



RACING CALENDAR

NEW ZEALAND

FIXTURES—1905

July 6 and 7—Gisborne R.C. Steeplechase Meeting
July 12 and 15—Wellington R.C. Winter
August 15, 17 and 19—N.Z. Grand National Meeting

WEIGHTS DECLARED:

July 17—N.Z. Grand National Meeting (chief events)
August 4—N.Z. Grand National Meeting (minor events)
August 21—N.Z. Cup

ACCEPTANCES.

September 1—New Zealand Cup

Sporting and Dramatic REVIEW

AND

Licensed Victuallers' Gazette.

With which is incorporated the Weekly Standard

THURSDAY, JULY 6, 1905

CONCERNING GAMBLING.

On Thursday last a meeting was convened by the Ministers' Association to discuss the somewhat threadbare topic of betting as applied to horse-racing, the question of gambling on mining scrip, stock and shares of all kinds, land deals, and such forms, by which the more wealthy can have their little flutter, not being touched upon. The remarkable inconsistency displayed in this connection by those taking part apparently escaped attention.

The chairman, the Rev. A. North, president of the association, in opening the proceedings, dwelt on the widespread character of the gambling evil, which, he said, was not confined to any age or sex, but tainted almost all classes in the community, and was threatening to sap the moral character of the nation. He mentioned that for the year 1901-2 the sum of £1,275,813 was put through the totalisator, showing an increase of 130 per cent. Employers of labour were specially interested in this question, because there was no doubt that the gambling evil tended to depreciate the value of work, and was essentially demoralising. We do not question the figures given, although it would have been interesting to know upon what was the increase of 130 per cent., and also perhaps it would have been better to have quoted later and smaller figures. Neither do we dispute the truth of the assertion made by Mr. R. Hobbs, who, in seconding the motion, blamed the authorities for not enforcing with greater stringency the laws against gambling. The poor Chinaman playing fantan, he said, was promptly laid hold of, and his opium dens were periodically raided, but though their notice had been repeatedly called to the matter the authorities allowed the laws relating to betting and gambling by Europeans to remain in abeyance. He entered his protest against this kind of thing.

"Gambling is carried on wholesale," said Mr. Hobbs, and he was right beyond question. Gambling in mining scrip, gambling in other kinds of stock, gambling in house lots, gambling in merchandise, gambling, in fact, upon every conceivable thing upon which man, who is essentially a speculative animal, can give or accept a wager. Betting on horse-racing is but one feature of the evil which is simply a characteristic of the

human race. Much as we may deplore it, this is so, and always will be; yet the Ministers' Association would propose to kill the evil, for evil it is, by what? Why, by an Act of Parliament. Could anything be more conceivably futile?

Mr. Arthur Myers, our worthy Mayor, who attended the meeting, can always be relied upon to look at any subject from the commonsense point of view. He said there could be no doubt that gambling was the besetting sin of the colony. The evil was so widespread that he did not think any Act of Parliament would be sufficient to abate it. The remedy must come from within, from the quickened moral sense of the people themselves. He admitted it was not an easy problem to solve, but the matter had reached that stage when something must be done. Lack of parental control and love of excitement were among the causes of betting, and to counteract these it was necessary that parents should more deeply realise their moral obligations, and that the young should be brought up in a healthier atmosphere—that means should be provided, as was being done by the Leys Institute and the Young Men's Christian Association, whereby boys and girls might be enabled to find a substitute for gambling in more rational enjoyments and interests. In that way, and by inculcating habits of thrift the evils which they deplored might be lessened. Those are words which every parent might well take to heart, for there is much truth in them, although we do not suppose that any organisation carried along on the lines of the Y.M.C.A. would ever really reach the great body of the community, and most certainly not its sporting section.

So far, we are in accord to a certain extent with some of the speakers, but with the remarks of one or two who followed we cannot for an instant agree. For instance, Mr. Speight said that when the Totalisator Act was passed in 1881 it was believed it would reduce gambling, and prevent young men being swindled by bookmakers. But it had had the effect of increasing gambling. People now used the totalisator who would never have dreamt of going to a bookmaker. They ought now to say to the Government, the law you passed to reduce gambling having increased it, you should repeal the law. The totalisator should be abolished. It was degrading the community, and creating gamblers, because it was respectable, and looked honest and fair in its mode of operation. This sort of stuff no doubt sounded all right to the clerical gentlemen and their friends who composed the meeting, but it seems a pity there was not somebody present who had the courage to stand up and put the other side of the question; someone to point out, for instance, that because a man is a bookmaker he is not necessarily a swindler. It seems an impossibility with some people to disassociate the two, in which they do a very great wrong to a body of men who frequently give far more money towards the relief of distress and in charity than do the very people who are so ready to denounce them.

Then, again, it seems a rather remarkable fact that the very people who are so prone to decry the totalisator are those who know the least about it. No doubt these people who are so ready to speak badly of it will be surprised to hear that many of the leading people in New South Wales and Victoria are doing their utmost to have the machine adopted, while in every other State of the Commonwealth it has proved a great success. If the totalisator has the effect of so greatly increasing gambling, why do the returns as given by our leading clubs show a steady decrease? Of course the truth of the matter is that there is no such increase in the amount of betting, but by the present system it is under Government control, and the figures are available, whereas before this was not the case. As the evil is inherent in human nature, we think that it is far preferable to have it as far as possible under the strict supervision of the

Government, instead of returning to the older system which gave no check. The only alteration we would suggest is that the percentage at present going to the Government should be devoted to charity, and thus gambling, which is bound to continue in any case, will be productive of some good.

The efforts to put down by law the carrying on of agencies for the sale of tickets in Tattersall's consultation is without doubt one of those crusades, which, like prohibition fanaticism, is certain to do more harm than good, because not only will it interfere with the liberty of the subject, but it will also be diametrically opposing the wishes of a very large section of the community. We know that these consultations are well managed, being licensed by the Tasmanian Government and drawn under the direct supervision of its officers. Surely the few shillings sent across annually by seven-eighths of our population cannot harm the senders, whereas it at least gives a possibility to the poor man of a competence for life, a fact which, of course, can never appeal to those people who oppose it, and who are generally to be found in snug billets. The fact of the matter is we are getting too much nursery Government altogether, and could get along very much better if a little less of the swaddling clothes system of rule were in vogue. We know that many a man has been ruined on the turf just as they have in every other form of gambling and in business of all kinds, but to sweepingly denounce racing on that account verges on the ridiculous. Gambling from its very nature cannot be put down by any Acts of Parliament. To legislate against the totalisator is like picking off the flower to kill the plant. To check the evil it is necessary to strike at the root of it, and the only way to do this is in the home.

THE ORIGIN OF CLASSIC RACES.

Although named after Edward Stanley, twelfth Earl of Derby, there is every reason to believe that Sir Charles Bunbury was the actual founder of the Derby—he won the first race with his colt Diomed—for at a dinner party given by Sir Charles at his London residence immediately after the Epsom meeting in 1799 the details of the first Epsom Derby were arranged (says a well-known writer). Diomed's Derby was not the first race of that name run in the British Isles, for far back in the seventeenth century, at the time when the Earls of Derby ruled over the Isle of Man, a race called the Derby Stakes was annually run on a narrow strip of turf which separates the bays of Derbyhaven and Castletown on that island.

The Oaks was established a year before the Derby at Epsom, and there is no doubt that the Earl of Derby was sponsor for it, and its name is that of his lordship's estate in the vicinity. Strange to say, the first Oaks was won by Lord Derby's Bridget, by Herod. The Epsom Derby was established in 1781, five years after the inauguration of the St. Leger, another race that was proposed after a good dinner. At the dinner mentioned, the Marquis of Rockingham proposed that a £25 sweepstakes for three-year-olds should be run for at Doncaster, and out of compliment to Lieutenant-General Anthony St. Leger, of Park Hill, the race should be called the St. Leger Stakes. It is somewhat strange that the first St. Leger should, like the Derby and Oaks, fall to the proposer, as the Marquis of Rockingham's Alabaculla won it.

"Scatter your minions!" said Disease one day.
To the demon Cold and his friend Decay;
"Winter is here to give you a hand,
Out! friend, out! and ravage the land."
"I can't," said the Demon, "I'm quite out of work,
A mortal named Woods pulls me up with a jerk;
His Great Peppermint Cure is death to my host.
Good-bye!" said the Demon, and gave up the ghost!

Bully!



Old Judge Cigarettes.

[ERNEST ALISON.] [ALISON JUN.]

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