

SPORT

by

S. V. McEwen

DURING the surfeit of holiday sport which was almost sufficient to make one's head burst keeping track of everything, I was able to spend a few hours of pleasant relaxation with one of the most enjoyable books I have ever read.

I don't know what your particular interest is in the animal line, but there must be very few people who do not possess some spark of affection for the dog. He competes with the horse for the honour of man's best friend. He is, in fact, servant, friend, fellow sportsman and sharer in man's most primitive and masculine delights.

Books on sport invariably tire one because of their technical nature. Few authors are able to clothe the do's and don'ts with sufficient dressing to make their contribution to sporting literature one of entertainment as well as one of knowledge.

We can be grateful to Mr. J. Wentworth Day for his latest effort, "The Dog in Sport" (publish-

ed by Harrap, London), for giving the dog an honoured place in literature. Mr. Wentworth Day is a well-known London journalist and a gun of no mean order, so he speaks with much authority on the part the dog can play with man in the field of sport. His book is monumental for the research which must have been involved, but its pages also contain charming writing, spiced with personal anecdotes, while he treats entertainingly the growth, history and development of each breed, giving, in particular, exhaustive treatment to gun dogs.

The author claims that the book is not for the dog-breeder or show-bench hot-gospeller; it is, actually, a book for the ordinary man or woman who has had a lot of fun, and a good deal of boyish enchantment with dogs; who, perhaps, has discovered that the love of a dog is a balm for wounds.

Art Of Venery

France and England are the only two countries which have kept the art of venery alive, these two being the masters of game so far as the pursuit of birds and animals with dogs is concerned.

Fox-hunting is the most typical of English sports, itself little more than 200 years old, but England owes to France the direct roots of every form of hound used for hunting, whether it is Scotch or Irish deerhound, foxhound, otter-hound, harrier, beagle or greyhound.

The oldest breed of dog has never been definitely determined. The Arctic breeds are of great antiquity, while the Norwegian elkhound is said to date back in its present form four or five thousand years before Christ.

Greece is said to be the possible origination of the greyhound, while the Romans in the last decade of the Empire kept packs of hunting dogs in various parts of Gaul for regular hunting parties.

The dog was born in a mist of legend. From the dim panorama of the past he has been used to serve man in many domestic purposes and as an ally in the pursuit of game, but the mystery of his origin remains unsolved. He is sculptured on Egyptian tombs that were built five thousand years before Christ. He has been the watchman of the house, shepherd of the sheep, warden of the oxen and nursemaid of the children since the first skin-clad man slept shivering on the naked ground fearful of the wolf in the night.

Great Legacies

"Both Roman and Danish civilisations swept over our land, leaving great legacies," says the author. "The Romans gave us roads, laws and a code of justice. The Danes bequeathed us our sea sense. Their fighting stock hardened our national character and physique. Their forthrightness offset and overmastered the cunning and deception of the native Celt.

They brought a breed into the nation which has helped perhaps more than any other to make our Empire. The Roman brought the pheasant. The Dane brought the sailor and the fisherman.

"Both brought the sword and the fighting spirit wherewith to use it. But neither brought the dog who, as Aristotle said, is 'man's greatest triumph of conquest.'

"That was left to the French. The grim, steel-clad barons of Normandy; the dashing Gascon knights; the squires from Poitou and Touraine; the gentlemen-adventurers from the lands of La Vendee—all that precious, fighting, filibustering crew brought with them their hounds of the chase, the love of hunting, the artist's knowledge of the finer points of venery—the foundation of the Englishman's greatest sport of the day,

★ A charming head-study of ★ Lucky Star of Ware, one of the finest Cockers ever bred in England. Although scientific breeding and kennel management is concentrating more on type than utility, dogs in the sporting breeds in England must still be capable of proving themselves in the field. The dual honour of show bench and field champion is highly coveted.

in the aggregate totalisator turn-overs at race meetings.

There is no more accurate barometer of public spending power than the totalisator, which suggests that when the public have a little extra money to spend they like to go racing, and also that the will to have a gamble is still an inherent trait in the make-up of the British subject.

It has always puzzled me why racing and trotting clubs do not spread themselves a little more in an effort to encourage more people to go racing. It is a fine pastime taken in the open air, and promoted on a standard which is said to set an example to the whole world.

Why racing clubs, as purveyors of entertainment, should continue to charge people about five times as much for an afternoon's amusement as any other

sports promoting organisation charges, is quite beyond comprehension. A large attendance is essential to the success of any race meeting. The larger the crowd the greater the revenue for the club, yet clubs will persist in maintaining class barriers by dividing their enclosures, a kind of segregation of the poor from the rich, while the sport remains beyond the means of many thousands.



Sport On The Air

JANUARY 19.

Running commentaries on the events of the first day of the Wellington Racing Club's Summer Meeting at Trentham Racecourse will be broadcast by 2YA from 12 noon. If the last race commences after 5 p.m. it will be broadcast from 2YC Wellington.

JANUARY 20.

A commentary on New Zealand Bowling Association championships will be broadcast by 1YA, on relay from Carlton Bowling Green, at 2 p.m.

Gordon Hutter, well-known sports commentator, will give a sports talk from 1YA at 7.30 p.m.

JANUARY 21.

A commentary on the New Zealand Bowling Association Championships being held at Carlton Bowling Green will be broadcast from 1YA at 2 p.m.

Running commentaries on the events of the second day of the Wellington Racing Club's Summer Meeting at Trentham Racecourse will be broadcast from 2YA at 12 noon. If the last race commences after 5 p.m. it will be broadcast from 2YC Wellington.

There is **NO LIMIT TO ENJOYMENT** with
"RED JACKET"
BRIGHT VIRGINIA CIGARETTE TOBACCO - 20zs. 1/10. 10z. 11^d lead packets