SUBURBAN HANDICAP OUR GREATEST RACE.

The Derby of the United States—Winners of Former Years—Gossip of Ornament, the Present Favorite.

[Copyright, 1898.]

The Suburban was the first of the great handicaps offered by any of the large racing associations of the United States. Ever since it was set on foot it has been a celebrated and popular race in all parts of the country. In the list of the Suburban winners are many names of note, while numbers of celebrated horses have unsuccessfully competed in the famous contest.

This event is always a signal for the outpouring to the beautiful grounds of the Coney Island Jockey club at Sheepshead Bay, N. Y., of thousands of those who love the horse for himself as well as for his prowess. It is such races as this that keep alive what little sentiment there is nowadays connected with the turf, racing unfortunately being regarded in these latter days by its followers in a cold, hard, businesslike fashion.

The track faced young girls, the lovely women and staid matrons who are seen at the race track but a few times each season are always in evidence on Suburban day. Then, too, the busy merchant, who is kept with his nose to the grindstone of business at his desk in town six days in the week and who can only snatch a few hours away from the city by special effort, is present and relieves the monotony of the struggle for money by a little healthful recreation.

The presence of all these fair, radiant women and their escorts temporarily casts into the shadow the regulars who are present day after day.

Every year the public makes some horse the favorite to carry its money. One of the few occasions on which the wisdom of the popular selection was justified was in 1896, when Millionaire Huggins's Salvator won. The furore caused by that winning will easily be recalled. Last year M. F. Dwyer's bay colt Ben Brush captured the rich prize with Sims up, and seldom has there been a finer race or one more honestly won. Four times the Suburban has been captured by horses owned by pool men.

This year the race will be run on June 18 at the usual distance, a mile and a quarter, and a glance at the entry list will convince any one that a great contest may be confidently anticipated.

The Suburban Handicap has been an annual fixture for 15 years. Here is a list of the winners up to date:

1884—General Monroe (126), 2:01 3-4.
1885—Foxhall (126), 2:06.
1886—Troubadour (122), 2:07¾.
1887—Tarpan (126), 2:07.
1888—Sir Dixon (126), 2:07¼.
1889—Eric (126), 2:06¾.
1890—Longfellow (126), 2:06¾.
1891—Kingmaker (126), 2:06¾.
1892—Montana (126), 2:07 3-4.
1893—Lamplighter (126), 2:07 3-4.
1894—Dobbin (126), 2:06 1-4.
1895—Lamplighter (126), 2:07 1-4.
1896—Salvator (Mason) (126), 2:07.
1897—Ben Brush (126), 2:06 1-4.

Ben Brush has turned a trick, and it is feared by racing days are over. His very career has been a brilliant one, and last year he went into winter quarters as the champion of his class. Few horses have left the turf with a brighter record than Ben Brush, and if his breakdown should prove to be permanent he will go into the stud with an enviable prestige, which, taken in connection with his breeding, should make him a successful sire. Not long ago he was purchased by James R. Keene from M. F. Dwyer at the reported price of $25,000.

The following are the entries for the race this year:

Entered	Age.	Wt.
Ben Holladay	4	126
Dr. Dock	4	126
Tillo	4	126
Ornament	4	126
Hawks	4	126
Howard Mann	4	126
Sir Walter	4	126
Don't Lie Abed	4	126
Adhesive	4	126
Typhoon II	4	126
Halma	4	126
Frontenac	4	126
Transmute	4	126
Dare to Be Free	4	126
Tom Cat	4	126
Lady	4	126
Lucky Dog	4	126
Dr. Rice	4	126
The Robber	4	126
Imp. Tudor	4	126
Romany Girl	4	126
Sir Hubert	4	126
Mary Pickett	4	126
Dr. Leggett	4	126
Commando	4	126
Gallifet	4	126
Ben Brush	4	126
Sir Richard	4	126
Dr. Hall	4	126
Hob	4	126
Ogden	4	126
Dead Shot	4	126
Lucky Brown	4	126
Bonnie	4	126

Ornament, carrying the weight, is the favorite with the public this year. He is one of the best looking race horses and is a chestnut colt by imported Order—Victoria, by Gladiator. He started in the Kentucky Derby last year, finishing second to Typhoon II, leading Dr. Catlett, Dr. Sheppard and others. His most important race during the Louisville meet was the Clark Stakes at a mile and sixteenth on May 19 last year. On June 29 he won the St. Louis Derby, a mile and a half, in 2:41. His first important appearance in the east was on the opening day of the autumn meeting of the Coney Island Jockey club, when he captured the Fall Handicap for 3-year-olds. At the same meeting he won the Twin City Handicap at a mile and a quarter in 2:08 3-5. This last is at the same distance as the Suburban. Ornament recently passed out of the hands of C. T. Patterson into those of Hedley & Nelson and won his first race under their colors the Dresden Handicap, two weeks ago in hollow style with Tod Sloane up. His time was 2:10 over an extra heavy track, and some of the good horses he beat were Ben Holladay, Sir Pax, Don Te Ono, Tillo, On Dock and Ogden. The winner of the Dresden was handed a weight penalty, so that Ornament must carry 131 pounds in the Suburban.

Most of the well known jockeys now in the east will have mounts in the race. Claxton will probably be on the favorite, while Tod Sloane will have the mount on either Lehman or Doris Keene, as he is riding for the Fleischmann stables. On Dock or Typhoon II will be piloted by Taral.

The list of entries will be cut down before the day of the race for various reasons, and it is probable that only about a dozen naps will go to the post. Last year there were only nine starters.

Sheepshead Bay is justly noted for being one of the most beautiful race tracks in the world, the club, green fields and giant beeches and maples making that portion of Long Island resembling the course the garden spot of the state. But on Suburban day there is no time for the hurrying thousands to admire the smooth sward or beautiful groups of flowering plants. There is a rush and hustle for the grand stand to secure seats, it being a case of first come first served. An hour or more before the first race is called there is not a seat to be had, and the space reserved for vehicles is crowded with carriages, dogcarts, wagons and wagonettes.

From the boxes before the vast, double decked grand stand, the spacious paddock and huge inner field, with its hundreds of booths, are clearly seen, with the throng out for a number's holiday. Here is an old timer rubbing his hands and telling any who will listen that a season that so favors the sport of kings is never one to be defeated in the hours of the world.

Trains after train deposits its living freight, and the crowd, now tremendous, but good natured withal, fills up every nook and corner on each side of the white track like two armies drawn up in battle array.

There are many women magnificently dressed in that vast assemblage. Hundreds stand for hours with their brothers or somebody else's brothers and applaud their favorites, unmindful of the beating sun.

Every one exchanges opinions with his neighbor, from the tailor made girl who comes from no one knows where, but whose show of horse flesh is amazing, to the city clerk with a half holiday and a good dollar to gain a fortune on the "good thing" to which some kind friend has tipped him.

At last the three less important races are over, and with appetites whetted by the long delay all eyes are turned to the stack whence the horses for the great event will emerge from the paddock.

Here comes the favorite. "How can this beat him?" is the cry. Others follow, each greeted with cheers by its adherents, while the jockeys full not of heavy recognition and admiration to do their best.

There is a delay at the post, but at last comes the joyous shout, "They're off!"

As the beautiful animals run past the stand everybody rises with one accord and applauds. The homes roar of the multitude is interpolated with the sharp staccato of the coronations and shrill strokes of the fashions continent. Then there is a lull as the steeds disappear in the back stretch.

At last they swing into full view again, as the last furlong is entered, there is a cloud of rapidly approaching dust, the wire is passed, and all over. Numbers of men pull and faces for joy in demonstrative fashion, while others turn away with cold, hard, strained faces, but these things all must be, for as our old friend Mark Twain sagaciously observes:

"It were not best that we should all think alike, it is difference of opinion that makes horse races."

Besides the Suburban there are several other rich stakes to be run off at the June-July meeting of the Coney Island Jockey club. On the 25th of June the Great Trial Stakes takes place. This is the richest race for 3-year-olds in the United States, being worth $25,000. It is run on the Futurity course, which is 170 feet short of six furlongs. On July 4 the Realization will engage the attention of the turf lovers. This race, by over a course of 1½ miles, is worth from $21,000 to $25,000 and is for 3-year-olds.

On Aug. 23 will take place the Futurity, the richest turf event in the country, or, for that matter, in the whole world. For that, if for no other reason, this is an interesting race. It gained its name from the fact that the horses are entered before they are born—that is, the progeny of certain dams are named as starters two years before the date of the race in which they are to run and before they are foaled.

WALLACE F. HYDE.

An Interesting Booth Letter.

John Marlowe recently acquired by purchase a letter written by Edwin Booth about 15 years ago, to the editor of a New York paper who had requested from him an article on the drama.

"Having no literary ability whatever," wrote the great tragedian, "I must decline your flattering invitation. Nor do I know how to aid the worthy cause you advocate. Could I do so, be assured it should be very dear. My knowledge of the modern drama is so very meager that I never permit my wife or daughter to witness a play without previously ascertaining the character. This is the method I pursue. I can suggest no other unless it might be by means of a 'dramatic censor,' whose taste or judgment might prove, be frequently at fault. If the management of theatres could be induced to specialists and placed in the hands of actors who value their reputation and respect their calling, the stage would at least afford a healthy recreation if not indeed a wholesome stimulus to the exercise of noble sentiments. But while the theatre is permitted to be a mere shop for gain, open to every blackleg of immoral gimcracks, there is no other way to discriminate between the pure and base than through the experience of others."

Mark Twain (Samuel L. Clemens) is announced to be at work on an English adaptation of Lindenau's German comedy, "Bad Weather," which will be produced simultaneously in America and in London in the autumn.

CHAMPION MARKSMAN OF UNCLE SAM'S ARMY.

"Gunsling Dick," Sergeant of the Sixteenth United States Infantry—His Record on the Rifle Range.

[Copyright, 1898.]

The theory that a blue eye should not has been exploded. The champion marksman of the United States army has a brown eye. With those two brown eyes he shoots with both eyes open—he has beaten all shooting records at all distances, in all positions and under all circumstances.

This champion marksman is now a member of the Sixteenth infantry. He one bronze medal and six gold ones near the name Richard N. Davidson. Those medals testify that he is the best shot in the whole United States army. His comrades are proud of him and are willing to pit him against the world.

Davidson enlisted in 1896. In 1890 he won a third class department bronze medal for marksmanship. His comrades guyed him, saying all his time would be occupied in burnishing his medal, whereupon Davidson replied that he would win a medal that would not need burnishing.

And he did.

In 1891 he won the first gold medal in the team belonging to the department of the Platte. In 1892 he again carried off the first medal in this same department with a score that has never been beaten or even equaled since. This famous score was 62 points out of a possible 65. Later at Fort Sheridan, Chicago, he captured the first class gold medal for moving target practice, the object being at a distance of 800 yards and moving as fast as a man moves in ordinary walking, three miles an hour. In 1895 he was awarded the first "distinguished marksman" gold trophy, the Buffalo medal. "This is the greatest honor possible to a marksman in the army. His score was 61 points out of a possible 65.

These prizes were all won with a Springfield rifle. There has been no contest since the new King-Jorgensen rifle was introduced in 1896. However, Davidson is willing to try the new rifle in a contest with any marksman in the United States.

This crack sharpshooter is also famous as the most rapid marksman in the army. In what is known as a half sole lock position in a minute he has fired an average of 12 shots in 30 seconds, while others could discharge only seven in the same time. While making these rapid shots he holds his gun in a peculiar position, which has caused him to be known throughout the army as "Gunsling Dick."

A remarkable fact in connection with this "wizard of the rifle," by the way, is that he has very weak eyes.

GILSON WILLETS.

"GUNSLING DICK," CHAMPION MARKSMAN OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY.

Stories of The Stage.

When George Thatcher betook himself to farce and sought to wrangle with rams through the medium of "Tuxedo," Miss Dorothy Morton, who was in her teens and a likely soubrette, settled upon the other made her to John M. Thatcher, it being her first approach to a contract.

She telegraphed to her father: "Am going with George Thatcher of Thatcher, Primrose & West. Have signed contract."

To which her irate parent wired in reply: "How dare you run away with a minstrel troup? Come home at once."

Dorothy tried to explain, but the father was obdurate, and one morning just as she was about to leave for rehearsal, a polite official with stars and warrants gained admittance to the innocent Dorothy's presence and made it clear to the young lady that unless she immediately allowed the officer to conduct her to the depot in time for the next train home he would be called upon to order police assistance.

And Dorothy, who was under age, was carried off weeping and wailing and sending telegrams to the whole of her acquaintance. It was some time before things could be explained to him and the necessary pay for expiration crowded with home sense enough to make her realize that she had not had a gifted daughter who could not be withheld from the public appreciation awaiting her. Now, when she climbs down to study lines and songs, rehearses from sunny morn to dreary eve and plays nine performances a week, she wishes she hadn't tried so hard to convince papa of the purple dreams he was likely to dispel, the golden state of fame and incidental expenses he was overlooking.

George Bernard Shaw, author of "Arms and the Man" and "The Devil's Disciple," has published a book called "Plays Pleasant and Unpleasant," in a preface to which he asks the question why people should be indifferent even to those of his plays which are pleasant. "The main difficulty is," he says, "the monopoly for serious drama of thousands of playgoers of all classes. With them I must frankly take the superior position. I know that many managers are wholly dependent on them and that no manager is wholly independent of them, but I can no more write what they want than Joachim can put aside his fiddle and chime a happy company of bean feasters with a marching tune on the German concertina. They must keep away from my plays; that is all."

In commenting upon the fact that a great many actors at this time of the year are forced into idleness and that a great many of them do not laycheck money away to carry them over the vacation period Henry Irving offers some interesting gossip as to the earnings of the better known actors and actresses. According to him, certain of our players earn high salaries. The best paid player in America is Ada Rehan, who for many a year has been receiving $900 a week—perhaps. Out of that income she has laid by a tidy fortune.

John Drew receives $500 a week, and, being of prudent disposition, he is now reputed to be worth $250,000—also perhaps.

For some years back E. H. Sothern has been making more money than either of these, but as he assumes the responsibility of his own productions he also loses more. Thus for several seasons Mr. Sothern's profits have been in the neighborhood of $50,000 a year. Later, however, certain of his plays have not suited the public, and he is said to have lost heavily.

The two Josephs, Jefferson and Murphy, risk nothing on productions and little on actors, and by pursuing this economic system for many years each is wealthy.

Lillian Russell has received the highest salary ever paid to a comic opera prima donna in this or any other country. Her income began with $15 a week at Tony Pastor's and reached $1,500 a week with Abley, Schoeffel & Grau. During her 20 years' connection with the stage Miss Russell has earned about $1,000,000—another perhaps. She is the kindliest and most generous of singers and still prodigal. Probably if her pearls were sold the estate of the golden dove would not reach $25,000.

That was the fortune Georgia Cayvan had gathered after two decades in acting. Georgia's salary was never high. She earned $200 a week and saved most of it.

Many persons were surprised doubtless, in reading the story of Anton Seidl's wanderings a few hours before his death, to learn that he resorted to a well known Broadway (New York) coffee house "to read the papers." That had been his habit during all his visits to New York, and there any afternoon one may see a group of musicians and writers in the city sipping coffee, talking or reading the papers.

William Norris, erstwhile the Cissy Dutchman of the "Bells of New York," has created a very comical bit of character work in his impersonation of the theatrical "angel" in "The Chorus Girl."

BEHIND THE FOOTLIGHTS.

Perugia is the name of a new force who has lately made a hit at Catania, Sicily.

Miriam Scandia, who will be previously known as Miriam Nesbitt, has been engaged by Charles Frohman for leading roles. Alice Riley, who will appear on the programme as Dorisa Dore, will support Nella Morris for his annual summer tour, and Jessie MacAllister, a niece of Judge MacAllister of the supreme court and a New York society girl, has been engaged by Richard Mansfield for his company next season.

George H. Broadhurst, the author of "The Wrong Mr. Wright" and "What Happened to Jones," has written two new plays, one of a serious character called "The Last Chance," and a farce entitled "Why Smith Left Home."

Chris Abraham is a picture as she stands in the center of the stage during the patriotic finale of "The Telephone Girl." The stars and stripes are draped around her, and her brunette beauty shows off to greater advantage than ever amid the surroundings of the scene.

Lottie Blair Parker, author of "Way Down East," began her theatrical career as a member of the Boston theater stock company.

Andrew Mack's new play, "A Ragged Earl," is by Ernest Lacy.

The English version of Rostand's "Cyrano de Bergerac" for the London Lyceum will be made by Sidney Grundy.

Montreal is to have a new theater.

Alice Russell has gone to London. Shortly she will play in "Dangerfield, M.," under Charles Frohman's management.