

# Who is that?

A Ramble Round the Saddling Paddock.

Some of Auckland's Racing Identities.

(By "The Judge.")

It was a countryman obviously down from the far back blocks. The sort who wanders up and down Queen-street at Show time gazing with his mouth open at the crowds and the buildings, and especially at the trams. Well one day, he had drifted out to Ellerslie. Seeing the racing from the flat was no use to him, but he must do the thing in style. Therefore, he had done in the best part of a thick 'un and was parading the lawn. Knowing not one horse from another it soon appeared that the geegees failed to interest him probably because because they were not suitable for the plough or the dray. However, with him the proper study of mankind was man, and it was speedily evident that if that countryman didn't know everyone in the enclosure worth knowing then it was not for want of asking, for he pumped up questions as easily as mud from a suction dredger. Some time away back in the bush he had come to my rescue when a night in the open looked an odds-on chance, so, although I dodged him for a time, yet it was up to me to give him the glad hand, and having done so I was a goner for the next hour.

"Say, Judge, I can't make out this bally betting at all. When I want to get on a sure thing the machine's closed, and when I get over to a corner to try to lift some boodle from a book he's closed to. I'm referred to the Gaming Act, but I'm dashed if I can make any sense of that. I asked a lawyer chap and he couldn't tell me, and then I tackled a live secretary, but if you please his nibs knew about as much as my aunt's tabbies. I'm full up to the neck of it, so lets' have a drink and you can point me out those who."

"Well there was nothing for it but to make the best of matters, but it was an appalling contrast I'd let myself in for.

"Whose the Johnnie with the square bowler and the apoplectic face?" he began, as we strolled into the paddock. "Looks like a big gun by the amount of kow-tow he's getting."

"What dont you know Sir George? He is the great Whangdoodle, as it were. Born out here as long ago as '47 and been a sport ever since. Lives at Stonyhurst, in the South Island, when he's at home, and breeds Shropshire Down sheep like an artist. Breeds and runs his own horses, and runs them to win every time. That's why the blue and gold chequers are so popular. They've come home in front on a lot of good horses too. There was Stonyhurst who won the C.J.C. Derby in '85, and Maligner, Treadmill, Quarryman, Glenogle, Cannie Chief, Windwhistle, and a host of others, while some are running at this meeting. Sir George is the Racing Conference, or, rather is president, which is much the same thing.

"There's a cove over there talking to a boy in a yellow jacket and black cap."

"What! Not know Mr. Gee Gee Stead. I could tell you lots about him if I had a week or two to spare, but I haven't. He's from the country of broad acres with a dash of the Scotch to leaven the Yorkshire. You wouldn't think it to look at him now, but he used to be no slouch in the saddle at one time. He's the boss rooster of the C.J.C., having joined as long ago as 1872, and since that time he has run more winners than any man south of the line. I couldn't even try to tell you the names of the

horses he's owned as it would load up a three volume novel, but perhaps the best were Lochiel, Maxim, Cruciform, Menschikoff and Multiform. I saw the former beat Abner in the Newmarket Handicap at Flemington, and they whispered at the time that G. G. lifted a heavy swag from the pencilers. Lochiel was the horse that broke the ring in the N.Z. Cup of '87, when it is said that the owner hadn't a red cent on the nag. He doesn't bet nowadays, and seems to have given up the habit of winning every classic event going."

"Who is the man in the grey suit and the soft hat. He's wearing a worried look, but seem popular enough."

"Why, that's Secretary Hartland, the man at the tiller at this meeting."

"You don't say, why, I expected a shiny bell-topper, frock coat and patent leathers at the very least."

"No, style's not his strong suit, but he gets there all right when it comes to biz. The committee don't require to be always watching the rails when Hartland's at the lever."

"There's a fellow over there, who seems to have got a down on the jockeys. Keeps on yelling 'Get out.' I mean the bloke with the happy smile and the emponpoint, to say nothing of the flower in his button-hole."

"What! Not know Freddy Yonge—why I thought everyone knew him. He's a sort of general secretary to the universe. It's all one to him if it's a race meeting, or a trot, or a gymkana, or a boxing match. When a secretary's wanted, Freddy's on deck. Reckon he's one of the most popular men here to-day. Everybody likes him, and—I'll let you into a secret—he dispenses the lunch tickets."

"Here comes an avoidrupois sort of Johnnie with a holland suit and a come-and-have-a-drink sort of air, whose he any way?"

"What! Not know the doctor, well, well. At least they hope so when they see him. He's no end of a sport—really knows a horse from a donkey and is around when the flag flies for 'Doctor,' wanted in the casualty ward." Spends his spare time keeping the steamers waiting, and also is a theatrical critic of the deepest dye. At least the evenings when he's not found occupying a box are not worth counting."

"The tall sombre-looking man is Mr. Robert Wynyard. I doubt if he would know himself by that name, however, for everybody calls him "Bob," and that in itself is the hall mark of popularity. And in this case the hall mark is no fraud for the Takapuna secretary—you know he runs those pleasant little fixtures at the Shore—is a real good sort, although with some it may be a case of 'you've got to know him first.' Next please."

"Here' the man for my money," said my rustic old Man of the Sea. "Now I'll bet he's a champion florist from the sweet pea garden in his buttonhole."

"Florist be hanged, but you're half right for he's a champion all right, a champion billiard expert, a champion bowler, and a champion good fellow. Why, that's Bill Lyons, the straightest man that ever called the odds. He's been on deck for some time now, and he knows all there is in the game and plays it fair every time. If all the self-styled too-good-for-this-world folk did as much we shouldn't have so many exasperating spoil sports meddling around. Those who are everlastingly running down the books might do worse than follow Bill's example and play the game."

Here's another one with a dream of a flower garden in his coat and a general air of knowing what's what. Who's he?"

"What! Not know the Judge, why I thought Bob Lusk was known all over Auckland. He was an athlete in days gone by, a perfect dandy over hurdles. It hardly seems seventeen

years since I saw him win the Championship of Australasia at Sydney. He was the right bower when it came to football, too, and he has represented the province on several occasions, notably against Stoddard's team in '88. Bob is not too bad at the wickets either, and even now taps them about for Parnell. His father, Major Lusk, bred Winnie, the dam of Record Reign, and Bob has been fond of the game all his life. A real good judge he has proved himself.

"Who is the old buffer on horseback with the Dundreary whiskers and the my-teeth-are-my-own smile?"

"Oh, come off it, you can't mean you don't know Arthur Selby. Why, he's a typical huntsman of the old school, a veritable John Peel with a record Nimrod would not have been ashamed of. The Clerk of the Course was born way back in '45 and has hunted ever since. What's more he still goes straight as the crow flies. He's been associated with the Pakuranga Hounds for fourteen years, and it would be a blank day when he was not out with the old pack. He owned that fine 'chaser Nor-West, whose sensational victory and death took place at the Spring meeting. Do you remember that onetime popular song, "The place where the old horse died." Apply the words here and see how the cap fits."

Isn't that the Hon. E. Mitchelson?"

"Certainly, the very identical. I thought you would surely know the President. Everybody does, so I suppose I can't tell you anything about him. A real good man with one weakness. Ask the books what that is and you'll soon find out."

"You can't tell me that you don't know Harry Gorrie. Well it's a sure proof that you and Ellerslie are strangers. Should have thought you would have tumbled across him at Buckland's every Friday. He's a Pakuranga Hunt Club man, and a Vice-President and a steward and a treasurer, and the lord knows what beside. These racing clubs know a good thing when they see it, so it's a case of—get Gorrie."

There's a little cove I've noticed dodging about the paddock, when he's not riding Noah's original pony that he took into the Ark. I mean the sad-faced tourist in the knickers."

"Ha! ha! ha! He's no bally tourist. That's Charlie O'Connor, the best starter, bar none, in the colonies to-day, and that means the wide, wide world, for from all accounts the starting in England is not worth shucks. It would be a good idea to send Charlie home to show them how. We wouldn't hear so much about the failure of the starting gate."

"Here, come and have a drink," said my tormentor, "for I'm beginning to see double. Is that one man over there or is it two?"

"Why you chump, those are the Duder Bros. the straightest sportsmen on the turf to-day."

"Yes, that's all right, but which is which?"

"Well one's Robert and one's Richard, but which is which would puzzle Sherlock Holmes. One time they both were going a bit short in front and required sticks or crutches to hobble about with, and then I'm bothered if anyone could tell t'other from which. It doesn't matter much because both are such good sports and good fellows. Robert used to run like a deer and over any distance, while Richard was not exactly a beginner at the game. The brothers have owned some good horses in their time, perhaps the best of which were Brigadier and Cuirassier. They've got some here to-day, and that one over there is Devonport, who should win the —, but there, let's have that drink you were bleating about before I run foul of that dashed idiotic Gaming Act and say things. Mine's whisky."

## A FISH OUT OF WATER.

The climbing perch (Anabas scandens) is a remarkable example found in Asia. This singular creature appears much like other perch, but is endowed with an extraordinary power of leaving failing streams, climbing banks, and proceeding over dry land in quest of better filled watercourses.

Hundreds of them have been seen at a distance of fifty or sixty yards from a pool just abandoned, and travelling, though the ground was so rough that this distance must have required sufficient muscular exertion to take them half a mile over level ground.

Some writers even assert that this fish is capable of climbing the rough stems of palm-trees. The fishermen of the Ganges, who subsist largely on climbing perch, are accustomed to keep them in dry earthen pans for five or six days after catching, and they live this strange life without discomfort.

## WHAT HE GOT OUT OF IT.

He never took a day of rest,  
He couldn't afford it;  
He never had his trousers pressed,  
He couldn't afford it;  
He never went away, care-free,  
To visit distant lands, to see  
How fair a place this world might be—  
He couldn't afford it.

He never went to see a play,  
He couldn't afford it;  
His love for at he put away,  
He couldn't afford it.  
He died and left his heirs a lot,  
But no tall shaft proclaims the spot  
In which he lies—his children thought  
They couldn't afford it.  
—Chicago Record-Herald.

'Twas not for want of breath he died,  
But rather that he misapplied  
The ample breath he had, I wot.  
Before he went to bed that night  
He wittlessly blew out the light.  
The gas escaped; the man did not.

They dined all alone at 8:8,  
On oysters they dined and 8:8,  
And he asked his dear K8  
To tell him his f8  
When they 8 t8-a-t8 at 8:8.

Soon after the Civil War, General Ingalls, U.S.A., visited a friend in the South. Taking a walk one morning he met a boy coming up from the river with a fine string of fish.

"What will you take for your fish?" asked the general.

"Thirty cents," was the reply.  
"Thirty cents!" repeated the general in astonishment. "Why, if you were in New York you could get three dollars for them."

The boy looked critically at the officer for a moment, and then said, scornfully:

"Yes, suh; er, I reckon if I had a bucket of water in hell I could get a million for it."

"Mama, did you love to flirt when you were young?"

"I am afraid I did, dear."

"And were you ever punished for it mama?"

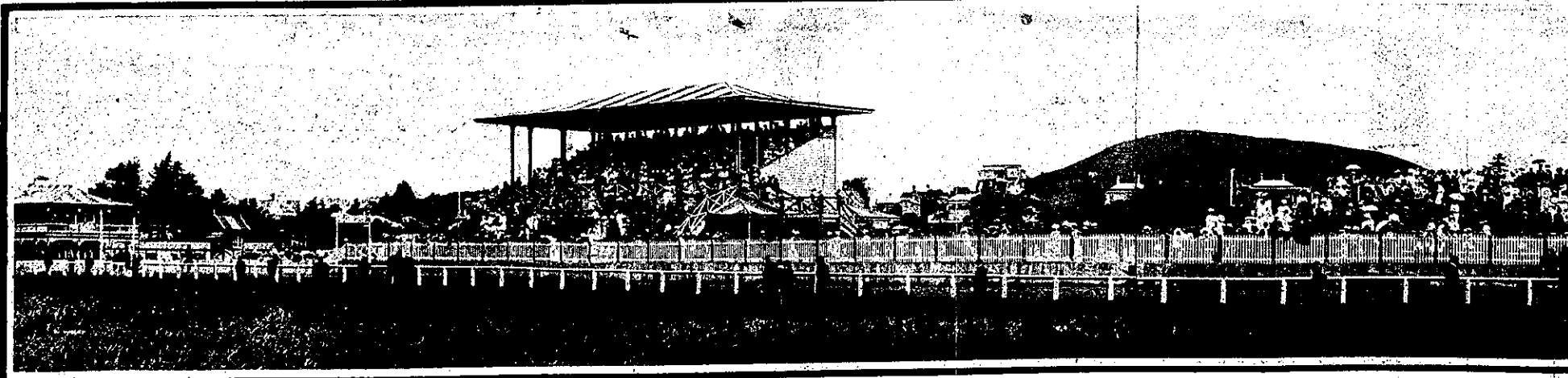
"Cruelly, dear. I married your father."

The following story is told by the Chinese Minister at Washington:

"There was a Chinaman who had three dogs. When he came home one evening he found them asleep on his couch of teakwood and marble. He whipped them and drove them forth.

"The next night, when he came home, the dogs were lying on the floor. But he placed his hand on the couch and found it warm from their bodies. Therefore, he gave them another whipping.

"The third night, returning earlier than usual, he found the dogs sitting before the couch blowing on it to cool it."



Panorama of Takapuna Racecourse.