

HOW HE LOST THE RACE.

BEHAVE OUT OF A JOCKEY SAVES A CHILD'S LIFE.

Pathetic Story of the Turf "All Bets on Seltzer Declared Off"—Not a Cent Lost.

Mortality has swung out, and is following close behind, third from the pole. The wire is terribly near. Whoever wins will win by a short head.

Suddenly something happens. A nurse-girl with her escort down close by the fence has become too deeply interested, and her little charge has toddled out upon the track and stands piteously helpless right in the path of the flying racers. Billy sees it all in an instant—the horrified expression on the nurse girl's face and dazed look of the little toddler on the track ahead. He can guide Seltzer around her, he thinks, but nothing can save the baby from the rushing "field" behind.

What can he do? A single false move and the race is lost. It won't be his fault if the child is crushed, anyway, and to win the race means so much. But some way, something in the appealing face of the baby makes him think of the little sister asleep in the tiny English churchyard so far away over the water, and he can't help it—he must do something. But what?

Like a flash he remembers a picture he once saw of a brave hussar who snatched a child from in front of a flying regiment of horse. After the Wild West show was on the other side, all the lads about the stables had practiced for weeks picking up articles from the ground by dropping over the horses' sides, and he had been the best of them all, but this was so vastly different. He knew he would fail, but he must try. With one hard pull on the reins he drops them, and with a cry to Seltzer he slips his left foot through the stirrup and draws the slender iron up to his knee. Kicks his other foot clear and throws himself wildly to the right, straight down over the horse's side. There he hangs, by one knee head down, his arms outstretched and his little body swinging wildly against the racer's side at every bound.

Seltzer falters in her pace and drops back. With a wild sweep of his arms Billy clasps the little form close and lifts the baby clear of the ground as the horses hurtle by. The strain is a terrible one, and he can only drag himself up a little way. His leg is almost broken by the sharp stirrup. He can only bend himself up as far as possible, close his eyes and hold tight. He hears the wild shouts from the crowds as David sweeps by, a winner. On they go for it seems a mile but in reality only a dozen rods. Seltzer slackens and stops. A dozen stable boys are springing at her head. Someone snatches the baby from his arms, and Billy drops down and steals hurriedly away to a quiet corner of the stables. It has all come over him now. Seltzer has lost. His dream of making a name for himself are gone. Mr. Burnett will never allow him to ride again. His head is whirling yet. He feels deathly sick. Everything looks black, and he wishes he were dead.

Sinking down on the straw, he buries his face and sobs as though his faithful little heart would break.

"Well, young man?"
It is Mr. Burnett.
Billy does not look up. "I'm sorry I lost the race, sir," he sobs. "I couldn't help it, you know, sir. She'd 'a' been killed, sir—the baby."

"Well, I should say she would. And how in heaven's name it happened that you weren't beats me."

"I'm sorry, sir, I didn't win."
"Eh? What?—didn't win? Jockey boy, I'd rather have my jockey do that thing than have my horses win a dozen races—yes, a hundred," adds young Mr. Burnett, after computing the matter more carefully.

"But the money, sir, wot's been lost?"
"Not a cent, except the purse. All bets on Seltzer declared off. Come along up in the stand, now; they're all howling for you."
And Billy went.—Charles Newton Hood in Lippincott's.

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