

"TOWN AND COUNTRY,"

A WEEKLY RECORD OF

Sports, Recreations, Live Stock Matters

ETC., ETC., ETC.

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Office—13 Adelaide St. East, Toronto.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE, PER ANNUM, \$2.50.

SINGLE COPIES 5 CENTS.

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Town and Country.

TORONTO, ONT., JUNE 23, 1880.

HANLAN'S DEFEAT.

At one time it was considered requisite that a person entrusted with the duty of giving an editorial opinion should be conversant with the subject entrusted to his criticism. Now-a-days, however, and since ordinary newspapers have taken up sporting matters, the only credential required, judging from the effusions which sometimes appear in our contemporaries, is ability to hold a pen. A case more in point could not be produced than the editorial which appeared in the *Toronto Globe* of Monday last under the heading of "boat racing," which was a direct and personal attack on a man who, instead of having covert abuse and low insinuations cast at him, should have been tendered a far different reception. The article is a direct charge against Hanlan of having sold the race at Providence if it means anything at all, and while it may carry weight with people not conversant with sporting matters, it only creates a feeling of pity for the man who had a duty imposed upon him for which he had not the slightest capacity. That the writer did not know the first thing about "boat racing" is evidenced by his opening assumption that because Hanlan rowed four miles in 25:14 at Chataqua and Ross took 29:54 at Providence, Hanlan should have won by about half a mile. Now it is a well-known fact that in no

branch of sport is the time test so fallacious as in rowing, for the reason that the condition of the water is the unknown quantity which steps in to upset the nicest of calculations by the watch. Another thing is, that in rowing over the course alone, as Hanlan did at Chataqua, the oarsman suits his own capacity and rows the whole distance at a speed to carry him through instead of going off at a "sprinting" pace against an opponent adopting the same tactics. The man credited with the fastest time on record over the English Championship Course on the Thames is a third-rate oarsman who would be lost by such men as Boyd, Elliott and Higgins. It will also be news to the *Globe* man to know that a very prominent backer of Trickett was present at Providence, indeed we doubt not but that a little demonstration as to the difference between an oar and a shell would be of use to the critic.

We are just as desirous as anyone to expose fraud, but we put our foot down very flatly in this case, and assert that there is not the slightest indication that there was anything underhanded in the Providence race. That a man does not sell a race except for present or prospective gain will be accepted as a truism by all. Now we have taken some pains to investigate the surroundings of this race, and the "present gain" theory falls to the ground completely when we find that there were not more than \$200 invested on Hanlan in the pools. Such a favorite was he that he was barred, and the pool-selling was done on the others for second place. We are, moreover, in a position to assert that not one of Hanlan's immediate supporters, nor, indeed, anyone from Toronto that we know of, invested a single dollar for or against him because of the rate of odds demanded by the fielders.

With regard to prospective gains it is only necessary to ask what could Hanlan add to his reputation by once more defeating men he had previously played with in match races. Boyd we do not take into account, as he was neither in condition nor rigged so as to show his powers. Men who wager on racing events, whether it be turf, pedestrianism, or rowing, gauge the merits of a candidate by his best performance, and Hanlan will be recognized in England, when he meets Trickett, as the man who made such an example of Hawdon and Elliott, and not as the sick man of the Hop Bitters muddle. If Hanlan had desired to make a bid for a depreciation of his powers his course would have been to make a show of being defeated on his merits, and finishing somewhere near the front without any excuse for not winning beyond that of meeting better men. As it is, the late race will be entirely discarded in forming an estimate of his abilities.

There is one more point we will briefly call attention to, and it is this, that even supposing that Hanlan had been induced to lose the race for a pecuniary consideration which it is fair to presume would have been equivalent to the first prize of \$3,000, there was yet the second money, \$1,500, at his mercy, and as he was rowing for money it is preposterous to suppose that he would so foolishly have overlooked this inducement to row the race out. Of the many ridiculous rumors which have been current amongst the wisecracks (after the race) it is unnecessary to speak, as they bear on their face the imprint of falsehood, and only demand common sense on the part of the listener for their complete refutation.

The Directors of the Industrial Exhibition held a special meeting last evening and decided to give \$400 in premiums at the dog show to be held in connection with the exhibition in September next. Dog men must now do their share and make a sufficient number of entries to induce the Directors to make a larger grant next year.

DISQUALIFIED AMATEURS.

It is more than probable that during the present year we will hear a good deal respecting disqualified competitors at athletic sports, and no better time is likely to occur than now to call attention to what promises to be the new departure in Amateur sports. Up to within a month ago the only Association sailing under the strict amateur flag was at Montreal and we believe its ruling was confined to Athletic Sports. This year, however, we have the establishment of a Canadian Amateur Rowing Association with the strict law in force, and now the National Lacrosse Association wheels into line, and by its action commands for the new departure the success it might otherwise have had to fight for.

The object of these Associations in adopting this definition is to keep amateur sport clear of all taint of professionalism, and the widening of the gap between those who make a business of or money out of athletics in any one of its branches. The most difficult section to overcome will be the Caledonian Societies, who, with the acute sensitiveness of Scotchmen [we are from north of the Tweed] may be inclined to take umbrage at any other societies seemingly dictating to them as to the method they must adopt in the giving of prizes at their annual games. We know such was the case in New York when the New York Athletic Club, single-handed, decided against the admission of Caledonian men who had competed for money. The younger members of the Scotch societies saw the position this would place them in, and finding that their own clubs would not amend their prize lists, founded Athletic Clubs of their own and withdrew from competition for the Caledonian money prizes. Such a course is by no means a necessity if the Caledonian Societies and all clubs or societies that give prizes for athletics would but give prizes instead of money. It is a very simple alteration to make, and now that these annual festivals and gatherings are about to commence, it is most essential that the change in favor of prize *versus* cash should be made at once so that a young athlete's prospects may not be blighted through ignorance of the law.

It cannot be too distinctly stated that if any person hereafter competes for a money prize he cannot play as an amateur at lacrosse, run at an amateur athletic meeting nor row at an amateur regatta, and it is the bounden duty of every society to respect the amateur law as it now stands, and help along the good work.

WOODSTOCK RACES.*From our own Correspondent.*

Woodstock, June 18, 1880.

It would have bothered any one except a professional to know from the appearance of this beautiful town this morning, that it was the inaugural day of the Western circuit of races. Many of the old-timers were present, but there was an evident lack of appreciation by the citizens. The visitors made their headquarters at Mr. Forbes' hotel, and it is needless to state he catered successfully for the enjoyment of his guests. The track is situated about three-quarters of a mile from the town, and there about 2 p.m. your correspondent wended his way. The day was excessively hot, the roads and track dusty, but the crowd was chilling in a numerical sense. At 3.00 p.m. the horses were called up for the first heat in the three-minute trot, but it was some time before they were got together, when five showed up. The judges were, Messrs. Sutherland, Nesbit, and O'Neill, of Woodstock; the timing department being entrusted to Mr. P. Collins, of *Town and Country*. Of the five nominations, Bay Fearnought, a fine looking bay stallion, was the favorite in the pools—pools, we say, at the rate of Fearnought \$10, field \$6, but little business was done. The race deserves no description, but for the outrageous conduct of the owner and driver of the favorite, for he was palpably pulled in the first and second heats as his owner declared for the purpose of saving a record. Before the third heat was called, arrangements had been made for Mr. Pete Curran "the noblest Roman of them all" to take the seat behind the stallion. It was understood that some of those who were interested in Fearnought had been placing their money the other way,