



There would be comparatively little interest taken in sport if there was not permeating it more or less of the element of danger. It adds a spice that, like a good appetite, cannot be duplicated. Nor Nabob, nor Batty, nor Crosse & Blackwell, nor all the drowsy imitations on the flat can meddle to such good sport as the steeplechase. It is a decidedly British institution; it carries around with it great possibilities for the talents of a coroner; it requires nerve and pluck and perseverance, and it is just here where the man wins who never knows when he is beaten. There is a glorious feeling of exhilaration in going over three miles of what is called fair hunting country, scoring rails and water and stone. There is an indescribable tension of the nerves when you think you are doing your prettiest and when you suddenly discover the nose of a long shot just up to your saddle girth and still a quarter of a mile to go; when the other fellow, to your eyes, looks fresh and your own gallant hunter is not responding just the way you wish; when you both rise to a raking double and the splinters are sent flying; when there is a crash beside you and a groan that sounds like a whisper as you fly past and indistinct figures flit across the open to help the fallen rider; when you feel a trifle tired in the arms and the knees tighten instinctively as you have barely time to think whether that three feet of water on the other side of that raise is very cold or not; you are over and you come down with a jar that seems to loosen every joint and give you telescopic information of bodies celestial. When you hear a murmur of voices that sounds in your ear like the roar of a cataract and you know not whether it betokens danger or victory; when you look straight before and see nothing but still one more obstacle to be overcome; when, like a flash, a brilliant but bespattered silk passes on your right like a meteor; when, as the swell of voices grows louder and from amid the din you are barely able to distinguish—"Well done, Chester!" "Come along, Hard Times!" "Chester has it!" When both plunge forward in the last decisive rush; when both know that the first over that bit of timber is the victor; when teeth are set and a tighter grip taken; when you brace yourself for the ordeal and lean forward as your game hunter rises; when you hear that same dull crunching sound, and you know that another opponent has come to grief; when you swerve into the straight and ride for dear life; and when you are grasped by a multitude of hands and deluged with a shower of congratulations—then you know that you have won a steeplechase, and that you are the owner of the trophy that brings with it the honour of the Hunt, and it is a fitting representative of the multitude of loving cups whose brims have been bathed in the effervescent foam of the choicest vintages and the exuberance of good wishes that tell of friendship.

The Montreal Hunt have had considerable difficulty to labour under this year insofar as their steeplechases were concerned, and many entries that might reasonably have been expected to appear on the cards were noticeable by their absence; but, although the number of starters was small, no fault could be found with the racing. The second day was decidedly superior to the first, and the weather was of that class which delights in making cross-country work not only difficult but dangerous. Then there were enough croppers taken to satisfy even the most sanguinary expectant of bloodshed. In fact, there is good reason to be profoundly thankful that the casualties were not attended with more serious consequences. With fine weather, the new course at Blue Bonnets, although somewhat awkward in formation, is a satisfactory one, but on wet days it is suicidal if anything like speed is aspired to. The figure eight is a good idea, but as a great deal of running is done on the upper loop, it is unsatisfactory to the general public who are not provided with good glasses. It perhaps would have been more to the purpose if, instead of attempting to make the course gone over the mile even, a different starting point for the green and cup courses had been fixed and straight running made without doubling. It would certainly have given the spectators a better idea, not to speak of the possibilities among a large field of horses in anything like a three mile race, when there would be some danger of collision at the crossing point. Just at present there seems an epidemic of strangely made tracks, and the kite-tracks for the trotters are coming in for a share of abuse altogether unmerited; but these are run on straight lines, and no such thing as a cross in opposite directions is possible. Now, I think, and most steeplechase men will agree with me, that in a limited area, with a large field of entries and in a distance like three miles, there is more than a possibility of accidents with the "8" track.

The first day's racing may be dismissed with but comparatively little comment, as, with the exception of one race, the results in the rest seemed foregone conclusions. It does seem strange that the two first races in one day should be won by one horse, but the winner seemed so superior to his opponents in both events that the result is not so much to be wondered at. Quaker succeeded in carrying off both purses in one-two order, and was never anything else but a winner at any stage of either race. In

the Members' Plate the same result was had, in so far that Hard Times held the race from the start and won handily. There was somewhat of a surprise in store in the open flat, as with Purse in the running it was not to be expected that Prince Charlie or Eve would have anything like a show. But the changes of a very short time proved differently, and, while the second favourite finished first, the only and original favourite proved himself not in it, the best that could be done being a struggle with Eve for second place. It was a splendid race, however; in fact, the race of the day.

The second division of the meeting, although handicapped by the weather, was by far the most enjoyable day of the two, for the very simple reason that great struggles can always be depended on in the Farmers' and the Hunt Cup races. This was the day when the unrelenting rain worked every bit of clay up into unrelenting mud, and made things unpleasant all round. The going was bad, very sticky and very dangerous, and one of the best steeplechasers in the country would not take chances, and showed his good sense in doing so, because when the western one was started with another jockey up there was no doubt of his coming to grief, and he never finished.

"Who is the mud horse and who can stay longest?" was the natural question asked when things began to get interesting just before the first race started. Mackenzie was taken off the boards, and by some means or other put on at a later stage; but, instead of the well-known gentleman jockey, Mr. Lowden, who is usually seen in the saddle, there was a coloured rider, who likely is a tip-top man on the flat, but who made a sorry exhibition getting over obstacles. There was a collapse at the ditch, a narrow escape at the wall, and a total quit at the second attempt at the pig-pen. This put Bay View stables out of it. From the appearance of the horses and the way they were going, it looked as if it were going to be a hard finish between Quaker and Little Charlie. The latter seemed to have the best of it, too, but the stone wall sent both horse and rider feeling for their heads on the other side. It looked like a broken neck for Minogue, if the way he went down was any criterion; but he was not seriously hurt, although put out of the race. This practically left nothing in it but Quaker; then it was that good riding and good judgment brought Prince Charlie fairly up to the winning point, and, although not winning, both horses made a grand struggle of it. The race for the Hunt Cup was never more popularly won than when Mr. E. J. Major ran in to the finish all alone. Overstone, who, as far as appearances went, would have won handily, had a nasty faculty of hitting the rails, and after passing the pig-pen got inextricably mixed up at the next jump, getting away again before Mr. Elliott had time to recover, and when at last he did remount he had a handicap of three-quarters of a mile to get over; but, like the old steeplechaser, he knew that an accident was liable to happen to anybody, and with the view of taking chances he stuck to it, and was eventually rewarded by running in second. The last half mile was a splendid race between Chester and Hard Times, and both came to the last jump on even terms, and both rose to it together. But Mr. Stevenson had the fates against him, and when victory appeared within his grasp there was a stumble, and he was out of it, being so badly used up that he could not remount. Then it was that Mr. Elliott, who had been riding hard since his fall, cantered into second place. In the Farmers' Race there is always the satisfaction of the anticipation of a good race being gratified, and Saturday proved no exception to the rule. Everybody expected a good race, but everybody did not guess accurately as to the winner, and the night before the race Quirk went begging at outrageous odds, and the other son of Quito, who finished a handy second, was hardly thought of at all. A tumble at the stone wall is a nasty thing to take, but the artist has caught the spirit of the scene and preserved it for the readers of THE DOMINION ILLUSTRATED. The consolation race was practically a matter of no account, only two horses going over the course.

There was one thing unpleasant connected with the last day's running, and it was part of the first race. Protests were lodged against Quaker on the grounds that the entry was not received in time. When the matter came to be discussed by the stewards it was found that the entry had not really been made on time, but the acceptance of it proved that it was more with the view of encouraging good sport than adhering strictly to the letter of the rules which prompted the action taken. As far as I can learn, it was with the desire of making a good race for the opening of the day that the gentlemen in charge stretched the rules a little bit, and when Mr. Drysdale started his horse it was certainly under the impression that there would be no trouble about it. Under these circumstances, especially after winning the race, it was a little hard on Quaker to find himself protested. But just here is where the Montreal Hunt proved that a matter of a couple of hundred dollars could not be permitted to stand between a technicality and their love of sport, so they awarded two first moneys—one to Prince Charlie and one to Quaker. It is just this sort of generosity which makes the Hunt steeplechases so popular, and even if the number of starters was small it was the non-entrants rather than the club which suffered, and maybe a lesson has been learned which will be useful next year.

The lacrosse season has come to a conclusion for all pur-

poses of interest, but its ending has not been a happy one. Only once before in the history of the game was the ill feeling and ten-ion between clubs so great. Then there was a split up and the same thing is threatened now. Rivalry is a good spirit to animate a club; but when that rivalry takes the form of doing everything to inconvenience an opponent off the field, then the sooner a reformation in the national game comes the better. Of the two meetings of the council of delegates and the very peculiar decisions arrived at, the less said the better; the matter has been pretty well threshed out already.

The Shamrocks gave a surprise party to the Torontos on Saturday last, when the Western men, who calculated on an easy victory, were held down well by the grounds team and the result declared a draw. It was just another example of what little dependence can be placed on the form of previous matches to make calculations for the future. Here another question arises. Will these drawn matches be played off or not? The all-wise council decided on Saturday last that the Montreal-Toronto match should not be played off, as it did not interfere with the championship, a resolution for which the Toronto and Shamrock delegates voted. Still, in the face of this fact, it is announced that the Toronto-Shamrock draw will be played over on the Rosedale grounds. It will take the wisdom of a Solomon to disentangle the mess of technicalities and votes and precedents and bad feeling, etc., etc., which have been the concomitants of senior lacrosse this season, and which are gradually but surely disgusting the people who really like the game and are willing to pay for it.

After all the talk about the match between the Cornwall and the Montreal clubs, it was a disappointing exhibition. Posing as champions, a title which the club fairly won on the field—and, strange to say, did not lose in the council chamber—it was to have been expected that they would have come to Montreal with their full team, instead of being short three of their best men. The result was as might have been expected. The champions were never in it from the start, and the Montreals literally walked through them to the tune of four straight games. This is not as it should be. When an exhibition match is advertised, the public have a right to expect that they will see just as good a game as if it were for the championship, and if this method of putting on "rag" teams is adhered to, it will not take long to find out that these exhibition matches will not be so profitable in the future as they have been in the past.

The Far West is not so far west but it has its lacrosse cranks in as large number as the effete East. They have had their lacrosse championship series, and they have had their crowds and big crowds, too. Just imagine 8,000 people at the final match in New Westminster, 2,000 going from Vancouver to see the match. There are three clubs in this British Columbia association and each plays two games. The final match was between the New Westminster and Vancouver clubs on Saturday last, and although the match was played in a drizzling rain the reports say that it was a most exciting one. New Westminster won the match by two games to nothing, and well earned the title of champions. The series finished—New Westminster—won four, lost none; Vancouver—one won, two lost, one drawn; Victoria—lost three, drawn one. There are several old Torontonians on the coast, and they are putting a lot of go into the game out there.

The brithers o' the broom are beginning to look after their winter's sport already. In Montreal there is nothing being done except calculating on the weather and wondering how long it will take to get ice. The regular prosaic business of the clubs was all transacted early in the year, and now nothing remains but for King Frost to send in his card and compliments. In Toronto things promise to be lively the coming winter. The Moss Park Club have held their annual meeting, when a large number of new members were added to the roll. The election of officers will take place on the 16th inst.

It looks pretty late for yachting, but still they are at it yet on Lake Ontario. On Saturday last the Queen City Yacht Club sailed off the final race of the season for the silk challenge flags for boats in the 25-foot class. Three yachts—Nellie G, Caprice and Widgeon—started in this class. Bad judgment of the skippers on Nellie G, and Caprice and a lucky slant of wind gave the race easily to Widgeon, who had eight minutes to spare.

Some interesting calculations as to the flight of time and the flight of a horse are being made since the King of the Turf made his mile in 1 min. 35½ secs. How many trains go forty miles an hour? Yet Salvator has approached this speed within a fraction. But a more minute calculation will give a better idea of the tremendous pace at which he travelled. Take these 95½ seconds and then the 5,280 feet in the mile and the simple process of division will show that every second Salvator covered more than 55 feet of ground.

Alicante, the great French mare, must be a wonder if she can come anywhere near justifying the hopes of her friends, who have been plunging on her since her victory two weeks ago, and she now occupies the place of first favourite for both the Cambridgeshire and Cesarewitch, distances widely different.