

must say that his task has for the most part been well performed. He has, at any rate, given us a puzzle, and that is one sign of a good handicap. I do not feel the least confidence in selecting a batch that shall include the winner. Being, as it were, driven to the task by inexorable duty, I shall take Eurocydon, Fabulist, Lady Zetland, Saracen, Searchlight, The Shrew, Pompos, Dauntless, Anita, Lord Zetland, Epaulet, and Lord Roslyn as a dangerous dozen, and, if pressed for a narrower selection, would take The Shrew and Lord Zetland among the seniors, and associate with them the best of the three-year-olds (to be yet discovered). But, as I say, I don't profess to be able to pick the winner, and in my judgment the man who thinks he can do so just now has a good conceit of himself.

Racecourse Friends and Schmoozers.

In the circular to be submitted to the Racing Conference by the bookmakers, requesting to be licensed, one of the conditions—the last in the circular—is open to argument. The pencilers urge "much unpleasantness between owners and their friends, through the former's reluctance to divulge stable secrets would be overcome, as once an owner had fixed odds he could candidly inform his friends of his horse's chance, and they would invest freely on the totalisator." Of course, this is an old yarn, and, by the way, the lamest of the otherwise sound arguments mentioned in the circular. What horseowners want to know is, if any plan has yet been suggested so that an owner can get his money on before his friends help themselves. "Once an owner has got his money on!" makes one smile. The bookmakers must be sweet, innocent things if they cherish the idea that the friends are going to wait till the owners get on. The New Zealand "racecourse friend" wants to know the full strength of things long before the races commence, consequently, before the owner gets his money on. If an owner tells these "racecourse friends" (many of whom do not know the owner when next they meet him in the street, and perhaps do not care if the owner were dead after they get the information they are after) to wait until just before the race, so that he may have a chance of enquiring the odds about his horse, the "racecourse friend" haunts him until he knows something. Let this "racecourse friend"—who is standing by, at a respectful distance—see the owner transfer some banknotes to a bookmaker, and the friend (?) nearly drops dead. Then, without waiting for the owner, he rushes off to get something on, and when he meets the owner again during the day, it is more than likely he is much annoyed with his conduct, and thinks the owner has tried to dodge him. I am very familiar with the "racecourse friend." If owners had their way, they would have these sort of people shut up in an enclosure by themselves. Yes, the great puzzle for owners is to know how to get their money on. There is another kind of "racecourse friend"—the "schmoozer." Being the Sunday before the races, and a fine day, he calls on the poor owner in a friendly way, and is always careful to arrive before feed time, so that he can see the horses. The "schmoozer" takes an owner into his confidence and gives him imaginary information about his neighbours' horses, and that he is sure the owner he is calling upon has something better, and that he need not be afraid of meeting Brown's horse. It is strange how quickly people tumble to the "schmoozer." There's nothing genuine about him. When he is leaving the stable he will probably place a couple of pounds in the owner's hand, with the off-handed remark, "Put that on any of yours at the meeting. I'm satisfied with what you do." He then drives away in a hail-fellow-well-met sort of style, so that the owner has no chance of telling him to invest his own money. On the day of the races, when the "schmoozer" fancies he knows this poor worried owner's "best" in a certain race, the "schmoozer" rushes up to him—"I say, old fellow, have you invested that two pounds of mine, because I am going to put a couple of pounds on so-and-so, unless you say leave it on yours." That's the way he fishes. But the "schmoozers" are pretty well known. I know one. His limit, he will tell you, is a "nosta." But he has asked for information and obtained it so often, and then boasted quietly afterwards how much he won over the race, that he is just about played out now, unless he can get some recruits. This "schmoozer" owns a nag or two, but it would break his heart for him to put anyone on to them.

SCRATCHINGS.

MELBOURNE CUP.—Black Squall, True Blue, Jeweller.
CAULFIELD CUP.—Mahee.

The latest Sydney betting on the Caulfield Cup is—20 to 1 Reka, 25 to 1 Marusa and O'Trigger, 33 to 1 Seneschal, Trentham, Thunder Queen, Tire, Aquarius, Miraculum, Toreador, Dreamland, Hopscotch, Hortensius, Damien, Gaulus, and Nada; Melbourne Cup—14 to 1 Reka, 20 to 1 Toreador and Wallace, 25 to 1 Tire, Trentham, Newhaven, Miraculum, and O'Trigger, 33 to 1 Marusa, Hova, Coil, Nada, Damien, Seneschal, and Aquarius.

The adjourned hearing of the protest against Forella receiving second money in the Gisborne Park Steeplechase, was continued last night at a meeting of the stewards of the Gisborne Park Steeplechase Club. The protest, as has been already stated, was on the ground that Forella ran round the first jump—the brush fence. Collins, the rider of Forella, contended that his horse ran through the wing of the jump, and did not go round it, but the weight of evidence was that the horse ran round, striking the outside of the wing. The protest was upheld, and the second money ordered to be paid to the owner of T Rose, which horse finished third. For continuing in the race after having run off at the jump, Collins was fined £1 and suspended from riding for one month.—*Poverty Bay Herald.*

Australian Turf News.

[OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

It appears that the sensational backing of Reka for the two Cups and Derby, which I mentioned in my last, wasn't a stable commission at all. The cunning crowd were forestalled. A Sydney bookie got in on the Melbourne ring, and secured £50,000 "on his own." Owner McSweeney said the colt ought to be a good one, but so far is practically untried. Also that he only had £1000 about him, a bet not worth considering seeing that he often goes as much as that on a suburban meeting. Since this explanation was made, however, a £12,000 bet has been worked on the Sydney ring about Reka for Melb. Cup, not Caulfield, and he soon saw shorter odds. If this youngster is as good as some people seem to think, the Victorian Derby may not prove the one-horse snip the sporting public imagine. However, he may shine better in the handicaps than with 8.10 up. Or he may not shine at all. His brother, Portsea, couldn't get a drum at the same age in the big Flemington Cup.

Personally, I think that if Tire starts for the Caulfield Cup he will make a better showing than any of his year. But the event is a long way off yet. And there are a few bottled-up oldsters in it at comparatively light weights.

At the last Grafton races a bailiff took charge of a horse just before the event the nedly was entered for. It was rather unusual to see two men walking a horse round the paddock, and the crowd were wondering how the trainer would get out of the dilemma. But he was up to snuff. Whipping the bridle off suddenly, he left that article of gear in the hands of the bailiff; threw a towel round the animal's neck, led him to a stall, where he saddled him; then threw the jockey on, and the latter rode straight out to the post.

Little Agnes and Patroness have been relegated to the stud by the Hon. W. A. Long. The first-named goes to Grand Fleaneur, and the Sydney Cup winner to Splendor.

After a number of failures since his Birthday Cup win, The Captain won the Warwick Farm Handicap, of one and a quarter miles, on Saturday, when the public were sick of him and backed something else. "Twas ever thus. Chipping Nor on thought Patrona had an undoubted chance, and the public followed the stable. Patron's sister, however, failed to eventuate. Royal Rose, who carried 8.4, and The Captain (7.7) had a great race up the straight, the latter just managing to win by a neck. The Grand Fleaneur horse, Vagabond, was behind them. The trio couldn't get a place at Rosehill the week previous. This was The Captain's seventh win in five seasons. He will likely race for Caulfield Cup, and he can race so far as I am concerned.

The public fell by the wayside all day. Satanella (Qui Vive—Lady Drummer), a 6 to 1 chance, made all the pace in the hurdles, and lasted long enough to win from J.B.C., Sadur being a head off third. The last named, who belongs to Crick, M.P., is improving wonderfully in his jumping.

Forester's Unison (The Prodigal—Music) was neglected by the public in the Farm Handicap, and he signified his contempt therefor by winning in the usual way. Old Clo' (Lochiel—Tatters) was the favourite, but could only run third. Later on, Unis in perpetuated a fashion that has come into vogue lately by winning the last event, the Pace Welter. The disappointing Lieutenant was a hot favourite, and then came Unison and Old Clo'. Forester's horse got there by a length from Revolver, the Chesham mare, Dora, being third.

Backers couldn't pick the winner of the all-beautiful Selling Race either, Michigan winning by a long head. The winner, who was any price, is a full-brother to Chicago, the Caulfield Cup winner, and his owner was glad enough to get rid of him for £20.

A feature of the Victorian G.N. Steeplechase was the meritorious win of little Dungan, under 12.9, on a heavy ground. It was a dismal day; the rain never stopped, and the ground holding. The Camperdown black lost friends after his G.N. Hurdle display, and when late backers eyed the course and the weight he had to lumber, they left him alone. Consequently, he was a good horse for the books. Joi was a hot order, and people never left off backing him. A great many, though, remembered that Mikado II. was a good old plodder, and a reliable jumper, and weight of gold made him second favourite at the last moment. Dondi and Walter only arrived from Ballarat on the day, the first named being a bad doer away from home. The pair are trained by Taylor at Burrumbeet, but belong to different owners. There was nothing to choose between them in their trial, but Taylor fancied Dondi. The Ballarat crowd came along in force to back them and went down. The Miller stable turned out Larnook and Whernside in tip-top order, but both fell. Timoni looked fit, and had the advantage of a light weight, but so far as condition went, J. B. Clark's Grandwing took the plum. The only trouble about Grandwing is that he is not fast enough. In the race Joi knocked the panel out of one jump and the stuffing out of another, but didn't seem to mind it, and after two miles and a half it was painfully evident to the crowd that he had no finishing energy left. Dondi was going very strong in the last part of the race, and took the last fence just in front of old Songster, Timoni, Dungan, Joi, and Mikado II. following. Dungan challenged the leader in the straight, Timoni coming up alongside. The black, however, passed the pair, and streaked for the winning post. Timoni came again, and there was great excitement when the grey commenced overhauling the top-weight at every stride. He was just late enough to lose by a neck. Another few yards, and the "vision in white" would have annexed the pool. Dondi was a length and a half away third, Songster a good fourth, Walter fifth, Mikado II. sixth, Joi followed, and the rest were down the course. Leap Year was among the fallen.

It was a popular win, and the books joined in the hilarity. Dungan's 12.9 is third to the weight (13.1) carried by Sussex the year the race was inaugurated, and Redleap's 13.3. There were five more starters in the latter's year, though. Dungan, the undoubted chasing champion, had 13lbs more than Daimio lumbered last year.

The pace was a merry one throughout, as the time (6.58) indicates. This, on a soaked ground, has only been beaten four times in 15 years. The winner is apparently good in the heavy going, for he beat Joi at Onkaparinga under similar conditions.

Not a single favourite got home all day, the investments going into a few hands. The connections of the Sydney horse Billy Boy had only a few notes on him in the Open Hurdles, which he won, Freestep and Ouyen following. The latter, in Miller's stable, was reckoned a cert. But it proved to be only a cert. for a place. This stable went down badly during the day. It tried for every race. Ouyen got third; Miss Gladstone (by Statesman), winner of the double at Williamstown a fortnight previous, ran second twice; both it's reps fell in the Steeple, and Dart was unequal to 12.5 in the two-mile Open Steeplechase, and may not race for some time as a result.

The July Handicap fell to the Caulfield Cup candidate, Merman (Grand Fleaneur—Seaweed). With the exception of Disparity, the field wasn't first-class, and people went a raker on Upshot. Merman, who shaped none too well at Randwick, Sydney Cup time, had no trouble in beating Miss Gladstone by a length, Amadeus being third. He was quite unfancied.

Earlier in the day the six-furlong Lawn Handicap provided Griffiths' Boston (not yet three years old) with a distinguishing opportunity. As usual, the public could not see him in it, and he landed an 8 to 1 chance. This was his fourth effort under colours, and his third win. Boz's son is in the Caulfield Cup. His owner didn't think he was forward enough to win the Lawn. Eureka, full brother to Wild Rose and Churchill, was a short favourite, but came home with the rest. Koran, the St. Albans rep, did likewise.

The "books" once again played outsiders trumps in the Open Steeplechase, and raked in the kitty. Larrikin, Dart, and Balmaghie were thought most of, but only the first-named got a place, and that was second. Vigil led over the last fence, but Larrikin was first into the straight, and a great falling contest saw Vigil win by a head. The winner had fallen in the Maiden Steeple, a week previous, and backers had no other public statement of his capabilities to guide them when investing.

On the whole, it was a cheerless sort of a steeplechase meeting for the public, and the books have been playing billiard tournaments ever since.

THE ENGLISH DERBY OF 1844.

Won by a four-year-old.

Running Rein's Victory

How many, I wonder, who read the little bit of Turf history here set down, will remember the sensational English Derby of 1844, when, but for the intervention of Lord George Bentinck, the stakes would certainly have been awarded to Mr Goodman Levy and Mr Wood, the owners of Running Rein. Mainly through the instrumentality of Harry Hill, who was Lord George Bentinck's Turf agent, the suspicion was aroused in his lordship's mind that Running Rein was none other than the Maccabeus colt, then four years old, and had been substituted for the brown colt by Saddler out of Mab. Consequently, an objection, on the grounds that Running Rein was a four-year-old, was lodged by Colonel Peel, the owner of Orlando, who came in second.

Although there were good grounds for these suspicions, it is open to doubt whether the objection could have been sustained without the valuable assistance rendered by Tom Ferguson, Chas. Coghlan, and Francis Ignatius Coyle, three of the shrewdest men then on the Turf.

Charles Coghlan at that time was on the most intimate terms with Tom Ferguson, of Rossmore Lodge, Curragh, a very prominent patron of the Turf in the forties, loved and respected by everybody, and it was through Ferguson that the information was supplied to Lord George Bentinck, which enabled him to prove the fraud beyond the possibility of a doubt. But, owing to the cunning and treachery of Harry Hill, neither Charlie Coghlan nor Francis Ignatius—as he was generally called—ever received any acknowledgment of their services.

On the night of the Derby the two friends were at supper at Coghlan's house, in Porchester Terrace, and as Harry Hill was perfectly aware of the intimacy of that gentleman with Tom Ferguson, no surprise was created when Lord George Bentinck's Turf agent made his appearance, and it was at once guessed that his visit had some connection with the objection to Running Rein. At Hill's request, Coghlan wrote to Tom Ferguson—who was laid up at the Curragh with the gout—asking him to put in writing all he had told him about the substitution of Running Rein.

Lord Bentinck and Hill had both heavily backed Orlando, and Coghlan was promised, in the presence of Coyle, that he should be put on a large sum to nothing if he would help to expose the fraud. Hill also gave his word that Tom Ferguson's reply should be kept a secret. But when the reply came, some days later, Coghlan foolishly allowed Hill to take the letter away with him, on promising faithfully to return it the same evening. Harry Hill hurried off and showed the reply to Lord George Bentinck, who, with his usual impetuosity, started off at once to Ireland, and made poor Ferguson tell all he knew. But, instead of Coghlan being put on the large sum to nothing, he was totally ignored, all Harry Hill's promises proving, as Coghlan declared, "as faithless and worthless as he was himself."

Although Francis Ignatius Coyle's reputation in Turf history of fifty years ago was far from wholesome, to his credit be it said that he was a

man of undoubted courage, and the most brilliant example of this quality was established in connection with Running Rein. Coyle was an Irishman, and his poverty often drove him to dirty and unscrupulous means of "getting a bit." Still, such was the personality of the man, he made many friends, and, of course, a few great enemies. He was fairly well educated, and Charles Coghlan was his firm friend and constant companion.

Harry Hill, on the other hand, rose from a very humble position. When a young man he was "boots" at an hotel in Manchester, and later on made his way to London with his stock-in-trade and fixtures under his arm, prominent among which was a table, a few nimbles peas, and a merry little thimble. Fortune smiled upon him, however, and in 1844 he was a racing star of the first magnitude and the favourite and most trusted turf agent of Lord George Bentinck, and, after getting all the information he wanted from Coghlan and Ferguson, Hill carefully avoided them, and was set down by the former as "one of the meanest, craftiest, and treacherous scoundrels that ever lived."

But to hark back to Running Rein. After winning the Derby he was lodged in a box at the Cock, at Sutton, and in the course of the famous trial, Wood v. Peel, which arose out of the objection, and came before Baron Alderson in the Court of the Exchequer, on July 1, 1844, the Baron expressed a wish to see the horse for whom the Derby was claimed; but to the amazement of everyone, William Smith, the trainer, had to admit in cross-examination, that Running Rein had disappeared. Some person or persons unknown had smuggled him out of the way in order to baffle the agents of Colonel Peel.

On the day after the Derby, it appeared, a stranger, having every appearance of a country farmer, with a red face and an admirable get up, entered the yard of the Cock, at Sutton, at about five o'clock in the afternoon, and ask the groom to "put up" the horse he was riding.

The farmer was none other than Francis Ignatius Coyle, and so well did he play the part, and so capitably was he got up, that none of those staying at the inn had the slightest suspicion of the perilous enterprise on which he was engaged. No doubt Coyle had made an accomplice of one of the grooms in charge of Running Rein (to whom the horse he rode into the yard bore a strong likeness), and with this assistance Francis Ignatius was able to "ring the changes," and to ride safely away, mounted on the back of the horse that came in first in the Derby of 1844.

With the disappearance of Running Rein a most damnable piece of evidence was missing, and thus the all but successful fraud failed to bring down upon Goodman, Levy, and Wood the penalty they so richly deserved.

Although nothing favourable can be said on the morality of the part played by Francis Ignatius Coyle, still it must be admitted that the deed was a highly courageous one. If discovered it would inevitably have meant transportation for life to the principal actor. But nothing was ever found out; the Maccabeus colt disappeared as if the earth had swallowed him, and not until years after Coyle's death did these facts come to light; the Derby of 1844 had long been awarded to Orlando, and Running Rein was almost forgotten.—*English Licensed Victuallers' Gazette.*

GOLF.

The weather is still too bad to make golf very enjoyable on the links, but, notwithstanding the wet state of the ground, a good many members turned up, on Saturday last, for the Bogey competition. Colonel Bogey, as was anticipated, proved too formidable an opponent on the day, and nobody succeeded in getting the best of him. A number of foursomes were played after the competition.

Mr Caldwell, an enthusiastic golfer from Wellington, who has come to reside here, was playing on the links for the first time.

The Open Championship of England has just been concluded, and we hear that the result ended in a tie between Taylor (last year's champion) and Varnon.

There has been some talk lately of trying to get a Wellington team to come up to Auckland about Christmas time, to try conclusions with our men, but we can't say whether the match will come off. Both teams are, we believe, very confident in themselves, and if Wellington could manage to send a really representative team, we think the result would be a very open one.

A FEW FACTS ABOUT



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