

separate heaps, "You have here orders for 910,000 feet of matai; 750,000 kauri; 840,000 feet of white pine. Now, supposing the senders are alright, can you execute the orders? They are evidently urgent or they wouldn't be telegraphed for," said he, whimsically.

The cool way he treated the matter made me wonder whether he really thought they were genuine. If they were, what fortune was mine! I began to think what Williams would say about that little mortgage of mine that he threatened to foreclose on, when I showed him orders for such quantities of timber. My friend, however, cut my reflections short with a curt, "Well, can you?" I said, "No, I could not. There is not that much timber in Auckland." "Quite so," said my friend. "Then what do you propose to do?"

I was getting angry. I had come round at his special invitation to hear his explanation of the numerous telegrams, and all the satisfaction I could get was a most unhappy feeling that my friend was having a game with me. So I told him plainly, that if he had nothing better to do, and so little consideration for my feelings, I should seek a solution elsewhere. With that, he burst into loud laughter. "Listen to me," said he with great vehemence, when he saw my angry flush, "What are you doing with telegrams that don't belong to you?" I said they were mine, and had my name clearly on them. His reply was, "Yes, they have the name 'Brown,' and your initials, but are you a timber broker?" I replied that I assumed the word 'broker' was written in error, and that it was intended for merchant. "Nothing of the kind" said he. "They belong to Billy Samuels, the bookie." "Billy Samuels," said I, "the bookmaker! But he is not a timber merchant?" "No, but he is a timber broker on race days, and those telegrams were for him." "But what!" "Never mind what you are going to say," broke in my friend. "I know Billy well. I had some bets with him to-day." During the luncheon spell he was much puzzled that he hadn't heard from his pals in Palmerston North, Wanganui and Wellington. He mentioned the names of Jacobs of Palmerston North, and Scott of Wanganui, and said it was most extraordinary that no bets had come from them. "I believe," said my friend, quizzing me curiously, "that you had several orders from these gentlemen, didn't you?" "Yes," I said, "one wanted 510,000 feet of rimu and the other 240,000 feet of matai. "Well now," said he, "both those gentlemen are timber brokers and usually do a thriving business with Billy Samuels on race days. Their names are not published on signboards above their places of business, but they do a very substantial trade nevertheless, in a back room in a tobacconist's shop."

"But I do not yet see the connection," said I. "Well," said he, "suppose the sending of telegrams containing bets or racing tips were illegal. Do you suppose the clever bookies haven't sufficient brains to hoodwink a few telegraph clerks? Let me tell you a little code these gentlemen use on race days. Suppose there were six events at the races to-day. To

demonstrate my point we will suppose that you and I are bookmakers, you living in Palmerston North and I in Auckland. You want to send me £5 in bets to put in the horse standing first on the race card for the third race; £2 on the fourth horse in the first race, and £100 on the fourth horse in the fifth race. Now, how would you manage this if telegraphing bets were illegal? I'll tell you. We take the race card, and call the first race, for the sake of argument, "rimu." The second race we agree to call "matai." The third race "kauri," etc., etc. "But still I don't see—" "Wait a minute," said my friend, "you will see it all in a moment." Now we further agree that we send our wires as nearly like genuine telegrams as possible to avoid suspicion. If I want to send you £5, I make the first figure of the telegram a "5." If I want you to put it on the first horse I make my next figure a "1," if the second horse it would be a "2," and so on. And as we have already arranged that the different races shall be named after some tree in common use for timber, we can now translate the telegram from Mr. H. Jacobs. His wire read, I believe, "send 510,000 feet of rimu." The first figure represents the amount of money, viz.: £5. The second figure the horse, viz.: the "first" horse in this case (the remaining 0's being mere ciphers to make the telegram look genuine), and the name of the timber "rimu" represents the race. So you see H. Jacobs wanted Billy Samuels to put £5 on the first horse ("Speedwell," according to my card) that ran in the first race to-day, and you have stopped Billy Samuels from doing so. I can imagine that H. Jacobs will have some explaining to do the men he took the money from, and it may cost him a considerable amount to keep his credit good, as, of course, he must pay out on the winning tickets to save his reputation. Incidentally you have learnt something about a business you had previously no knowledge of.

### New Hollow Concrete Brick Introduced in England.

A new building unit that has recently been introduced in England, says "Commerce Reports," is nearly five times as large as an ordinary brick, but in comparison is much less heavy and is easily handled. The lighter weight results from the hollowing out of the brick to provide air layers. By the shaping of the ends the existence of joints running all the way through a wall is avoided. The brick is, as a rule, made of 1 part cement and 4 parts sand by simple hand machinery. Three men can make enough bricks in a day to build 400 to 500 sq. ft. of wall. A further economy is effected by the manner of laying the walls, inasmuch as the ends and bottoms of the bricks need only to be dipped in a thin lime mortar mixed with a small amount of cement. If laid in the usual way the air channels in the brick would become filled. It may be added that slag, clinkers, sand, and brick dust, mixed with cement, form suitable materials for these bricks.