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The Romance of Racing

HORSES THAT HAVE MADE FOR TUNES.

(Mr. J. BARR-LINNEY, in Glasgow Weekly).

There are few more interesting chapters in the history of the Turf than that which tells the story of Tattersall's world-famous auction-mart, which has been the Mecca of the horse-lovers from all parts of the earth since the far-away days of "Farmer" George; and, unlike most of its chapters, it is practically unknown to the present generation of sportsmen.

It was as long ago as 1766 that Richard Tattersall, training-groom to the last Duke of Kingston, conceived the idea of opening an auction-mart where sales of horses could be regularly held and where sportsmen could meet and discuss their favorite topics; and with the financial help of Lord Grosvenor he soon had suitable premises built on the site on which Grosvenor Crescent now stands.

From its opening day Richard Tattersall's venture was an unqualified success. His sterling qualities commanded universal respect, while he had the valuable gift of making personal friends of his most distinguished supporters. Charles James Fox, who was one of "Old Tat's" greatest admirers, always spoke of him as "my dear old friend"; and few weeks passed which did not see him hobnobbing and cracking his jokes with one or two royal princes.

So successful was his early sales of horses that Tattersall decided to increase his venture by holding also sales of hounds and sporting-dogs. Here again he scored a great hit; and country squire and masters of hounds, who in a general way came to town but rarely, now willingly put themselves to the inconvenience of a long and wearisome journey by stage coach solely in order to patronize "Old Tat's" sales, while a still further development came when he started sales at Newmarket, which were even better attended than those in London.

A shrewd, far-seeing man was this first of the Tattersalls, as is proved by the following story: Hearing that the stud of a Scottish nobleman were to be sold by auction in a few days' time, he took the coach, without mentioning his errand to a soul, and, travelling day and night, reached his distant destination on the very eve of the sale. On inspecting the horses, he quickly saw that there were some treasures among them; but, alas! his available capital was too small to secure many of them.

Luckily he chanced to meet a wealthy man of his acquaintance, and to him he made this proposal: "If you will find half the capital to pay for the whole of this stud, I will find the other half and the skill. We are in for a good thing." The offer was accepted, and Richard Tattersall was thus able to secure for himself and his partner every animal in the stables.

What an excellent bargain he made is proved by one fact alone—that among the horses sold was Highflyer, the famous son of Herod, and sire of Sir Peter, a horse which never knew defeat. This prize he secured for 2,500 guineas; and, in later years, he confessed that he had cleared £25,000 out of him!

By the time "Old Tat's" son succeeded him the fame of Tattersall's had spread all over Europe, and it had become the chief medium for traffic in racehorses and hounds not only with all parts of England, but with most of the countries of Europe and as far afield as America and the West Indies; and each succeeding generation had added to its fame and popularity.

In 1865 the great auction-mart was transferred from Grosvenor Place to a site at the junction of the Brompton Road with the main road through Knightsbridge, near the Albert Gate—commonly known as "The Corner"—where it entered on a continued career of prosperity.

The new premises largely followed the lines of the old, with the subscription-room and counting-houses on the right of the entrance; a similar spacious courtyard with a circular dome structure in the centre, standing on four Corinthian columns and surrounded by the bust of the fourth George, as shrine for the ancient pump, the yard being surrounded by stabling for the horses and

galleries for carriages offered for sale.

Not very many years ago, it is interesting to recall, the site to which Tattersall's was removed was a village green, with its maypole, around which the lads and lasses used to make merry; and there may be some living who can remember the watch-house and the pound, which stood close by, and to which Addison refers in the Spectator.

If it were only possible to write a full history of Tattersall's the chronicle would be one of extraordinary interest; it would, in fact, be an epitome of the history of the British Turf for little short of a century and a half.

"Nearly every great sale of horses during the past century, has been in our hands," says Mr. Somerville Tattersall—a fact which in itself is eloquent of a whole world of romance. Among the most famous racehorses which have passed through their hands, was Meddler, who fetched the then enormous sum of 14,500 guineas; and seldom has there been seen, even at Tattersall's such excitement as marked this sale. The bidding was followed by the onlookers with bated breath. Scarcely a soul stirred as the price mounted higher and higher; and when at last the horse was knocked down, the tense and highly wrought feelings of the spectators found vent in a general sigh of relief.

La Fleche, as filly, was sold (to Baron Hirsch) for 5,500 guineas, and as a brood mare for 12,600 guineas; Blair Athol fetched 12,500 as a stallion; Busybody and Harvester realized 8,800 and 8,600 guineas respectively; and Galopin, as a stallion, brought 8,000 guineas.

So the long list of famous "lots" and record prices runs on, until one ceases to marvel even at the fabulous sum of £230,000 for which Tattersall's purchased the great Ormonde from Don Juan Bocan, for Mr. McDonough. Of them all, probably the two cheapest horses ever sold by Tattersall were Galopin and St. Simon—the former of which went for 8,000 guineas, and the latter, as a two-year old, for 1,600 guineas. Since then these two horses have brought their lucky owners many thousands a year; and St. Simon, who was never beaten as a two and three-year-old, proved to be the most successful sire in England.

When Mr. Somerville Tattersall was asked who is the quickest bidder he has known, he answered unhesitatingly, "Captain Macchell. He is generally able to silence his opponents," he said. "If a horse starts with a bid of a hundred guineas, and the captain is present and wants the animal, he bids two hundred. And thus he goes on until he has scared off his opponents by the hugeness of his bids, the ordinary bidder being usually content with bidding, ten, twenty or fifty pounds."

But even Captain Macchell once found more than his match, when None the Wiser was put up for sale at Newmarket. After the Captain had run up the price by hundreds at a time, Lord Ellesmere stepped in and completely took his breath away by sensational bids which carried the price quickly to 7,200 guineas, at which figure his Lordship secured the filly.

Of the most remarkable bidders ever known at the Corner, Mr. Harry Tattersall tells the following amusing story: "Some time ago I was selling in the yard when a gentleman came to the front near the rostrum, and began to bid in a most energetic way. His bids were generous to a degree, and we were all pleased at his total disregard for proportion. At last a horse was knocked down to him. When he went into the office to pay his deposit, we found he was stark, staring mad. As a result, we had to put the horse up again."



How Kipling Got Slang and Lingo

How Rudyard Kipling "crammed" the technical slang and lingo of sailors, railwaymen and engineers, which figure in so many of his poems and

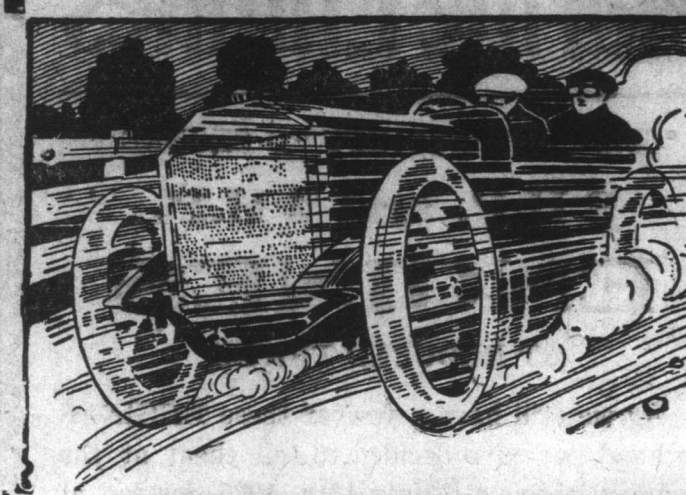
short stories, has been revealed by S. F. McLean, a secondhand book dealer, of Pasadena, California.

It was when he had a shop in New York that Mr. McLean one day had a call from a stranger, who, to have some books forwarded, wrote down his name and address, "Rudyard Kipling, Bartlettboro, Vermont."

The sequel is told by Mr. McLean: Not long afterward, I received a letter from Mr. Kipling, asking me to submit to him information about all the books that I could get on the subject of shipbuilding, railroad construction, tunnel-boring, surveying, labor unions, and kindred activities. I made up a comprehensive list, from which he culled a goodly order. When the books arrived he promptly acknowledged their receipt in a short, cordial letter, and asked for more.

During a period of twelve months I sold him a very large number of technical books. I often wondered what interest such an author as Mr. Kipling

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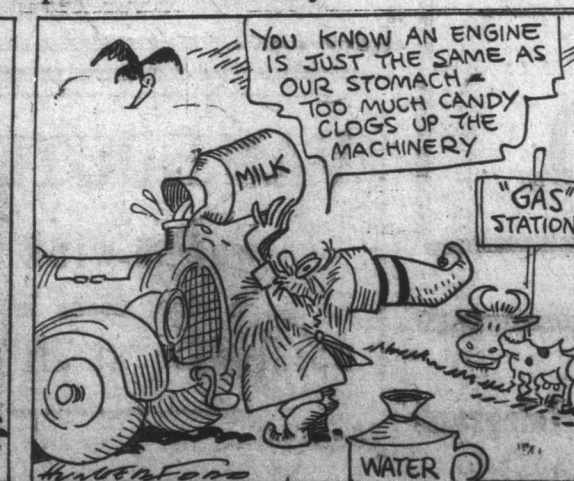
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SNOODLES



The Professor Prepares For A Journey

By CY HUNGERFORD