

BETS ON A WIFE'S WHIMS

ONE WAY OF MAKING MONEY ON THE RACE TRACKS.

A Dream That Came True but Was Not Quite Accurate—Success of a Woman That Knew Nothing of Race-Horses—Strange Mistake of a Bookmaker.

"Queer things happen on the race tracks," said an old-time racing man. "The story of how some people backed an outsider because it was a white horse and they had just seen a red-headed girl, and how they won, sounds forced, but it is no stranger than what happened to a well-known man the day the Webster affair came off at Gutterburg. He went to the track with his card marked by a young woman who did not know one horse from another. Yet she marked him six straight winners, and at the fifth he was over \$5,000 to the good. Then he decided he could not stand Torchlight, the Daily cast-off, at 40 to 1 in the sixth race, and backed the favorite at 8 to 5 and so lost nearly all of his winnings while Torchlight won easily. Another case is that of a well-known cigar manufacturer who went to Sheephead and for fun turned back his roll of bills and took the left hand figure of the number of one of them and backed the jockey whose number corresponded. He, too, had five straight wins, and finally lost by switching to the favorite, when everyone knew that Sol Lichtenstein was practically holding Emin Bey, the horse indicated by the number, out of his book, and Emin Bey won in a walk. He tried that trick several times after, but it never went through again.

"Another racing man has a wife who loves a horse dearly, and, without being an expert, she is a good all-round judge of a sound animal. When Domino was in his prime she looked him over in the paddock one day and told her husband never to back him running down hill. She went into the paddock the day Henry of Navarre, Domino and Clifford ran at Morris Park, and seeing Henry move around with that awaying motion of his loins, something as a wolf moves, she recognized a wonderful resemblance between him and a horse she once owned called Phil Sheridan. Her husband was a strong Domino man and stood to lose a lot, but she persuaded him to hedge on Henry. Well, the race was Domino, ahead at the half and Henry at the three-quarters and an easy winner. Domino, coming down the hill from the water tower, was eased up by Tatal in the last furlong. That flat toe of his could not stand the incline.

"The most curious thing she ever did was in, I think, 1892; anyway it was at Sheephead, and on a June 27. Early that morning she woke her husband up and asked him what time it was. He grunted sleepily, looking at his watch, 'Five minutes past 3. Go to sleep.' She said, 'Remember I have something to tell you at breakfast.' In the morning, remembering her dream, she told him it was about a horse with yellow and black stripes rushing down the track away ahead of everything, and she wanted him to play a horse carrying yellow and black stripes in the race about 3 P. M. that afternoon. He looked over the entries but found no yellow and black stripes. The nearest to that description were Lawless, with yellow body and black sleeves, and an Empire Stable horse, I think Comanche, with yellow and red stripes. That confused her, as she was dead sure of the colors; but later when she saw an ice wagon driver with a yellow and black striped blazer on, that settled it. 'There you are,' she said. 'Play the yellow and black stripes if they are there, body and sleeves if not.' Lawless was quoted at 8-5, Comanche at 30-1, and finally the man put \$5 on the former, and the Empire Stable horse won by a block, pulled up. The wife was right about the stripes, but wrong about the color. Another time she insisted that her husband should play Wilfrid because it was his name, and, getting 100 to 1, she cashed a \$5 ticket. So far as I know the horse never won before or after that race. Then she played Sullivan at 40-1 the same way because it was her servant's name and the servant being a negro it was bound to be lucky. Then she quit going to the track.

"I remember the time when the Dwyers changed their colors. Mike Dwyer's hoodoo started to work when he changed from the red and blue to the all white and gold tassel. I was at the Gut on May 7, 1891, and placed a bet with Ike Thompson on Meriden. I was playing a system which called for a bet of \$60. The horse was at 3-5, and I said \$36 to \$60. Thompson grabbed the bills and called \$60 to \$100. Then I was pushed away from the block. Well, I went to see the race, which was just finishing, and I saw a white jockey sweep past and thought my cash was gone, but not knowing the colors I asked a man and learned it was Dwyer's new rig. I went in to cash my ticket, and seeing

the bookie went to him, and said: 'You made a mistake on my ticket.' Before I could say anything further he burst out: 'How much do you want to rob me out of?' Knowing his manner I laughed and replied: 'Nothing. I'm satisfied if you are. What do you say?' 'Let me see it,' he said, and handing my ticket up I told him what it represented. Balancing up his cash, he found it was so, paid me the right amount, and saying, 'There's honest men among the punters as well as on the block,' led the way to the bar and remarked: 'That's a drink on me.' Coming back to the ring he said, 'Play Running Deer for the next race. It's a cinch. I am going to hold it out of my book entirely,' and off he went. It opened at 4 to 5, and in a minute was 1 to 2 on, and as I was well ahead I let it go past. Well, Running Deer, in a seven-furlong race, ran fourth to J. Forbes's Ketchum, Bohemia and Amiel. I went across to Ike, who was looking black as a thundercloud, and said, 'That was a blamed good tip to give an honest man.' He looked at me a second, and then plunging his hand into his pocket said, 'How much are you out?' 'Nothing,' I replied. 'Then you're more sense than I had,' came back.

"It was at the Morris Park meeting one day that a young man and his best girl came over from Paterson, N. J., to see the races. He was one of those yellowish blond men who always manage to get a suit of clothes, a light overcoat, hat and tie about the same color as themselves, thin and nervous-like. He and his girl sat on the stand at the end of the alleyway near the press stand. In the fourth race, I think it was, there were only four or five horses, and the Morris stable Risk was the outsider at 10 to 1. The man had evidently won a bit on the other races, and put some of it, possibly \$20, down on Risk. The racers came round the water tower with Risk trailing, and as they struck the stretch the Morris horse began to close up, and at the end of the chute was running third, five or six lengths behind the leader. Suddenly a voice like a calliope rang out, 'Come on—n, Risk!' the last word being snapped out like the crack of a whip. 'Come on—n, Risk!' and every head turned to see this fellow standing up, snapping his fingers like castanets, eventually getting down into the clearway and stooping down and actually riding the horse to victory in the last few jumps. Then with a howl of triumph he started for the ring. The alley, you remember, is a four feet wide platform, then come two steps, then another platform then two steps, and so on and he tripped on those and rolled up against the balustrade at the turn, his hat flying on to the lawn. Scrambling to his feet, he tripped again, rolling down those steps to the brick sidewalk, and getting up he vanished toward the ring, shouting:

'Risk, Risk! He-he! Of course every one laughed for a minute and then forgot it. Just before the sixth race one of the veterans saw that the girl was sitting alone crying, and going to her, found that the man had never returned. She was there without a cent, did not know her way home, etc. He had cashed his ticket, evidently, and, forgetting his girl, everything, had started on the dead run for Paterson, and probably never stopped until he got there. The veteran came around and said, 'Boys, I want ten cents apiece to get that girl home,' and like the Samaritan that he was, took her to the ferry and saw her well started. He said there was a gleam in her eyes which boded ill for Mr. 'Risk' when she met him.

A DRUNKEN'S STORY OF LUCK.

How one out of Work Made a Ten Strike Almost Against His Will.

"Four commercial men, one of them employed by a firm of jewellers were swapping stories in a hotel the other evening and gradually drifted to experiences involving luck. When the jeweller's turn came his eyes twinkled as he brushed the ashes from his cigar with a finger circled by a diamond ring, and rather lazily got into position for his innings. 'On the subject of luck,' he began, 'I suppose I have a right to say something, inasmuch as the stroke of my life was made inside of three days and without the use of a dollar of capital. In 1885 the firm I was working for in a little inland town went to the wall, and without a week's notice I was left without a leg to stand on. When my bills were settled I had barely enough left to get out of town, but decided to go to New York, where I wasn't known and begin life over again.

"During the ride along the Hudson I became interested in the talk of two men just behind me, who discussed business matters and referred incidentally to an important manufacturing site to be sold in a certain real estate office in New York at noon the next day. It was said that some Western man wanted the site, which was regarded the best in the East for their purpose, and that a New York firm had planned to shut them out by buying the property at any cost. The Westerners were thought to be equally determined to get the property.

"Beyond this conversation the only cause of interruption in my rather dreary reflections was a somewhat stout, middle-aged woman who sat just ahead of me, and to whom two or three times I rendered trifling services. As we entered New York there was the usual flurry of preparations to leave the train, and the stout woman was amongst the first of the passengers to be lined up in the aisle. As I was in no haste, I did not rise to put on my overcoat till she was outside the car. I hurried out to



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see her disappear into a carriage and hear her call out, 'Oh, my handbag and diamonds! Before the alarm had gone further I placed the bag in her hands and explained that she had dropped it in the car. She almost overwhelmed me with thanks, in which her husband, who was present, joined.

"We owe you more than you know, sir," he said, ignoring my attempt to withdraw, and I must in some way repay your kindness. Our carriage is in the way here and there is no time to talk. Is there anything to prevent your taking dinner with us? If not, step into the carriage.

"Before I could collect my wits to make suitable protests we were being bowled away and the woman was reiterating her relief and gratitude. A few minutes later we were received at the door of a residence on one of the avenues and my host was saying, 'This is my son, sir,—but I shall have to ask your name.' Whereupon I gave him a card.

"The name of an old friend of mine," he declared as he read it; I knew him in M—county.

"Possible my father," I said; 'he lives at Stratford in that county.

"The very same, I am sure, he went on: 'we were at school together. And I feared thereafter as an old acquaintance.

"It came out during dinner that the diamonds were worn by the woman at a wedding she had been attending and were very valuable. The family seemed to rejoice particularly, however, over their escape from publicity usually attending the loss of such jewels. At the close of the meal the hour was late and I spoke of going, but was led to admit that my time was my own and it was soon settled, somewhat to my dismay, that for a day or two at least I must be the guest of the family. Next morning I went with my host to his place of business and found that he was a dealer in jewelry. As noon approached I thought of the real estate sale and spoke of the matter to my host.

"What! you interested in that sale?" he said in a tone of surprise. 'Let's go over; it's just across the street.'

"We crossed and caused some comment, I thought, as we entered the place. The bidding seemed rather slow, but gradually ran up to \$189,000. At that point the auctioneer glanced over in my direction, and, scarcely aware what I was doing, I nodded.

"A hundred and forty," he shouted, and a few minutes later the property was knocked down at that figure. Before I could recover from my amazement or reply to the auctioneer's request for the purchaser's name, the door opened and a man rushed in and asked whether the sale was over and who was the buyer. When I was pointed out he approached, looked me over listlessly and said:

"Represent the St. Louis man, I suppose."

"No, sir," I said, with a meekness that he appeared to mistake for indifference.

"The devil you don't," he retorted, eyeing suspiciously the jeweller who stood beside me. 'What do you want of the property, then? Going to sell, eh?'

"Possibly," was all I could say.

"Come aside here," he resumed, in a milder tone, as he motioned to the auctioneer to wait. 'I want to talk to you. I see you understand the situation and want to make something. I got caught in a blockade down town or you wouldn't have had the chance—you may bet on that.'

"I left the place with a \$10,000 check in my vest pocket without having my name appear once in the transaction and for the rest of the day my mind was almost an absolute blank. I vaguely recall that my jeweller friend told me he had been authorized to buy the property, if it went right and meant to bid, but that I had fore-stalled him. It was supposed that I bid for him and when he saw the situation he made me hold out for the ten thousand.

"The next day he offered to take me in to his business, and fearful lest my money might vanish by some unearthy means I became his junior partner without even looking up his financial rating. The venture proved a lucky one. Not long afterward I became his son-in-law. And, by the way, the name of my father-in-law's old friend in M—county wasn't mine at all, as he thought by a slip of his memory, though the two were somewhat similar."

Quite One of Themselves.

A clergyman whose parish duties included a certain amount of preaching at the local lunatic asylum obtained preferment some little time ago, and in due course his last Sunday came round, with the inevitable "farewell sermon."

To make the task easier, he prepared only one discourse, to do duty both at the asylum and the parish church, intending when he preached it at the former place to leave out any parts that might be unsuitable. However on the day itself, in his excitement, he forgot his original intention, and gave the asylum patients the full benefit of his valedictory remarks.

One passage he afterwards felt he would have liked to have left unsaid—and it was this:

"Dear friends, when I think of the many happy days spent amongst you, I must indeed say that, though I am about to leave you, I shall continue to consider myself quite one of yourselves."

A Handy Excuse.

Mother: "What on earth are you doing to the child, Bridget, to make her cry so?" Bridget (who has just clapped her): "I s'pose it's the medicus, mum; th' label says as how children cries for it."

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