

high-pressure deliberations was, as the Attorney-General explained, 'a plain-working compromise between the three distinct camps in evidence on the gambling question—namely, the totalisator camp, the bookmakers' camp, and the Puritan camp'. The debates on the subject were, in effect, legislative specimens of the triangular duel in 'Midshipman Easy'.

The new measure is thus—and by the necessities of the case—a compromise. As such, it will fail to meet with the full approval of any of the three hostile sections. But, on the whole it is an acceptable measure, in so far as it cuts off some of the worst excrescences that have grown upon the gaming instinct among us. The measure, however, displays some of the defects of over-haste—a few inconsistencies, sundry failures of co-ordination in some of its minor provisions. But these will, no doubt, stand so revealed in the working that they will probably be legislated out of it in the near future. In the meantime, street and tote-shop betting are slain by the amended Act; gaming houses are closed; newspapers in New Zealand may no longer publish 'tips' regarding horse-races, nor 'any information, advice, or suggestion as to the probable result of any race', nor even, as an item of news, report the dividends paid on any race by the totalisator; on premises registered as a factory no person may make, or offer to make, any bet or wager regarding any horse-race or other sports defined by the Act; and the whole measure proceeds on the sound principle of quarantining wagering on horses to those present at races. If it succeeds in this, the new measure will render an important service to the Dominion. The giving of a legal status to the bookmaker is a provision which may, in easily conceivable circumstances, tend to intensify the evils of gambling within the restricted area of the race-course. A great deal depends upon the interpretation and the working of this provision of the Act. On the whole, the Act is a commendable effort to grapple with a problem of menacing urgency. To all our readers, in fine, we commend in this matter, the example of the popular actor, William Terriss, as recorded in his biography by Arthur J. Smythe—to back only the 'little filly called Common Sense, ridden by Tommy Let-it-alone'.

Notes

Brer Rabbit

In European folklore and fable, the fox is the great emblem of cunning. But in Uncle Remus's plantation stories, Brer Rabbit outwits Brer Fox at every turn. The negro, says Joel Chandler Harris, 'selects as his hero the weakest and most harmless of all animals, and brings him out victorious in contests with the bear, the wolf, and the fox. It is not virtue that triumphs, but helplessness; it is not malice, but mischievousness.' There is a singular pathos in this characteristic of negro folklore. In Australia and New Zealand, Brer Rabbit has scored over more powerful enemies than the bear, the wolf, and the fox. Cased in a triple armor of passive resistance, burrowing habits, and (best of them all) marvellous fecundity, he has defied shotgun, the most potent poisons, and the microbes of the Pasteur Institute. This last was the toughest tussle of all, and Australia looked on while burrowing rodent and armies of deadly microbes struggled for the mastery. But the umpire has awarded the belt to the rabbit. So much we learn from a Sydney cable message in last Saturday's daily papers. It runs as follows:—

Dr. Tidswill, who, as the representative of the Federal and State Governments, watched the experiments with the Danyasz virus for rabbit extermination, has presented his report. He finds that the efficiency of the virus as a destroyer of rabbits has not been demonstrated, and that although the microbe might be made

to infect certain small animals, there is no reason to apprehend any danger from its practical use. He points out that a similar, or at least indistinguishable, virus has been known for years, and its natural behaviour on the main land has not been sufficient to keep rabbits in check, and no results have come out of the experiments to indicate that the virus could be artificially manipulated with greater efficiency. There need be no apprehension of danger to human beings from its use, while the risk to other animals is remote.

Brer Man has been worsted, as well as Brer B'ar and Brer Wolf and Brer Fox. But Brer Man may yet find among his growing microscopic menagerie a microbe with a more potent virus, yet sufficiently safe, to let loose in the big warrens of Australia and New Zealand. And then Brer Rabbit must look once more to his armor.

Tourist Traffic

Johnson did not tour till late in life—when his heart was too crusty and his mind too hardened by insular notions to learn the tolerance that travel teaches. And so to the end of his days he never overcame his dislike of foreigners, whom he catalogued *holus-bolus* as 'fools'. The immense facilities of travel nowadays are highly calculated to break down the race prejudice that seems to set its strongest grip on insular peoples. And in the end, the tourist, with his puttees and his knickerbockers and his slung kodak, may unconsciously be playing a contributing part in the international peace of the future. In the meantime he is, even in New Zealand, an asset that increases steadily in value year by year. According to Commendatore Bodio, the tourist traffic is worth about £40,000 a day to Italy. Several years ago it was estimated that the tourists to the Riviera enriched these charming Mediterranean winter resorts to the tune of some £12,000,000 annually, while some £5,000,000 were distributed by summer visitors among the hotels and boarding-houses of Switzerland, 'the playground of Europe'. Switzerland had in 1899 (the year of the latest available report) 3167 hotels and boarding-houses, with an invested capital of £22,000,000. And in the same year 2,559,000 arrivals were registered at the hotels, etc., representing an influx of some 300,000 to 400,000 individual tourists, of whom 34 per cent. were estimated to be Germans, 20 per cent. Swiss, 17 per cent. English, 11 per cent. French, and 18 per cent. of various other nationalities. We in New Zealand are far out on the rim of the world. But the unique character of our scenic attractions, and the reputation of our tight little islands as a sportsman's paradise, are drawing to our shores an increasing stream of visitors from afar, that bids fair to make New Zealand the playground of the Southern Hemisphere, as Switzerland is of the Northern.

Those Wall Charts

The Wellington Education Board has accepted (so the papers say) a number of wall charts of the Ten Commandments, to be hung up in the State schools within their jurisdiction. Are the members of the Board aware that the translation of the Ten Commandments referred to is taken from a sectarian version of the Holy Scriptures? Are they aware of the controversies—sometimes, unfortunately, deplorably bitter on the non-Catholic side—that have whirled and eddied and even still sometimes circle, around the division and the wording of the Ten Commandments? The new biblical charts are of course, intended, not merely to fill so much wall space, but to be read, at least casually, by the pupils during school hours. If not, what are they for? How does this square with the legalised secular character of the system during working time? And can the Board see any difference in principle between placarding a part of the Protestant version of the Bible on the school walls, in large print, during school hours, and placing a part, or the whole, of the same sectarian version of the Inspired Record as a reading-book in the hands of the pupils? And how will Jewish parents rel-

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