



OUR RACING PROPHECY.

If the Betting Offices are not put down before next year, we should suggest something like the following as a programme for the next Cup day at Ascot:

The Footman's Plate—of three dozen spoons and half a dozen forks, by subscription of a spoon or a fork each. Every subscriber to remove the initials and crest, or forfeit one shilling.

The Tradesmen's Cup—by subscription of half-a-crown each from their masters' tills by the London shopmen.

The Butchers' Stakes—of one hundred pounds, open to all the metropolitan butchers' boys.

The betting will be limited to the Betting Offices, and the final settling will take place at one of the penal settlements.

THE YOUNGEST MEMBER IN THE HOUSE.—A lady declares that if Mr. Anstey were to remain in the House of Commons all his life, he would still be the youngest member in it; "for it is perfectly clear," she says, alluding to his accustomed habit of counting out the House, "that so long as he retains the faculty of speech, he will never be able to reach forty."

A FAVOURABLE SYMPTOM.

We must congratulate our contemporary, the *Mark Lane Express*, upon having made a pun. We are refreshed to find that in speaking of the EARL OF DERBY's late speech upon "Compromise," its comments end, somewhat naively, thus:

"We can only express our sincere hope that the tenant farmers may not find themselves in the end *compromised*."

The italics, it is needless to say, are not ours. They denote emphatically the maiden effort, and so disarm our criticism. But in truth we are too happy to be critical. We have heard such grievous stories (literally such, we begin to fear) of agricultural depression lately, that it indeed immeasurably rejoices us to find the farmers' oracle can still produce a joke, and its distressed readers even yet afford—to laugh at it.

TAPPING A BEER BARREL FOR THE TRUTH.—

Mr. Pepper has been lecturing at the Polytechnic upon the qualities of the different beers of Allsopp, Bass, and Salt. It strikes us as being a curious way of proving that these beers are not adulterated, when we actually have before us the admission that both Pepper and Salt are mixed up largely in their composition.

WHAT IS AN ENGAGEMENT?

"Something that does not last."

Answers WAGNER; and also the Irish PRIMA DONNA, who, too, has broken her engagement.



A NEW definition of the word engagement is sadly wanted to suit the Vocalists' books. We will not say it is like piecrust, or a boy's drum, or a young lady's heart, only made to be broken, but we will define it simply, thus:

"AN ENGAGEMENT is like a general invitation—given very freely, but with the full understanding that it is never meant to be kept. Such engagements, like elopements, are only runaway engagements. 'Come and sing,' is about synonymous with 'Come and see me any day,' I shall be happy to see you.' The singer is no more expected to sing, than the foolish fellow who has been so liberally invited is expected to call upon you. It's only a form—just as putting your name to a

bill is 'only a form'—and a form which any one who takes his stand upon it is sure to have to pay for the breaking of it."