

Sporting Comment

ANOTHER attempt is to be made to have betting suppressed at the Woodbine track. This would indicate that the moral reform folks are not easily discouraged. Their last effort was hailed as a triumph but was really rather less than a gold brick. Its combined results have been probably \$40,000 more gate money for the Jockey Club, double the number of bookmakers doing business and that slight inconvenience to the bettors that makes them all the more anxious to get their money up. At the present rate of going the abolitionists will build up a nice business for the Jockey Club if they can hold the pace.

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The Flood incident at the Toronto Baseball Grounds demonstrated two things exceptionally well. The first is how quickly change the feelings of the throng, and the second, that sports are like families, and no matter how they quarrel among themselves, they want no outside interference. The crowd hissed Flood when he jumped into the umpire with his spiked shoes, and agreed no punishment was too great for him. But when Colonel Denison gave him fifteen days in gaol he was the offender no longer, but a martyr indeed. "He is being punished for the sins of others," they yelled. And that yell started an all-round family row. The baseball fans pointed to the lacrosse followers. "They pound each other over the head with clubs every game," they charged. Lacrosse followers passed it on to the footballists: "They killed two men last fall," their ultimatum. The footballists in turn shoved it along to the boxers: "They killed a man, too," was their assertion. And so the charges and counter-charges flew, no body pointing for a moment to various other component parts of nationality that under the name of industries kill men annually by the hundreds with less noise than is made over a mobbed umpire or an assaulted referee.

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For sport has its place in nation-making. Wasn't it Wellington who said that Waterloo was won on the cricket field of Eton? Doesn't many a successful Canadian who didn't have the advantage of boyhood on the farm or in the bush owe the fighting qualities that have made him a leader to the physical and mental training he received on the athletic field? Sport plays a large part in the building of our national character. If it occasionally exacts a small price therefor, why blame it?

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Will bicycling as a sport come again? Most assuredly. It died of an overdose of popularity. But the members of the old brigade still sit around and tell of great spins, greater races and meets that set the whole country agog. Yes, bicycling will come again, and, more than that, it is coming. At a recent road race in Detroit a dozen cities and at least two countries were represented. It is hardly necessary to say that one of the countries was Canada, and that most of the prizes crossed the boundary. But bicycling is coming! Get your ear to the ground and you can hear it.

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The watchful eye of the yachting expert is working overtime at present and so far it has discovered that the Aileen is a wonder in light winds, but that in beating to windward or in a breeze the Adele shows to better advantage. The Crusader is an unknown quantity, having been out but once before going back to Oakville for a new mast. However, she showed sailing qualities that promise to keep her right in the racing.

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Of the Seneca, the new defender, little can be seen at this distance. Her trials so far have not been such as make folks sit up of nights. But then our Yankee cousins are a foxy lot, and do not always show their hand before it is called. When Mr. Hanan takes the helm it is just possible the Seneca will take to its heels and set a pace hard to follow.

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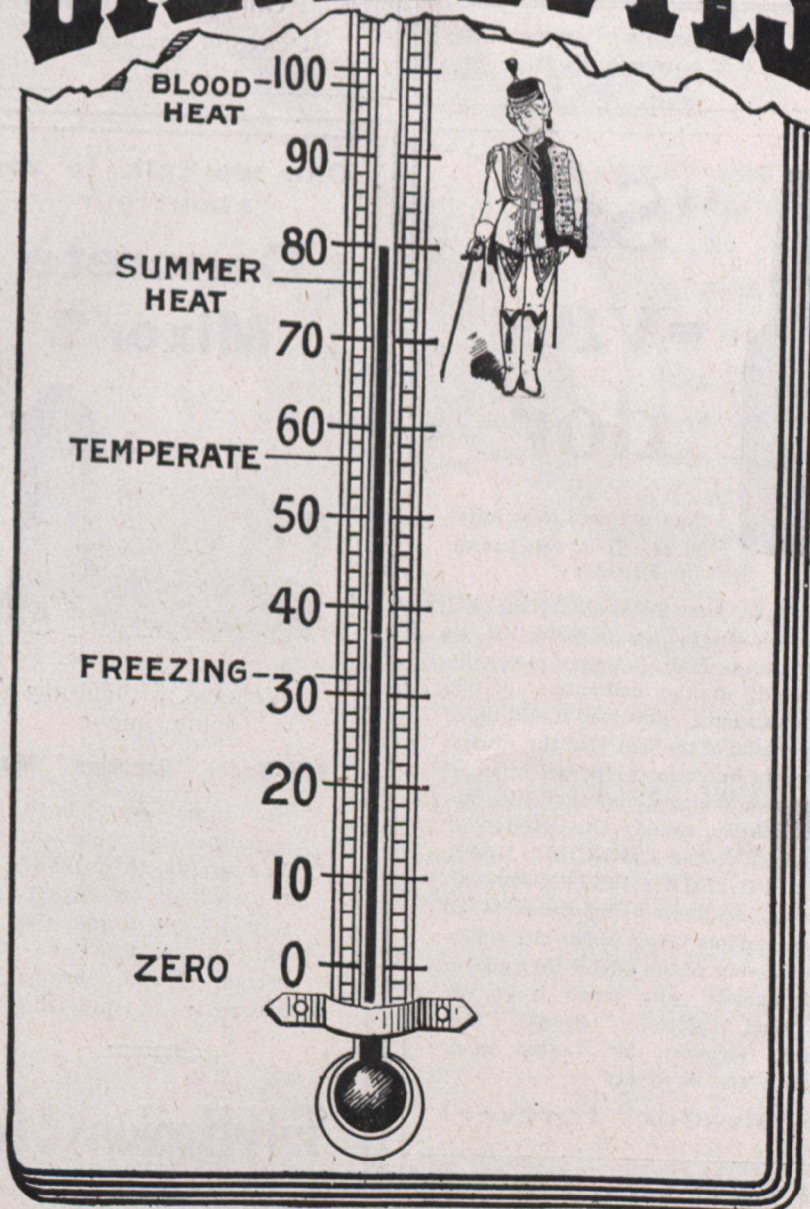


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Warmer weather has prevailed throughout the Dominion during the week past, the average thermometer reading being 80, as indicated by the sword point of the famous SWEET CAPORAL girl.