

propriety. The meeting was not by any means the largest of the year, but I was assured by those who were qualified to give an opinion,—among others by the Governor of the colony,—that the conduct of the crowd was the same even when the crowd was the greatest. It should be understood at home that the people of these colonies are almost invariably decent in their behaviour when gathered together, decent in their dress, and decent in their language. There certainly was no reason why ladies should not be present at the races I saw,—unless ladies dislike to see jockeys falling over high railings.

There was indeed a betting-ring in which the usual applications were being made to some outside and invisible world to accept lavish offers of complicated bets. Men were walking about making unintelligible appeals apparently to each other,—which nobody ever seemed to accept. I am bound to say that the Melbourne ring looked to be as villainous as any other ring that I ever saw. The men wore the same objectionable clothing, were conspicuous in the same manner for indescribably abominable hats, and talked in that tone which to ordinary ears seems to be in itself evidence of rascality sufficient to hang a man. There were present, perhaps, two or three dozen of them ready to pick out any man's eyes; but I could not discern the prey. There is prey no doubt, as the profession thrives and wears jewelry. But the betting-ring on the Melbourne race-course will hurt no one who does not expressly seek its precincts.

GAS-LIGHTING.

THE Very Rev. Dr. Clayton, Dean of Kildare, having experimentally ascertained that a permanently elastic and inflammable aëriform fluid is evolved from pit-coal, described the same in a letter to the Hon. Robert Boyle, who died in 1691; though the discovery was not published in the *Philosophical Transactions* till the year 1739. Hughes, in his *Treatise on Gas-Works*, 1853, says:—"To the celebrated Dr. Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, we are indebted for the first notice of the important fact, that coal-gas retained its inflammability after passing through water into which it was allowed to ascend through curved tubes;" but there is evidence in the *Miscellanea Curiosa*, 1705-6-7, vol. iii. p. 281, to show that Dr. Clayton also discovered that gas retains its inflammability after passing through water.

Although the Chinese have, for ages, employed natural Coal-Gas for lighting their streets and houses, only within the present century has Gas superseded in London the dim oil-lights and crystal-glass lamps of the preceding century. Dr. Johnson is said to have