonder," wrote an authority, "with such a man as Admiral Rous at its head, that the Jockey Club was raised from a bankrupt state to a position of affluence."

Never, in fact, was there a more thorough or conscientious Turf reformer; and although Lord

George Bentinck, his predecessor, had fairly earned the title of "Dictator," several of his methods were tinged with selfishness, and he was apt at times to play, as it were, for his own hand. But the Admiral was no bettor, and possessed but few racehorses of his own; and whatever measures he passed, or helped to pass, were for the benefit of the sport as a whole and not of any individual.

In the matter of handicapping we shall never look upon his like again. Not only was he a regular attendant upon the heath during exercise hours, but at all the principal race meetings he was to be found, and from the top of the stand he would watch the progress of the racing with the keenest interest, through (it was averred) the same old telescope which had served him so well whilst on the quarterdeck. Much given to *finesse* as were the owners, trainers and jockeys of the period, it was not often that dust was thrown in the Admiral's eye. And many an attempt to do so would recoil upon the alleged "sharp." A censorious world would assert, whilst winking the other eye, that his aristocratic friends would endeavour to curry favour with the Admiral by making a "soft" match against one of his horses; and with the running of matches, a fashionable pursuit in the middle of the century, it is a fact that a horse belonging to Rous but seldom lost one. But it was very improbable that any such inducement as this would influence the decision of the final handicapper.

Mr Frederick Swindell, upon becoming aware that the house adjoining the Admiral's, in Berkeley Square, was to let, promptly secured a lease of it.

That astute practitioner foresaw developments which might advantage himself, through the medium of his betting-book, could he but find out what aristocratic owners visited his neighbour on the eve of the publication of an important handicap. A hard-bitten, suspicious man of the world was Swindell, with his wits sharpened by penurious surroundings during early life. He had but little faith in the integrity of mankind; and for days before the handicap was out this astute Turfite would take his seat in the summer-house of the garden opposite, to see who might be calling on the Admiral. He would sit tight for hours together, and as he saw this brougham or that cabriolet pull up at the door opposite, would chuckle softly to himself as he murmured, "I thowt th' beggar wanted a bit of favour." But there is every reason to believe that this astuteness on the part of Mr Swindell did not advance his prospects much.

What could Admiral Rous have said, should anybody have dared prophesy in his presence that the time would arrive when horses would be started for all races by means of a machine? A speech from the man who saved the Jockey Club, and through it the Turf, from rack and ruin would be worth hearing, at the present juncture. As a man of practice rather than theory, and as a man of sound common-sense, he would have hardly approved of mechanical starting. His methods were vigorous, if rough. "Get me a hack and a hunting-whip!" he would cry, were a delay at the starting-post to be what he considered an unnecessarily prolonged one. And then woe

betide the jockey who might be inclined to take liberties! If he did not literally feel the sting of the lash, he had the rough end of the old salt's tongue, which was worse. And there was never much more delay when once the Admiral, with his hack and his hunting-whip, had arrived upon the scene.

His aversion to betting was on a par with his hatred of tobacco. King "Jamie" himself—also a good friend to the British Turf—did not hold "the vile and pernicious weed" in greater abomination; and on this point he and his old friend George Payne were at one. But the last-named by no means shared the Admiral's views on the subject of wagering. For years, during his connection with the Turf, Rous used to fulminate against what he considered abuses, in the columns of the *Times* newspaper. And in one of his most impetuous letters he proposed that any person winning more than £30,000 over one race should forfeit his winnings, whilst any member of the Jockey Club who won more than £50,000 upon a race should be expelled from that august body. He often declared that as a Turf legislator it was his chief wish to provide for the best interests of those who, as he phrased it, were "in the £10 line of business."

But against heavy bettors he waged war. His indignation was boundless against such "delinquents," as he termed them, who won enormous sums of money by the success of their horses in certain races; such as Mr James Merry, who was said to have landed £70,000 over Thormanby's Derby; Sir Joseph Hawley, who netted £80,000

upon Beadsman; or Messrs Naylor & Chaplin, who were said to have won more than £100,000 apiece, upon Macaroni and Hermit. Curiously enough, it was during this same period that Sir Joseph Hawley himself was preaching against the evils of heavy betting, and the running of two-year-olds; although the "tricky" baronet was a prominent offender in committing both of these crimes.

Towards the end of the "sixties" a betting-machine was introduced into England by one Oller, from France, who was said to have made a large fortune through the system of *Paris mutuels*, mutual bets which were made through this medium. The money taken over the losing horses in a race was divided into so many shares for the benefit of backers of the winner, less a percentage for the operator. The system was absolutely fair to all concerned; and whilst backers knew that they could not be cheated, the man who "ran" the machine made a daily "certainty"—varying in the amount according to the number of the customers—each day it was worked. The same system, in fact, on a much larger scale, maintains on the Continent, in India, and in some of our colonies at the present day.

But the *Paris mutuels* machine, or the "Parry," as the habitual followers of the Turf called it for short, did not commend itself to the authorities in England. Certainly Oller, the alien, was allowed to pursue his wicked calling without interruption for a year or two; but when English bookmakers took to working the machine, they did so in fear and trembling. The Admiral, one morning during

the Newmarket Craven meeting, was standing on the steps of the Jockey Club rooms, when he noticed a long species of box being wheeled past on a truck, *en route* to the sacred Heath.

"Stop!" he shouted to the gentleman who appeared to be directing the progress of the apparatus. "What have you got there, my man?"

"That, Mr Admiral?" said the owner. "Oh, it's only our old organ, Admiral; you know what I mean."

"No, sir," said the Jockey Club steward, beginning to fume, "I do *not* know what you mean."

And the Admiral's wrath, as soon as the working of the "fairest system of betting on the course" had been explained to him, was so great that the poor proprietor was glad to escape with his life, after being peremptorily ordered to take his "horror" back to the railway station.

The law of the land was still more severe against the working of the "Parry"; and more than one unfortunate was committed, and sent to penal toil for daring to give the racing public a long-felt want. And as the usual effect of repressive legislation is to stimulate what it professes to check, the result of this harshness was to revive, after a few months, the same "Parry" system, but without the machine, and without the honesty.

The last of the dear old Admiral's impetuous letters to the *Times* caused a mighty fluttering amongst the dove-cotes—if a celebrated training-stable can be properly described as a "dove-cote." This letter was written after the flagrant scandal

connected with the Derby of 1868, won by Sir Joseph Hawley's Blue Gown. The Marquis of Hastings's The Earl, albeit perfectly fit and well, was struck out of the race on the evening before, to the surprise of nobody connected with racing, as the horse had been "dead meat" in the betting market for some days before. And the mare, Lady Elizabeth, in the same ownership, had, although a pronounced first favourite, finished in the background, after being absolutely the first beaten.

The Admiral's letter concluded as follows:—

"Lord Hastings has been shamefully deceived; and with respect to scratching The Earl, Lord Westmoreland came up early on Tuesday from Epsom to beseech Lord Hastings not to commit such an act. On his arrival in Grosvenor Street he met Mr Hill going to Weatherby's with the order in his pocket to scratch The Earl, and Mr Padwick closeted with Lord Hastings. In justice to the Marquis of Hastings, I may state that he stood to win £35,000 by The Earl, and did not hedge his stake-money.

"Then you will ask, 'Why did he scratch him?' What chance can the poor fly demand from the spider in whose web he is enveloped?—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

"H. J[illegible]US.

"13 BERKELEY SQUARE,
"*June* 15, 1868."

The relations which existed at the time between Messrs Hill & Padwick and the Marquis of

Hastings are described in a subsequent chapter headed "Harry."

The above letter made John Day, the Danebury trainer, furious, and an action for libel was at once commenced against Admiral Rous. Photographs of a drawing representing Day and the Admiral in pugilistic attitudes, with a representation in miniature of a spider pouncing upon a fly which had become entangled in the web, appeared in many of the shop-windows, endorsed :—

"THE SPIDER AND THE FLY.

"Hit me if you dare!

"or

"6 to 4 on the Admiral!"

But ere many months wiser counsels prevailed amongst the "parties," and instead of further enriching the already overpaid profession of the law accusations were withdrawn, and harmony—outwardly, at all events—once more prevailed. But at the same time it is the fervent conviction of the writer that Admiral Rous never once swerved from his original belief with regard to the transactions between the "fly" and the "spider." He was not the man to do so.

Nine years after this incident the dear old Admiral breathed his last, and in concluding this memoir it will not be out of place to quote from a speech made by Earl Granville on the occasion of the presentation of a service of plate to this father of the Turf at Willis's Rooms, on June 18 (Waterloo Day), 1866 :—

All the Winners

"There are dark spots on the sun, and racing has its dark as well as its bright side. On the one hand it encourages the breed of horses and supplies enjoyment for thousands of all ranks of life; but, on the other hand, there are dangers connected with it which, if permitted to go to an unseemly length, threaten the vitality and well-being of our great national sport. Among the men of wealth, character and position whose patronage has done so much for the Turf in modern times, our honoured guest of this evening holds a conspicuous place. He has always done his best to repress everything of a fraudulent or dishonourable nature. He has laboured to reconcile conflicting interests; and although he may have made mistakes, as the best and greatest of human beings are liable to do, he has enjoyed the respect and affection of every class of the racing community. And I am sure there is but one feeling among all present this evening, and indeed among all true sportsmen throughout Great Britain, that, if Admiral Rous should retire, he will leave a void impossible to fill."

These were the words of a great statesman who, during a period in which statesmen were wont to interest themselves in matters connected with the national sport, was—and this is written advisedly—as good a friend to the Turf and as true a sportsman as Admiral Rous himself. It was Earl Granville who, whilst Minister for Foreign Affairs, found time to take part in the debate on Lord Redesdale's "Light Weight Racing Bill"; and it was Earl Granville's speech on that occasion, with its happy quotation,

"De minimis non curat lex,"

"which," said the noble speaker, "may, I think, be not inaptly translated, 'You cannot legislate for featherweights'—it was this speech which settled the whole question satisfactorily for all concerned.

We sadly miss nowadays the statesman who deigns to stoop to consider matters connected with the recreations of the people and the improvement of the breed of horses. And still more do we miss the guiding hand in the direction of the national sport, and the heart of a man who was nothing if not thorough in whatever he undertook; of

> "A man,
> Take him for all and all,
> We shall not look upon his like again!"

A PROMISCUOUS ACQUAINTANCE

A Reminiscence of the City and Suburban

It was really most provoking. For a week past it had been arranged that I should escort Mrs Digby Perceval to the City and Suburban, in my brougham; and now, on the very morning of the race, whilst I was sitting at breakfast in my house in St James's Place, came her maid with a scrawl of a note on bright scarlet paper, saying that the lovely and exacting scrawler had one of her bad nervous headaches, and didn't intend leaving the house all day. Sulks, I supposed. Because our box at the Gaiety the night before was not in such a good position as that occupied by her sister professional beauty and deadly rival, Lady Violet Aubrey. Well, the brougham was ordered, and so was the luncheon—a masterpiece of Morel's. It was a lovely morning, and I had backed Macmahon to win me 4000 sovereigns. So there was nothing for it but to go by myself.

The period of my story is a good many years ago, as my sporting readers will see for themselves after reading the close of the last paragraph.

The first part of the journey by road to Epsom is not pleasant. The "Surrey side" is indubitably the "seamy side" of London. Trams everywhere, costermongers' barrows and stalls wherever they

can find standing room, omnibuses, women with babies, 'Arries with paper frillings to their hats, and concertinas and pea-shooters in their hands, many people drunk, everybody noisy, and a general odour of gin, onions, peppermint and clothing which has been kept in ill-ventilated rooms. Faugh! Things are a little better when Clapham Common is passed, and by the time we reach the aristocratic neighbourhood of Balham we have got clear of one of the crowds, though another looms ahead in the far distance. Through Tooting and Mitcham we bowl along at a merry pace, stopping at the George at Morden, to give the horses a rest and wash their mouths out. Needless to say, I do not wash my own mouth out, the beverages of the vulgar herd having no charms for me.

The country on the other side of Morden is picturesque in the extreme, and we catch a glimpse of Sutton on our left, and of quaint, old-fashioned Cheam, whereof it was written in the long ago:—

"Holborn for wealth,
Cheam for health"

Away to the right rises that celebrated landmark, "The Rookery," the fine avenue of elms on the highest ground on the Worcester Park estate. We pass numerous neat-looking residences by the wayside, stopping at one of them, formerly the residence of Mr Sowter, the eminent saddler, for the proffered glass of excellent sherry; and then on we go again, leaving Nonsuch Park (every inch of it classic ground) and Queen Elizabeth's elm on our left. Very shortly afterwards Ewell is

reached, and here we pick up the advance-guard of the race crowd.

Making our way up the hill at a foot's pace we were occasionally compelled to come to a stand-still. It was during one of these temporary stoppages that I became aware of a pair of very bright eyes gazing fixedly into mine from a window on the first floor of a house flush with the pavement on my left. A more prolonged inspection showed far and away the loveliest face I had ever seen in my life. She wore a large Gainsborough hat, and as I gazed, spell-bound, into her eyes, she signalled to me with her fan. I bade the coachman stop, and as I did so there came fluttering down to me, like the murmuring of a brook, the words :—

"Oh, *do* take me to the races!"

Was this fate? My lips parted, but the words would not come. I could only lay my hand on my bounding heart, and bow, as she murmured again :—

"Oh, *please*, take me to the races! I do so want to back a horse."

Promising this! Well, I was fairly in for it, and this girl had enthralled me.

"With all the pleasure in life," I replied. "But are you all alone?"

"Quite. They've locked me in, the brutes!" she continued. "So I shall have to get out of this window."

"Nonsense; you'll fall."

"Let your tiger fetch the step-ladder from the yard opposite, and I can get down easily."

I sent the boy for the means of descent, and

anon, regardless of the sensation which we were creating, reckless of the jeers and yells from the passing mob, I assisted my charmer, *pro tem.*, to alight, and to enter my carriage. And then on we went.

I was at liberty to observe my companion more closely. She was a brilliant brunette, rather above the medium height, with that brilliant peach-like complexion which is so characteristic of the daughters of the sunny South. She had eyes which could laugh and cry, plead and command in turn, just as she pleased. She had the bust of a Juno, and hands which a sculptor would have bartered his soul for the privilege of sculpting. And she wore no gloves.

Her attire, in truth, was not a little remarkable. In addition to the broad-leaved hat, with its sweeping ostrich pinion, she had donned a sealskin jacket, richly trimmed with sable. Beneath was (so far as my uneducated eye could judge) a species of *peignoir*, or tea-gown, all pink satin and little bows, and creamy fluffy lace. She had evidently dressed in a great hurry, for she had not put on her boots. As she was descending the step-ladder I got a very distinct view of two trim ankles, clad in open-work silk, and a pair of very fetching little bronze slippers, which, however well adapted for the boudoir they might be, did not look much like taking their wearer racing.

She was a most delightful companion, and apparently well up in racing lore.

"I often ride on to the Downs to see the horses at exercise," she said, "and I haven't missed a race meeting in the neighbourhood for years."

She looked about eighteen.

"I go to Newmarket sometimes, but papa is so—"

"So what?" I inquired.

"So dreadfully afraid that I shall lose all my money on the Turf."

"Fancy!"

"Yes, only fancy! Yesterday my tipster wrote saying that Bird of Freedom is sure to win the City and Sub., and that I was to put my shirt on. So for fear I should do so papa locked me in the house with one deaf old servant, and went to London."

And then she threw an infinite amount of trustful devotion into her glance, as she slightly pressed my hand, and I was more than ever her slave as she whispered softly,—

"*You*, I am sure, will look after me, and be kind to me."

I mentally resolved to beard her father in his den that very evening, and demand his daughter.

Amidst the usual crowds of vehicles and clouds of dust we climbed the hill leading to Epsom Downs, and eventually took up a splendid position against the rails, between the number-board and the winning-post. My divinity clapped her little hands—their pinkness, and their plumpness, and their dimples unhidden by any envious gloves—as my boy unpacked each item of the luncheon; and after making me promise to put her £50 on Bird of Freedom, she drank to that proud horse's success in a tumbler of Pommery—a liquid, by the way, to which she seemed to be particularly attached. It was worth a whole "fiver" a look

to see her nibbling a plover's egg; though the vicious way in which she crunched the bones of a quail between the little mites of teeth made me tremble somewhat for our matrimonial hereafter.

We had finished our luncheon, and having invested £50 on Bird of Freedom with Mr Richard Dunn, I had re-crossed the course whilst it was being cleared for the big race of the day. We both mounted to the box seat, and she was scanning the various objects of interest through my race glass, when I became aware of a seedy-looking individual watching us intently. He looked like a tipster out of work, and I began to tremble for my silver forks and spoons.

"Price," I called out to my tiger, "be sure you and the coachman keep your eyes on what's inside the brougham."

And presently the horses cantered past us, and in a little while longer we heard the shout, "They're off!" and knew that another great race was in course of progress. Of course we couldn't see much of the race, but it was with intense excitement that we recognised the colours of Macmahon and Bird of Freedom, who singled themselves out from below the distance. And the shouting was terrific as the two horses passed us locked together. And then, less than half a minute afterwards, we knew that Fred Barrett's desperate riding had got "The Bird" home, a short head in front. "Hurrah! my horse!" screamed my companion; "and now make haste, and run across and get my money."

With some difficulty I managed to cross the course, which had once more become densely

crowded. With still more difficulty I managed to catch the eminent bookmaker's eye.

"I can't pay everybody at once," was his oft-repeated cry. "You must all wait your turn."

At length it came to my turn, and I presented my ticket.

"Number 3472, £300!" chaunted the bookmaker, who added, as he paid the notes into my hands, "and thank you, sir; and mind you don't lose 'em."

My charmer was not on the box when I returned to my brougham. No; she was seated inside, and —why, what the d—— there was the seedy-looking man I had taken for a tipster out of work seated facing her. She was ghastly pale.

"How dare you, scoundrel?" I yelled, seizing him by the collar. But he soon shook me off. "Gently does it, captain," he observed. "This 'ere's my warrant," and he shoved a formidable and evil-looking document into my hand.

"Good heavens!" I cried, "what does it all mean?"

"It means," he rapped out, "murder!"

. . . . . .

It was quite true. This lovely creature, this enchantress, this queen amongst women, had that very morning, at breakfast, poisoned her father, mother, two sisters, and five servants, with vermin-destroyer, artfully mixed with the freshly-ground coffee. Of course, she was mad—she is still mashing all the doctors at Broadmoor—and what had driven her mad was being welshed over the Craven Stakes at Newmarket only a few days before I met her. But the worst part of it was, that I was taken

before the Epsom magistrates as an accessory after the fact. The old woman next door swore that she saw me help the girl from the window into my carriage. But I soon established my innocence of any nefarious transaction on her part, and the magistrates discharged me, after their chairman had addressed me sternly, as follows :—

"I trust, sir, that this temporary inconvenience and this eminently tragic story may serve as a warning to you against promiscuous acquaintances."

And, by Jove! it has. I go racing by train nowadays.

"G. P."

"'Broke,' eh? Begad! I was just going to ask you to put in a couple of thousands next Monday for me to settle with!"

The voice was the voice of George Payne, most popular and best known of all the votaries of the Turf for upwards of half a century. And the words were addressed to the twelfth Earl of Westmoreland (the "Lord Westmoreland" of Admiral Rous's letter to the *Times*, mentioned in another story) on the morning after the memorable Derby of 1868, when Blue Gown won, despite the opinion and wishes of his usually lucky owner, and Lady Elizabeth walked in with the crowd.

It was a party of three—including the present writer—who, for lack of better accommodation, were travelling from Waterloo to Epsom town in a third-class compartment on the London and South-Western Railway. And both Lord Westmoreland and "G. P." had experienced reverses during the week at the "great game." In fact, that Epsom meeting marked the commencement of the handsome Earl's downward career as an owner; and, writing from memory, the "green and white hoops" were in the exasperating position of second some eight times during the four days.

As a boy, I was much struck with the brusque,

jovial manner of Mr Payne, who always struck me as a typical John Bull.

"Old Bridges?" I once heard him remark with reference to a fellow-lodger of mine own. "Bah! Man stinks of money! Got two big estates in the country, yet pigs in a bit of a room in St James's Place that I wouldn't put a terrier into. Dines at his club by himself every night—begad! I believe he dines there on Christmas Day!"

The story of "G. P.'s" life is the story of high play and mammoth wagerings. He made his entry into the world with pretty nearly every advantage that mortal man could desire; a princely income, nearly half a million sterling in "ready," a splendid constitution, talents which would have fitted him for a high position in the Senate, a most fascinating manner, a voice which went straight to your heart, and an inexhaustible fund of spirits, which no amount of reverses could possibly repress. A stern moralist could cull many a great lesson from the "wasted life of 'G. P.'"; but, as the writer is no sort of moralist, but one who seeks to extract as much entertainment and instruction as possible from the sayings and doings of a wicked world, for the sole benefit of others, it will suffice to quit moralising with the remark that the subject of this sketch, who "played ducks and drakes" with all his gifts, might have taken for his motto:—

> "'Tis better to have lived and lost,
> Than never to have lived at all"

At the age of twenty he lost £33,000 over one race. When Mr Gascoigne's—afterwards Lord

Glasgow's—Jerry won the St Leger of 1824, young Payne who, besides backing Brutandorf, and a horse of his own, for the same race, had laid heavily against the winner, found himself "out" by this substantial sum. According to one chronicler his invariable reply to many expressions of condolence was, "It's a pleasure to lose it, begad!" According to another report, in which I place the more faith, the youthful plunger retired to bed in his Doncaster lodgings in order that nobody would see "the face of a d——d fool!"

The story goes on to say that John Gully, prize-fighter, M.P., and owner of racehorses, condoled with Payne afterwards, saying, "Never mind, Mr Payne, you can afford to wait; you'll get it all back on Memnon next year." This "tip" duly came off, and "G. P." recouped himself for his losses on Jerry. At the same time, in these modern days it sounds like necromancy that a man should foretell correctly the winner of the St Leger twelve months before the race, with the Derby and other big three-year-old prizes intervening. But at the beginning of the nineteenth century the Doncaster St Leger was the most important contest of the year—in the opinion of north countrymen, at all events; and Memnon, who was the property of "Squire" Watts, of Bishop Burton, near Beverley, had probably been "kept" for this particular race.

George Payne was by no means a "systematic" backer. As a rule, there was but little method in his investments; and whilst two horses in whom he was interested were each within a short head of winning a Derby, his hair nearly became pre-

maturely grey, when, in 1840, his mare Welfare at one period of the race looked very like beating the celebrated Crucifix for the Oaks. Payne had thousands on Crucifix, and but a trifle on his own mare, who so nearly upset the good thing.

He would sometimes back as many as five-and-twenty horses in a big handicap and then miss the winner. When Lord Lyon won the Derby the subject of this sketch stood to gain nearly £50,000 by the success of Lord Ailesbury's Savernake, who was not beaten by the length of a walking-stick; and Mr Payne stood almost as large a stake upon Pell Mell, who was close up with Cremorne half a dozen years later.

It was computed by an old Newmarket trainer that before the days of railways Mr Payne had spent more money in chaises-and-four than would have kept a man in comfort for his life. He owned racehorses from 1824 to 1878, but never possessed a really first-class animal; although Musket, one of the horses bequeathed him by Lord Glasgow, together with a legacy of £25,000, has, since he went to the stud, transmitted to his descendants some of the stoutest blood of the generation. This same Musket, by the way, was very nearly being shot, when two years old, as worthless for racing purposes. His noble owner, well known as "Lordy," was a most eccentric character, and rather than sell, or give away, a horse which did not please him, would condemn him to be shot. And John Osborne tells the story how Musket, whom he had ridden in a trial one morning, had so dissatisfied Lord Glasgow that, but for a firm protest on the part of Tom

Dawson, his trainer, the colt would not have survived, to run races or to beget posterity.

"G. P." never won the Derby and Oaks, St Leger, or Two Thousand Guineas Stakes, with a horse of his own; and his solitary victory for the One Thousand Guineas Stakes, with Clementina, was achieved with a filly which he had bought very reluctantly from Lord Jersey, at the advice of Mr "Frank" Villiers.

Keen as mustard on a "good thing," Payne was probably the recipient of more tips than any of his contemporaries. There is a good story of Mr Sidney Jacobs being shown into our hero's dressing-room, whilst he was shaving himself. The visitor promptly described the result of a trial which had taken place that morning.

"Good Gad, Jacobs!" exclaimed the shaver. "Is it as good a thing as that? Are you sure there's no mistake?" And then he added, "Your news has actually made me cut myself!"

But when Captain Powell invested the whole of a small legacy—from the same "Old Bridges" mentioned at the commencement of this memoir—upon See Saw for the Cambridgeshire of 1868, Mr Payne declined to take the "tip." Lord Wilton's three-year-old stood at odds of 100 to 1, and Captain Powell had to thank Fordham for his fine riding, which went so far towards increasing the "lucky legacy" one hundredfold.

When not engaged in the "great game" our hero was a most persistent votary of cards. As a whist player he was one of the best; but the old game was too slow for so inveterate a gambler, who much preferred *écarté*, which in the "forties"

and "fifties" was very popular in the highest circles. And the story has more than once been told how "G. P." and Lord Albert Denison—afterwards the first Lord Londesborough—sat up all night at "Limmer's" playing this seductive game; and that when they separated in the morning, Lord Albert, having lost nearly £30,000, proceeded, after a tub and a change of toilet, to St George's, Hanover Square, where he was united in holy wedlock to his first wife, Miss Henrietta Maria Forster, sister of Lady Chesterfield, Mrs Anson and Lady Bradford. With the same antagonist, and playing the same game, Mr Payne once set out from London in a post-chaise, on a visit to a country house in the New Forest. They played all day, and when night fell a lamp in the roof of the carriage was lighted, and they proceeded to deal and propose, without intermission. Mr Payne was in the midst of a splendid run of luck, with £100 staked on each game, when both players became aware that the chaise had stopped, and that the bewildered postboy, who had lost his way, was tapping lustily with the butt end of his whip at the window of the post-chaise, to solicit the attention of the occupants.

"What do you want?" at length asked Payne, in irritated tones.

"Please, sir, I've lost my way," returned the man.

"Good God!" exclaimed Payne. "Come and tell us when you've found it." And it was probably lucky for the wretched postboy that his employers were not quite as arbitrary as some young bloods of the day. For it was no rare

occurrence to hasten the speed by peppering the rider with small shot through the front window of the chaise.

Mr Payne was, of course, an important witness in the important action for libel taken by Lord de Ros, in 1837. The plaintiff had been roundly accused of cheating at cards, and Mr Payne, after bearing testimony for the defendant, was severely cross-examined by Sir John, afterwards the first Lord Campbell. And in his summing up, the last-named spoke of "Payne, the professional gamester," who, "having started as a dupe, soon crystallised into something worse." This was more than our hero could stand; and vowing vengeance against the licensed bully, he armed himself with a stout horse-whip, and waited for several afternoons in the neighbourhood of Westminster Hall, with the full intention of giving Sir John Campbell a sound drubbing. But the shrewd Scotchman got notice of the intended assault, and slipping out each afternoon by a back way, allowed sufficient time for Payne's wrath to cool, when he offered an apology through the medium of Colonel Anson, who, like Charles Greville, was a sort of universal peacemaker, and "G. P." at once good-humouredly forgave the gentleman of the long-robe.

A story which our hero never tired of telling against himself was called

A Deal in Tallow

Mr Payne was a bit of a speculator in the City, and during many years of his life would spend a

few hours in the early morning in East-central haunts. He would dabble in pretty nearly every speculation that offered itself; and during the Crimean War, having got the "tip" that tallow was "good, buy at once," proceeded to order, through a broker in Mincing Lane, so many tierces of P.Y.C. or "prime yellow candle." He added that his address was Stevens's Hotel, Bond Street.

"Is it for delivery?" asked the broker's clerk.

Payne, without understanding the question, answered in the affirmative; and forgot all about the matter until a fortnight later, when, whilst at breakfast in the hotel, he was considerably astonished at having a greasy document placed in his hand, with the information—

"Please, sir, the man's come with the tallow."

Going to the door, the bewildered speculator beheld a cart full of tallow casks standing outside, and, as far as eye could reach, a string of similarly-loaded carts behind it.

"Never trust me," he exclaimed subsequently to a knot of friends whom he encountered at the Turf Club, "if Bond Street was not choked with tallow carts up to Oxford Street!"

That was Mr Payne's first and last transaction in tallow.

There are many amusing stories of the shifts to which those followers of the Turf known as "The Boys" are often put to, in order to get to a race meeting "on the cheap." Upon one occasion, seeing the Marquis of Hastings and five friends seated in a first-class compartment of a

train about to start for Doncaster, one of this fraternity, having borrowed an official cap from the porters' room—whilst the porters were away at tea—proceeded to the open window of that compartment, and, with the polite demand, "Tickets, gen'lmen, if you please!" collected half-a-dozen, on the spot. A somewhat similar fate once befell "G. P."

Going to Goodwood one day he was taking his railway ticket, at the little office-window, when through the crowd was thrust a hand, which tapped him on the shoulder.

"Take me one, 'G. P.'," said a tall, rather handsome man, with a blue bird's-eye scarf, horseshoe pin, and a very shiny hat.

Mr Payne took two tickets accordingly, handing one to the free-and-easy speaker, who blurted out,—

"Thanks, 'G. P.,' settle at Goodwood," and disappeared in the crowd.

Never from that moment did Mr Payne again set eyes upon the fraudulent follower of the national pastime; and he was never tired of telling the anecdote, and of laughing over it himself.

"You see," he used to add, at the finish, "more people know Tom Fool than Tom Fool knows. I did not know him from the dead, but thought I must have met him abroad somewhere. Clever rascal! He is welcome, I'm sure, to his fraud, and the proceeds."

Mr Payne, like most people, possessed a watch with no particular points about it; a solid, old-fashioned timepiece, which would be dubbed heavy

and old-fashioned at the present period. And that watch was as well known to some of the habitual followers of the Turf—in short, the aforementioned "Boys," a dangerous community, as well as the Old Bailey itself. Frequently did it leave the possession of "G. P." against that gentleman's will; frequently did he mourn long and loud for his lost "ticker."

But the thieving fraternity have always had their middlemen, or "fences," as they are technically called. And then, as now, the wise man who wishes to recover lost (*i.e.*, stolen) property will inform a professional go-between, and arrange terms with him, rather than report the loss to the police. The value of George Payne's timepiece had been frequently assessed at £10, a sum which would of course be "cut up" between two or three of the associates.

On one occasion, as Payne was journeying to Liverpool races, the train, as usual in the past, made a long stoppage at Rugby, in order that the passengers might refresh the inner man. Whilst returning from the dining-room to his carriage, Payne was tapped on the shoulder. A voice from behind muttered, "Don't turn round, guv'nor, it's all right," and something was forced into his right hand. The "something" proved to be the oft-times missing watch. Figuratively grappling the chronometer to his soul with hoops of steel, Payne felt in his note-pocket for the customary reward of a "tenner," which he handed to the middleman.

"Beg pard'n, Mr Payne," said that individual, who was lithe of limb, small of stature, and most

respectably dressed, "but you must really make it a bit more this time, you must indeed."

"A bit more? a bit more?" murmured "G. P." "What the deuce d'ye mean, my man?"

"Well, sir," rejoined the restorer. "The bow of your watch was getting a bit old fashioned—it broke, in fact—and we had to get a new 'un made for it."

And, chuckling exceedingly at the cool impudence of the transaction, the owner of the watch transferred a couple of sovereigns more into the possession of the malefactor.

Considering his long and multifarious experience, Payne was never in the course of his career a good judge of racing. His favourite jockey, "Nat" Flatman, used to be convulsed with merriment as he narrated the conflicting opinions of Messrs Payne and Greville—who were for some time racing confederates—when they stood together representing the winning-post at the end of the trial, and could not agree as to which horse had won the trial. Payne took delight in telling anecdotes, some at his own, some at his partner's expense, and none of them was merrier than his account of the trial at Littleton, in which Greville's Ariosto passed successfully through a severe ordeal.

"Let me give you the liver-wing, Payne," said the delighted Clerk of the Council as they sat down in their trainer Dilly's house to breakfast, and Greville undertook to carve the roast chicken. Their exultation was considerably abated when Ariosto ran second to Teddington for the

Chesterfield Stakes; but the confederates wisely took the lesson to heart, and next year were amongst the principal winners when Teddington ran away from a "record" field in the Derby of 1851, "Exhibition year." Never, before or since, was there heavier wagering on a Derby; some of the bets laid by the "Leviathan," Davies, being colossal. And it was after this race that he is said to have observed, whilst scanning the lovely sylvan prospect from the betting-ring on Epsom Downs,—

"All that I can see from here might have been mine had I never made a bet on a Derby until the day of the race!"

The last Derby witnessed by Mr Payne was that of 1878, won by Mr W. S. Crawfurd's Sefton, who had previously taken the City and Suburban Handicap when carrying the lowest possible weight. Sefton, who was by Speculum (third to Blue Gown in the Derby of 1868) out of the dam of Liverpool, was one of the most moderate horses that ever carried off a Blue Riband; at the same time "G. P." landed a large stake over the result, for the chief reason that the winner was bred at the Glasgow Stud at Enfield, whose destinies were for some time controlled by Mr Payne himself, in conjunction with General Peel.

Soon after Sefton's Derby came the end. On the 10th August 1878, only a few days after the Hungarian mare Kincsem had cantered in for the Goodwood Cup from two opponents, Mr Payne was seized with partial paralysis, and, being taken to London, was placed in the bed from which he

never moved until carried to his grave. He died on the morning of 2nd September in the same year, at the little house in Queen Street, Mayfair, which had for some time been his town residence. And it can be said of him, without moralising, that his death was deeply felt by every sportsman in England, for he was a sterling English gentleman, upright in all his dealings, the soul of honour, a stern foe to cant and hypocrisy, possessed of the true spirit of Christian charity. And as one of his oldest friends wrote of him, "George Payne was beloved by men, and idolised by women, children and dogs."

BREAKING THE BANK

A FEW REMINISCENCES OF "PAPA" BLANC

MONTE CARLO is a prolific theme for the *raconteur*. The gambling-rooms were originally started there by Monsieur Blanc, father of the gentleman who paid the executors of the late Duke of Westminster £39,375 for the stallion Flying Fox, with a view to improve the French breed of horses. The father's fortune was not made out of horses.

The rules of the establishment at Monte Carlo are not only stringent in themselves, but they are rigorously enforced. No residents are allowed in the rooms. Admission can only be had by means of a green ticket, but this can be obtained without much difficulty; all the visitor has to do is to give his name, state where he comes from, and at which hotel he is staying. Notorious bad characters, swindlers and pickpockets find themselves excluded. A large staff of detectives of every nationality are always on the spot, and the Administration knows exactly, day by day, who are the winners and who are the losers.

Should you be unfortunate enough to lose a large sum, and are utterly "broke," the Administration will give you enough to pay your fare

home. But it is worse than useless trying to deceive them. They know if you have lost quite as well as *you* do—perhaps better. Once you have taken their money you must clear out. They have even been known to give a *decavé* his ticket for Marseilles and see him off by the train. Once, I recollect, they advanced 500 francs to an Englishman who had lost £3000. Next year, attracted to the spot again, he applied for his card, only to find, to his astonishment, that the authorities not only remembered him, but requested the return of *their loan* before admitting him.

In Blanc's day matters were conducted in a more happy-go-lucky style, and many a time has he been heard mournfully regretting his want of caution.

One afternoon old Blanc was taking his ease on the balcony of the hotel close by the Casino—the hotel being his property also—when a waiter put a card into his hand. The card was instantly followed by the gentleman, whose name was engraved thereon. Blanc knew him well—by report, at least.

The visitor was a young, handsome and hitherto light-hearted baronet, who, succeeding to an ancient title at an early age, had done his best to play ducks and drakes with a splendid property. He had been at Monte Carlo for several weeks and had made himself a name already for the dare-devil recklessness of his play. His success became proverbial; but M. Blanc, when anyone mentioned the matter to him, only shook his head, saying,

with a quiet smile, "Well, well; they all begin that way."

When the Englishman stepped upon the balcony that afternoon Blanc knew that the end had come already. The frank, boyish face had lost its freshness and animation; it seemed years older. There were hard lines about the mouth that told their tale of a mind made up to some definite purpose.

The baronet quietly seated himself in the chair offered to him, and, after a few minutes' silence, said,—

"Papa Blanc, I have come to say good-bye."

Blanc was profuse in courteous regrets suitable to the occasion.

"Before leaving England," continued the young man—and he spoke in calm, business-like tones, totally unlike his usual method of address—"I turned everything available into ready money. I brought all here. I played, and won. Success emboldened me; again and again I rose from the tables, my pocket heavy with winnings. Suddenly my luck changed. I played, and lost. The luck never turned again. I sit in this chair not worth the price of a cigar."

"Ah!"

"M. Blanc, to-night I shoot myself."

The young gambler announced his resolution calmly and unconcernedly. Blanc remained silent for a time. No doubt he had heard stories of the same kind before; yet he seemed uneasy. He tried to argue the young man out of his grim determination, but to no purpose.

"Well," said Blanc, resignedly, when he found all arguments fail, "if you must, you must."

"Remember," said the baronet, rising, "I make no reflections whatever on you; you are in no way responsible for my death; I blame no one but myself for what has happened or for what is about to be done. Let us shake hands before I go." And he held out his hand with something of his usual manner.

"Stay, sir," said M. Blanc, ignoring the proffered hand; "if this must be so, will you do me a slight favour first?"

His visitor gave a sickly smile. What favour could he do any man now? However, he gave the assurance. Blanc continued,—

"You must be aware of the strong feeling there is in many quarters against me and my tables. Any excuse is good enough as a text to hang a sermon on. A suicide directly traceable to gambling would be a splendid chance. Now, if you could only manage this little business elsewhere—"

The Englishman smiled in spite of himself.

"So," he said, "I have your full approval to shoot myself, provided I do not disgrace your establishment! *You* ask this, who are the primary cause?"

"It cannot make any difference to you, and it makes a world of difference to me," pleaded Blanc. "Go even a few miles away—go to Genoa—to Turin—even to Rome!—anywhere, rather than do it at Monte Carlo!"

"How can I?" he exclaimed impatiently. "I

tell you I haven't enough money to take me to the next station, let alone to Rome!"

"Ah!" cried Blanc, starting to his feet immediately, "*that* need not stand in the way! I will lend you money. Let me see. You had better have a good dinner before you—before you start. There are 200 francs. That will take you as far as you require to go."

The Englishman took the money and his departure from the hotel. He provided himself with some good cigars and strolled aimlessly about, thinking, not of the grim tragedy he meditated, but of what he would have for dinner. The shades of evening found him still undecided.

"I will have one last look round," he muttered, with just a little sigh, "perhaps there are one or two of the boys I should like to see for the last time."

He walked on the terrace of the Casino, and met one after another of his friends. Then he looked through a window into the brilliant room, and saw the familiar table with its excited crowd. He was young, and, after all, life was pleasant. He went in and stood behind the chairs, feeling somewhat like a ghost at the banquet. They were playing for golden stakes.

Suddenly the man in front of him pushed back his chair with an ill-concealed groan. Knew him well.

"Did you ever see such luck?" muttered the player; "this makes nine rouges in succession, and I have not backed the colour once!"

Almost mechanically, our friend dropped into

the vacant chair. Changing a hundred-franc note, he put a five-franc piece on black, and lost. Again and again he tried, losing each time, until, without seeming to notice how his money had vanished, he was reduced to his last five francs! He clenched his teeth as he put down the last coin, and rose from the chair scarcely looking to see what colour turned up. This time he won. He gazed at the two coins, but did not touch them. Again and again the red won. He changed his stake to gold, and a pile soon lay at his call. He was suddenly brought to his senses by the voice of the croupier calling,—

"Monsieur has a larger stake than the rules permit."

He drew in his winnings. But the craving was upon him. He put down five louis on a number, and won, gathering up 3600 francs. Amid the breathless excitement of the onlookers he repeated the play six times, always successfully. The pile of gold grew larger and larger, and then there was a pause in the game. The croupiers held a hurried consultation; every eye watched them, every ear was strained to catch the drift of their discussion. Then, like one in a dream, the winner heard the decision: "The bank has lost the maximum amount permitted at one sitting. Play will be resumed at the usual hour to-morrow."

He had broken the bank!

"What did he do?" said Papa Blanc, with a shrug, when he told the story. "In the morning I received a polite note, enclosing my 200

francs. The gentleman never came near Monte Carlo again, and, I should think, never since has touched a card. It is so like you English; he enriched himself at my expense, and then deserted me. Well, well! I am not sorry that he did not kill himself—only it *was* a little cruel that *I* should have to pay."

A still more flagrant game of "spoof" was played upon M. Blanc, in his earlier days. This occurred at Wiesbaden, when gambling flourished exceedingly in the Fatherland, and the paternal Frenchman held a bank against all comers.

He was awakened one morning by a knock at his bedroom door.

"Enter!" cried the great man, imagining it was his *valet-de-chambre*.

But it wasn't. A haggard-looking but well-dressed Austrian came hurriedly into the apartment; and without explaining the reason of his visit commenced to hammer into the wall a large iron staple. Papa Blanc, speechless with astonishment, watched the proceedings of his visitor, and then inquired,—

"What on earth are you trying to do?" The man administered one more hard knock to the staple, and then turned and faced his involuntary host.

"I am about to hang you by the neck from that, if you do not instantly give me 1000 crowns."

What little hair Blanc had left stood up on end.

"Are you mad?" he asked.

"As sane as you are. I got cleared out at the tables last night."

"I didn't see you there."

"That," observed the Austrian, grimly, producing a stout rope from a capacious pocket, "does not matter in the least. I give you two minutes to decide whether you will give me 1000 crowns, or die the death of a dog."

M. Blanc looked anxiously towards the bell. The stranger was between him and it, and, shaking his head, smiling the while, remarked,—

"It is useless for monsieur to think of a rescue, when there will be no rescue. Come, your choice."

"Kindly give me my coat," said the unfortunate capitalist. The stranger obliged, keeping both eyes firmly fixed on his victim the while. Notes to the required amount were produced from a case, and M. Blanc sank back in bed, exhausted.

"I shall now, with your kind permission," continued the visitor, "proceed to bandage your arms and legs and make you fast to the bed." And he suited the actions to the words, adding, "By the time that you have freed yourself and given the alarm, I shall be well out of the reach of everybody. Monsieur Blanc, I have the honour to wish you, with my most distinguished compliments and thanks, a profound *au revoir!*"

But it was a *bonâ-fide adieu.* Papa Blanc never again set eyes on his visitor. It was a

simple case of robbery. The man had never been in the gambling-rooms in his life. Staying in the same hotel he had found out some of the habits of his intended victim; and having spirited his valet away temporarily on a bogus mission, the rest was easy.

One more story told by Papa Blanc against himself. It occurred also at Baden. Whilst walking one morning with his wife in the fashionable street, she casually mentioned that a new sunshade would come in handy.

Smilingly remarking that ladies were always wanting something, Papa inquired how many sunshades his better half already possessed.

"I never count these things," said madame, loftily. "But probably about five-and-twenty."

They were passing the most expensive shop in the place, and M. Blanc, shrugging his shoulders, humbly followed madame in. The most expensive article was, after a long time, selected, the account settled, and soon afterwards the happy pair separated, madame to take the air in her victoria, and monsieur to see how things were going in the *salon de jeu*.

It was early for play, yet the game was in progress. The little ball was rolling; and it suddenly occurred to Papa Blanc that he might recover the cost of the sunshade at the simple game of roulette. At the end of an hour, having lost the price of a carriage and pair, he ordered a chair, and proceeded to enter into the game in a more business-like manner. Still he lost; and after playing for four hours against his own bank, fighting, as it

were, his own shadow, he rose from the table, having lost the profits of the whole season.

Poor Papa! He never forgot that sunshade. But he did not mention so trifling a matter to madame.

"LORDY"

In the matter of covering sins charity is not in the race with a long purse. "When you've got the money," as the old song used to run, "you're a brick, brick, brick!" And Crœsus can do pretty well as he pleases, as long as his bank holds out. Instructors of youth, ministers of the Gospel and other well-meaning theorists may protest to a contrary effect, but the possession of wealth is, after all, the most desirable state in life. Escapades, eccentricities and mad follies can be condoned or "squared" with "palm-oil"; and an action which would be looked upon as shameful, even criminal, in a man of little means, is readily condoned, and even extolled, by the world at large.

Many of our sporting ancestors who lived and flourished during the first five or six decades of the nineteenth century were possessed of wealth and played tricks enough before high heaven to dissolve the angelic host in tears. And whilst the escapades and extravagancies of our ancestors may have more or less impoverished their descendants, we merely accept this as the natural order of things, in accordance with the dread promises made in the Divine deliverance to Moses; a

promise which has been religiously and jealously kept ever since, in visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation.

Saint or sinner, one of the wealthiest eccentrics who ever played the "great game" was James Carr Boyle, fifth Earl of Glasgow, who was better known for many years as Viscount Kelburne. Born in 1792, he reached years of alleged discretion at a warm, wicked epoch, when the man of fashion was of necessity a gamester, and joy and sorrow alike were nightly drowned deep within the bowl. "Jamie," the youthful Scot, went to sea at an early age, and, although he did not remain long afloat, it may be said of him that throughout his career he never lost the salt flavour. In blood, as in manner and disposition, he was a true descendant of the hardy Norsemen whose brave deeds have so often been celebrated in song; and though his tones were haughty and his manners those of the bully, his wayward and uncertain temper were condoned by the intrinsic worth of the man, who was an embodiment of honesty and honour, although in about the grimmest shape those admirable virtues have ever adopted. And although the majority of mankind feared the rasping voice and the imperious manner, the man who "stuck up" to the tyrant would always come out "on top."

As a mere youth, we read of "Lordy" seated with a friend at one of the windows of the "Black Swan," in York city, during the race week, with magnums of claret within reach, the wine being

handed out to the passers-by in tumblers. It is also on record that at the "Star," in Stonegate, also in York, he jumped on the table one night when John Gully entered, and offering 25 to 1 in hundreds against Brutandorf for the St Leger, repeated the offer in thousands. And later in life he fairly jumped down the throat of the great Lord George Bentinck himself.

On the night before the Derby of 1843, Lord George came into the dining-room at Crockford's and expressed his readiness to take 3 to 1 about his horse Gaper.

"I'll lay it you," snapped Lord Glasgow.

"Yes," said the Turf Dictator, in his most mincing, supercilious tones, "but I want to do it to money."

"I'll lay you £90,000 to £30,000," was the prompt rejoinder; and even the hardened *blasés habitués* of the most colossal home for gambling that ever existed, started, and gazed open-mouthed at the stern and wild Caledonian. But he was master of the situation. He had fairly "bluffed" the "Napoleon of the Turf," who, muttering something about the folly and iniquity of mammoth wagering, turned on his heels and went out.

As Lord Kelburne—when he attended no race meeting south of Doncaster—he lived much in Scotland, at Hawkhead, near Paisley, where, when there was no racing on, he devoted himself to hunting, shooting and conviviality. Nor did he lack boon companions, when such boon companions—"bonnie boys" or dear old "chappies"

they would be called by the modern roysterer—as the Marquis of Queensberry, Lord Kennedy, Sir William and Sir John Heron Maxwell, and Sir James Boswell would be always dropping in to cheer up "Jamie." Then would the corks fly and the wit of the period sparkle; and it was said that enough claret was drunk nightly to float a frigate. Those were the days—or nights—of heavy wagers, in which one would back himself to outdo another in some feat of speed, courage or endurance; and one of the guests, Lord Kennedy, was always ready to shoot, walk, ride or drive, against any mortal man, for any conceivable sum. Lord Kelburne, with an equally sporting, stubborn disposition and a comparatively bottomless purse, was just the sort of foeman who was always ready and willing to take-on the other at any hour of the day or night. The later the hour the wilder the bet. One night, after a free circulation of the "rosy," a warm dispute arose between Lords Kelburne and Kennedy as to the merits of their respective coachmanship. A match for £500 was the only means of deciding the question of superiority. Two coaches and teams were accordingly ordered round from a neighbouring hostelry, and the pair started on their race, which was to be from Hawkhead to a certain point in the town of Ardrossan.

The night was as dark as Erebus, but the two rivals started off at a gallop nevertheless, and the two coaches swayed about as if they would topple over every minute. The road was barely wide enough for the one vehicle to pass the other; but

whilst there were frequent collisions there were no upsets. Lord Kelburne's team eventually forged ahead, and he would probably have won easily but for an unfortunate error. Arrived at the top of a hill where two roads met, one leading to Ardrossan, he took the wrong one. He lost the wager, and with no inconsiderable amount of difficulty just managed to stop his horses as they were about to plunge from a great height into the sea.

Like "The Squire," mentioned in another place in this work, Lord Glasgow by no means stuck to one trainer during his career as an owner of race-horses. Nor was this altogether surprising, for he was no ordinary employer. Thomas Dawson, of Middleham, probably understood him better than any other trainer; yet "Tom" and "Lordy" were not always on the best of terms. And James Godding, who trained for Lord Glasgow at Newmarket for a space, was not long in finding out that the peer was not the man to work a joke upon. His lordship was going round the stables one morning with his friend George Payne and the trainer. They came eventually to a stall occupied by a very good-looking bay horse named Volunteer, bred by Mr Gardner at Fordham, about four miles from Newmarket.

"Nice horse, that," remarked Lord Glasgow.

"Yes, m'lord," said Godding.

"As good a looking one as anyone would wish to see," added Mr Payne.

"I never saw a better," continued the peer.

"And yet, m'lord," observed the incautious trainer, "his owner has never seen him. It's a

curious thing, but his owner has never seen this good-looking horse."

"Indeed!" snapped Lord Glasgow, falling into the trap. "How's that?"

"His owner's a blind man, m'lord," was the reply. And then Godding flew for his life. The eccentric nobleman could not brook being the victim of a joke by his own trainer. Much to Payne's delight—"G. P." roared till the tears came — poor James Godding was chased three times round his own yard, whilst Lord Glasgow, with stick brandished, was calling him "a damned red-faced old scoundrel." The trainer fortunately escaped in time from the threatened castigation; but he was never forgiven the offence, and the eccentric peer removed his horses a few days later.

One of his pet aversions was to give names to his horses. He always maintained that no horse should receive a name until he had earned one by winning a race, and as this but seldom happened with Lord Glasgow's horses, the majority of them finished their public careers as the "colt by Rapid Rhone out of sister to Physalis," or the "filly by Here-I-go-with-my-eye-out out of the dam of Jenny-come-tickle-me." Half the evenings in the Jockey Club Rooms at Newmarket were spent by his friends—Lord Derby, Admiral Rous, Lord Strafford, General Peel and others—in suggesting names for his instruments of gaming. Once, and once only, did they succeed in getting the firm old Scot to fall in with their views. He named three horses all by himself, and the same evening the

All the Winners

Messrs Weatherby received the following cognomens for registration :—

"He-has-a-name."
"Give-him-a-name."
"He-isn't-worth-a-name."

Mr Pickwick, it may be recollected, once arrived at the conclusion that the friends of Mr Magnus were very easily amused. And it was said at the time that Lord Glasgow was so well pleased with the compliments heaped upon him for his pretty knack of nomenclature that he for some time entertained serious thoughts of writing a racing novel in three volumes.

"Lordy" usually possessed some of the biggest and best-looking horses in training, amongst them such celebrities as Rapid Rhone, Make Haste, Tom Bowline, Brother to Strafford (afterwards named Outfit), General Peel, and last, but not least, Musket, a son of Lord Derby's Toxopholite—second to Beadsman for the Blue Riband of 1858—and the transmitter of most of the stout, staying blood we have at the present day. The eccentric peer was never known to sell a racehorse, although he occasionally gave one away to friend or *employé*. He used to have regular "shooting days" after he had tried his two-year-olds, those which had failed to answer expectations being shot in batches. And had it not been for the entreaties of the still living John Osborne—who had ridden the colt in the trial—Musket himself would have fallen a victim to the fatal bullet. Wiser counsel

having prevailed for once in a way with his rugged owner, the horse made a name on the Turf, being subsequently bequeathed to Mr George Payne, together with a substantial pecuniary legacy.

A good story attaches to these periodical "shoots." A friend of the writer's, then farming in the neighbourhood of Middleham, had invited some of the "heads of departments"—jockeys and strappers in the local training establishments—to a supper at the principal hotel in the town. Full justice was done to the meal, which consisted of sundry substantial rump-steaks, juicy and savoury, and done to a turn. These were washed down with rare old home-brewed ale. Amongst the usual toasts afterwards was that of the giver of the feast, who responded in a few well-chosen words. He was rejoiced that they had all enjoyed their supper so much. And would they be surprised to hear the name of the beast from whom those prime steaks had been cut?

"Prime Scotch beast, I should think," hazarded Tom Dawson's head lad.

"Better than that," said his host. "Its descent was far more aristocratic. Those steaks, gentlemen, were part of the yield of the two-year-old by Brother to Give-him-a-name out of Maid of Masham's dam!"

Then did a great awe fall upon that assembly, and one and all of the guests called loudly for brown brandy. Although, as a matter of fact, a steak cut from the rump of a well-fed horse is by no means to be despised, as the writer, for one, can testify.

All the Winners

As Master of the Renfrewshire Hounds Lord Glasgow distinguished himself by his liberal management; but if anything went wrong with the sport he would immediately "blame it" upon his huntsman, and on occasion that unfortunate functionary would be chased for a mile or two over fence and furrow. When run into, he would feel the length of his employer's whip-thong; and the whippers-in and his Lordship's second horseman would occasionally experience the same treatment. And, as might naturally be supposed, his Lordship's servants, like his trainers, were in a chronic state of transition. One huntsman, however, was made of sterner stuff. When engaging for the post, he expressly stipulated against any assault and battery; "and I give you due warning, my Lord," said the man, "that I am quite as capable of giving as good a thrashing as anyone can give me." History, moreover, tells how upon one occasion this same huntsman administered a right royal "leathering" to his employer before the whole field assembled.

The story of throwing the waiter out of window, and telling the landlord to charge for the man's broken leg in the bill, may or may not be true when applied to Lord Glasgow. At all events, the story has been told of many autocrats connected with sport. But that "Lordy" was a terror to servants, whether his own or other people's, is certain. And there was only one postboy in Middleham town who would take him in a chaise from the nearest railway station to the hotel. Postboys of the period—in fact they varied in age from

eighteen to eighty-one—were occasionally subjected to very rough treatment from their "fares"; from being pulled out of the saddle and chastised with their own whips to being peppered in the back with small shot through the front window of the chaise.

But it was on the Turf that Lord Glasgow was most familiar to the people of England. For upwards of fifty years he figured as an owner of horses, and during that period he spent hundreds of thousands of pounds upon breeding and training thoroughbred stock. Yet not one of the three greatest classic events fell to his "white body, crimson sleeves and cap." The greatest victory of his life was in the York Subscription Purse, when Harry Edwards, on his Lordship's Action, defeated by a short head the terrific rush of Sam Chifney on Memnon. The best horse he ever possessed was General Peel, a son of Young Melbourne, and with this horse "Lordy" won the Two Thousand Guinea Stakes of 1864, and ran second to Blair Athol for the Derby and St Leger. Through monetary difficulties the owner of Blair Athol was in the hands of some of the bookmakers before the Derby; and it has been written that the original intention of the conspirators was that General Peel should be allowed to win the Derby, and that Blair Athol, a "dark" horse—who was known to be a "wonder"—should be kept in reserve for the St Leger. Needless to say, the high-principled "Lordy" knew nothing of this arrangement, whereby he was to be suffered to capture the Blue Riband. And, owing to the con-

vivial capacities of one of the conspirators, the plot had to be changed, with the result that Blair Athol won both Derby and St Leger in a canter.

Lord Glasgow's fickleness was proverbial—he was perpetually changing his trainers and jockeys. No one was so wayward and difficult to please, or so munificent when he was pleased. His trainers came and departed, like the east wind, until at last men of standing in the profession would not engage themselves to him without a guarantee for at least three years. When he had gone the round he would come back to the old ones, although he had, at some time or other, vowed that they had ruined his horses. Amongst the more eminent men who had his horses were Thomas Dawson (twice), John Dawson, Joseph Dawson, John Scott, and J. Godding.

His irritability was, in a large measure, due to a nervous infirmity, which compelled him to use drugs at night to induce sleep. And occasionally, "Nature's soft nurse" having refused to visit his pillow, he was very irritable indeed next day. Thomas Aldcroft, the jockey, once felt the full measure of his noble employer's wrath. It was after Aldcroft had ridden Tom Bowline in the Two Thousand Guineas Stakes of 1860, for which race the horse was second favourite. Lord Glasgow called his jockey out of the dressing-room at Newmarket for explanations; and the other jockeys, scenting a disturbance, stood up at the window to watch the proceedings.

They commenced by "Lordy" inquiring as to how the race was run, and how the horse had

carried its rider. Aldcroft, although a very capable performer in the saddle—his "final rush" was as celebrated as that of Sam Chifney—had not the gift of description fully developed within him, and could never remember many of the details of a race five minutes after it was over. He commenced a hesitating narrative something after this fashion,—

"After we started, m'lord, I waited with my horse until—until we were half-way across the Flat, m'lord; then I sent him—sent him to the front—to the front, m'lord, and we took the lead." (*A pause.*) "After we passed the Bushes, m'lord, my horse began to tire, and—and we dropped back."

Lord Glasgow, who had been very fidgety during the narrative, and who had resented keenly his horse's defeat by The Wizard—trained in the same stable—stretched the back of his neck harder and faster than usual, and, turning round in a fury, screamed out,—

"Liar! You were never in the first ten!"

Off went Aldcroft, like a scalded dog, and there came a ripple of laughter from the jockeys' dressing-room.

"Lordy" was a good hater. For some reason, or without any reason, he conceived an intense aversion to Colonel Forester—known to his intimates as "The Lad," a very hard rider to hounds in his day, and a patron of Thomas Wadlow, who still trains near Shifnal, in Shropshire. The eccentric Earl used to vow, again and again, that the Colonel should never become a member of the

Jockey Club during his (Lord Glasgow's) lifetime; and upon one occasion he travelled all the way from Glasgow to London — having chartered a special train for part of the journey—on purpose to blackball his pet aversion. As one black ball was sufficient, the Colonel was not elected to the Jockey Club until after the death of the peer, who left, amongst other legacies, one to the "The Lad." The amount has been differently estimated, but did not approach £20,000, as has been stated.

There was something particularly determined, a sort of bull-dog resolution about Lord Glasgow, as he would lean his back against a post in the stand or a corner of the "Rooms," rubbing the back of his neck with his hand, and ready to lay the odds, when in the vein, or to back his fancy, almost up to any amount. It was dangerous for a trainer or jockey to put £100 on a horse, as "Lordy" was sure to multiply the advised sum by 10, 20, or even 100. Frequently he would take no advice whatever; and with a colt at least 28 lbs. better in his stable, he characteristically enough backed Dare Devil to win £50,000 in the Doncaster St Leger, and put his first jockey on the horse. But be the issue what it might, no one could tell by his features whether "Lord Glasger," as the north-country members of the betting-ring used to call him, had lost or won.

When, on the 11th March 1869, Lord Glasgow died, at his Renfrewshire seat of Hawkhead, the sporting world missed and mourned him sincerely. Even in his dress one could trace the prevailing

eccentricity of his character, for he never wore an overcoat, even in the coldest and wettest of weather, until within a few years of his death.

"To the last," wrote "The Druid," "he stood by the side of the cords with low shoes a world too wide, white trousers in which T. P. Cooke himself could have conscientiously danced a hornpipe, and not infrequently in a bright blue coat with gilt buttons. See him when you might, there was the same nervous irritation which ruined all natural rest and made his span of seventy-seven years, eked out as it was nightly by chloroform or laudanum, very little short of miraculous.

"The more they jeered at his stud tribes the more he stuck by them, and the more he matched the produce. He cared nothing what he spent out of a reputed £60,000 a year. If a privileged queen of the card-women hit him too hard with her chaff he would rub his neck or back, as was his nervous way, a little more vigorously than usual, and throw her a sovereign to get rid of her. He liked having his racing blood to himself, and therefore he put the fees of his sires at a pretty prohibitive figure. In fact, he would rather lend than let, and infinitely sooner shoot than sell. He has been known to go down to Middleham out of the season, summon four or five resident jockeys overnight to ride a score or more trials for him next morning, and finish up by shooting half a dozen of the worst twos and threes, without benefit of clergy. Stern of mood as he might be when crossed, 'his hand was ever open, his heart was ever warm.'

"It was said that he once fed half Paisley in a time of distress, and that yet not even a bailie dared thank him on behalf of his brother townsmen for fear of being assaulted. A £10 note or a 'pony' was the very least he would pull out of his pocket if the hat went round, and good cause was shown for some Turfite who had fallen behind the world. For forty years after their connection had ceased he would send one of his earliest jockeys a £50 note, if he had won a good event, simply for 'auld lang syne.' With all his foibles he was a glorious old landmark to the Turf; and while he was still among us, defying the roll of the ages, with his quaint garb and blunt speech, some may, perchance, have felt that his presence was a wholesome corrective to the modern spirit which has lowered 'the sport of kings' into a doubtful trade, a contest for honour into a lust for long odds."

A CHOP, AND WHAT FOLLOWED

A Hunting Story

"'Od rabbit the fa-axes, the nasty, stinkin' varmints, says I," exclaimed long Will Pearson, head keeper to Squire Beauchamp, and familiarly known to the youth of the neighbourhood as "Old Gaiters." "They kills more 'o my pheesants in a wik than'd fid a parish. I'd shut'n or trap'n all, the stinkin' varmints, if I had my way." And with his big thorn stick thrust under his arm, and Dan, the retriever, following close at his heels, Will sauntered sulkily along the hedgerow.

The South Midlandshire hounds had met at Skillborough Hall that morning, five miles or so from Buttonville, the vast smoky metropolis of the Midlands. The Squire's hospitality was a by-word for miles around, and in addition to the habitual followers of the chase, who had done themselves well on game pie, topped up with orange brandy, hundreds of the inhabitants of Buttonville had turned out to see the fun, and to make a serious diminution in the contents of the Squire's hogsheads of old ale. The "big covert," some distance from the hall, was the first to be drawn, and it was outside this covert that Mr Keeper made the opening remarks.

All the Winners

"Hope to goodness he'll break this side," observed Charley Anstruther, of the 120th Hussars, then quartered at Buttonville, to Ned Dockham, the hard-riding coper of the district, as they jogged along the lane side by side. "It's a perfectly lovely country as far as Massingham, with as much jumping as you could want, and all those button-tickling devils are on the other side."

"No chance of a run, Captain, unless he does," said the other. "They'll never get him away through all those folk. He'd be chopped to a certainty."

"Heleu-u, in there m' little beauties!" cries a distant voice in the wood; and ever anon comes also the reproving "Ware rabbit!" with the accompanying "cr-rack!" of the whip-thong of Will Ash, best of huntsmen.

"Deuced slow work, this," says little Baggs, the tailor, on what he would call his "'ired 'ack" — "and what a mixed comp'ny, eh, m'lord?" addressing the jovial Earl of Fishborough.

"Well, damn it all, Baggs," replies his lordship, knocking the ash off his cigar, "we can't *all* be tailors!" And Baggs disappears through the wood.

What's that? A faint whimper in the distance, and then another. "'Eleu at him there!" cries Will Ash. And, in a second or two, the younger hounds take up the joyful chorus, which presently gets fainter and fainter.

"Dash it all!" says Charley Anstruther, "they're running clean away from us." And putting his horse at the stiff stake-and-bound

fence which borders the covert, he adds, "We can get into the main ride presently, and it leads straight through."

Most of the field follow suit, the more timid waiting until a pretty considerable gap has been made in the fence, whilst others "macadamise" it until the nearest open gate is reached.

"Those dashed fellows from Buttonville will see all the fun," thinks Charley, as he gallops along, inwardly cursing his luck. "If they'll only keep off the line, he'll lead us a rare dance, as hounds seem to be running like smoke."

But a different story has to be told when the other side of the covert is reached. The huntsman and the foremost members of the field are staring in blank amazement at the hounds, who have thrown up their heads, and are evidently "dead off it."

"They must have chopped the beggar," hazards the Master.

"If they have, they've been pretty quick over breaking him up," says the senior member of the hunt, "for they haven't left even his brush."

"Can't mak' it out 't all," snaps Will Ash. "Scent war good enough, and here they checks. 'Tain't much use a-castin' of 'em in this crowd," he adds, with a look of disgust at the assembled multitude.

"But what's become of the fox?" is the universal cry.

"Yes, where the devil's the fox?" inquires Charley.

"I'll tell 'ee," murmurs a small boy who has gradually sidled up to him. "Gie us a shillin', measter, and I'll tell 'ee."

The coin of the realm was promptly forthcoming, and everybody gathered round the boy.

"Yon chap," at length said he, pointing in the direction of a horseman who was careering along in the opposite direction some two fields away, "give foive shillin' for 'un, and took 'un away wi' 'un."

'Twas true enough. The anything but wily fox had broken cover on the Buttonville side. 'Twixt the Scylla of the pursuing hounds and the Charybdis of the vast multitude, he had chosen —that stupid and unsportsmanlike fox—the latter. With the leading hounds a quarter of a mile away, the little red rascal had run almost into the arms of a compact body of button-ticklers, who, with the help of their sticks and a half-brick or two, promptly settled his hash. Whereupon a solitary horseman had galloped up and demanded the price of the carcase. For the sum of two half-crowns a bargain had at length been struck, and the purchaser had promptly made off with his prize, whilst the murderers of the fox had as promptly made tracks also.

"Well, did anybody ever hear the like?" exclaimed the old member, as soon as the boy's tale was complete.

"Curse the fellow's impudence!" muttered the Master.

"The davvle ought to be chasetised to dath, or turned stark naked into my kennels along wi' th'

hounds!" cried Will, angrily slashing away with his whip.

But Charley, without wasting any time over words, had promptly set spurs to his horse and was now in full pursuit of the delinquent.

"Hurrah!" yelled the Master, as soon as he saw this. "A man hunt! If we can't hunt the fox, we'll chase the man who's got him."

And hats were crammed more tightly on heads, reins were gathered up, and "For'ard, on!" was once more the cry.

"Go-one awa-ay!" shrieked Charley Anstruther, who had got a flying start. And, mounted on a well-known steeplechaser, the crack rider of the 120th soon began to gain on the fugitive.

"Well, I'm blessed!" exclaimed Charley, as he got a nearer view, "if it isn't that confounded little Baggs! And the beggar threatened to County Court me only the other day. Hi! Drop that fox, will you?" he shouted, when well within hailing distance; but the flying tailor only urged his now flagging steed to renewed exertions.

But the unfortunate snip was not destined to enjoy much longer "law." In another quarter of a mile the steeplechaser had got within a couple of lengths of the "'ired 'ack," and immediately, with one tremendous "cr-rack" the heavy thong of Charley's hunting-whip was curling round little Baggs's body.

"Give it up, you d——d thief!" roared the Hussar.

"Chasetise him, Captain!" sang out the huntsman, and the whip was once more raised aloft.

And then did the tailor arrive at the fact that discretion was the better part of valour. With an oath, he flung the carcase of the fox on the ground, and then got out of the way of further harm as quickly as his steed could carry him.

"Whoo-whoop!" shouted the M. F. H. "This is the funniest run I've ever been in."

. . . . . .

But the fun did not last long. In less than a week the little tailor had the bulge on the hunt in general, and Charley Anstruther in particular.

An evil-looking youth, who carried a black bag, and who could not possibly have been mistaken even by the dullest of sentries for anything but a lawyer's clerk, eventually obtained an audience of that gallant officer, who accepted service of the writ.

"My advice, my dear sir," said his solicitor, "is, most positively, compromise."

And the tailor subsequently received a cheque for £300 for "moral, physical and intellectual damages." But he never again ventured out hunting.

"HARRY"

"WHERE'S your plate book, my lord?" asked the new secretary, after arrival at Donnington Hall, Derbyshire, to take up his duties.

"Never heard of such a thing," was the cool reply.

"Then what do you do if you lose any forks or spoons?"

"Do? Why, buy some more, of course."

This little anecdote is illustrative of the utterly reckless disposition and habits of the last Marquis of Hastings, who flickered in the Turf firmament for a brief space, as a brilliant meteor, all too soon to be converted into a falling star, a constellation which fell

"like Lucifer,
Never to hope again!"

As a plunger of the plungers in the "sixties," that period of the nineteenth century during which many noble and aristocratic patrons of the Turf, casting reason, common-sense—ay! even common decency—to the winds, wasted as much of their patrimony as they could lay hands on, and anticipated the rest—for the sole benefit of fat-bodied, stony-hearted financiers, layers of odds, Hebrew jewellers, licensed victuallers, and other more or

less objectionable people—"Harry" Hastings was one of the most remarkable characters that has ever footed and strutted their hour upon the Turf. It would be impossible to count the number of moral lessons to be deduced from the public career of an amiable young man—without guile, but with a long minority—who, whilst by no means a "mug," yet betted in such reckless fashion that not even the Bank of England, backed by the Rothschilds, with the mines of Golconda and Peru, and the buried treasure of Hindostan as additional supports, could have withstood the strain. He had absolutely no idea of the value of money, and upon occasion (usually after dinner) his wagers would assume such mammoth proportions as to make even bookmakers blush.

The late Captain Henry Coventry (more familiarly known as "B" Coventry), who was a well-known steeplechase rider and votary of the Turf during the "Hastings era," was in the same form at Eton with the present writer. Upon one occasion, when called upon to "construe" a portion of a chapter in the Greek Testament, the master (as was customary) had borrowed his pupil's book, temporarily. Said master, the Reverend Mr Birch (ominous name!) had a roving eye, and was not long in espying on a fly-leaf within the sacred volume the record of sundry insignificant wagers upon the Derby of 1858, won by Beadsman.

"What are these, Coventry?" inquired the master in awful tones. "Bets?"

"Yessir," was the unabashed reply of the bowled-out.

Then followed a long and most severe jobation, in the which was a promise of an interview with the headmaster and the prettiest little birch-rod that money could purchase. And the lecture wound up with this solemn prophecy,—

"Depend upon it, Coventry, that the boy who bets in shillings will, when he becomes a man, bet in sovereigns."

The rest of the class were duly awed and impressed by this sinister prediction; and since that day I have known the same culprit (long since deceased) have as much as a "monkey" upon a horse. Yet I little thought, upon the first occasion when I met the Marquis of Hastings, and saw him invest one sovereign at Birmingham steeplechases with that gigantic metallician of the period, Mr John Greaves of Pontefract, that the time would arrive—and very shortly too—when this punter in sovereigns would be wagering in tens of thousands.

It was only a few years afterwards that the "Hastings hoops" of scarlet and white became as familiar in our eyes on the racecourse as household bread or brown brandy; whilst no public training stables were more closely watched than Danebury, which is on the hill-top, just out of Stockbridge town.

This (at the time) world-renowned training establishment, close to the site of the Ancient British Camp at Danebury, was originally (*i.e.*, in 1832) converted from a labourer's cottage and an

old thatched barn into a residence for himself and stabling for thirty-five horses by John Day the elder, one of whose sons, John, trained here for thirty years, having amongst his employers the Duke of Beaufort and the Marquis of Hastings. In old John Day's time Venison was trained here, that wonderful type of the hardy English race-horse, who cost but £100 to purchase originally. And from this spot the horse went forth on his annual tramps—there were no railways in those days—which amounted during his racing career to upwards of 1300 miles; in addition to which he was running in long-distance races, in heats, and many King's Plates. Venison was the trial horse of Lord Lichfield's Elis, the St Leger winner of 1836, upon which race Lord George Bentinck won a very large stake. Here, too, the last-mentioned nobleman's Crucifix was trained, together with Bay Middleton (who was buried at Danebury) and others belonging to Lord George, who was associated with the fortunes of the Stockbridge training establishment from 1836 to 1841. After this Messrs John Gully and Harry Hill became associated with the Danebury stable for ten or twelve years; and during this period three Derbies, the same number of Oaks, and many other important races fell to John Day the younger. His father had, early in the "fifties," removed to Findon, where he trained privately for Mr Henry Padwick, a gentleman who was destined, a decade later, to exercise a very strong control over the fortunes and the actions of the subject of the present sketch.

Old John Day was, indeed, a character. Of untiring industry, and possessing a sound knowledge of his business, he was always at work in the stable, in the saddle (when a jockey), and subsequently as owner and trainer of racehorses. He was married as a mere boy in his stable jacket; his son John was born when his father was but twenty-one years old; and we read further that the old man would ride his hack sixty or seventy miles to a race meeting and back again next day, that he rode a St Leger winner but never trained one, and that he trained two Derby winners but never rode one. He had five sons, John, Sam, William, Alfred and Henry, the first four jockeys, and the last a solicitor; and the third son, William—who has distinguished himself not only as trainer and jockey, but as an author—is still alive in this year of grace 1902.

Although his racing stud was as extensive as it was expensive, the Marquis of Hastings only managed to win one of the "classic" races. This was the One Thousand Guineas Stakes of 1866, which fell to Repulse, by Stockwell, who was ridden by Thomas Cannon. His first wife was a daughter of John Day the younger, who was throughout the Marquis's trainer. And the "scarlet and white hoops" were, as a rule, worn by either Cannon or Fordham.

I do not propose to make any reference to the marriage of the Marquis, which created a great sensation at the time. Nor would it serve any good purpose to analyse the performances of all

his racehorses. Let it suffice to chat about some of his most famous performers; and in this connection I cannot do better than commence with Lecturer, the "pony" whose Cesarewitch victory in 1866 is said to have increased his noble owner's balance at the bank of upwards of £100,000.

Lecturer had run at two years of age in a selling race at Goodwood, on the same day that Redmire had won the Chesterfield Cup in a field of thirty. Lecturer, fortunately for the Danebury people, was not claimed, as he might have been, for something like £200; and next year, Alfred Day (the trainer's brother) sold him to Lord Hastings for something like twice that sum. The first time the horse ran in the "hoops" a tremendous plunge was brought off on him, in a T.Y.C. handicap at Newmarket. This was a lucky race indeed for the Marquis, as not only did he land a most substantial *coup*, but the fact of Lecturer winning a five-furlongs race had impressed other people with the idea that the horse was a mere "sprinter."

On May 4, 1866, a most important trial took place at Danebury. Rustic, the Duke of Beaufort's Derby horse—who afterwards finished third in the race—was tried, in company with Blue Riband, Lecturer and The Duke, the last-named of whom had walked over for the Queen's Plate at Salisbury the day before. It is only a short distance from Salisbury to Danebury, either across the downs or by road, and The Duke travelled the distance in a horse-van (according

to the fashion of the day, with high-class race-horses) on which was painted "John Day, Danebury." The trial being of such an important nature considerable disappointment was felt in London, at the sporting clubs and elsewhere. Bookmakers marvelled at the silence of the Stockbridge touts; and nobody heard until a day or two afterwards that this silence was due to the Napoleonic strategy of His Grace the Duke of Beaufort. The trial had been fixed for the same morning as a most *recherché* luncheon at the Grosvenor Arms, Stockbridge, to which the Duke had invited every horsewatcher in the townlet. Nothing loth, the "men of observation" attended in force. Not one of them had "shied" at the banquet; and after his guests had taken their seats the Duke addressed them in some such terms as these:—

"I hope you will enjoy your luncheon, gentlemen, and that you will not object to be locked in during the repast. We are anxious to gallop some horses up above whilst free from observation, and we intend doing so. Gentlemen, may good digestion wait on appetite. *Au revoir!*"

His Grace retired, the coffee-room door was locked, and the jump from any of the windows—the apartment was on the first floor—was too formidable to undertake. So the trial came off in the presence only of the connections of the stable.

The first rumour of the trial which reached London was most favourable to Blue Riband; whilst Rustic, who had looked like starting a

better favourite than his one-time stable companion, Lord Lyon, was reported to have done badly, and "went out" in the betting consequently. Through something taking place—one or two horses running out or something of the sort—the trial was not altogether a satisfactory one. Most people had looked upon Lecturer as a sprinter, and were surprised to see him in the course of a few hours backed to win a lot of money for the Derby at 100 to 1. He ran at Bath on the following Tuesday, and won a mile race easily. The following day odds were laid on him for a mile and a half race, but he bolted on his way to the post. At anyrate, he did not start with the rest. Whatever happened to him he did not run for the Derby, for which Rustic, who ran a very soft race, finished third. Lecturer, who was a little, sturdy horse, frequently cut his arms in running, and it was thought that he overreached in galloping. Eventually it was found that he did it with his forefeet, and this will show what his action was. For this reason he was not afterwards plated on his forefeet.

The Marquis of Hastings was never on friendly terms with Admiral Rous, who in turn—as one who had no stomach for the plunger or the spendthrift—did not love poor "Harry." And when the weights for the Cesarewitch of that year made their appearance, the whole of the Lord Hastings horses which had been entered were struck out, the noble owner being much dissatisfied with the weights apportioned to them. This was done in a fit of pique, on the spur of the moment, and the

very next day, after Lecturer had won a great trial over a distance of ground, the noble owner fairly groaned in spirit. Then all of a sudden he recollected that the little horse had been entered in the name of his friend Mr "Peter" Wilkinson, and the situation was saved. At that period the rules referring to nominations were nothing like as strict as at present, nor was there any necessity to register partnerships.

And who was Mr "Peter" Wilkinson? One of the most popular as well as one of the best-known men—on the racecourse or in the south-west district of the metropolis—that sporting history has ever dealt with. The son of a clergyman, this man-about-town was accustomed, it was said, to read the Second Lesson in church whilst staying under the paternal roof. When staying elsewhere he was as light-hearted a roysterer as it is possible to imagine; an amateur jockey in early youth, possessed of a ready wit and an excellent digestion, the intimate friend of noblemen who went the pace; possessed of no ostensible means of subsistence—with the exception of the "pony" which, according to tradition, one or other of his pockets never lacked—he was one of the most delightful of boon companions. Like his constant companion, "Harry," and a good many more mutual friends, he had no ideas on the subject of the value of money, and denied himself no luxury. The first green peas in the market he stipulated for, invariably, when ordering dinner.

"I can't understand, Mr W.," said an irate

creditor, a bookmaker, to him once in the coffee-room of a high-class hostelry, "how you can have the impudence to eat peas in March at a guinea a pint when you can't afford to settle my account."

"Can't you really?" purred the creditee, sweetly. "Yet 'the early pea for Peter' has always been a weakness of mine which never goes unsatisfied."

And the fact of Lecturer having been nominated by "Peter" literally saved the situation.

Mr Frederick Swindell had a hot favourite for his Cesarewitch in Proserpine, and Lord Hastings, in a fit of extreme generosity, lent him Ackworth, the Cambridgeshire winner of 1864, wherewith to try Proserpine. Then Ackworth was boxed back to Danebury to try Lecturer, who accomplished a much bigger task in his company than Proserpine had done. Mr Swindell used to tell this story against himself almost with tears in his eyes, invariably winding up with—

"Owd John Day had me like a rat in a trap," which summed up the situation exactly.

With reference to this trial between Ackworth and Lecturer the following appeared in the *Badminton Library*:—

"We have never been able to ascertain with absolute accuracy what Lecturer's trial for that Cesarewitch really was—it has always been given as Ackworth at even weights—yet have we some vague recollection of being told by John of Danebury that it was The Duke who had succumbed at even weights to Lecturer. What, however, we do remember most clearly is old John's account

of his blank astonishment and dismay when Lord Hastings threw to him across the table the folded slip of paper which contained his intentions with regard to the forthcoming trial. John thought the task, whatever it was, an absurd and impossible one. Nevertheless, he knew he had to obey orders, for the Marquis was master in his own stable, and brooked no denial. Moreover, as John pathetically remarked, with him individually, 'It was a case of Lecturer or Whitecross Street,' for he had just been called upon by the grace of Her Majesty Queen Victoria to meet a dishonoured bill of several thousand pounds, to which, with his usual accommodating spirit, he had unwisely appended his name, 'as a matter of form,' and to oblige—well, not Benson. The family exchequer, too, was at that moment at lowest ebb."

Lecturer, as the record shows, won the Cesarewitch easily, ridden by Hibberd, who was never a fashionable jockey, but could always get a horse home if good enough. This victory set "Harry" on his legs again, but only temporarily. One of his commissioners was a haberdasher in Bishopsgate Street, but the chief agent in backing the horse was Mr William Wright, who has for the last thirty years resided in Paris. This gentleman still cherishes amongst his possessions the cheque drawn in favour of "The Marquis of Hastings, or order," for £70,000, which was duly executed and paid over on the Monday after that Cesarewitch. And the Hastings winnings were probably some £40,000 more; whilst on the night

before the race the owner, who visited the "Rooms," after entertaining his friends right royally, had backed his horse to win an absolutely impossible sum. But none of these wagers had been written down in the books of the professionals. The wine was in, the wit was out, and neither "Harry" nor his friend could recall the amounts of the wagers when the morning brought reflection—and restoratives.

Next year the *débâcle* was hastened by the victory of Hermit in the Derby, over which the Marquis lost nearly as much as he had gained over Lecturer's Cesarewitch; and although it was currently reported that these losses were met on the regular settling day, such was not the case. In fact, he was not square with some of his creditors until after the Doncaster September Meeting. And the chronicler is bound to add that a courteous and kindly letter from Mr Harry Chaplin—the owner of Hermit and one of his lordship's principal creditors—offering "time" *ad libitum* was neither received nor answered in the same noble, forgiving spirit.

But the Danebury horses had a most triumphant career at the Ascot Meeting following Hermit's Derby. And there was some rare "plunging" on them all.

Vauban won the Prince of Wales's Stakes, Europa the Triennial, Lady Elizabeth the New Stakes, Vauban the Fourteenth Triennial, and Lecturer the big double event of the Ascot Gold Cup and the Alexandra Plate. Lecturer had splendid fields behind him on both occasions, and

on the Cup alone Lord Hastings won £20,000, and of this he had the greater part "down" on Lady Elizabeth in the next race, which she won by six lengths in a field of a dozen. Lecturer was now recognised as a thorough Cup champion of the very best type. Seldom has a horse been more loudly cheered than he was when he won the Ascot Cup. Letting alone the personal feeling that existed for Lord Hastings, the extent of whose disaster was known, the people seemed glad to see such a little fellow as Lecturer whip the giants.

Never was two-year-old so "slaughtered" as was Lady Elizabeth. At all sorts of weights and all sorts of distances, the filly had to gallop her best in order to "keep the pot a-boiling." A few good wins made but little difference to the exchequer of such a wastrel as the Marquis of Hastings; and as Lady Elizabeth was in the days of her youth, a real, *bonâ-fide* "money spinner," her powers were shamefully overtaxed, with the usual disastrous results in due course.

After running a dead-heat with Grimston at Epsom, the pair were made to run off the decider —a criminally-severe test for two-year-olds, which is happily now forbidden by racing law. And although, at the back-end of the season, after running unplaced to Green Sleeve and Rosicrucian in the Middle Park Plate, she showed unmistakable signs of wanting a rest, there was to be no rest for the "money-spinner!" Two days later she was matched to run the three-year-old Julius—the property of another noble "plunger," the Duke of

Newcastle—who had won the Cesarewitch with 8 stone on his back, with an allowance of but 9 lb. for the difference in age, instead of the orthodox 23 lb. Cash must indeed have been wanted badly! It was a shameful and a cruel question to ask her; and although she answered that question in the affirmative, what followed next year can only be looked upon as retributive justice. If ever a Derby was left on Newmarket Heath, it was whilst Lady Elizabeth was running her match with Julius.

There has been no more sensational Derby than that of 1868. Although the anti-gamblers may deny this fact, it is certain that the present atmosphere of the Turf is far purer than it was thirty-four years ago; and it would be just as easy at the commencement of the twentieth century for a gang of shrewd and unscrupulous moneylenders to "run" as a going concern (for themselves) a noble owner of racehorses, as it would be to keep first favourite in the market a mare who, as must have been known to those concerned in her management, had deteriorated in form at least 56 lb. since last seen on a racecourse.

A la guerre comme à la guerre. There have been many bits of sharp practice in racing condoned simply because it was in racing. But there has been no blacker deed in Turf history than the scratching of The Earl. He had beaten Blue Gown and Suffolk in the Biennial at the Newmarket Craven Meeting, a month before. The horse had actually arrived at his temporary

quarters at Burgh Heath on the Tuesday. Yet the following notice appeared in the London papers next morning—the Derby day itself:—

"IMPORTANT SCRATCHING.—The Earl was struck out of the Derby at 7 p.m. yesterday."

And the worst part of the matter was that no habitual follower of the Turf was at all surprised at this news. For his fearful losses during the season of 1867—in fact during the whole of Lord Hastings's brief career as an owner of racehorses—had so exhausted his "bank" (which was never a large one) that at the beginning of the next year he was not only ruined in health, but practically bankrupt as well. Not a hair in the tail of any one of those high-mettled bits of blood, whose powers had on occasion been so lamentably overtaxed, belonged in reality to him. The order for the elimination of The Earl was written out some time before it was conveyed to Weatherby's office by Mr Harry Hill; and although The Earl was nominally the property of the Marquis of Hastings, the brain which controlled the destiny of the horse belonged to a "warm" (in more senses than one) individual, whose share of the world's philanthropy consisted in "financing" noblemen and gentlemen with expectations.

The crass ignorance of the Stockbridge touts as to the condition of Lady Elizabeth was by no means the least remarkable part of the business connected with this Derby. A couple of years before, enforced attendance, on the wrong side of

a locked door, at the Duke of Beaufort's banquet, had prevented them from using their eyesight on the training grounds; but it was not all revelry and feasting at Stockbridge during the spring of 1868, during which period it must have been manifest to the meanest observer that the Derby favourite had lost, not only her temper, but her action, besides every good quality for racing which she had once possessed. Such men of no observation as the Stockbridge touts of thirty-four years ago would not have earned much of a living in the present more exacting times.

"Lady Elizabeth's temper," wrote the Stockbridge correspondent of the *Sporting Life* a week before the race, "is now so good that I have no fears as to her behaviour at the post."

Oh, wonderful!

Fordham's face, as he mounted the mare near the starting-post was a study. That the famous jockey "knew something" was manifest. For a long time the mare refused to budge a yard from that post. She eventually, when the red flag was lowered, got off about five lengths behind the rest, was actually the first beaten of the entire field, and would have finished the absolute last but for some of the others being eased in their stride.

Curiously enough, there was never any insinuation thrown out as to the mare being "milked" in the market, *i.e.*, laid against by her own party. And in a communication which appeared in the *Sporting Life* on the Saturday before the race, the Marquis of Hastings expressed the conviction that Blue Gown would beat Lady Elizabeth, the name

of The Earl not being mentioned. Before that the writer had attended the Strand Theatre and sat just opposite the Marquis, who was sharing a box with "Peter" Wilkinson and another friend. Miss Lydia Thompson, who was playing a leading part in the burlesque of *The Field of the Cloth of Gold*, hazarded a "tip" in her topical song in favour of Lady Elizabeth, making a bow as she did so to the Hastings's box. But "Harry" shook his head, rather sadly as it seemed. But the statement made in print two days to the effect that he won £5000 by the success of Blue Gown has not since been confirmed.

On the Oaks day Lady Elizabeth was again on show, and as this time she was saddled in the paddock, the *cognoscenti* were enabled to get a good look at the mare, and there could be no doubt as to her jaded, tucked-up appearance. "Why start her at all?" was a pretty general question; and as she cantered past in the preliminary the Hastings "hoops" were loudly hissed from on all sides. Such sounds are fortunately not often heard on a racecourse, and it was patent to everybody that her noble owner's day, as owner and "plunger," was gone. The mare ran in about the same fashion as in the Derby, finishing much nearer last than first; and it was criminal to pull her out again for the Prince of Wales's Stakes at Ascot a fortnight later, only to be once more disgracefully beaten. Thus was one of the best two-year-olds of modern times sacrificed to the "exigencies" of a gambler's necessities, and after Ascot the racing world heard no more of Lady

Elizabeth, who would probably in different hands have been enrolled upon the same scroll of illustrious mares with Crucifix, Blink Bonny and Achievement.

As for The Earl, he was, after a brief stay at Burgh Heath, near Epsom, shipped across the Channel to Paris, where he won the Grand Prix easily from six opponents. After this victory he was sent back to the shores of Albion, and at Ascot in the same week won three stoutly-contested races, in one of them narrowly escaping defeat from Baron Rothschild. Horses who bore the "hoops" were never allowed, if worth backing, to eat the bread—or rather the oats—of idleness; at the same time the Ascot successes of The Earl probably benefited the Marquis of Hastings's creditors rather than himself.

The last time poor "Harry" was seen on a racecourse was at Doncaster in the same year—a mere shadow of his former self, wasted with disease, haggard and old in the face, and leaning heavily upon a stick. He was truly ghastly to look upon. His end was comparatively peaceful, and his racing career and sad premature death served, it is to be hoped, as directing-posts inscribed in large letters and pointing out the pitfalls to be avoided by young men of fortune who desire to "make history" on the Turf.

OUR RANCHE

WHEN Algie first proposed taking a ranche, I thought it was some new kind of house-boat; but when he explained that I was to emigrate with him to the wilds of America, I dug the heels of my newest slippers into the hearthrug, and flatly refused to go.

A likely thing, indeed! That I, Ermyntrude de Courcy, with the snappiest little house in Mayfair, a brougham, and a most swagger little Ralh car to drive in the Park, unlimited tick at White's and Howell and James's, and the right side of thirty, should go and pig it on a wretched prairie, with no servants, and Red Indians for one's only visitors! It was the height of the season, and two of the best balls and a State concert were coming off the next week, to say nothing of Ascot the week after. The idea of anybody missing Ascot!

And then Algie, that bad, bad boy, confided to me that he couldn't show his face on a racecourse again till he'd paid the horrid betting men, oh! ever so much money.

"No Ascot for us this year, little woman," he said—and his lovely blonde moustache seemed to droop still more as he said it, while his great blue

eyes grew quite dim—"I've been fearfully hard hit over yesterday's Derby—stood Paradox to win a lump, and I've done nothing but lose all the year. George Brookes is my biggest creditor, and I daren't face the music again."

Face the music, indeed! He talked as if he were the conductor of an orchestra.

"I'm overdrawn at the bank," he continued, "and it seems hopeless to expect any rents from those scoundrels in Ireland; the tradesmen are dunning me three or four times a day, and I've got to pay Sam a thousand in a week, or he'll know the reason why. After realising some securities I can set matters pretty straight, having three thousand or so for us to get away with. Here we're spending nearly three times that sum a year. So there's nothing for it, my ownest own, but to take the next steamer to America."

The idea was so horrid that I tore a lace pocket-handkerchief to bits then and there, went up to my room, boxed my maid's ears and turned her out, and then lay down on the bed and cried my eyes out. To think that I, in the pride of my youth and beauty, the admired of all with good taste, the best-dressed woman and best waltzer in London, should have to ostracise myself from Society, and go and live among a lot of buffaloes, poisonous snakes, and nasty, dirty cowboys! However, go we had to. And as Fifine positively refused to try what ranching was like, I had, for the first time in my life, to dress myself.

Anything more horrid than the passage out I can't remember. A lot of Americans and business people, the women either dowdy or desperate flirts, and the doctor, a horrid little wretch who would make love to me, to the intense amusement of that wretch Algie; most of us violently ill, and the whole of us packed like sardines in a box. Arrived in America, we had nearly a week's journey by train, and then three days' jolting in a "buck-board"—something like an English mail-cart—until we reached our ranche.

The prospect was not encouraging. A house like a barn, with neither shrub nor flower in the garden—nothing but potatoes. No stables, as all the horses run wild about the country, winter and summer; and not a tree to be seen between us and the Rockies. Our nearest neighbours lived thirty miles off, and, though there was a post every day, we didn't get a single letter for six months after our arrival—which, as Algie observed, was something to be thankful for. After a little, when we had got used to the situation, we began rather to like it. Although virtually buried alive, the life was a pre-eminently healthy one, and occasionally awfully exciting. Every woman in those parts carries a gun. For a drunken cowboy is no respecter of persons, although, in his sober senses, he would as soon think of harming a woman as of washing himself. So I bought a Winchester rifle in New York.

"For bar or room shooting, ma'am," said the storekeeper, "you will find it invaluable." (The *idea* of my going into a bar!) "And, should some

darned Ingin attack your shanty, just you empty that there Winchester out of the window on him —for Ingins is pizon, ma'am. There is but one good use to which you can put an Ingin."

"And what is that?" I asked.

"Plant him three feet underground," was the reply, "and he will make the grass grow green."

I used to groom and saddle my own horse, and a beauty he was, though he nearly had me off one day when I was shooting at a drunken half-breed who had insulted me. I was taking provisions to the cowboys who were camped out on the Rockies some twenty miles away; and you would have died with laughter to see me—but a few months before the pride of the Park—jogging along with a bag of potatoes in front of the saddle, and a side of bacon hanging on each side. At feeding time I used to be surrounded by all our live stock—horses, cows, poultry, dogs and cats, all pressing in to be the first to be fed; and I once caught one of the cows in our kitchen, munching up the beans we were going to have for dinner. Naturally we both got as brown as berries, and Algie let his beard grow. Nearly all day we were out of doors, and my dress was a caution—broad-brimmed felt hat, Garibaldi jacket, blue serge skirt, no gloves, and thick clumsy boots which would have made Hook and Knowles or Moykopf faint to look at. But we managed to have plenty of fun for all that, except when we got the cold snap, and that was something awful.

Fancy the thermometer forty degrees below zero, and everybody and everything snowed up.

We once found a horse out on the prairie frozen so hard to the ground that we had to get it away with a pickaxe. Of course, the poor animal was quite dead when released.

We had such fun with our visitors. And every time pretty nearly the same ceremony was gone through. The women would arrive in a waggon, get out, and open the door without knocking. Then it was,—

"How do?"

The customary greetings over, the principal lady would commence to appraise the furniture. "Guess that armchair cost some dollars," or "That settee warn't raised in Colorado, I reckon." And the general verdict used to be that I was too "high-toned" a lady for a ranche.

After the furniture, from the stove to the door-handle, had undergone a rigorous inspection, the old woman of the party would remark,—

"Guess it's pretty near dinner time?"

And then the whole lot would troop into the kitchen, and commence peeling the potatoes and baking the little cakes, which are the only kind of bread eaten in those parts. After dinner the visitors would depart in the same unceremonious fashion.

I shall never forget paying a return visit to one who had the reputation of being the "highest-toned" lady between New York and the Rockies. Directly I had dismounted from my horse, and turned him loose—as is the custom out there—she was out and welcoming me.

"How do? Come right in."

"Now do come right in, my dear," she continued, "and have some dinner." And she conducted me into a large barn of a place, where were seated about a dozen filthily dirty cowboys, all with their clasp knives out, eating bacon and potatoes, and using the most dreadful language. I pleaded loss of appetite, but it was no use. I was forced on to a bench, between a cowboy and my hostess, and compelled to swallow rancid bacon and potatoes only fit for pigs, though each mouthful nearly made me sick. I never called on that high-toned lady after that.

For a long time we were not annoyed by Indians. Certainly their wives, or squaws as they call themselves, used to look us up occasionally, and steal what food was handy when nobody was looking. But the men kept away, and we thought that they must have become cowed since General Miles and Colonel Otis gave Sitting Bull and his army such a beating years before. Some of our neighbours remembered the occasion. It was when a large waggon train was passing up the river protected by an escort of soldiers. How little did we think, as the old cowboy was telling the story, that our turns would—but I anticipate.

One day I was sitting alone at dinner, Algie having gone out to shoot antelope—with which the neighbourhood abounds, although the buffaloes have nearly been exterminated. All of a sudden I was aware of the presence of a second person in the room. I gave a little scream as I saw it was an Indian squaw.

"*Googerée bah, lakin chitti pukkarow*," she

said, which means in their picturesque language, "Don't be afraid, but take this letter."

Then she handed me an important-looking document addressed to Algie, which, translated, read as follows :—

"YELLOWSTONE.

"PALEFACE, I want to know what you are doing in this country. You scare all the antelope away, and catch all the fish in the river. I want to hunt and fish in this place. I want you to turn back from here. If you don't I will eat you up. I want you to leave all you have in the wigwam, including your wife, and go away to your own country. Wish you would write as soon as you can.—I am your friend, BLACK TOOTH."

Heavens! Here was a situation to be placed in! I made the woman understand by gestures that my husband had just stepped out, but would send an answer if she would call next day. But Algie, on his return, pooh-poohed the whole business, and said that he and I, and our men, would be a match for any number of Indians. And so next day the squaw was sent empty-handed away.

Fatal confidence! I can see the whole dreadful scene now, so firmly was it impressed upon my memory. About three nights afterwards we had just retired to bed, when the stillness of the night was broken by the unearthly yelling of Indians.

"Quick, your Winchester!" cried Algie, jumping out of bed, and wheeling his Gatling to the window. The faithful cowboys were on the alert, too, and soon the sharp "crack, crack," of the

deadly weapons became mingled with the cries of the Indians. We could plainly see that we were fearfully outnumbered. In fact, there could not have been less than 300 of the monsters. Algie mowed them down bravely with his Gatling, whilst over and over again did I empty my trusty Winchester on them from the window.

At length, after an hour's sharp fighting, it was evident that the Indians had had enough of it, for the main portion of the survivors were plainly to be seen running for their lives. But, somehow or other, the biggest man of the lot managed to elude my Winchester, and made a dash at the window. Like a terrier on a rat, Algie was upon him. Drawing his scalp-knot with one hand, he was about to plunge his hunting knife into the wretch's heart, when, oh, wonderful! the scalp came away in Algie's hand, and disclosed a bald and perfectly *white* head.

"Gently does it, Capting," said the Indian, and Algie and I stood rooted to the spot, in sheer surprise.

"I think you'll remember me, Capting de Courcy," continued the man, "though being collared by Indians, when one's out on a pleasure trip in America, after racing's all over in England, and living six months with the varmints, has pretty considerably changed my frontispiece."

"Remember *you?*" exclaimed Algie.

"Yes—I've got an account against you, and I've managed to keep my settling book concealed about my person all the time these devils were making me work for them. Ah! here it is"—and

he produced a little oblong volume bound in morocco, and having found the place read out,—

"De Courcy, Captain, £5716."

"Yes," continued the man, "life among those blooming Indians is calculated to change most people's natures; but for all that I'm George Brooks, Member of Tattersalls', the Victoria and Albert Clubs, and I should like that little account as soon as convenient."

. . . . . .

We planted him, riddled with bullets, just behind the woodshed; and having heard a week afterwards of the opportune death of Algie's rich old aunt, we came back to dear old London again. And Black Tooth may have the ranche and all that is therein for aught I care. You can bring in tea, John.

"THE SQUIRE"

THERE has been more than one "Squire" in the history of the Turf. In fact, the homely nickname has been applied to many players of the "great game" for divers reasons. According to the strict meaning of the word a squire (or an esquire) should be a country gentleman, possessed of more or less landed property; a typical Briton, uncorrupted by alien innovations, either worshipped or detested by his tenants, a staunch Tory in politics, a foe to progress in any shape or form, a staunch subscriber and rider to the local hounds, and a little king in his own immediate neighbourhood.

But the "squires" who have patronised and ornamented the Turf have not all possessed these characteristics. One of the most celebrated was Mr Osbaldeston, as persistent a gambler as well as hardest rider of his time. He once tackled the great Lord George Bentinck. It was at the Newmarket Craven Meeting, and, riding up to his lordship, Mr Osbaldeston said,—

"Lord George, I want £400, won of you at Heaton Park."

The Turf director drew himself up and replied,—

"You want £400 that you swindled me out of at Heaton Park."

This was like applying a torch to a barrel of gunpowder. No apology could be offered or accepted. They met to fight a duel with pistols. It fell to Lord George's lot to fire first. His pistol missed fire, whereupon, without any appearance of excitement, he remarked to his adversary,—

"Now, Squire, it's 2 to 1 in your favour."

"Is it ?" observed his opponent, discharging the contents of the pistol in the air. "Why, then, the bet's off."

"Squire" Heathcote, who lived later, was the son of Sir Gilbert Heathcote, owner of Amato, the only Epsom-trained horse that ever won a Derby. The son was a good sportsman, but very eccentric, both in attire and demeanour. He hunted his own staghounds, and was a very hard rider to them; and nothing delighted him as much as to have the deer uncarted on the other side of some great "rasping" fence, in order that the field might be as select as possible. He and his huntsman would be the first to negotiate the obstacles, and then, after looking back, Mr Heathcote would exclaim,—

"Pounded 'em again, Jem, begad!"

He was once officiating as judge at a suburban meeting, much frequented—as usual with suburban meetings of that period—by the "scum of the course." The judge stood in the sentry-box, which had been borrowed for the occasion, and was not a fixture. In the last race a horse, against whom the welshers had fielded heavily, was seen to be winning in a canter. A happy thought occurred to one of the ringleaders.

Squire Heathcote and his box were laid hands on and upset, some of the mob sitting on the box until all the horses had finished.

"Did ye see which won?" Mr Heathcote was asked.

"No, no. How the devil could I?" came in the usual squeaky tones from beneath the sentry-box.

"Then ye can come out." And away crawled the poor Squire, the race being subsequently declared "null and void."

For years Mr Heathcote lived at Durdans, Epsom, in two rooms, the remainder of the mansion being given up to dust and desolation. And after Lord Rosebery had bought the estate from the executors, he was warmly congratulated upon his purchase by Mr Henry Steel, the eminent bookmaker, upon Newmarket Heath.

"But," pleaded his lordship, "I fail to see that I have got such a particularly good bargain."

"At all events, m'lord," persisted the layer of odds, "you'll get the best ratting in Europe!"

Another "Squire," of still more recent date, was Mr "Fred" Hobson, well known in the pigskin, and the steerer of Austerlitz—of which he was part owner—to victory in the Grand National Steeplechase of 1877. But it is time to hark back to the subject of this sketch, who, during a brief career as a gentleman jockey, was even better known than any of the foregoing.

Mr George Baird—who, for some occult reason, paid a large sum annually to register the assumed name of "Abington," although his identity was

well known to society at large, from the saloons of the wealthy to the cellars and kitchens of the criminal and impoverished—had the misfortune to lose his parents long ere he had arrived at what are called, for the sake of euphemy, "years of discretion." With a long minority, a million or so "ready iron" to handle on entering his majority, and an inexhaustible supply of wealth in a raw state beneath the rugged hills and dales of bonnie Scotland, it could or should have caused no particular surprise that our hero, whilst he lasted, "went the pace" as it has seldom been travelled before.

There are several fine old crusted yarns anent the forebears of Mr "Abington." And it is strict truth that when his uncle—usually and wrongly described as his father—Mr James Baird of Cambusdoon, purchased his beautiful mansion, a mile or two outside the town of Ayr, he gave orders to a Glasgow bookseller for so many *yards* of books to fill the shelves in his library. Also that when asked if he would like said books bound in russia or morocco, he replied,—

"Hoots, man! Can I no hae them bund in Glesca?"

Apocryphal, in all probability, is the yarn which relates how Mr James Merry bet this same Mr James Baird £10 that he could not repeat the Lord's Prayer without error. There are numerous versions of this story, the most colourable one being that Baird started on the recital of a hymn much in vogue in Scottish kirks, and that Jamie Merry paid the bet before his oppo-

nent was halfway through the first stanza, with the remark, "Hoots! I didna think ye kent it." But I believe there is but little truth in that story. There were as many stories about "Merry of Belladrum" as there were about the eighth Henry, but they need not be repeated here.

I fancy, but am not certain on this point, that Mr George Baird never enjoyed the advantages and privileges of a fashionable public school. He must have been a particularly trying pupil to anybody who may have made the attempt to cultivate so uncouth and rugged a soil. A story is told of him which describes a trip to Egypt. His first sight of the Pyramids impressed him vastly.

"Great Scott!" he cried, as he viewed those mighty erections from afar. "What great big bottle-works are those?"

It was explained that he was not gazing at bottle-works, but at the Pyramids, built thousands of years ago by the Pharaohs.

"Fairies, eh?" was his observation. "The bitches!"

"Not fairies, George," said a friend. "Pharaohs—Pharaoh was a man."

Mr Abington lit a cigar, muttering—"The swine!"

The present writer's earliest recollections of George Baird were in the early "eighties," when he was residing at Whittington Hall, near Lichfield, and still nearer to Whittington Heath, whereon the races used to be held, before the War Office blocked the place with a big range

of barrack-buildings. And the presence of "The Squire" did not altogether lend a healthy tone to the neighbourhood. In fact the neighbours affected to be scandalised, and neither he nor his friends attained to that popularity which is so desirable in the country. He was not put on the Commission of the Peace; nor was he asked to read either of the lessons at the church service. But he would on occasion cheer up the sober and devout inhabitants of the cathedral city on a Sabbath evening, by driving a fast-trotter from his house to the principal hotel. He would allow himself so much time, and would endeavour to reach the front door of the hostelry just before closing time. Occasionally, through no fault of his own in the sparing of whip-cord, he would arrive just too late to be admitted; in which event there were "alarums and excursions." In fact, although no special prayer was ordered to be read within the Lichfield diocese after the departure of Mr "Abington," to take up his residence in the metropolis and elsewhere, the general rejoicings were with difficulty repressed.

He was a man of no sentiment whatever. His belongings, whether equine or human, were treated as mere machines to obey his every whim; and, whenever practicable, the humans, as may be imagined, made him pay pretty dearly for those whims. But for his trainers—whom he frequently changed—the powers of his racehorses would have been as unduly taxed as were those of the celebrated "Jack" Mytton.

The best bit of bloodstock he ever possessed

"quality" of "The Squire's" mercy was not of a superior order; and after his mare had won the One Thousand Guineas Stakes and Oaks, he had her galloped in order to keep in condition for her Ascot engagements, instead of giving her poor legs a much-needed rest. And then followed the *débâcle!*

In the One Thousand Busybody met, amongst others, Queen Adelaide—a great, raking chestnut mare of Sir John Willoughby's, that afterwards started first favourite for the Derby—and the Duke of Westminster's Sandiway, who afterwards won the Coronation Stakes at Ascot, the Nassau Stakes at Goodwood and the Newmarket Oaks. She afterwards, when second favourite, finished fifth to Florence in the Cambridgeshire. In the hands of Cannon, her trainer, Busybody easily accounted for the opposition; and a month later she as easily won the "ladies' race" at Epsom. Here odds of 105 to 100 were laid on Mr "Abington's" mare, who again defeated Queen Adelaide (a bad third), the winner's most dangerous opponent being Superba, by Sterling out of the most prolific of brood mares, Highland Fling.

It is not often that a filly boasting such perfect "lines" and symmetry is seen on a racecourse. Her owner, Mr Robert Peck, was especially fond of her, but she was not quite good enough for the top three-year-old form, and could only finish third in the St Leger—after winning the Sandown Derby from a very moderate field—to The Lambkin and Sandiway.

It was shortly afterwards that Mr George Baird removed himself and horses to Newmarket, with James Gurry to train and the astute Mr Robert Peck to exercise a sort of general supervision. And the Derby of 1887—Jubilee year—fell to the bearer of the "green, plum cap" more owing to the luck of meeting a singularly weak opposition than to any exceptional merit possessed by Merry Hampton, the winner.

The field was composed as follows:—

Merry Hampton, 9 st.	Watts	1
Baron, 9 st.	Cannon	2
Martley, 9 st.	F. Barrett	3
Aintree, 9 st.	Webb	4
Grandison, 9 st.	G. Barrett	0
Blanchland, 9 st.	Martin	0
Eiridspord, 9 st.	Fagan	0
Savile, 9 st.	Robinson	0
Colt by Doncaster—Shannon, 9 st.	J. Osborne	0
Consolide, 9 st.	Goater	0
Porcelain, 8 st. 9 lb.	Bruckshaw	0

The betting was:—5 to 4 on Baron, 100 to 14 against Eiridspord, 10 to 1 against Martley, 100 to 9 against Merry Hampton, 100 to 8 against Aintree, 200 to 9 against Blanchland, 50 to 1 each

against Porcelain and Grandison, 1000 to 8 against Savile, 200 to 1 each against Shannon colt and Consolide.

A worse lot of horses have but seldom competed in a Derby. Martley had a few weeks before run second to Bendigo for the first Jubilee Handicap, when Mr Barclay's stout champion was giving no less than 37 lbs. to the three-year-old. And it was this performance which induced the present writer to back Martley for a "place" in the Derby as long as any bookmaker would lay the market odds. Baron's favouritism was due partly to his having won the Craven Stakes at Newmarket, but principally to the fact of his being trained by Matthew Dawson. His conformation, however, his loaded shoulders, were altogether unsuited to the Epsom gradients, and he must have been either strangely infatuated, or ignorant of the points of a horse, who laid odds on such a one for such a race.

Never before or since has a Derby been won as easily. From Tattenham Corner there was literally nothing "in it" but the winner; and had Merry Hampton confirmed this victory at Doncaster later on, he would have been remembered with more honour by posterity. But in the St Leger he was easily beaten by the Irish-bred Kilwarlin, who had lost nearly as much start as did Lord Clifden twenty-four years before. Merry Hampton only ran in those two races as a three-year-old, and although first favourite for the City and Suburban next year, finished last, very leg-weary. He was a comparative failure at the stud although a pretty sure foal-getter.

But how did Mr "Abington" take his Derby triumph? Did this child of nature and favourite of fortune betray any undue excitement, or even any natural pride, over a victory which Lord George Bentinck would have given his right hand, and did give many years of a most valuable life, to obtain? Hardly. It is not true, as was reported at the time, that young Baird declared that he would sooner ride the winner of a selling hunters' race than own the winner of a Derby. He said no such thing. The writer was close by him in the unsaddling paddock directly after Merry Hampton had passed the winning-post.

"Now, George," said his friend "Tommy" Earle, "give us twopenn'orth of ceremonial and lead in the winner."

"Damn it all!" exclaimed the proud owner. "Must I?"

And of a verity never has the feat of bearing away the most valued prize in the racing calendar been endured with more equanimity, amounting to absolute indifference. And as "The Squire" gave his horse a formal pat on the neck and turned away, the writer could not but recall the scene in the library of the House of Commons years before when Lord George delivered his "superb groan."

"All my life I have been trying for this, and for what have I sacrificed it?" he murmured.

It was in vain for Benjamin Disraeli to offer solace.

"You do not know what the Derby is," moaned out Lord George.

"Yes, I do; it is the Blue Riband of the Turf," said the other.

"It is the Blue Riband of the Turf," he slowly repeated to himself, and sitting down at the table buried himself in a folio of statistics.

Considering that he had horses in training in most parts of the country, it cannot be said that "The Squire" had the best of luck during his career on the Turf. A most industrious jockey both on the training grounds and the racecourse, he did a deal of travelling about; but as his mounts were usually hot favourites, the system of backing "Abington's mounts" was not a particularly lucrative one. With such animals as Lady Rosebery, Pioneer, Freemason and the speedy Juggler he was tolerably successful, whilst the two-year-old Master Bill proved a regular money-spinner, winning five races out of seven.

The season of 1892 witnessed the first appearance of Milford, by Saraband out of Colleen Bawn, and Meddler, by St Gatien out of that beautiful but overworked mare Busybody, two of the grandest youngsters ever bred by "The Squire" or anybody else. A certain fair lady who shall be nameless, but whose colours were afterwards familiar enough on the racecourse, was invited to choose one of the two as a gift, and she selected Milford—a fortunate choice, for although Meddler possessed a trifle more quality he only lasted one season as a racehorse, and was afterwards sold to go to America. Meddler was invincible; with 4 to 1 on him he won his first race, the British Dominion Stakes at Sandown Park, in the com-

monest of canters, ridden by George Barrett. He won the Chesterfield Stakes at Newmarket as easily, with Mornington Cannon riding, the same jockey being successful on him for the Dewhurst Plate, which he won by half a length from the Duke of Portland's Racburn. And this was the last appearance of Meddler on a racecourse.

Milford scored thrice as a two-year-old, and created a tremendous sensation, when stripped at Kempton Park, before taking part in the race for the Royal Stakes. Mr (now Sir) J. B. Maple's Minting Queen was an odds-on favourite, but Milford, in the hands of George Barrett, beat her cleverly. Then followed victories in the Coventry Stakes, Ascot, ridden by John Watts, the same jockey getting Milford home first in the July Stakes at Newmarket by a neck from Bill of Portland. Subsequently Milford was badly beaten in the Champagne Stakes at Doncaster, and the dread discovery was made that he was not sound in his wind. Consequently, his attentions were confined to races of not more than one mile in distance. At the same time, Milford was just one of those gift-horses into whose mouth one should not look too closely.

"The Squire" had no desire to mix with the *crême-de-la-crême* of Society. A smart function did not appeal to him in the least; and one of the best of the numerous stories with which his name is connected is as follows:—"One morning in the height of the season, a friend called at his rooms in John Street, arrayed in the regulation frock-coat and tall hat.

"I have called," said the friend, "to take you for a duty-stroll in the Park."

"All right," said "The Squire," "but wait a minute or two, like a good chap. I expect Jem Carney here directly, and we'll take him with us."

As a matter of fact he preferred the companionship of pugilists—like Jem Carney, Charley Mitchell & Co.—to any other; and, presumably, he had to pay pretty dearly for such companionship. Not that he was an easy man to extract a lawful debt from him. Money was of very little object to him, and his sources of income were comparatively inexhaustible. At the same time his legitimate creditors had not infrequently to wait his pleasure for a considerable period ere the amount of the debt would be forthcoming. He hated writing a cheque; and the late Mr Robert Howett of Nottingham, who had sold him two brood mares, had almost given up the debt as a bad one, until he took the advice of Mr Robert Peck, and drew a cheque on a blank piece of paper, placing it before the young millionaire for his signature. But on occasion such a broad hint as this would not be taken in good part. Mr Charles Morbey, formerly jockey, and later on landed proprietor, once produced paper, pen and ink, and, placing them in front of Mr Baird, requested the favour of his esteemed autograph. "The Squire's" reply was to throw the ink-bottle out of the window.

"Oh!" said Morbey, "that doesn't get you out, Squire. I've another bottle of ink in my pocket."

Which was forthwith produced. And, after a fine flow of Celtic language, the cheque was duly signed.

It was always "open house" at Bedford Lodge, Newmarket. And the guest who was not too tender of epidermis, and who could accommodate himself to the manners and customs of Bohemia, with a plentiful strain of the Seven Dials introduced, could always enjoy himself. And after a very "sultry" night, in which boxing, cock-fighting, dog-fighting, or some other description of warfare had entered into the programme, the guest would be awakened later in the morning by a stately groom-of-the-chambers, who would inquire, in softly-modulated tones, whether the guest would partake of champagne or sparkling hock, for his matutinal "livener."

Later on, at breakfast time, the host would come in, after riding innumerable gallops on both sides of the Heath. His breakfast usually included some very superior old brandy; and he would, as a rule, get rid of the matutinal budget of letters by flinging the lot, after a casual inspection of the addresses, into the fire, or through the open window.

But as often as not there was no host to greet the incoming guest. A warm invitation might have been given the day before, yet the guest would be informed, on arrival, that Mr Baird had taken train to Worcester or Plymouth, or Hamilton Park, in bonnie Scotland, in order to ride the certain winner of the hunters' selling race. But

the guest, in the full knowledge that he would be "done" just as well in the absence of his host, had, as a rule, no qualms whatever about resigning himself to the situation.

"The Squire" seldom took a valet with him when race-riding, and had to depend upon what casual aid he might find in the dressing-room. Upon one occasion he had engaged the services of a once celebrated character, "Ned" Payne, to whom he entrusted his valuables, including a well-filled note-case.

"And what am I to stand with you, sir?" asked Ned.

"*You?* Nothing at all, damn you! You can't afford to bet." And soon afterwards Mr Baird took his "leg-up" into the saddle. But in proceeding leisurely to the starting-post he was considerably startled to see his temporary valet having a "plunge" on his mount, in the ready-money ring.

"I'll take £10 to £8!" would cry a bookmaker.

"Right! Me!" would reply Ned Payne, note-case in hand.

"Payne! Payne!" shouted "The Squire," in passing; but the man was too closely occupied in planting the "flimsies" to pay attention.

"I never rode such a finish in my life," the gentleman jockey used to remark in telling the story. "And as soon as I'd weighed-in there was the damned fellow congratulating me most warmly, almost blubbering.

"'Gawd bless ye, Mr Habington!' he cried. 'You've made a man of me, you 'ave. Seventy-five blooming quids! And I couldn't afford to bet, couldn't I?'"

"The Squire" figured in more than one tavern brawl; but he was always particularly well "minded" by a select *côterie* of pugilists, so that he never got "bashed." Many of his actions were, of course, both irresponsible and stupid; and at a well-known resort in the Strand, after causing what at one time looked like being the prettiest faction fight ever fought, insulted a harmless journalist by removing the cigar from his mouth as he stood at the counter. A summons was promptly obtained; but the matter was eventually —like most of "The Squire's" acts of indiscretion —"squared."

Scenes of violence at his own chambers were of no infrequent occurrence. There was considerable jealousy between individual members of his body-guard; and once, in the small hours of the morning, an attempt to invade the privacy of the young millionaire was forcibly resisted by the favourite *pro tem.*, with the result that two of the assailants, after being terribly "bashed" with the drawing-room poker, had to be conveyed to the nearest hospital.

But he was a good friend and a generous one was "The Squire"; though unfortunately, the least deserving, as usually happens, benefited most by him. When clothed and in his right mind, he was not only endurable, but possessed of a certain amount of *bonhomie*. He was not half a bad sort

in the main; but—as somebody observes in one of Mr H. J. Byron's comedies—that main was such a long way underground that only the most persevering of turncocks would trouble to search for it.

A PRIOR CLAIM

"No, I will not pull out any more for him," said George Bestaman, prince of commissioners, at Romano's. "This is the third Monday running that I've settled for Mr Gerald Aubrey, and now he sends his trainer to me for a thousand. I can't stand it any longer."

"But he's good for a lump yet, surely?" inquired Gus Abrahams. "Three millions takes a bit of getting rid of."

"Three fiddlesticks!" sneered the other. "It's my belief it was nearer one, and most of that's tied up. What with his tastes, he might easy go flat broke before Doncaster."

So it may readily be believed, from the foregoing conversation, that the Ring were beginning to look a little shyly at Mr Gerald Aubrey, one of the latest accessions to the Turf. The sporting papers still described him as "that popular young sportsman," and "one of the most spirited owners of bloodstock that the present generation has seen." But it was evident that he would not be able to play the "great game" much longer. He had inherited a vast fortune from his father, who, with his father before him, had boiled soap to some purpose, and accumulated—so it was said—fabulous wealth.

All the Winners

Reared in the lap of luxury, Gerald was not likely to follow in the footsteps of his ancestors. Acids, alkaloids, tallow and other ingredients used in the manufacture of soap were distasteful to his refined ideas. His ambition lay not in the direction of "yellow," "mottled," or "honey," whilst "Old Brown Windsor" stank in his nostrils. In fact, his first determination, upon coming into his inheritance was, "No Soap!" So the business was readily disposed of, and with the purchase-money the young millionaire settled down in a cosy little house in Mayfair to enjoy himself, and see that life which is only to be seen through the most expensive of eyeglasses.

He took a moor in Scotland, and the little cottage which his grandfather had built three miles from the busy town of Grayborough, several streets in which he had inherited, he had fitted up as a hunting box. Not that he did much hunting. As an after-dinner sportsman he shone conspicuously; but late hours and unlimited brandy and soda do not invariably exercise a beneficial effect upon the nerves. In fact, London was his happy hunting ground when not attending some distant race meeting; and the delights of the metropolis never seemed to pall upon him.

He was one of the most devoted attendants at the Pasture Club, where baccarat and hazard occupied the nightly attention of the young bloods, most of whose money found its way into the coffers—or, rather, the bank—of the wily proprietor, who made a princely income out of fines and card-money. And there was no more regular

playgoer than Gerald; and whilst Tottie de Vere of the Chastity, and Blanche Tudor of the Like-to-see-'em were frequently seen, by turns, on the box seat of his drag, it was no secret that the priceless pearls which Lilian Prance wore nightly in the *pas à quatre* at the Propriety, were presented to that most estimable young lady on her nineteenth —the other girls said her twenty-ninth—birthday by Gerald. And although the Society papers vied with each other in recording each successful freak of extravagance on his part, the judicious grieved muchly, and mothers of marrigeable daughters groaned in spirit.

"I'm told," said Miss Tabitha Tatham, the rich old maid who lived opposite, "that the profligate smokes cigars at ten shillings a piece, and breakfasts regularly off brandy and Indian pickles."

"Ah!" groaned her visitor, the Reverend Mr Mowther. "I called upon him the other morning for a subscription to the Irish Mission Fund; and although it was noon the young man had only just come downstairs. A pile of letters lay on the breakfast table, and I assure you, my dear Miss Tatham, I saw him deliberately throw the whole of his correspondence, unopened, into the fire!"

Polite society fought very shy of Gerald. Not that he cared.

"I'd rather sup at 'The Roman's,'" he observed upon one occasion, "with a lot of good Johnnies, and a chorister or two, than go to a stupid party, and get half crushed to death, and poisoned with sweet champagne and stale lobster."

"Right, old man," said Wyndham Blythe.

"The gilded *salons* of the aristocracy are a mistake. I was at a swagger dinner at old Vavasour's last night, and I give you my word all I got was an orange and a lukewarm plate."

Although he had lavished his money pretty freely upon the fair sex, Gerald had not as yet felt the tender passion, although for two whole days after he met that little lump of flirtation, the Countess of Hungerford, he imagined himself to be desperately in love. But after she had taken his cheque, and tripped off with a major in the Blues, he was speedily disillusioned. That he was a favourite with a certain section of womankind goes without the saying, yet still he was anything but a ladies' man, and, as a matter of fact, would rather assist at a prize fight or a drinking bout at "The Roman's" than make himself agreeable in the boudoirs of the half-world.

"I know I'm no Adonis," he would say, "but with my money I can cut out the whole of the Household Brigade, to say nothing of the Stock Exchange."

But there came a time when a random shaft from the bow of that little villain Cupid smote our hero between the joints of his harness, and he fell prostrate at the dainty little feet of Alice Howard, most bewitching of soubrettes, most ravishing of burlesque artists. Whether she set her cap at him, or whether he made the first advance, matters not, though it was currently reported that at the recent race meeting at Bath, the inhabitants of which city she was at that time nightly enslaving by her impersonation of the

Prince in *Cinderella*, "she never left him." Such a face and such limbs could not be allowed long to waste their sweetness and their symmetry on the provinces, and at the time of our story Alice was first favourite at the Propriety, from which immaculate playhouse Gerald was in the habit—when not otherwise engaged at the Pasture or elsewhere—of escorting her, in his own brougham, to supper at the Café Royal, or to her bijou residence in Brompton Square. Nor was it until he was served one afternoon with a citation for divorce, at the suit of Charles Sutherland, that he became aware that his divinity had an encumbrance in the shape of a husband.

"Confound it! What's to be done?" he asked his friend, Kit Richardson, as they were sitting at breakfast the following morning.

"*You've* been done, and pretty brown, too," replied Kit. "It looks remarkably like a plant."

"And the brute claims £10,000 damages."

"Which he'll get to a certainty. British juries are extra virtuous in these advanced days of newspaper *espionnage* and Vigilance Committees; and your record is not a particularly chaste one—eh, old man?"

"Don't worry a fellow. What's to be done?"

"The injured husband might be bought off—"

"Squared, eh? Well, that doesn't seem a bad way?"

"'Pon my honour, Aubrey, I believe it's the only way. But you'd better go and look up old Shakeham, your solicitor, and get his advice on the subject."

"And hear a lecture on my iniquities since the death of my revered parent? Confound it all! that's the very last thing I want to do. But I suppose I must go, all the same."

And the two separated, after Kit had filled a particularly capacious cigar-case from his friend's box, and refreshed himself with a *demi-tasse* of the very old Cognac.

The lawyer pulled an unusually long face when Gerald took the consultation chair and deposited his glossy hat upon the floor.

"Mr Gerald, I was about to write to you upon the subject of your pecuniary affairs. Are you aware how much you have raised on the Greyborough property in the last nine months?"

"Can't say, I'm sure."

"Fif-ty thou-sand pounds."

"Pooh! That's nothing. I can get that back over a selling race at Sandown, playing it up at baccarat at the Pasture afterwards."

"Your levity is ill-timed, Mr Gerald. Your poor father—"

"Dash it! Shakeham, drop the late lamented."

"Well, sir, my time is valuable. And it is my duty to inform you that no further mortgages can be effected on your property."

"That's unfortunate," observed Gerald, "seeing that the main object of my visit is to ask you to raise a goodish bit more."

"Impossible!" and Mr Shakeham took a big pinch of snuff, and closed the box with a snap which seemed to say, "Abandon hope!"

"Hang it all, Shakeham, don't say impossible.

Now, look here, I'm in a hole. Here's a confounded, evil-looking document which was served upon me yesterday evening, coming back from Kempton." And he handed the citation to the lawyer.

"Very awkward—ve-ery awkward, indeed," said the latter, when he had perused the document.

"I suppose the fellow must be squared?"

"A compromise might be effected, certainly. And as to raising more money, Mr Gerald, it might be done—I only say it *might* be done—but on very disadvantageous terms, ve-ery dis-advantageous terms."

"Never mind the terms. Crowd on all sail, put up that good old jockey, sixty per cent., and I'll back him. Send out for the sheepskins, and let that old clerk of yours plough into them for dear life. I'll sign any mortal thing."

The lawyer shook his head gravely as his visitor departed.

"What would his poor father say if he could but hear that all the money he'd accumulated by thrift and honest labour was being made ducks and drakes of by his profligate of a son? Ah, well!" And refreshing himself with another pinch of snuff the man of law took up a quill pen, and with a self-satisfied smirk on his countenance, commenced to scribble the draft of a Deed Poll, which was destined to make even Gerald open his eyes wide when he came to peruse it.

Mr Charles Sutherland was not altogether

averse to a compromise. In fact he showed a decided inclination to listen to reason. Although he occasionally escorted his wife home from "treasury" at the theatre, it was no secret that the affection which existed between him and the beauteous Alice Howard, whom he had married but three years before, was not particularly deep. Rumour had it that his rooms in Jermyn Street had been furnished by the Duke, who was still an admirer of his wife, who, rumour also proclaimed, made her husband an allowance, on certain terms; and save in the very shady society in which he mixed—their headquarters were at the Try-and-Carry-on Restaurant—Mr Sutherland was not what might be called a popular man. He rode the high horse, at first, after receiving the lawyer's letter. "Honour assailed," "injured feelings," "ruined home," and all the rest of it; but in the result he agreed to withdraw proceedings, upon receipt of £3500 down, his solicitor's costs, and an undertaking from Gerald not to again "molest" the erring wife.

The money, so the lawyer wrote, would be paid over at his office at 11 on the following morning; and at that hour there were assembled in the dingy little room, Mr Charles Sutherland and the fair Alice, with Gerald lounging sulkily in the background. The preliminary formalities having been gone through, a discharge was handed to Sutherland to sign.

"That," said the lawyer, "will acquit Mr Aubrey of further liability and responsibility in this matter. And if he will take an old fool's

advice, he will, my dear madam"—with a miserable attempt at a leer at Alice—"abjure for the future the society of your too, too fascinating sex."

"Cut the patter, Shakeham," observed Gerald, impatiently, "and pay the fellow his money."

"And, sir," exclaimed Mr Sutherland, indignantly, "do you not think I have honestly earned it, and at a great sacrifice to my feelings as a husband?"

"Don't bluster, sir," said the victim; "you're not at 'The Roman's' now, with a mob of second-rate fighting men at your back. Give him the cheque, Shakeham." And the little oblong slip of paper was handed over to the injured husband.

"Thank goodness," exclaimed Gerald, "that little matter is squared."

"But you've been and squared the wrong man!" came in gruff tones from the doorway; and with a piercing shriek, Alice fell in a dead faint, upon a pile of deed boxes.

"Who are *you?* And what the deuce d'you mean?" inquired Gerald.

"My name," said the stranger, "is Joseph Stiles, and fourteen years ago me and that woman there was married, at the parish church of Massingham, in Kent. I don't know what she calls herself now, but she was married in the name of Anne Willet, which her father kep' the Cat and Cauliflower, at the bottom of the willage."

"My God! News of your death reached me four years ago!" exclaimed the now recovered Alice.

"But I didn't die, you see," said the newcomer, "elseways I shouldn't be here now. It's rather 'ard to settle *me*. You see, after doing five of the best at Portland, for 'orse stealing, I was determined to emigrate, 'stead of going home to the woman as had put me away. So I offed it by the first ship to New Zealand—"

"And the ship was wrecked on the voyage out, and all hands perished?" interrupted the wretched woman.

"Well, not all, you see. There was five of us rescued in a small boat—leastways, four, through 'aving to eat the cabin-boy, being short of pervisions. After drifting about a matter of a fortnight, we sighted land, which we afterwards found was the island of Boracca, in the possession of the Portuguese. We was all taken for slaves there; but, after a bit, I managed to escape. I worked my way home aboard a collier, and we arrived in the Thames a fortnight ago; and since then, being down on my luck, and not overburdened with cash, I've been a tracing of you out, my lady, and, good luck to it, found you at last."

"Then you are not Mrs Sutherland after all?" exclaimed Gerald. "And the money I've paid to Mr Sutherland—by the way, where *is* Mr Sutherland?"

"Well on his way to the bank, I should say by this time, to cash the cheque," said the lawyer, drily. "And we shall be too late to stop it, even by telegraph."

"Well, who's a-goin' to straighten *me?*" inquired Mr Stiles. "This 'ere young woman is my

lawful wedded wife—where is the violater of my 'earth, and what is he prepared to pay?"

"My dear sir," said the lawyer—"I should advise you, for your own sake, not to press this matter of compensation for disturbance. There is your wife. Take her."

"Not me! I'd sooner get up the chimney."

"Very well, then, have the kindness to leave my office, both of you. Mr Aubrey, this has proved an expensive business to you, and it would appear that you have been badly treated in the matter—"

"Fairly spoofed!" put in Gerald.

"As to this man, Sutherland," continued the lawyer, "it is my firm belief that we shall never see either him or any part of the proceeds of that cheque again."

And they never did.

AN INEFFECTUAL DOSE

SIR PERCY SECKINGTON was one of Fortune's favourites. His parents had died whilst he was a boy at Eton, and the wealth, which in consequence reverted to him, had been allowed to accumulate in the most careful and remunerative manner, by his trustees. Arrived at man's estate —he was in the Guards at the time—three courses were presented to him, with regard to his immediate future.

"Do the Grand Tour," said his Colonel; "and after staying away from this filthy country for a year or two, you will return with your mind expanded, your body invigorated, and a dead shot at game."

"Look out for a wife," said his senior trustee, who had marriageable daughters; "nothing like a fellow settling down early in life."

"Go in a buster, and enjoy yourself," squeaked little Algie Barber, the wickedest subaltern amongst all the "Pet Lambs"—which is saying a lot—"get dead mashed on a chorister or some brand new tart, take a house in Mayfair for her, and let her give nice little dinners to your pals; keep a lot of racehorses, and give the Ring fits."

Percy's initial move was to follow the last-named advice—bar the chorister-tart business,

The love of sport was intuitive in him. As a boy at school he had kept the best ratting terrier to be had "up town," had "toodled" wrens, and seen a badger drawn; he had kept a roulette table at his dame's, and could tell all the Derby winners from Beadsman's year. He was by no means a bad "young 'un" to hounds, and he yearned to own the winner of the Derby. So his friends were not altogether surprised when within three months of coming into his inheritance, or, as he called it, "touching the stuff," he had got together an extensive, and decidedly expensive, stud of racehorses.

But his great difficulty lay with his trainers. "In the multitude of counsellors there is safety"—a maxim which he had taken in with his Eton grammar and his periodical "swishings"—so he sent a couple of horses to Sam Jones at Massingham, three or four to Ben Jonson at Marlow-in-the-Dyke, three high-priced yearlings to Fred Knight at Smotherham, some steeplechasers to Isaac Smith in Cheshire, whilst the bulk of his stud was located with a fashionable trainer at the metropolis of the Turf. He entered horses for everything, and the heart of Her Majesty's Club rejoiced exceedingly at his appearance on the Turf, whilst Mr Botherby, the secretary to the Turf Senate, wondered not a little, and impecunious members of the Gimcracked Club itself thought Percy was a young man to be encouraged.

Still, he never seemed to win a race. Somehow or other the majority of his horses appeared to succumb to what are known as "the exigencies

of training," or to get beaten in their trials—friendly touts told him through being galloped to death in trying horses belonging to bigger swells than himself—and the horses he used to ride in hunters' flat races (he was advised not to trust himself just yet awhile over hurdles or fences) would invariably fail when it came to the finish of a race. At the end of his first season, therefore, he had dipped pretty deeply into that portion of his capital which had not been prudently tied up. His want of success was remarkable. He could not make it out.

"Tell you what it is, old fellow," said the Honourable Dobell Shouffle; "you've got too many trainers. It's like working a lot of marionettes without the guiding hand to pull the strings. You must concentrate, old fellow, concentrate." And the honourable counsellor buried his aristocratic beak in one of the huge B. and S. tumblers for which the Guards' Club is so justly celebrated.

"But how?"

"Have a weed out. Draft off a lot of the rubbish to Newmarket to Scatterall's sale—it's the end of November now—and send the rest to a clever trainer; and, by the way, I know of just the man for you."

"Yes?"

"Yes. Old Abe Sparks of Snufton-on-the-Spyke. Cleverest man in England; by no means a fashionable trainer, in fact he's a bit under the weather at present, but just your man. Finest downs in the world, beautiful little cottage for yourself when you take a run down to inspect or

to ride, and a fine natural steeplechase course within a mile. Go and see him."

Percy went, as directed, and the result of the interview was that by the commencement of the next season he had got a nice little lot of horses at Snufton-on-the-Spyke. Mr Abel Sparks was a man of few words, but evidently of great depth of character; and after he had won Percy a selling hurdle race at Woodville, and P. himself had steered old Whitestockings to victory in a steeplechase at Lumborough, he thought he had at length managed to get things into the right groove.

Still, somehow or other, when the flat-racing season began, he by no means carried all before him The Shah, who was looked upon as a pinch for the Drinkingshire Handicap, went dead off his feed after arriving in the town; and though by a magnificent effort on the part of his jockey, he managed to finish nineteenth in a field of twenty, his owner was far from pleased as he handed a cheque for a large sum to the commissioner who settled his account. The Tart's near fore leg gave way the very day before the Pity and Disturbance Handicap, a month later. And the heart of Percy waxed sad within him.

"Never mind, guv'nor," said Abe, as he met his master on the course, "we've got little Whisper safe and sound at Santon, and if he don't win the Prince of Prussia's 'Andicap to-morrow, I'll eat him, plates and all!"

"I hope you're a true prophet," murmured Percy, as he turned to cross the course to his drag;

"for to tell you the truth, Sparks, I'm getting sick of the whole thing. The thousands I've lost lately—"

"Will all be got back to-morrow, guv'nor, and with confounded interest, too."

That same night Abe was having a friendly glass with Mr Wolsey, the eminent bookmaker at the Little Pitcher, a snug hostelry not a hundred miles, nor one mile either, from the Staymarket in the great metropolis.

"It's quids in your pocket if you'll do it," at length observed the penciller; "and mark me, I've waited long enough for my brass."

"Perish me!" responded the trainer; "but it'd mean ruin to me—stark, staring, desperate ruination."

"That be damned!" said the other. "It's man and man between us; and you'll please to remember, my man, that I've got a little account agin' you in the book. Here it is—'Sparks, 575.'" And Mr Wolsey, "the Cardinal," as his mates called him, shut the volume with an ill-sounding snap, which very much suggested the closing of the cell door of a prison.

"Bless my eyes, can't ye wait a bit?" whined the trainer. "All the guv'nor pays me is two ten a week a horse, and all I'm a-living on is the odd ten bob, so help me! But as to this business, it's pretty near a hanging matter nowadays when the Gimcracked Club has got so down on us all. If I get warned off, what's to become of the missus and the little Sparklings?"

"What's to become o' you and the lot of 'em

if I split on that little business at Tarfield five year ago?" growled "the Cardinal."

"But think, only think, Mr Wolsey, what doctoring a horse means. Think—"

"Think what having a man locked up means. Besides, you've no occasion to doctor him. A bucket o' water 'll do as well."

"Mercy on us! It'll break the horse's wind, I tell ye."

"Better do that than break *you*. How much is the governor good for?"

"He's sure to have a thousand on."

"That's all right. And the blooming public 'll be sure to follow suit, 'specially when they see Fred Fowler's going to ride."

"Poor old Whisper!" sighed the trainer.

"It's poor old Sparks, if you don't do as I tell ye," sneered the other. "Have another whisky, man; there's plenty of time for ye to catch the last train to Santon."

. . . . . .

All the world and his wife were present at Santon next day. Percy had driven a large party down on his well-appointed drag, including the Duchess of Dillwater and her two lovely daughters. The Heir to the Throne was there, the weather was all that could be desired, and altogether it was quite a gala day.

The Prince of Prussia's Handicap was the fourth race on the card, and just before the competitors were saddled, Mr Wolsey approached the trainer, who was standing watching the horse Whisper being led around in a circle.

"Looks well enough," said the bookmaker; "has he had his bucket?"

"*He's had two!*" gasped the trainer.

"Right," said the Cardinal. "Remember that I've bet you a monkey he wins, and the slate's cleared off!"

"I sha'n't forget it," observed the trainer, sulkily.

And then "Cardinal" Wolsey walked back to the ring, wherein presently his stentorious tones were heard, offering "four monkies Whisper."

"It's a good betting race," thought Gus Acorn, who stood beside him; "but why is he knocking the blooming horse out?"

Percy, accompanied by a posse of ladies, and a still larger following of quidnuncs, went to see his horse saddled.

"How is he, Sparks?" he whispered.

"Never better in his life, sir," said the trainer, as he polished the horse's quarters with a silk handkerchief.

And Percy went back into the club enclosure, and, careless as to what his commissioner had done, took 700 to 200 four times over the rails. "A bit of this," he reflected, "will be for Lady Jane."

"Now, what's this horse?" inquired Fred Fowler, the jockey, as he approached his mount. "Looks a bit beefy, don't he? Why, Goblimy, you've been a-stuffing him!"

"He's a little bit short of work," said the trainer.

"And how much am I on?" inquired Fred,

who, from his love of lucre, was then known amongst men as "the Brassman."

"You are on," whispered the trainer, "a hundred this time. Don't hurry him—he takes a lot of getting into his stride—wait till they begin to stop a bit, and then come with one run."

"Right!" said the Brassman, as he was lifted into the saddle.

All eyes were strained, and all race glasses were out to watch the great race of the day. It was run over the last five furlongs of the new course. And as Percy glared upon the scene through his binoculars, he could see The Curate, Old Holloway, and Newman Noggs disputing position for the lead.

"Where's Whisper?" was the universal cry, for the horse had been backed not only by its owner but by the general public for thousands.

"There's Whisper," said a tall, dark man, who looked like a Circassian chief. "He's on the rails, about seventh from the leader."

And hearts were beating—oh! how they were beating—as the leaders began to climb the hill at the finish.

"Newman Noggs wins!" shouted the crowd. "I'll take 2 to 1 Salisbury cops it!" yelled a man in Tattersalls' Ring.

And then they saw, what they had seen before, but never so strongly emphasised, a little horse, stretched out to his utmost capacity, and gradually gaining on the leaders.

One crack of Fred Fowler's whip, and the trick is done. Little Whisper has passed his field two

strides from the winning-post, and Judge Nark gives it a short head.

. . . . . .

Whisper never ran again, and Percy, being quite satisfied with his winnings, retired from the Turf, having previously married the Lady Ella Warmingham. Poor old Abe Sparks is now a tout—and no flyer at that. As for Mr Wolsey, just about the time when he was taking ship for Buenos Ayres, an attentive observer might have overheard him mutter to himself,—

"He ought to a' biled that water!"

"LORD FREDDY"

SOME men are born rich; others have riches thrust upon them. Others, again, acquire wealth for themselves through tact and energy, combined with a strong belief in themselves, and an instinctive knowledge of human nature. "Put money in thy purse" was excellent advice when offered in the simple, olden time; but the more modern philosopher got much nearer the mark in laying down the great principle—

"Get th' brass, lad. Honestly if thou canst; but get it!"

Volumes, as Mr Pickwick would have remarked, could not say more. And it is precisely this method of reasoning which has made so many men powerful—for riches mean power—in whatever station of life they may be placed, and in whatever trade, occupation or calling they may be engaged.

Few more remarkable men have made the Turf the great study of life than the late Mr Frederick Swindell. A "Lancashire lad" by birth, it could not be said that he had been specially favoured by Nature at the commencement of his career either in appearance or surroundings. He was a working man, pure if not simple, and every bite and sup that he put into his mouth had to be earned, and

hardly earned. It would have taken a very sanguine and imaginative prophet to anticipate, at the commencement of young Frederick's career, that he would eventually control the destinies of many magnates who took delight in the national sport for profit as well as for pleasure. But young Frederick got there, just the same; and, what is more, acquired long before his death the brevet rank of nobility. For although in certain censorious circles he was known by such an opprobrious nickname as "The Demon of the Turf," it was as "Lord Freddy" that he figured in that mighty organ, the press, although the present writer has no knowledge as to who was the first to confer this dignity upon the snub-nosed, insignificant-looking little man with the pasty face and little twinkling eyes.

It has been written that the first start in life of Mr Swindell was made when Charles XII. won the Liverpool July Cup in 1839. The youth, whose "bank" at that time was but a modest one, had, so it was said, walked from his home—a score or more of miles—to the racecourse at Aintree, invested his entire worldly wealth on the chance, and although set upon his legs by the victory of his fancied horse, had, instead of treating himself to an easier and more luxurious method of locomotion, walked back again. But there is reason for believing that this was by no means the youthful Swindell's first "flutter." Out of business hours he was a sedulous attendant at the Post-Office Hotel, in Manchester, at that time the great centre for the heavy wagering

which used to take place in the cotton city. The authorities have not always been "down upon" betting; and as late as the "seventies" it was the practice—in the more northern counties at all events—for bookmakers and backers to meet openly within some hostelry, for the express purpose of betting on the day's racing. There was usually a large room devoted to this purpose; and wagering fast and furious was indulged in all the afternoon, in an atmosphere reeking of cheap cigars and brown brandy, with no interference whatever from the police. In fact, the present writer has, in the past, had many a bet, within a tavern in a northern city (*not* Manchester) with an inspector of the county police, who combined the profession of bookmaker in order to fill-out his time.

"Lord Freddy" was a habitual frequenter of the Post-Office Hotel. But whilst there—in his early days at all events—he was accustomed to exercise a policy of non-intervention. He, like Brer Rabbit, "lay low an' said nuffin." But he was a good listener, and frequently overheard something which he was not slow to turn to his own advantage. He was an indifferent scholar, for this was long before the period of compulsory education. At the same time, as he sat at a table, and sipped from time to time a "modest quencher," his face was usually half concealed from view by a newspaper, which the young man appeared to be studying intently. Once a friend approached him from behind and greeted him thus:

"Well, Fred, what's the news, lad?"

"Not much," was the confused reply. "I canna mak' out why they want to put so much shippin' intelligence i' th' paper."

His friend seized the sheet, and exclaimed, "Why, dang it, lad, thou's getten it upside down!"

It was a fact. Mr Swindell might as well, for the instruction he was receiving from that journal, have been reading Sanskrit, or the writings of the early worshippers of Isis. But he was hearing a great deal of the conversation, which was exactly what he wanted.

He had horses in training in most stables, although for many years William Goater was the only trainer who publicly claimed him as an employer. But in those days it was not necessary that a horse should be entered for a race in the real name of his *bonâ-fide* owner. It was not necessary to register a partnership at Weatherby's, or even a *nom de course*, far less to pay a handsome sum (as is compulsory now) annually for using the same. Consequently only a few people ever knew to whom such and such a horse really belonged; and hereby hangs a tale, which is illustrative of the custom of the "good old times."

A young gentleman ran a horse at Croydon in a race in which there were six other starters. He had no intention of backing his horse, who had been well beaten in his trial; consequently the youthful owner was not a little astonished at the persistency with which his animal appeared to be backed. From 4 to 1 the horse "jumped" to "two's," and before the starter's flag had fallen it

became a case of "I'll take 11 to 8 Hardbake don't win!"

The youthful owner had not one penny piece invested upon Hardbake, and it was with no little surprise that he saw his horse's number go up in the premier position over the judge's box, after what looked like a desperate and a magnificently-ridden finish. It afterwards leaked out that the other six runners in the race all belonged to the same individual, although each appeared on the card under different ownership. And the young man, although he wisely held his peace, thought quite as much as did the sailor's parrot in the story.

It was as a commissioner, a maker of arrangements, an unraveller of intricate plots, that Mr Swindell more especially shone. If a horse went badly in the market, the first thoughts of owner or trainer was usually, "Where's old Fred?" The year 1848 was one of the most successful, in a racing way, which Mr James Merry, the Scottish ironmaster, ever had. The grey, Chanticleer, won no less than ten out of the fourteen races in which he was engaged, amongst them the Northumberland Plate, the Goodwood Stakes—for which he carried the crushing weight of 9 st. 2 lbs.—and the Doncaster Cup, in which he scored an easy victory over Van Tromp.

In stakes alone Chanticleer won £3460 for his owner that year—there were no ten-thousand-pounders in the "forties"—and a very substantial sum in bets. There was no more sanguine owner than "Jamie Merry o' Belladrum," and no heavier

bettor. Moreover, in his transactions he combined pluck with judgment, and had at all times some animals which were worth backing. The astute "Fred" was his commissioner, and nobody knew better than he how to extract the cream from the betting market. Chanticleer started at 7 to 1 for the Northumberland Plate, 6 to 1 for the Goodwood Stakes, and 3 to 1 for the Doncaster Cup. In the "forties" and "fifties" the Goodwood Stakes was one of the heaviest betting races of the year; so it may be written, without much danger of being over the mark, that Mr Merry won at least £70,000 in bets over Chanticleer in 1848.

But all had by no means been plain sailing in connection with the Goodwood Stakes. For weeks the grey had been (as it has always been called in racing *parlance*) "in the dead-meat market." There were certain layers who never tired of laying against Chanticleer; and as there is never smoke without fire, so do bookmakers but seldom overlay their books without "knowing something." Evidently there was a traitor in the camp. The trainer was above suspicion, and he was quite prepared to vouch for the integrity of his employees. Mr Swindell was sent for, and the conspirators shook in their shoes. And when, at the eleventh hour, the jockey was changed, there were "alarums and excursions."

"No sooner," said a writer in *Baily's Magazine*, "had Charles Marlow's name been affixed to the telegraph for Chanticleer than it seemed like the writing on the wall to the Assyrian monarch;

the 'legs' fell out in groups, and he was first favourite before the clerk of the scales had completed his duties; and the result was that an ex-member of the Jockey Club, now an exile, has never since recovered the blow."

In the following year, 1849, Chanticleer only won two races out of nine, and in 1850 he was put to the stud, where his success was as brilliant as it had been on the Turf, amongst his produce being Ellermire, the dam of Ellington, winner of the Derby of 1856; Sunbeam, who won the St Leger of 1858; and Ellen, the dam of Formosa, who won the One Thousand Guineas Stakes, Oaks and St Leger, and dead-heated with Moslem for the Two Thousand Guineas Stakes of 1868.

There was opposition of a similar kind to West Australian for some days before the St Leger of 1853, and here again Mr Swindell's assistance was invoked in the unravelling of the plot with a most satisfactory result.

But probably the most admirable *trait* in the constitution of Mr Swindell was his patience under reverses. He kept his upper lip always stiff, and possessed powers of recuperation known to but few other men. Thanks to these natural gifts he would frequently turn a defeat into a victory. That is to say, the disaster of to-day would, if borne philosophically, become the success of to-morrow. A notable instance of this occurred in the case of Wallace, a great, fine, upstanding horse, at first the property of Thomas Dawson, the Middleham trainer. In Dawson's colours Wallace ran six times unsuccessfully at two years old.

Then he was entered for a selling race at Shrewsbury, and being once more unfortunate, was claimed, according to the rules of racing, for his entered selling price, £50, *plus* the value of the race, £40. The claimer was Thomas Cliff, a trainer, residing at Hednesford, Staffordshire, on the borders of Cannock Chase. Mr Swindell was at the time one of Cliff's employers, and there can be no doubt but that Wallace was claimed on behalf of "Lord Freddy;" and the horse ran whilst in his possession as the property of Mr "Gibbs," one of the many names adopted, for racing purposes, by this remarkable man.

Although not a sportsman in the best sense of the word, he had a natural eye for the capabilities of a horse, and his invariable custom—in contradistinction to that of most owners—was to have a new purchase trained and tried over a long distance of ground. A similar plan was followed with Wallace, who, it was found, whilst not possessing any great amount of speed, could "go on," like the brook "for ever." He commenced his three-year-old career by winning a race at Nottingham, and was subsequently unplaced for the Newmarket Handicap at the Craven Meeting. The following week, at Epsom, Wallace was set in the Great Metropolitan Handicap to allow 10 lb. to St Albans, a son of Stockwell and Bribery, who afterwards won the Chester Cup and St Leger; and he would probably have taken the Derby as well but for going amiss. Wallace, in the Great Metropolitan, was a good second to St Albans, the rest of the field being beaten some distance. This

was a performance on the part of Mr Swindell which might well have earned him considerable respect amongst racing men, for the three-year-old who could give weight away to St Albans, and finish close up in a race of two miles and a quarter, must have possessed the gift of "travelling." Strange to say, however, he was allowed to start for the Derby at such an outside price as 50 to 1.

The Derby of 1860 was a memorable one indeed. Two of the best horses engaged had been previously either partially or wholly incapacitated from doing their best; but whereas St Albans—as previously stated—did not go to the post, Buccaneer—whose chances had been put-out by the action of a certain "nobbler" a fortnight before—took part in the race. This Buccaneer, it may here be stated, was the property of Lord Portsmouth, and the sire of many stout racers, including Formosa, and must not be confused with a horse of the same name who was running during the "nineties." The betting on this Derby was about the heaviest ever known; such horses as Thormanby, The Wizard, Horror, Mainstone (Lord Palmerston's), Nutbourne, Tom Bowline, High Treason and Umpire. The last-named had been specially imported from the United States to "knock spots out of the Britishers," and his owner, Mr R. Ten Broeck, was the pioneer of that "American Invasion," which so successfully assailed the morality and well-being of our national sport four decades later.

Umpire was the sensational horse of the race, and money came over from the States in shoals

to back him. Only the previous year Mr Ten Broeck had taken our Cesarewitch, with the aid of the American-bred Prioress, who, ridden by an American jockey, had previously "dead-heated" with two others. Fordham rode the mare in the decider, and the same jockey was on the back of Umpire in the Derby. Previous to the race, Mr Wyatt, the owner of Nutbourne, objected to Umpire, on the grounds that the horse was above the orthodox age—three years—but upon satisfactory evidence being tendered to a contrary effect, the objection was withdrawn, and a public apology made to Mr Ten Broeck.

Mr Swindell, as Wallace cantered by in the preliminary, had the satisfaction of reflecting that, with a comparatively moderate outlay, he stood to win upwards of £150,000, should his horse prove successful. Although at the close of the betting he stood at 50 to 1, much longer odds than these had been at one time or other offered against his chance, so many better favourites being quoted in the market. Lord Frederick, despite the heavy stake at issue, sought a coign of vantage on the grand stand with perfect equanimity, in company with his friend and co-worker, Mr Thornhill, a tall, stout, red-faced gentleman, who combined the occupation of a large Turf commission-agent with that of vendor of toothsome meat-pies—"fourpence apiece, gents"—at a store in Gracechurch Street, in the city of London. The start for the race was delayed some time, but eventually the red flag was lowered, and the two friends adjusted their race glasses to their eyes.

Before the field had galloped 100 yards it was seen that one horse was at least 50 yards behind the leaders. This unfortunate had, as a matter of fact, slipped on to nose and knees at flag-fall. Mr Swindell, with a chuckle, remarked to his companion,—

"I pity the poor beggar that belongs to that 'un, lad. What is it?"

Mr Thornhill took a long look, and replied,—

"Why, Fred, it's yours!"

In fact Wallace was hopelessly out of the race from the start, yet at the finish he was running through his horses, and going strong and well.

Mr Swindell was not the man to complain of his losses after defeat. His idea was to set about repairing them. He looked with contempt on the owner who, having had bad luck in a race, immediately began to "open out" and tell everybody what a certainty his horse would have been if all had gone right, and so on, thus giving the whole show completely away.

"Now, if it had been me," he would say after an occasion of this sort, in which an owner, who was yearning for sympathy, told all about the trial, etc., "I should have put my back up like a sick chicken, as it were, and asked people whether they didn't think I must be going yappy to have a lot of money on a horse that ran like that, and so forth, and I should have said nowt about trial, or what took place in the race."

It is presumable that Mr Swindell invited derision for having been "fool enough" to back a common selling-plater, for which he had given less

than £100, for a race like the Derby. Be that as it may, the public did not interfere when they saw Wallace in the Goodwood Stakes next month with 7 st. 4 lb., the bottom weight being 5 st. 4 lb. He won by six lengths, and at Tattersall's, on the following Monday, Mr Swindell collected £40,000. Not bad this, seeing what the horse had cost him!

As he had been hard at work since February, and the Goodwood race must have taken a good deal out of him, Wallace was probably not himself when he ran for the St Leger, and was not backed for much money. At anyrate, he was not placed, and he ran no more that year. Possibly he performed with a view to the Chester Cup of the following year, which was the next race in which he ran. Here he was supported to win an enormous stake, but this did not prove to be one of Mr Swindell's lucky races. Chaloner rode Wallace, and, timing his effort as he thought beautifully, brought him in a clever winner, and was pulling up to come back to weigh, when, to his consternation, it dawned upon him that he had finished the second time round, and there was another round to go. Under any circumstances he would have found giving 8 lb. to Ben Webster too severe a task, as with 9 st. 2 lb. on his back a week or two later "Ben" ran second for the Great Northern Handicap at York, giving horses like Horror a stone. After the race Mr Swindell sold Wallace to Mr G. W. Fitzwilliam for 5000 guineas, which was then considered a tremendous sum. For Mr Fitzwilliam he won the Great Yorkshire Handicap with 8 st. 7 lb., with the well-known Underhand

second, and many good horses behind. He won in the commonest of canters by four lengths, and then received forfeit in a match for £2000 aside, even weights, with Ben Webster. He was a fine weight-carrier, and, like many stayers, in galloping he carried his head very low down.

Mr Swindell, also, had more than a passing interest in a half-sister to Wallace, named Lioness. She was the property of Mr James Merry, and was trained by Matthew Dawson, at Russley, in Berkshire. Somehow or other she got into the Cesarewitch as a four-year-old with the lenient weight of 6 st. 8 lb. Admiral Rous did not often make such mistakes in handicapping, nor were Messrs Merry and Matthew Dawson given to much *finesse* in running horses with the deliberate intention to deceive the powers that were. But here was the situation: Lioness in the Cesarewitch with 6 st. 8 lb., and she was better than her stable companion, Knave, who had won several Queen's Plates, and at Doncaster had finished in front of the famous Caller Ou. Lioness was, indeed, a certainty—what would be termed, in these modern times, a "pinch."

But how was she to be backed, and who was to back her? For a canny Scot no man was more surrounded by hangers-on, time-servers and "prossers" than "Jamie" Merry. What man amongst these could be trusted to execute the commission wisely and secretly?

In his dilemma Mr Merry placed himself in the hands of his old commissioner, Mr F. Swindell, who undertook the business on condition that the owner

for the time being made himself scarce. The mare won the Cesarewitch by many lengths, and then came a scene. All the lot who thought that they ought to know everything about Mr Merry's horses were furious at not being "on," and Colonel Ouseley Higgins in particular had an altercation with Mr Merry on the Heath, calling him everything that he could lay his tongue to. Mr Merry placed himself in the hands of Lord Stamford, who became the bearer of a challenge to Colonel Higgins. He, nothing loath, named Mr George Payne as his friend. The strong man-of-the-world sense of that gentleman prevailed, and after he had consulted Admiral Rous the matter was "squared" without a visit to Calais sands.

Silence, in the opinion of Mr Swindell, was not only golden, but incrusted with precious gems as well; and upon one occasion, when asked why he never speculated upon rowing matches or pedestrian contests, the canny Lancashire lad replied tersely,—

"A niver back nowt as can talk."

And he was cautious enough not to meddle with steeplechasing contingencies, as he did not like to see his money "flying i' th' air."

The great aphorisms of "Lord Freddy" would have filled a volume too large to be got into the library of the British Museum; and as a diplomatist he was unrivalled. His advice was valued alike by the patricians of the Turf and those who were in what Admiral Rous called "the £10 line of business;" and upon hearing that the lease of the house in Berkeley Square next the "Admiral's"

was for disposal, he promptly took it, and moved in himself and belongings as soon as possible. He had but little faith in the integrity of mankind; and he was anxious to see what owner would try to "square" the handicapper on the eve of publication of the weights for some important race. He would sit for hours, either in his little front room, or (in summer time) in the garden opposite, to see what callers Admiral Rous had during the day, and would draw his own conclusions. And as "Lord Freddy" himself had plenty of visitors—especially on the Sunday before a big event—he had, on occasion, to entertain generals of opposite camps at the same time—of course in different rooms.

A well-known barrister of his day once took Mr Swindell into the Court of Queen's Bench—then held in a dingy apartment which opened out of Westminster Hall—on a visit of inspection. "Lord Freddy" was not long in taking in the whole scene—counsel, witnesses, plaintiff, defendant and jury—and listened for a while to the "beggars wrangling" (as he phrased it) with great enjoyment. But the most important figure in the scene, the judge, impressed him most. After looking the grim figure on the bench up and down for some minutes, he observed to his *cicerone*,—

"I suppose yon owd chap's oppen to a bit o' reason?"

His first thought had been of "straightening" the man at the helm.

Of course Mr Swindell's couch during his racing career was not always composed of roses. And

his great *debâcle* occurred when, in 1874, the "well-readied" Truth gelding was beaten by the shortest of heads by Aventuriere for the Cesarewitch. Archer was in the saddle, and but for being somewhat weak from wasting would have got the good thing home.

Shortly after the race Mr Henry Chaplin was condoling with the owner in the Birdcage.

"And," said the patrician, "my sorrow is the greater seeing that you always run your horses straight, Mr Swindell."

There was an increased twinkle in "Lord Freddy's" eyes as he rejoined,—

"*Straightish*, sir."

A FAIRY QUEEN

A Romance of the Footlights

The Honourable Algernon Chester had long been looked upon as a woman-hater by his brother officers of the gallant Yellow Lancers, quartered at the time of our story at the great commercial city of Reelsborough.

"Dogs I understand," he would say, "and as for horses, well, there—and I can play as good a rubber at whist as anybody in the service; but when it comes to a woman—well, no petticoat has made me gallop yet." And yet, as the philosopher has told us, it is the unexpected which is always happening.

Algy, who was sharing a box one night at the Royal Albert Theatre, Reelsborough, with two of his brother officers, received on that occasion his first lesson in "galloping."

The pantomime of *Ali Baba, or Harlequin Little Bo-Peep, and the Seven Champions of Christendom* was stupid enough, and the three gallant warriors looked the picture of boredom until the entry of the Fairy Queen.

"By Gad!" cried little Dotty Campbell, cheekiest of subalterns, "there's a ripper!"

"Real jam, isn't she?" put in Jack Durnford.

Algy somewhat lazily raised his opera-glass, and as he did so his heart gave one great bound—as it might have done when safe over the last fence in a steeplechase with the most dangerous one down—and in a better light you might have seen that he was blushing like a girl. Then he referred to his programme and read that the part of the Fairy Queen was being enacted by Miss Flossie de Belleville.

It was not an arduous part. She had little to do but to wave a long gilded wand with an electric light at one end, and to come on at the nick of time, just when the heroine was about to be borne off to the Ogre's Castle, the Demon's Hunting Box, or the Dark Dungeons of Unutterable Despair. But, to quote little Campbell, Miss de Belleville certainly was "a ripper" to look at. A tall and stately blonde, with the bust of a Juno and a waist that a boy's arm could have encircled with ease, the most voluptuous-looking limbs and the hands and feet of a Spaniard, she looked a Fairy Queen all over. Her costume was not much to speak of, certainly, consisting as it did principally of a pair of gossamer wings and a pair of the most delicate pearl-grey tights, with slippers to match. Her glorious hair was braided deftly beneath the jewelled coronet which surmounted a most intellectual-looking brow, whilst the rest of her locks hung adown her back in a wealth of golden showers. She undoubtedly fancied herself not a little as she tripped along on her 3-inch heels and scanned the stalls and private boxes in search of admirers.

She had not long to search for these last. Algy was a "goner" from the moment she appered on the stage; and all the way home, and over cigars and "pegs" afterwards, he was rallied by his companions upon his silence and his general "spooney" appearance.

On parade next morning he made some most absurd blunders, which called down upon his head the severest of reproofs from his chief, a very martinet amongst C.O.'s, who finally was overheard to observe,—

"D——n the man! What's come to him?"

All that afternoon Algy was pacing up and down the High Street, clad in the most elaborate mufti, on the off-chance of seeing the maid that had bewitched him. But she came not.

"Doubtless," he reflected, "the darling is resting after her labours at the theatre."

That evening as soon as she entered the back portals of the Royal Albert Miss de Belleville received from the stage-doorkeeper a paper box containing a bouquet of choice exotics. Artfully concealed therein were a pearl half-hoop ring and the following note:—

"Am I taking too great a liberty in addressing you? If not, will you give me the infinite felicity of your company at Bellaggio's afterwards? I shall be sitting in Box A."

Algy went alone to the theatre that night, and shortly before the curtain drew up on the dark scene in the pantomime he was handed the

daintiest little note in the world by one of the attendants :—

" *With great pleasure !* My brougham will be nearly opposite the stage door. *So many thanks* for the lovely flowers and ring. FLOSSIE."

All through the piece Algy sat in the seventh heaven of delight, scarcely daring to exchange glances with his charmer, who, nevertheless, made pretty good use of her velvety eyes in his direction. Needless to say, he did not wait for the transformation scene to display its glories to an admiring audience. The haughtiest little gesture from Flossie as she marched off after commanding the aforesaid scene to develop, was the sign to him that she-who-must-be-beloved would appear no more that night on the light side of the float. Three large brandies and sodas, just to steady his nerves, and then Algy sallied out into the darkness.

She had not deceived him. There in the dirty little side street, almost opposite the stage door, stood the nattiest of broughams—no more fitting chariot ever bore fairy to the realms of dazzling delight. A pair of chestnuts, thoroughbred as Eclipse himself, champed at their bits, all eagerness to be off. The coachman in his dark-green livery was neatness personified, whilst the diminutive tiger, who stood all alert at the brougham's door, must have been well worth his weight in gold for purposes of such servitude.

Algie hadn't so long to wait. In half an hour or so Flossie stalked majestically from out the

stage door. Her glorious locks were confined beneath a *toque* of the richest sable. A heavy sealskin coat almost hid from view the neat blue serge skirt beneath which peeped anon two little pointed patent-leather toes. She was attended by her maid, who was armed with a black leather hand-bag and a large brown-paper parcel.

"Take a cab home, Fifine," said her mistress, "and sit up till I come."

"Gracious!" thought Algy. "What a lucrative business acting must be."

The delicately-gloved hand scarcely touched his arm as she stepped into the brougham. And having plunged in beside her, Captain Chester felt, for the first time in his life, what it is to be next the one object that you adore most.

What a delightful little supper it was! Algy, always an agreeable rattle, was in great form, and the fair Flossie chatted, laughed, and nibbled and nibbled, laughed and chatted, with all the freedom and *abandon* of an old acquaintance.

"Gad!" thought Algy, "she has the manners of a princess and the charms of a goddess."

But any undue familiarity on his part was at once repelled. A glance from those eyes was sufficient, and when he babbled of love at first sight and a wedding-ring she stopped him at once.

"Please don't talk nonsense, Captain Chester; I've hardly known you a day yet. Let us be friends, as great friends as you like, but as for love—"

"But may I dare to hope?" he urged, whilst adjusting her sealskin.

"Perhaps," was the reply. "And, in the meantime, as you've been so *very* patient and good, I will tell you—"

"What?"

"That I think you're the very nicest man I ever met. No, you really mustn't, and I can't allow you to escort me home. What would Mrs Grundy say? Besides, there's Fifine, my maid, the daughter of a *curé* in Normandy; she'd give me warning to-morrow, and she's the best dressmaker in the world. You may call to-morrow, if you really care to; *good*-night." And the brougham and chestnuts vanished into the night.

He called the next day, and the day after that, and—well, he did every foolish thing that a man will do when attacked by the grand passion. In vain did his brother officers chaff him, and equally in vain did his chief remonstrate with him.

"She may be 'only an actress,' as you say, Colonel," he replied upon one occasion, "but she's as good as gold, and fit to be the wife of an emperor."

What arguments could convince so ardent a lover?

The intimacy had continued a whole fortnight, and he had never been allowed to tell his love. When it came to the point she invariably shook a taper finger at him, and whispered,—

"Not yet, sir."

Needless to say, this coyness drew him deeper into the mire. He attended the Royal Albert Theatre every night, and also went to every matinée of that most successful of pantomimes, when the calls of duty did not detain him elsewhere. Together they had driven, or ridden, to inspect every object of interest for miles around. They supped together most evenings, and he had expended about five years' income upon gauds and jewels for his enchantress. At length, one night at Bellaggio's, when he had ventured once more to touch on the forbidden subject, a strange, weird light came into the glorious eyes, and she murmured,—

"To-morrow, to-morrow night I will tell you."

Algy took his place in Box A next evening somewhat earlier than usual. That morning he had sent a magnificent necklet of brilliants to her lodgings, and, in the sweetest little note, she had declared that if she wore the necklet at the theatre he might have hopes. How slowly the time passed, to be sure! The overture never seemed so long, the opening scene never so dreary, the ballet never so tedious.

At length came the cue for the entrance of Gloriosa, the Fairy Queen; and then—

"Great heavens! what's the meaning of this?" groaned Algy.

For there on the stage, clad in the well-known scanty habiliments, the gossamer wings, and the pearl-grey tights, stood—not Flossie de Belleville, but Fifine, her maid!

Thunderstruck, he sought an audience of the manager.

"She's bolted, sir, !" sighed that functionary. "I was never so infamously treated during a forty years' connection with the higher walks of the drama. This woman, to whom I've been paying a princely salary — three guineas a week by my halidame, sir !—has basely deserted her post, and left her handmaiden to go on for the part. It's £50 a week, at least, out of my pocket, sir ! "

. . . . . .

"It is true, m'sieu," said the maid, as soon as Algy could get speech of her. "My mistress has gone, all suddenly; ah, Dieu ! how suddenly, this afternoon."

"But surely," pleaded the lancer, "she gave you some message or a note for me ? "

"But no, m'sieu, there was no message ; and the only note is this, which I found all cr-r-rumpled up on the floor of Madame's bed-chamber."

He seized the paper eagerly, and read as follows :—

"DERE LOO,—Com back att wunce thares sech a Gaim on, that litle lord elton as bin Boosin all weke at the Ameriken Barr an we Har goin to Take im on at the box tomorrow Hevenin we wont you to play the Pianer.—Yor affecly usban, Jo.

"triancarion Bar, toosda.

"p.s. The sparks is all put Hup but they wud honly spring fore quidd for the rooby braselet the Bloke sed as thay was shavins on Tinsal."

Next morning Algy received a bill for a month's hire of the dapper little brougham, chestnuts, etc., "which the lady," observed the messenger, "said as 'ow you would pay, Capting."

LA MASCOTTE

A Tale of Jubilee

Teddy Fellowes was what might metaphorically yet truthfully be described as "on his beam ends." Although not yet twenty-five he had managed to dissipate nearly the whole of the large fortune, real and personal, left him some years before by a maternal uncle. Yes, the savings and accumulations of a lifetime had been "done in" on the Stock Exchange, the Turf and at the board of green cloth within a few brief months. Although the passion for gambling was not previously part and parcel of himself, Teddy had, immediately after entering upon his inheritance, or, as his brother officers tersely phrased it, "touching the chips," retired from the gallant 201st Hussars ere he had obtained his troop, and each succeeding week afterwards had seen him drifting faster and faster in the direction indicated by the Evil One.

The day before the race for the Jubilee Handicap at Handicap in 1889—this story is mostly true—Teddy, upon forming himself into a select committee on ways and means, found that, beyond a few hundreds at the London and Westminster Bank, he was penniless. His houses and his broad

acres were all mortgaged up to the hilt, and there were but few fashionable West-End tradesmen to whom he did not owe a bit. He must hope for no aid from his father, who, although a country squire, was, thanks to agricultural depression, by no means a rich man. The last day Teddy had enacted the *rôle* of the Prodigal Son at Hadbury Hall, the old gentleman, so far from setting the fillet of veal, larded and stuffed, on the festive board, had given him the cold shoulder instead.

"No, sir," said the squire; "you have thought fit to stay away from my house for two years, the while you were squandering your uncle's money on dice and dissipation; and now the sole cause of your visit is to borrow money—or rather beg it. You shall have none from me, sir, while I live. The only thing I will do is to pay your passage to Melbourne or Cape Town, where I am told a very fair living is to be made as a billiard-marker or a hawker of vegetables."

All this was very dreadful, especially as Teddy was engaged to, and, moreover, head over ears in love, with the beautiful Lady Lilian Masham, whose taste of married joys had been but a brief one, and who had only discarded her widow's weeds a few months. As a matter of fact she never grieved much for the dear departed, who worshipped nothing but his bank book, and whom rumour declared she had only married out of spite.

"Accursed idiot that I have been!" meditated my hero from time to time. "I shall have to confess sooner or later to the only woman I ever cared a rap about that I am a beggar. She thinks me

rich enough now; what will she do when she learns the horrible, damnable truth?"

What, indeed? Who could tell? The Lady Lilian, though not altogether of the world worldly, had the most extravagant of tastes; and as she was the second daughter of an impecunious earl, and her dear departed's settlement had not been a particularly generous one, it was not to be thought of that she could marry a man without a shilling to bless himself or herself with. Though not absolutely devoted to Teddy, she thought him one of the nicest of the nice men she had known—a good-natured fool—and as such easy enough to twirl round her pretty, little, dimpled finger.

"I *know* he never really cared for another woman," she often confided to Léonie, her faithful and alert companion, "and he'll give me my own way in everything. And those diamonds we went to look at on Monday are quite too lovely!"

She was decidedly *petite*, with a most ravishing little figure, a waist easy to span with both hands, and hands and feet that would have enslaved the most *blasé* of mankind. Her raven locks had here and there a tinge of auburn in them; and rumour had it that in a weak moment she had once ordered her maid to dye them golden, but had repented the day after the deed was done, and had retired from Society until her hair had recovered its pristine hue. She had the most wonderful eyes of the darkest hazel—eyes which looked as if they could read your inmost thoughts, and which seemed to say, as they glinted at you

through the long gossamer lashes, "It's no good trying to deceive *us!*"

Amongst other accomplishments, the Lady Lilian was a past-mistress in the art of palmistry.

"You can't fight against Fate," she more than once told Teddy. "You and I are bound to be lucky together; your lines tell me so."

And then she placed on the forefinger of his left hand a ring, in which was set an old Egyptian scarabæus, and ordered him on no account to remove it until permission was given by the fair donor herself.

Hardly had Teddy summed up his resources and liabilities when a smart-liveried page arrived with a note from his mistress, and orders to await an answer.

"DEAREST T.,—I have decided not to *drive* to Kempton to-morrow, as I shall want the brougham for Mrs Foley's concert, and the Duchess's ball at *night*, and the *horses* will want a rest. So you will take me and Léonie down by the Members' train. *Twelve punctually*, mind; and keep me waiting at your peril.—*A toi*, LILIAN."

"As if I *could* keep her waiting!" thought the fond youth. "Why, the darling knows that I am her slave, bound hand and foot to her chariot wheels. But this Kempton trip is rather a nuisance. I haven't faced the music of the Ring since that confounded Goldseeker won the City and Suburban; and though I've always settled up on a Monday, some of the bookmakers seem to

look at me as if they had an idea that I had come to the end of my tether. Where am I to turn for money? Lilian thinks I've lots, and before the week's out she must be undeceived. Rather than lie to the only woman I ever loved, I'd jump into the river, or put myself under the engine of a South-Eastern express. However, go to Kempton I must."

Teddy was in considerably better spirits next morning when he handed his betrothed from her victoria, at Waterloo. By the first post he had received a registered package containing a bank-note for £1000, and the following laconic epistle :—

"Here's the thou. I lost at blind hookey a month ago. We planted the old man last week. Who said I never paid my debts ?—JOE."

The recipient heaved a sigh of relief, and as he placed the note, together with one of his few remaining "tenners," in an inner pocket of his waistcoat, he exclaimed :

"Who knows but that my luck is on the turn at last ?"

Lady Lilian would have made a vastly pretty picture as she tripped along the platform, in her neat frock of different shades of fawn and brown ; and from the great butterfly which topped the tallest feather in her hat, to the heels of her fairy slippers, she looked every inch "good form." The train by which they travelled to Kempton was filled with a gaily-dressed crowd, and Lilian clapped her little gloved hands with delight upon taking her seat, as she exclaimed,—

"Oh! I do so love racing! And now, tell me," she continued, "what are you going to back to-day?"

"I didn't think of having a bet," returned Teddy, somewhat moodily. "Since I've known you I haven't cared about anything else, you know; and I made a mental resolution never to have another—"

"Fiddlesticks!" she interrupted, playfully tapping him with the handle of her husband-beater. "You are to bet to-day, sir, and it will be for the last time."

"Well, if you say so, of course—"

"Listen. I've told you before that I am convinced we shall have luck together, that I am your Mascotte. Now I have the strongest presentiment that the pecuniary part of that luck is going to come off to-day. I had a most vivid dream last night—"

"Oh, do tell it us."

"Patience, sir. Well then, I dreamt that you and I were in the bullion-room at the Bank of England, and that one of the clerks was weighing out to you thousands of sovereigns—you know how lucky it is to dream of gold. Well, you put all these sovereigns into a great sack you had with you, and then proceeded to write out a receipt. Only instead of writing a receipt, you wrote:—'Violet, 1; Yellow Cap, 2.' Now, what do you think of that?"

"Most extraordinary."

"Well, before I left home I consulted my race card, and found that the only horse wh. .ill carry

violet colours in the Jubilee is Amphion; and that the only horse whose jockey will wear a yellow cap is Screech Owl."

"Amphion?"

"Yes, you must promise me that you will back these two horses, one to be first and the other to be second. If you won't do this, I'll never speak to you again, sir."

The journey to the course was soon made—even the South-Western Railway can be punctual occasionally—and having placed their wraps across three chairs, so as to reserve them during the afternoon, the trio proceeded to luncheon in the great pavilion, one of the Brothers Bertram's happiest efforts. The meal over, they took up their places on the Members' Stand, as Lilian did not care to run the risk of getting her pretty feet wet by strolling with the great majority of the swells and swellesses in the paddock. And then Teddy went down to do battle with the Ring.

"I'll bet again Goldseeker or Orbit!" was the first cry which smote upon his ears. And then arose a harsh, grating, but perfectly distinct voice,—

"Thousand to 80 Amphion!" the middle syllable being pronounced, after the custom of the Ring, "short."

"I'll take it," said Teddy, coolly, producing his betting-book.

"Right, Captain," observed the fielder. "Make it 2000 to 160?"

"Certainly."

"Want any more, Captain Fellowes?" inquired Gus Abrahams.

"Yes, as much as you've got."

"You can have £5000 to £400."

"Right, it's a bet."

Charley Hibbert and the redoutable Harry Goodson were next visited; and after Fry and Millard had been "tapped," Teddy, upon consulting his book, found that he stood to win exactly £11,100 by the success of Amphion; and to lose, should the horse not come in first—but he scorned the idea of such a contingency.

"Anything for a place, Captain?" bleated Gus Abrahams.

"Screech Owl?"

"Two to 1—here, 5 to 2 to you."

"Skittles!"

"I've just laid it to his lordship, I assure you, sir."

"Then lay it to somebody else, and be—"

"Well, here, you can have £600 to £200, and no more."

"Put it down."

In two minutes more Teddy stood to win £3300 should Screech Owl get a place.

"I've often heard," he mused, as he was shutting his betting-book, "that when you've got a heavy stake on a horse, the way to clinch your luck is to have a bit 'ready' on him as well. Hanged if I don't have a tenner on for luck. Here, how much Amphion?"

"Twelve to 1," answered a dark-complexioned bookmaker.

"Will you lay it to this, ready?" inquired our hero, taking a note from his pocket.

"Certainly."

That will make £120 to £10 more," reflected Teddy, as he hurried back to rejoin the ladies.

. . . . . .

The race for the Jubilee Stakes has already been so admirably described in the papers, that there is no need to reproduce it here. Teddy was trembling violently as the horses went down to the starting-post; and when the shout went up "They're off!" he turned deathly pale.

"*Courage, mon enfant!*" whispered Lilian, as she pressed his hand.

"I'll back Goldseeker!" was shouted, as the horses approached the bend; and then came the cry, "The favourite's beat!" And then we saw two horses emerge from the ruck, and one of them carried violet colours, whilst the jockey of the other wore a yellow cap. And then a wild yell went up from the Members' Stand of "Amphion for a million!" whilst a shriller voice proclaimed to her immediate neighbours that Screech Owl would indubitably be second. And then the horses passed the winning-post, and Teddy muttered a fervent, heartfelt "Thank God!"

"I shall have to write you out a cheque, sir," said the dark-complexioned bookmaker afterwards, "as I don't carry so much money about with me on a racecourse."

"So much money?" repeated Teddy to himself. "I should have thought £130 would have been a mere fleabite to him." But when the fielder solemnly handed him a cheque for £13,000, our hero's hair fairly stood on end.

Mechanically he put his hand into his waistcoat pocket, and pulled out the note which remained. It was a tenner. By a marvellous fluke he had given the bookmaker the note for £1000.

"Great heaven!" he muttered, "it is something like a Mascotte."

. . . . . .

That faithful friend Léonie was heard to declare afterwards that never again would she "play gooseberry" to two lovers in the train after they had won a lot of money.

Lilian and Teddy will be married in due course. Léonie will be the only bridesmaid, and the train of the bride's dress, which will be of the richest violet brocade, will be held up by two tiny pages, nephews of the bride, in Directoire suits of striped red and blue, with Directoire hats of yellow satin. And Teddy is never going to make another bet in his—well—

"AULD MAT"

When the complete and final history of the English Turf has been written—when the malodorous and murderous motor car has driven all traces of the horse of every class and form from our once free and happy little island—the name of Matthew Dawson will be found emblazoned in its pages as a trainer whose knowledge of his business was equalled by his integrity of purpose; as a man to praise whom were like gilding refined gold; as one to whom all who had the privilege of his acquaintance can point, in an age of cant, hypocrisy and assorted crime, as a man amongst men, a man without fear and without reproach. For the last fifty years of the nineteenth century his name was held in honour by all for whom the subject of the thoroughbred horse had any attraction or meaning; and it is unfortunately impossible for the present writer, in the space at his disposal, to do full justice to such a memory. More especially is it to be regretted that no memoirs of "Auld Mat's" career from his own pen have been left behind him. From his youth up modest and retiring, he was always averse to self advertisement, to let his light shine before his fellows; nor would any considerations of money or fame induce him to put on paper, in his own neat

handwriting, any details which might have been published—and which would have been as widely read and appreciated as the works of Dickens or Thackeray—during his lifetime. Therefore any biography of Matthew Dawson must needs be imperfect; and although much of the present record is the result of personal observation and hearsay, it is by no means as complete a review as could be wished of a most remarkable figure on the world's stage.

A native of Gullane, in Scotland, Matthew was one of four brothers, whose father, George of that ilk, trained a few horses for Mr James Merry at the commencement of his career as an owner. Three of the brothers eventually found their way to Newmarket, where two of them lived, prospered exceedingly as trainers, and died; and where one, John, is, at the time of writing, still in residence. Thomas, the eldest brother, set up an establishment at Middleham, in Yorkshire, where he was justly esteemed and respected as trainer and man, and where he completed his days.

The first record of Matthew in connection with a racecourse is in 1840. He was then twenty years of age, and had the charge of Pathfinder, a horse engaged in the Derby, belonging to the then Lord Kelburne, afterwards Earl of Glasgow, and discussed in this little volume under the heading "Lordy." This was "Mat's" first visit to Epsom; and the failure of Pathfinder to carry off the much-coveted "Blue Riband" would not appear to have discouraged our hero from following the example of Robert Bruce, and, in imitation of the historical

spider, "trying again." For in the course of the following fifty-five years we find Matthew Dawson's charges periodically pouncing upon the chief spoils at what is still the most important race meeting in the world.

But it was not until the commencement of the "fifties" that the subject of this memoir came into prominent notice as a trainer. At this period Lord John Scott's—this nobleman should not be confused in the mind of the young Turf student of to-day (if there be such a student) with John Scott, the Malton trainer of the same epoch, otherwise known as "The Wizard of the North"—little stud of some fifteen was under the private charge of Matthew Dawson at Compton, in Berkshire, one of the many cosy homesteads which nestle in the valleys of the spacious downs of one of the breeziest —as it is one of the most hospitable—counties in England. This little stud included at one time such celebrities as Miserrima (second to Iris in the Oaks of 1851), Hobbie Noble (sold as a two-year-old to Mr James Merry for the "record" price of 6500 guineas), The Reiver (second to West Australia in the St Leger of 1853), Catherine Hayes (winner of the Oaks in 1853), Kilmeny (winner of the Goodwood Stewards' Cup in 1852), and other noted ones. In fact, so amazing was the good fortune which attended this humble training establishment that no colours, not even those of Sir Joseph Hawley, had more followers when seen on a racecourse than those of the nobleman for whom Matthew Dawson acted as master of the horse. John Scott's, in the north, and John Day's,

in the south, were both powerful centres, but neither sent forth more winners, comparatively, than the master of the mere "toy" stables at Compton, in Berkshire.

Lord John Scott, not being a man of wealth, could not resist the offer made by Mr James Merry for Hobbie Noble, at two years old, and "Mat" Dawson, although he knew he was losing a good chance of preparing his first Derby winner, thought 6500 guineas too tempting a price to be refused. So the colt went to Mr Merry, although had he remained at Compton he would almost certainly have beaten Daniel O'Rourke at Epsom. Thus a few more years elapsed ere the ambition of our hero was gratified; and it was for the purchaser of Hobbie Noble that "Mat's" first Derby was won.

Most racing men are superstitious; and, although the "chiel frae Gullane" did not carry his faith in omens so far as to shriek if he upset the salt at table, or to lose faith in the chance of a favourite filly if engaged to run on the day on which a new moon made her appearance, he would have promptly abandoned any undertaking on the which he had set out had a hare crossed his path *en route*. A solitary magpie, too, would alter all his plans; and one morning, after he had set out for the nearest railway station, with two or three horses engaged the next day at the Epsom Spring Meeting, the bird of ill-omen put in an appearance directly in the path of the "string."

"D'ye see anither ane, Geordie?" the trainer inquired of his head lad.

The reply was in the negative.

"Take them back then," was the order. "We'll no travel the day."

And back they went to Compton, to return twenty-four hours later when no magpie was visible to the travellers. And it is further recorded that on that very day Cannobie, one of the "string," was successful in the Great Metropolitan Handicap at Epsom—at that time a much more important race, albeit of less value, than the present—from twelve opponents.

There were railways in Berkshire in those days, but they were few and far between. Locomotion was usually effected on horseback, and visitors to the different training establishments dotted about the downs were usually pressed by the host to stay all night, and, if they possessed a modicum of sense, usually did so. In the early "fifties" the Chester Cup was a race which provoked even more public interest than did any of the "classics"; and with journalistic enterprise in its infancy the entries for "t' Coop" used to be printed on cards, in the first instance, and circulated privately to nominators. "Auld Mat" never tired till the last of repeating the story how "Tom" Stevens the elder (who trained no great distance off) arrived at Compton one morning to look at one of these cards, which he knew had reached Mr Dawson. "Tom" had to return home the same afternoon, but ere his departure "Mat" thus addressed him,—

"Tom, you shall mark 100 horses on that card, and I'll take the rest—for £10."

The card was sent back, duly marked, next day. There were over 200 entries.

"And the most extraordinary part aboot it was"—poor "Mat" used to wind up the anecdote with great gusto—"that not one of the hundred horses he had marked finished in the first six!"

Early in the "fifties" Mr James Merry had taken Russley—another training quarters on the Berkshire downs—on lease, and installed James Prince there as major-domo. And in 1857, acting under the advice of Matthew Dawson, Mr Merry purchased the residue of Lord John Scott's stud—on the retirement of that nobleman from the active pursuit of the Turf—for 6000 guineas. Matthew Dawson then became associated with Prince in the training arrangements at Russley, but this alliance was severed in 1859, when Prince resigned his situation in consequence of some remarks made by Mr Merry on the condition of Sunbeam (the St Leger winner of the previous year) after she had been beaten by her old opponent Toxopholite, in the Port Stakes at Newmarket. Thenceforward, for nearly ten years, "Mat" reigned alone at Russley, and with such a trainer, the millionaire owner soon began to make matters on the racecourse (as the Americans say) "hum." "Jamie," besides being particularly well provided with worldly wealth, was a sportsman of whom we had no lack fifty years ago, when

> "To go and have a cut at the crack
> Was ever the motto of Merry."

The finding of Thormanby was not without

romance. Matthew Dawson was at Doncaster during the September race week of 1858, and meeting a breeder named Plummer casually, the last-named asked the trainer to come round and cast his eye over "a pup of old Alice's." The "pup" was a colt by Melbourne or Windhound out of Alice Hawthorne—winner of two Doncaster, one Goodwood and one Chester Cup, besides other long-distance races, and foaled in 1838—and had been almost "hawked about" the streets of Doncaster without finding a purchaser. But Mr Dawson was at once attracted by the colt's appearance.

"What's his price?" he asked.

"Three fifty," returned the breeder, fully expecting to receive a lower offer. But "Mat" was no bargainer. He took what he liked and left what he did not without haggling.

"Put him down to Mr Merry," was his sole remark; and although "Jamie" subsequently, in the fulness of his heart, suggested that the trainer should keep the colt himself, the youngster subsequently, under the name of Thormanby, carried the "boy in yellow," and put tens of thousands into the already well-filled coffers of the Clyde Valley ironmaster.

Thormanby—who was undoubtedly a son of Windhound—ran in no fewer than fourteen races as a two-year-old, nine of which he won; and with the exception of Folkestone, Lady Elizabeth and The Bard—all of whom came later—no horse was asked to do so much galloping in his early youth. But next season, by his trainer's advice, he was

"put by" for the Derby. Matthew Dawson never left Russley for a day during the early spring of 1860; and when the Derby Day arrived no horse could have looked in more perfect condition than did Thormanby.

"His coat," wrote "Argus," in the *Morning Post*, "was like a mirror, his muscle as developed as that of Heenan at the battle of Farnborough; and when he galloped past the stand he hardly seemed to touch the ground."

According to Henry Custance's *Riding Recollections*, it was not settled until the last moment that he should ride Thormanby in the Derby. He was only a boy at the time, and Mr Merry had telegraphed to Russia for a comparatively-unknown jockey, named Sharpe, to undertake the mount—possibly with the idea of obtaining longer odds against his horse on the day. But fortunately for "Cus," Sharpe had indulged a little too freely in "nerve stimulants" during the morning, and by the urgent demand of Matthew Dawson—whose will was stronger than that of the more obstinate "Jamie"—the "tippler" was put upon Northern Light, whose mission it was to make running for Thormanby, upon whom Custance scored a clever victory.

That the jockey named received the modest *honorarium* of £100 for that Derby mount he has recorded in his *Riding Recollections*, but nobody but the trainer himself, and the owner, knew or ever will know what "Mat's" pecuniary reward was for winning his first Derby, and the best part of £100,000 in bets, for the owner. Certain it is

that Mr Dawson would not have stood any meanness from an employer, of no matter what rank. A simple-minded, large-hearted man, the soul of generosity and honesty, he would not brook the questioning of an account; and, whilst a public trainer at Newmarket, later in life, it is certain that he once tore up the bill he had sent to a noble owner who had expressed himself dissatisfied with some of the items, with the remarks,—

"Your bill is paid, my lord. And I shall be obliged by your removing your horses from my stables by noon to-morrow."

Before quitting the subject of Thormanby it may be written that he "set the seal on his fame" by winning the Gold Cup at Ascot as a four-year-old; and that, of his descendants, Charibert, Atlantic and Hester—the first two trained by Matthew Dawson and the last by "Brother Joe"—were winners of "classic" races.

But for the wilfulness of his owner it is certain that Thormanby's Derby triumph would have been followed by that of Dundee—a son of Lord of the Isles, the Two Thousand winner of 1855, also Mr Merry's—the very next year. Dundee won six races out of seven, at two years old, but had his powers unduly taxed at York, where he was pulled out for two races of one mile each against the protest of the trainer. And it was on but *two* sound legs that Dundee finished second to Kettledrum for the Derby of 1861.

Progressing, in crablike fashion, backwards, the "boy in yellow" finished third for the great Epsom race of "Exhibition Year," 1862, on

Buckstone, who could get no nearer than third to Caractacus, and occupied the same position behind The Marquis in the Doncaster St Leger. And in 1864, Scottish Chief, probably the second best of Mr Merry's that "Mat" ever trained, could only obtain the "barren honour of a place," where Blair Athol, the white-faced chestnut from Malton, cantered in ahead of, probably, the best field of horses that ever competed in a Derby.

Mr Dawson has often described his first introduction to Blair Athol, which took place in the horse's box on the night before the Derby.

"There he is," said the horse's trainer, "as well as I can make him; but"—and here he heaved a deep sigh—"I do not even know yet whether he will run or not to-morrow."

In Mr Dawson's own word the chestnut was the "grandest specimen of a racehorse" he had ever seen, and after taking counsel with his brother "Tom," who trained General Peel, the two agreed that their charges were probably destined to occupy but the second and third positions in the great race—a forecast which was verified to the letter.

It is probable that despite many pleasant associations and memories Matthew Dawson was not altogether sorry to leave Russley to take up a position as public trainer at Heath House, Newmarket. "Jamie" Merry, besides being amongst the most obstinate, was one of the most suspicious of men. Fine sportsman as he was, possessing, as he did, all the dogged determination, and dislike to being beaten, of his race, "a little

'Jamie' Merry went a d——d long way"—to parody a once popular ditty. During his brilliant career on the Turf he tried nearly all the recognised trainers, as did his fellow-countryman the Earl of Glasgow, already treated of in this volume as "Lordy"; and probably neither owner nor trainer regretted "Mat's" move from Russley.

The reign of Mr Dawson at Heath House may be described as a most prosperous one throughout. During the twenty years or so that he was at the head of that cosy and compact establishment he had practically the pick of the magnates of the Turf as employers, whilst the horses which periodically went forth from the stables to take their part in the "great game" were possessed of the bluest of blood, and made, most of them, a great deal of history, which was very satisfactory reading for their owners. The "plunging" era was at its height when "Mat" took charge, amongst his noble patrons being the sixth Duke of Newcastle, the maddest, merriest and most reckless of all spendthrifts, who, as Lord Lincoln, had been one of the "Romeo lords"—as certain young sporting sprigs of nobility were nicknamed by one of the bookmakers at the end of the "fifties"—and who, if he had stuck to horse-racing pure and unadulterated, without combining games of chance and other alleged amusements, would have left a much richer estate to his heirs and assigns.

Julius and Speculum were the best horses that Mr Dawson trained for the Duke. The first-named, after winning the Cesarewitch, under what

was at that time considered the substantial impost of 8 stone, was matched against the two-year-old Lady Elizabeth on grossly unfair terms for the filly, who was nevertheless successful. But that her Derby chance was sacrificed by the running of this match there can be no question. Speculum, who was on the small side, was a good, honest, consistent performer. His City and Suburban victory roped-in a pile of money for his party; and the writer of these lines still possesses a betting-book, in which "Speculum 1, 2, 3" occurs with delightful reiteration on three or four pages with reference to the Derby, in which the horse finished third.

But Lord Falmouth, in the matter of winning races, fairly dwarfed the other "swells" at Heath House. A triumphal march was commenced when Kingcraft, a son of King Tom, after being badly beaten by Macgregor in the Two Thousand, turned the tables in the Derby; the easy defeat of Mr Merry's horse being undoubtedly due to the "rattling" he had been subjected to on the hard ground at Bath the week before. Other classic winners trained for Lord Falmouth by "Auld Mat" between 1870-'83 were Atlantic, Charibert (by Thormanby) and Galliard, winners of the Two Thousand; Cecilia, winner of the One Thousand; Spinaway and Wheel of Fortune, winners of the One Thousand and Oaks; Silvio, winner of the Derby and St Leger; Jannette, winner of the Oaks and St Leger; and Dutch Oven, winner of the St Leger. In addition to these, Busybody, sold to Mr "Abington" Baird, when Lord

Falmouth retired from the Turf, won the One Thousand and Oaks for her new owner.

Despite this long string of equine successes, the best horse at Heath House during this period was a boy, a simple British boy, whose talent for race-riding was only equalled by his ambition—a boy whose application and industry earned him in the course of a few years a very large fortune; who commenced as a mere "'prentice," at a wage of seven guineas, with a hat, coat and waistcoat for his first year of servitude; and who, at the time of his all-too-premature death, only eighteen years later, had acquired world-wide fame, and was in partnership with his old master. So many histories of the career of "Fred" Archer have been written that it would weary the ordinary reader to once more go over the old ground. There never was, nor ever will be, such a jockey; and whereas the death of Garrick was said to have eclipsed the gaiety of nations, the tragic fate of poor "Fred" left a tear-blot upon the history of the Turf which will never be effaced.

His Grace the Duke of Portland is another noble owner who has no cause to regret his racing connection with Matthew Dawson. Without being passionately attached to the "great game," the Duke has played it wisely and well, and nobody ever had better luck to help him on. Mat's purchase of Mowerina—claimed out of a selling race—for his Grace was a happy one; indeed, as the mare was not only one of the speediest of her day—she won the Portland Plate of 1881 with 9 st. 5 lb. in the saddle—but she was the dam of Donovan,

winner of the Derby and St Leger of 1889, as also of Raeburn, Semolina and Modwena. But this was nothing like the luck which attended the purchase of St Simon, at two years old, after the tragic death of his owner and breeder, Prince Batthyany, who fell dead on the steps of the Jockey Club Stand directly after Galliard (a son of the Prince's favourite, Galopin) had passed the post first for the Two Thousand of 1883. At the subsequent sale of Prince Batthyany's stud St Simon was knocked down to Matthew Dawson, on behalf of the Duke of Portland, for 1600 guineas.

That the son of Galopin and St Angela was the cheapest blood horse ever bought there can be no doubt, for, although not a Derby winner—he was not entered for the Blue Riband, and had he been the nomination would have become void through the death of the Prince—he was not only undefeated throughout his racing career, but his victories were obtained in the easiest possible fashion. Had he been qualified to take part in the great Epsom contest of 1884, where, oh! where would St Gatien and Harvester, the co-dead-heaters, have been? Since St Simon was put to the stud three of his sons have won more than £70,000 in stakes between them; and although as a sire he will probably never "top" Stockwell's "record" for one season—1866, when his progeny won no less than 132 races, value £61,391, and this, moreover, was before the days of "mammoth" prizes—the children and children's children of St Simon have already proved the most valuable of gold-mines to their respective owners.

Not a particularly "taking" colt—he was what is technically known as "short-coupled," and somewhat too straight in front to be absolutely symmetrical — St Simon was nevertheless an equine marvel, if not *the* "horse of the century." His two-year-old feats will never fade from the memory, and the way he "smashed up" all sorts of fields, giving weight, and lots of it, to all his opponents, was worth travelling long distances to see.

The week before the Derby September Meeting of 1883, Archer, the jockey, had been down to ride some gallops for Mr Robert Peck, who at that time lived and trained at Russley, Matthew Dawson's old quarters. Peck had a colt by Seesaw out of Quiver, whom he had named Archer, and the jockey had been on the back of his equine namesake at exercise. Both Peck's colt and St Simon were engaged in the Devonshire Nursery Handicap at Derby, their respective weights being—

St Simon..... .....8 st. 12 lb.
Archer..... .....7 st. 9 lb.

Just before Archer left Russley for Newmarket Peck entrusted him with the following message for Matthew Dawson,—

"Tell him that no two-year-old in the world can give mine 17 lb."

The message was duly delivered, and the terse remark of "Auld Mat" was,—

"Tell Robert Peck not to gamble on his."

St Simon won the race in a canter, Mr Peck's colt being beaten a neck from the second.

Matthew Dawson always considered St Simon at two years old to be nearly 42 lb. better than Harvester, who was known to be at least 14 lb. the inferior of Busybody before she was sold to Mr Baird. The Duke's "wonder" could not be thoroughly trained as a four-year-old, although the attempt was made; and the present writer well remembers a pleasant twenty minutes passed one morning in the early spring of 1885 on "Long Hill" with Matthew Dawson, as his horses passed us in a three-parts-speed gallop. St Simon was in the string, and appeared to move freely and well, with his stable attendant, C. Fordham, on his back.

"Not much the matter with him now?" hazarded the writer.

"No," returned the trainer. "And I only wish he had to run to-morrow instead of next month."

But there was to be no racing for the horse the following month. His fore-joints were none of the best—he always wore on the training-grounds a "boot" on his near fore-leg—and the exigencies of training proved too much for St Simon, who retired to the stud with his blushing honours thick upon him, and without having broke down.

In the writer's possession is a photograph—unfortunately much faded—taken from an oil painting by Mr A. L. Townshend, representing a string of thoroughbreds walking round a group consisting of Lord Falmouth, Matthew Dawson and "Fred" Archer, the first two afoot and the last on his hack. In the foreground is St Simon, a capital

likeness, and in front and behind him are Galliard are Busybody. The picture—which the present writer wanted to name "A Famous Muster," but which the artist more modestly called "The Walk Round"—was originally in the possession of poor "Fred" Archer, and used to hang on a wall in the dining-room of Falmouth House. After the tragic death of the jockey Matthew Dawson bought the picture; but to which of "Auld Mat's" heirs and assigns it has descended deponent sayeth, and, moreover, knoweth, not.

For Lord Hastings—who must not be confused by the young student with "The Mucker Marquis," of the "plunging" era—Mr Dawson trained Melton, winner of the Derby and St Leger of 1885. A finer finish than that of Archer upon his back at Epsom was never witnessed. The jockey, having ridden Paradox to victory in the Two Thousand, was well acquainted with that colt's peculiarities. Like some other equine celebrities he would not do his best when possessed of the lead. As the saying of those days went, Mr Broderick's Cloete's horse would "make a race with a donkey." Of his superiority to Melton the writer entertains no doubt whatever, but Archer was a little better general than Webb, who was on Paradox at Epsom, and "suffering" until the very last moment with Melton, the other was a neck in front five strides from the winning-post, then, with a "one, two" from the whip on the horse's quarter, Archer made his effort, and Melton passed the winning-post a short head in front, although repassed by Paradox in the very next

stride. Never was the result of a race more due to superior generalship, and many a victory as did Archer pull out of the fire this was undoubtedly the happiest effort of his career.

Since 1864 there had not been a better year for three-year-olds than 1886; and in Minting, a great "raking" colt by Lord Lyon out of Mint Sauce, the property of Mr Richard Vyner—for whom, two years before, Matthew Dawson had trained a St Leger winner in The Lambkin—Heath House sheltered a "hot 'un," indeed. Not even the great Ormonde was feared when the two met in opposition for the Two Thousand.

"You'll do me to-day, Mat," said John Porter, when the two trainers met in the "Birdcage," for a friendly chat, just before the battle.

"Well," was the rejoinder, "I think I shall, John."

"Mine's short of a gallop or two," continued the master of the Kingsclere stables; "but yours 'll have to gallop to catch him at Epsom."

John Porter's horses are usually more or less backward in condition before the end of May; but this particular Two Thousand did not witness the "survival of the fittest." And, although Ormonde and Minting raced side by side from The Bushes to the Abingdon Mile Bottom, it was all one way for the Duke of Westminster's horse from that point, and Mr Vyner, appreciating the maxim that discretion is the better part of valour, promptly withdrew Minting from the Derby, the big horse thus being kept fresh for the Grand

Prix de Paris, a race which he had no difficulty in winning.

The next and only other time that Minting met Ormonde was at Ascot, in the following year, in the Hardwicke Stakes, and, confirmed "roarer" although the Kingsclere horse had become, he finished a neck in front of the other, although the race was one mile and a half in distance, with a severe hill at the finish—a truly marvellous performance for a "roarer."

Minting only ran in one other race as a four-year-old, when he won the Jubilee Cup at Ascot, easily defeating Bendigo at even weights, and St Mirin—for whom the race was considered a "soft thing" by John Porter—carrying 10 lb. less.

The next season the son of Lord Lyon electrified all beholders by winning the Jubilee Handicap at Kempton Park in the commonest of canters, under the "hunting" weight of 10 stone, and it reflected the greatest credit upon "Auld Mat's" training skill that Mr Vyner's horse ever faced the starter at all. A week before the race Minting had a hock "as big as two," to quote Mr Dawson's own words. Never was trainer more elated with a victory. As he stood on the steps of the Members' Stand, just in front of the writer, Mr Dawson waved his hat in the air and shouted, "Minting for a hundred!" as soon as Fred Webb brought up his horse in the last furlong. And the worthy trainer's hands—both were in requisition—were shaken nearly off after the "All right!" had been pronounced. A bloodless victory over Love in Idleness for the Hardwicke Stakes at Ascot (with

the substantial sum of £2573) was followed by a long interval of rest. But how far removed from the Minting of old was the horse who succumbed to Friar's Balsam in the Champion Stakes the following October! The three-year-old was an exceptionally good horse who, had all gone well with him, would probably have swept the board this season. At the same time he was meeting Minting at a pound less than weight for age, and odds were on the five-year-old. Friar's Balsam, however, won in a canter, and Minting never ran again.

But for considerations not unconnected with "Anno Domini" Mr Dawson would have been associated with some further triumphs of the Duke of Portland, but the trainer thought the time had arrived for him to retire from public life, and, having taken a house with a small stud farm at Exning, some two miles from Newmarket, his nephew George succeeded him at Heath House, where Ayrshire and Donovan were trained, a couple of "bread-winners" who earned a considerable amount of butter as well.

But "Auld Mat" was not fated to retire for a little while longer. After enjoying a well-deserved rest he was fated to train two more Derby winners in Ladas and Sir Visto, of whom the first-named added the Two Thousand to his "classic" score, and at last took the St Leger as well. Mr Dawson was enjoying a little tour in Scotland with an old friend, Mr Smith of Whimple, near Exeter, a breeder of thoroughbred horses and Devon cattle. The two were driving back to Edinburgh in an

open carriage, after inspecting the wonders of the Forth Bridge, when they "struck" (as the Americans would say) the Earl of Rosebery, K.G. A chat followed, and its result was that the veteran trainer was induced to superintend the education of his Lordship's nice new racing stud. For some years the head of the House of Primrose had tried ineffectually, like the late Lord George Bentinck, to carry off the Blue Riband of the Turf; and no sooner did "Auld Mat" lend a hand than the desired feat became an accomplished fact.

Ladas was about the handsomest horse that ever carried a racing jacket, and was a long way the best of all the sons of Hampton. Matthew Dawson all but forgot his old favourites, Minting, St Simon, Thormanby, and the splendid collection of Lord Falmouth, in the bonnie bay who, but for wild riding, would have certainly added the St Leger to his classic victories.

"I don't altogether like his forelegs," observed a friend, in conversation with Lord Rosebery, as to the points of Ladas.

"You mustn't tell Mat Dawson that," quietly remarked his Lordship.

The last time that the present writer was privileged to hold converse with Mr Dawson was at the National Hunt Steeplechase Meeting of 1897, which was held on the "Links" course at Newmarket. The great event was won by Nord Ouest, trained in Richard Chaloners's stable, and ridden by a French gentleman. A lot of touts and stable-boys were "guying" the rider as he took his mount over the preliminary fence.

"I don't see anything to laugh at," observed Mr Dawson. "The man seems to me to be on excellent terms with his horse."

Nord Ouest won in a canter.

Next year the end came, and the crowd from all parts of the country, which assembled around the grave and filled the cemetery at Newmarket, testified to the respect felt for one of Nature's noblemen —a kindly, simple-minded, large-hearted man, over whose last resting-place there could be no more appropriate epitaph than: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant!"

THE END

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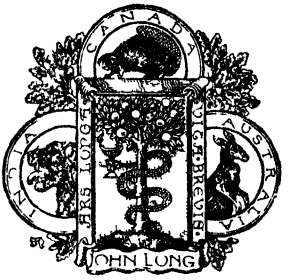

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