

distance, McKinlay being second, but in the back stretch they were both passed by Palmer, who won rather easily. Time, 2min 9sec.

One Mile Bicycle Handicap (for members of W.C.C. only).—F. Muir, scratch, 1; L. T. Herbert, 100yds, 2; D. Brand, 70yds, 3. Also competed, J. McGuiston scratch, W. Chegwidde 80yds, A. H. Hunt 90yds, W. S. Pearce 120yds, J. D. Avery 150yds. Time, 3min 5 2-5th sec.

Three Mile Roadster Handicap (open).—W. S. Pearce, 250yds, 1; H. H. Jessop, 350yds, 2; T. M. Lucy, scratch, 3. Also competed, J. McGuiston scratch, and D. Brand. Time, 10min 2-5th sec.

One Mile Flat Handicap, Ladies' Bracelet.—C. W. Palmer, 45yds, 1; D. McKay, 50yds, 2; S. Hawthorn, 50yds, 3. Also ran, C. D. Morpeth scratch, H. Osman 50yds, G. S. Hill 60yds, R. Travers 80yds, H. Crowe 100yds. Won by half a yard.

Five Mile Provincial Bicycle Championship (roadsters only).—F. B. Muir 1; Jas. Bissill (Wanderers' Bicycle Club, Napier), 2; L. T. Herbert, 3. Also competed, T. M. Lucy and J. McGuiston. Time, 17min 36 1-5th sec.

One Thousand Flat Handicap.—A. M. Stuart, scratch, 1; C. W. Palmer, 35yds, 2; H. Davies, 60yds, 3. Time, 2 min 29 3-5th sec.

Two Mile Bicycle Handicap (for members of the W.C.C. only).—F. B. Muir, 20yds, 1; W. Chegwidde, 100yds, 2; D. Brand, 100yds, 3. Also competed, J. McGuiston. Time, 5min 16sec.

Quarter Mile Tricycle Handicap (for boys under 14).—F. Baker, 6yrs, 100yds, 1; W. Berry, 13yrs, scratch, 2; A. Ross, 11yrs, 20yds, 3. This was a very amusing race, and was won easily by Baker.

Two Mile Flat Handicap (for members of Wellington Harriers only).—C. D. Morpeth, scratch, 1; F. C. Angell, 60yds, 2; S. Hawthorne, 110yds, 3. Also ran, G. B. Nicholls 150yds. Morpeth ran splendidly. Time, 10min 30 3-5th sec.

One Mile Bicycle Variety Surprise Race.—L. J. Herbert, 1; J. McGuiston, 2; W. F. Christie, 3. Also competed, J. D. Avery, D. Brand, W. Chegwidde, and H. Muir. Herbert made the pace in the last lap, and rapidly getting on terms with his men won a fine race by about eight yards. Time, 3min 5 3-5th sec.

210yds Flat Handicap (open).—First Heat—J. H. Hempton, scratch, 1; G. Smith, 16yds, 2. Time, 25 3-5th secs. Second Heat.—A. G. Hatrick, 15yds, 1; T. Manifold, 16yds, 2; G. H. Holden, 5yds, 3. Time, 23 3-5th sec. Third Heat.—G. C. P. Trip, 15yds, 1; W. King, 16yds, 2. Time, 26sec. Final Heat—Hempton, 1; Patrick, 2; Manifold, 3. Hempton got through his men in fine style, and won a splendid race by a yard and a half. Time, 23 3-5th sec.

Caius Augustus.

SOME years back, at a time when speculation on forthcoming events took a wider range than at the present day—that is, before starting price betting had come so much into vogue—among those best acquainted with the inner workings of the turf world, it was voted as remarkable how well-informed as to the genuineness of the reverse of candidates for the principal handicaps a certain section of the ring constantly proved to be.

Whatever may be the case at the present day, it is undoubtedly the fact that at the time alluded to early information was obtained illicitly from official sources by certain members of the ring.

The time at which horses were scratched for various events were not then recorded as accurately as they now are, and owing to this laxness bookmakers were frequently enabled to lay odds to large sums of money against horses which they knew at the time of making the bets had already been scratched for the race in question.

In very many instances the time of scratchings were never recorded at all; in others, letters from owners ordering the striking out of their horses were held back by accomplices of bookmakers, so as to allow time for the latter to get a bit out of the departed.

Prominent among the particular section of the ring previously alluded to, in fact it might almost be said its guiding spirit, was a man named Bettley, with whom, among others, were intimately associated three other bookmakers named Trent, Penschill and Laythem.

Everyone knows that nowadays a great deal of the communication that passes between persons engaged in important business of any kind is entrusted to the telegraph. We live at such a pace in these times that it becomes a matter of necessity to complete a transaction in a

few hours with which our forefathers would have been satisfied to occupy as many days.

Racing business essentially requires the free use of the wire, being dependent to such an extent on what a day, or even an hour, may bring forth. Though at the time of which I write the telegraph was not so much used in racing affairs as is now the case, there was a good deal of early information to be gleaned from the perusal of telegraphic messages by any one with sufficient knowledge of racing to understand their contents.

In the office of one of the principal firms of racing officials there was a certain clerk named George Parker, who was one of the chief sources from which the Penschill-Bettley clique obtained their early information. It is not necessary to enter into details as to how this arrangement had come about in the first instance—suffice it to say that it had been in existence for a considerable time before the events of this story took place.

James Parker, the brother of George, was a telegraph clerk. He was well up in the service, and was stationed at the head office in London. In the ordinary course of his duties, messages transmitted to and through London came continually before him.

James did not scruple to turn the information of which he became officially cognisant to his own and to his brother's advantage, in all cases where he felt that he could do so without risk of discovery, and of the items of early racing news which George Parker was able to furnish to Bettley, many originated in the gleanings of telegraph messages which James was able to place at his brother's disposal.

One of the principal south country stables was just at this time especially laying itself out for handicaps. The confederacy included certain very bold and dashing bettors, who with every confidence in the judgment of their exceedingly clever trainer, Tom Measure, had latterly hit up the ring to a very considerable extent. As a consequence that body were becoming chary of laying against horses trained at Poleton, on the Berkshire Downs, the establishment over which Tom Measure presided.

On the appearance of the weights for the City and Suburban a four-year-old in Measure's stable, entered in the name of Mr W. Dallington, called Caius Augustus, to whom the handicapper had allotted 7.9, had been generally pitched upon as one of the best treated, if not actually the best treated animal, in the race. This was a colt of good class, a winner of several races and one who had made a prominent show in his year, having been placed in both the Derby and St. Leger.

It soon became evident that the ring did not intend to be caught over this colt on this occasion, since he was promptly installed a good favourite on the Boulogne lists and in the early betting that took place on the race at the principal London clubs.

Some three weeks before the day of the race Caius Augustus who had made great improvement in the course of his preparation, was tried to be as nearly a certainty to win the City and Suburban as anything in racing can be; in fact, Measure came to the conclusion that his representative would stand a chance second to none if the handicapper had put another 14lb. on his back.

"They're offering a terrible bad price already," observed Captain Duckworth, one of the patrons of the stable, to the trainer, as they were talking the matter over in the house of the latter after the trial, "and I expect they'll dry up altogether when we come to back him for anything to speak of. It seems to me that we have got him in almost too well. What do you propose to do?"

"Mr Dallington wrote last week to say that I was to use my discretion as to running the horse or not, though at the same time he was in favour of keeping him until Ascot," replied Measure.

"Then if I were you, Measure," rejoined Duckworth, "I shouldn't run him at Epsom—at any rate not unless we can get a fair price."

"I think from present appearances that we should be lucky if our commission averaged 6 to 1," observed the trainer, "and I am sure that such a price will not satisfy Mr Dallington."

"No, that I am sure of, too," replied the other. "I see they quote him at 100 to 12 already, and not a shilling on for any of us as yet. Do you think they'll know of his trial by this afternoon?"

"Sure to, sir. The touts were all out this morning, and though I waited an hour and a half after the other horses came in, I understand that they did not go away until after the trial had taken place."

"Then you may lay your life that the commission won't average even 5 to 1," said Captain Duckworth. "And at that it won't be any earthly use running the horse at all."

"You're very likely right, sir," replied the trainer. "Anyhow we had better wait a day or two before doing anything. I will write to Mr Dallington, and hear what he has to say."

Now in the village of Langbury, some few miles distant from Poleton, there resided a friend of Measure, by name John Davey.

Davey was himself by way of being a trainer of racehorses, though the horses that he had in his stable were but few in number, and were for the most part his own property. His principal interest was centred in the Poleton stable, of the fortunes of which he was an enthusiastic and consistent follower. He believed implicitly in Measure, and made a very good thing financially by the information that he was able to acquire from him.

Occasionally Davey was entrusted with the working of commissions for the Poleton stable, and these he had hitherto managed to execute very satisfactorily. Davey rode over to Poleton on the day of the trial, and learned from Measure how well Caius Augustus had acquitted himself in the morning.

"But it looks like being little or no good to us after all," observed the trainer, as he finished the description of the colt's performance. "I'm afraid we shan't be able to back him. He's not likely to go back in the market after to-day's trial, and he certainly won't run if we can't get a fair price about him."

And it must be confessed that there did not seem much prospect of this latter contingency being fulfilled when as time went by the price of the Poleton candidate became daily shorter and shorter.

It now wanted but ten days to the day of the race, and although the stable had not yet put a farthing on Caius Augustus, not one fraction of a point over 5 to 1 would the ring offer against the colt. Hardly ever had a favourite been firmer in the betting for an important handicap.

Some days back it had been arranged between Dallington and Measure that they should run Caius Augustus for the Epsom event if they could obtain the odds of 10 to 1 to the three thousand pounds which constituted the stable commission.

This price, however, the stable commissioner on being communicated with at once informed them was in the present state of the market utterly out of the question, the outside price at which he estimated he could invest the money being 4 to 1.

This of course the Poleton division would not for one moment entertain, so the commission was withdrawn, and it was as good as determined that Caius Augustus should not compete at Epsom.

Now it did not by any means suit John Davey that the Poleton horse should be an absentee when the numbers went up for the City and Suburban, since knowing what an improved animal Caius Augustus was, he had quite early in the wagering taken some long shots about the colt to win him a good stake.

Without disclosing this fact to Measure, he put before the latter the great desirability of running the horse now that he was so fit and well, and moreover, pointed out that it was improbable that the colt would ever again be given such an extraordinary chance as he now had of carrying off an important handicap.

He also pooh-poohed the impossibility of getting a fair price about the horse, expressing his belief that it was perfectly practicable to get on all the money they wanted at the desired rate. To such good purpose did he reason with Measure that in the end the latter entrusted him with the commission to back Caius Augustus for £3000 at a limit of not less than 10 to 1.

In this connection Davey determined to put in operation a plan which he had for some time past been turning over in his mind. He had been much struck, some few weeks back, by overhearing on the District Railway a conversation held between two men in the next compartment to him. One observed to the other, "What do you think? Why, from the telegraph, of course. He has a pal who always gives him the office over anything like that. Trust him, he always knows as soon as anybody." Putting two and two together he had arrived at the solution of what had at one time been a great puzzle to him. On two separate occasions when Measure had wired information respecting the breaking down of two horses under his charge to their respective owners, although it had not come to the knowledge of the touts, the news had

become public some hours before the owners were in possession of the information sent by the trainer. On his way up to London on the morning of the Monday, eight days before the race, on reaching Reading Davey went to the telegraph office and despatched the following message to himself at Surbiton, where he was going to stay the night, as coming from Measure.

"Davey, Richmond-road, Surbiton.—Caius cast in box; ricked his back badly; impossible to run him in City; see Dallington and explain; must strike him out.—Measure, Poleton."

On arriving in town Davey went direct to one of the chief racing clubs, where he interviewed a bookmaker named Rawson, through whose agency he generally executed the commissions with which he was entrusted. In the course of an hour or two offers to bet against Caius Augustus began to be rather freely made in a certain quarter, Trent and Bettley being apparently anxious to accommodate backers of the favourite at a slightly easier rate of odds than had hitherto been in offer. As the afternoon progressed the demonstration against Caius Augustus became more pronounced, and a rumour became prevalent to the effect that the horse had met with an accident that morning.

It did not under these circumstances take long to knock the horse out, especially when Trent and Bettley commenced operations since backers had almost invariably found to their cost, that when a favourite began to be peppered by this clique, it was quite time to put up the shutters.

Nevertheless, a large sum of money was entrusted to the deposed favourite before the assembly broke up, the principal supporter of the colt being the bookmaker Rawson, who accepted all the offers to big money that he could get at anything over ten to one. However, when his commission was exhausted, there was nothing to arrest the further decline of the Poleton candidate, who gradually drifted out to twenty-five to one, offered all round the room!

But when on the following day the touts reported Caius Augustus as going strong and well at exercise, a species of panic seized the layers, and Caius returned at one bound to his former place in the quotations.

Davey returned to Poleton bringing the very satisfactory intelligence that, owing to some apparently inexplicable scare in regard to their horse, he had been able to execute the commission at the good odds of 14 to 1—the names of Trent, Bettley, Penschill, Laythem, and others in the clique being returned as responsible for the various bets laid.

The news that the rumour of the accident to Caius was false, and the further intelligence that the colt had never been better in this life than now, came as a most unpleasant surprise to the Bettley division, who naturally turned to George Parker for an explanation. A particularly stormy interview took place between the latter and Joe Bettley, in which Bettley openly accused Parker of having deliberately put them all "in the cart."

As a consequence of this interview the two brothers Parker met to talk matters over on the following evening.

"I shall chuck it after this, George," said the telegraph clerk. "Someone has evidently tumbled to the fact that the messages are milked, and no doubt he sent that one through yesterday as a blind. I'm not going to risk it again. If Bettley and his lot give you away, as they are likely enough to do if they get landed over this, I'm sure to be spotted—and to be sacked, if nothing worse."

"True enough, Jem," replied his brother. "I've had pretty nearly enough of them myself. They're a mean grasping lot, that it's no catch to do anything for. I shall chuck it too."

"I think we might do a little bit on our own account," suggested James, after a pause. "We haven't done too well out of it all so far. I have a plan which I believe we might safely work out," continued he—which plan they then and there proceeded to discuss. Early on the following Monday morning a telegram was handed in at the Head Telegraph Office, taken in, it so happened, by James Parker himself—at least, so investigation subsequently disclosed—addressed to Messrs Weatherby, Old Burlington street.

"Please strike my horse, Caius Augustus, out of the City and Suburban. Inform Tattersall's and the clubs. Dallington."

On the assembly of the principal bookmakers at the clubs, Messrs Weatherby's notice of this important scratching was