HEARING ON BETTING BILLS

THE JOCKEY CLUB PROPOSES A COMPROMISE.

It Provides for a Credit System of Betting and Prohibits Betting on Racetracks—Ex-Gov. Black Makes Chief Argument Against Percy-Gray Law Repeal.

ALBANY, March 4.—To minimize the effects of racetrack betting and to prevent people who cannot afford to make wagers on horse races, the Jockey Club, through its counsel, Joseph C. Auerbach, has suggested that the Codes Committees of the Legislature might amend the Percy-Gray betting law so that there will be no money bet at the racetracks. This amendment means the adoption of the English system of betting and would wipe out the field stands at all tracks, which are frequented by the pikers.

The closing arguments for and against the Agnew-Hart bills, which repeal the Percy-Gray law and provide for the punishment of bettors at racetracks as well as elsewhere, were listened to in the Assembly chamber by the largest crowd that has ever attended a hearing on a bill. The Jockey Club was well represented; August Belmont, H. B. Duryea, and Andrew Miller being among these who came to Albany on the special train to attend the hearing. James H. Butler, the owner of the Empire City track at Yonkers, was also present, and he and Mr. Belmont appeared to be on most friendly terms.

The fact that former Governor Frank S. Black was to make the answer to the arguments in favor of the passage of the Agnew-Hart bills attracted many. Mr. Black was in his best form and ridiculed the efforts to repeal the Percy-Gray betting law. He said that the only way to deal with the question was to regulate racetrack betting.

Louis Marshall of New York city, who was a member of the constitutional convention which adopted the article of the Constitution prohibiting gambling in this State, was the chief speaker for the anti-racetrack betting people. When Mr. Black was about to speak Mr. Marshall asked that he be permitted to have five minutes to reply. This was denied him, but at the conclusion of Mr. Black's remarks he shouted out:

"I asked for five minutes to make a reply to Mr. Black, but since I have heard his remarks I withdraw my request and say that when former Governor Black reads the stenographer's transcript of his remarks if he doesn't blush I will blush for him."

The next movementent in the fight will be made in the committees. Speaker Wansworth has shown that he is opposed to repealing the Percy-Gray law or making any change in it. Senator Raines is also known to entertain the same views. Both were attentive listeners to the hearing to-day. The real fight, it is believed, will be in the Senate. Assemblyman Murphy, the chairman of the Assembly Codes Committee, is believed to be in favor of reporting the Hart bills, and if the bills ever come before the lower house they will pass that body. Indications, though, point to the Senate Codes Committee being hostile to reporting the Agnew bill, which repealts the Percy-Gray betting law.

After Mr. Black had finished his speech the supporters of the Percy-Gray law believed that he won the day for them. At the last hearing they entertained the idea that it was a draw, but Mr. Black's answer to-day has sent their hopes soaring, for he talked from a different point of view than any one else had. He did not enter into a legal discussion of the law, as it was believed he would, but he put it up to every one that betting was something that could not be stopped. He referred to the clamor about an immense corruption fund, and as a citizen he said he wanted to emphasize the fact that he didn't believe one word of it. He resented the imputation and said that he was sure that no matter what action the Legislature took it would not arrive at a dishonest conclusion.

"Don't get excited over what people are saying," he said, "and with a rush of blood to the head do something you don't want to do. This is not a moral question. It is a practical one. Why, everbody would divide on the proposition as to whether or not gambling was right or wrong. Some of the ministers say they want these bills passed to prevent them from betting. One of the speakers who has just finished said he went to the races and lost and therefore his conscience has been aroused and he doesn't want to be tempted to bet any more.

"If you cannot do your own judging as to whether this is a good law to pass, then you are not fit to come to the Legislature. If you pass a law against betting on horse-races you must pass a law against all kinds of gambling. The man who bets on a horse must be put in the same class with the man who bets on a boatrace or a football or baseball game. The woman who bets a pair of gloves on the result of a boatrace or football game must be taken care of as well as the man.

"Now, I want to know if the minister who has a son on the football team would want his wife sent to jail if she bet a box of candies on her son's team. I am not here to argue to save myself from the sin of gambling or to save any of my family from going to jail. This proposed legislation is too drastic. It is wickeder than the offence it wants you to correct. Is betting on a boatrace a crime? No, it's weakness. Is it wicked? No, it's foolish."

He referred to the bill of Assemblyman Yates, which makes all forms of card playing and the possession of cards a misdemeanor. He spoke of the hysteria that is going the rounds. "Isn't it about time," he asked, "that we should call a halt and look over our hands? Isn't it time for one to say when he arises in the morning 'Am I really candid, or am I faking?' We have enough humbugs and some of these humbugs are making money at it."

Mr. Black said the only thing the Legislature could and should do in regard to betting was to attempt to regulate it. He said the Court of Appeals had construed the Percy-Gray betting law as meeting the requirements of the constitution.

"How about the constitution of South Carolina?" asked Senator Agnew.

"The only thing I know about South Carolina is what the Governor of that State said to the Governor of North Carolina," was the quick rejoinder of Mr. Black.

Mr. Black read the letter from the Rev. Thomas A. Sliker opposing the repeal of the Percy-Gray betting law and also one from Bishop Henry C. Potter, in which the Bishop said that driving a disease under the skin doesn't cure it, and he was in favor of the retention of the Percy-Gray law.

"This Agnew-Hart bill," declared Mr. Black, "is a blow at personal liberty. It is a blow at a personal right. You can't prevent a man from betting a cigar any more than you can prevent a man from smoking it. I am opposed to smoking; I am opposed to it because it makes me sick, but I am not going to ask you to pass a law to prevent smoking. Now in conclusion I want to say, Consider this question and arrive at your own judgment, but don't let any one else make your opinion for you."

F. K. Sturgis, secretary and treasurer of the Board of Stewards of the Jockey Club, reviewed the circumstances which led to the formation of that organization. He said the Jockey Club consisted of but 60 members, who pay $100 a year dues, and that it was erroneous to think that the Jockey Club handled much money of itself. He insisted that the chaotic condition of racing after the constitutional amendment of 1894 was needed to purify the turf, to improve the breed of horses and to keep jockeys honest. In his opinion what had been accomplished by the Jockey Club justified its work.

George M. Rommell of the Department of Agriculture at Washington reviewed the work of foreign Governments in improving the breed of horses, and insisted that the thoroughbred and the trotter could not be developed further in this country without racing.

At this juncture W. T. Burleigh, the vice-president of the agricultural societies, called the roll of the societies, and the secretaries of all but three responded from all the counties of the State that they were satisfied with the present racing law and against the Agnew-Hart bills. The secretary of the Montgomery county society created much laughter when he remarked: "In the language of our beloved President, me and my people are satisfied with the present racing laws."

Assemblyman Hoey of New York city at this point in reponse to an inquiry from Senator McCarren declared that he had made inquiries and was authorized to state that Alphonse Kloebel, who at the last hearing said he represented the Federation of Catholic Societies in favor of the Agnew-Hart bills, had no authority to represent the federation.

John H. Hull, representing the Kenilworth Breeding Association and the Buffalo Driving Club, said the Constitution was not a self-executing instrument and the Legislature in its discretion had passed the Percy-Gray law to make it effective to the extent considered necessary and the Court of Appeals had upheld it.

Frank Lord, who had been an Assistant District Attorney under William Travers Jerome, said that he had investigated the question of racetrack betting and he had been amused by reading of the accounts of men going wrong attending the races to make bets. He said he knew of one case that had come under his observation where a man had stolen $44,000 to bet on races, but he bet the money in poolrooms and he (Lord) on the strength of the information the man had given, raided a poolroom in New York city. He said now that there wasn't any racing in New York city poolrooms were as numerous as peanut stands.

Attorney Auerbach then made his remedial suggestion to curtail betting and reviewed what the Jockey Club had been doing of late in trying to keep the poolrooms from getting information regarding the races.

"During the New York racing season," he said, "poolrooms don't run, but when the Jockey Club's season is ended they run practically wide open. The Jockey Club has been carrying on a fight to exterminate the poolrooms."

The principal speaker in favor of the bill was Louis Marshall. He reviewed the proceedings in the Constitutional Convention of 1894 which inserted the article in the Constitution prohibiting bookmaking and poolselling. He said the Court of Appeals had not declared that the Percy-Gray betting aw was Constitutional and that the courts had never approved of the legislation. He said that the law was an offence against the spirit of the Constitution.

George Moone, president of the Manufacturers Association of Brooklyn, spoke in favor of the bills and said their passage was necessary to rescue the youth of the State.

Daniel Colvin of the Central Flatbush Taxpayers Association also spoke in favor of the bills.

Dr. Laidlaw was the last speaker for the bills. He read a leter from the Right Rev. Frederick Burgess, Episcopal Bishop of Long Island, who wrote:

"It sometimes seems unfortunate that the Church has to oppose the amusements of the people, but the clergy know better than others the fearful results of the gaming craze when once it takes possession of the mind. The number of boys and young men who have been ruined by being brought within the influence of organized gambling can hardly be estimated. The Church has no opposition to horse racing in and of itself nor do we believe that the breed of horses anymore than the manufacture of automobiles will be affected by the abolishing of systematic betting within the limits of the track".

NATIONAL GUARD NOTES.

Gov. Hughes Approves the Proposed Rifle Range Near This City.

ALBANY, March 4.—Adjt.-Gen. Nelson M. Henry to-day announced that Gov. Hughes has approved the introduction of a bill in the Legislature, in accordance with the preliminary report of the board to select a State rifle range somewhere in the vicinity of New York to take the place of the Creedmoor range, which was abandoned on account of complaints of danger to people living in its vicinity. The proposed location of the new range will not be divulged, as it would interfere with negotiations for whatever property might be needed for the purpose, but the Legislature was asked to make an appropriation sufficient to cover the purchase price of such land as is required. Property at Peekskill and in Orange county and on Long Island has been looked over by the board, the chairman of which is Lieut.-Col. N. B. Thurston, ordnance officer on the staff of Major-Gen. Charles F. Roe, commanding the National Guard.

Lieut.-Col. John B. Holland of New York, aid on the staff of Major-Gen. Roe, who is about to retire, has been brevetted by the Governor as Colonel.

Gov. Hughes has approved a pension of $30 a month for Corporal William Whitman of Company B, Twelfth Regiment, New York city, who was shot in the leg in an accident at the Creedmoor rifle range last fall.

Game Protector Retires as a Millionaire.

ALBANY, March 4.—The State will lose shortly the services of one of its most efficient game protectors, who is to become a millionaire. Floyd L. Smith of Plattsburg, who has been in the employ of the Forest, Fish and Game Department for the last two years, is finishing up his work with a view of retiring as soon as possible. He is a brother of the late Loyal L. Smith, who gave large sums to institutions in Plattsburg. Floyd Smith received a legacy of $250,000 and will also receive such share of the estate which remains after specific bequests are paid as to bring up the amount to more than $1,000,000.

G. W. QUINTARD, JR., MARRIED.

That Was in November of Last Year—He Thought It Wasn't the Public's Business.

WHITE PLAINS, N. Y., March 4.—Miss Mae Woods and George W. Quintard, Jr., grandson of George W. Quintard, the iron manufacturer, were married on November 16, 1907, in Mount Vernon. The facts concerning the wedding became known to-day.

Mr. Quintard before leaving for Buffalo to exhibit prize dogs at the Buffalo Bench Show said he had not made the announcement before because he thought the public had no interest in his private affairs. The ceremony was performed in the parish house of the First Baptist Church of Mount Vernon by the Rev. William A. Granger. The witnesses were Miss Estella Woods, sister of the bride; John A. Goodwin, Charity Commissioner of White Plains, and Miss Edith Granger, daughter of the clergyman.

Miss Woods displayed great courage when the Brewster Express was wrecked near Williamsbridge in February last year. She was on her way to her home at White Plains, and though badly hurt she helped other women passengers to escape from the car which turned over. She dragged several through windows and did other brave acts. Mrs. Quintard sued the New York Central Railroad Company for damages. Her suit was recently settled out of court.

Mr. Quintard, who recently became of age, is heir to about $1,000,000 of his father's estate. His grandfather, who is head of the Quintard Iron Works, is a brother of the late Charles Quintard, Episcopal Bishop of Tennessee. Mrs. Quintard's relatives are Catholics.

Methodist Bishop for Mexico.

MEXICO CITY, March 4.—It is stated here that the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which meets in Baltimore, Md., in May, will create a Bishopric for Mexico and that Dr. J. W. Butler, presiding elder of the Mexico district of the Methodist Church, will be made missionary Bishop for this country.

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RAILROADS MEET NEW LAW.

Extra Telegraphers Employed to Fulfil the Nine Hour Workday.

The law requiring a nine hour workday for railroad telegraphers went into effect yesterday and officials of railroads centering in this city were prepared to meet its requirements in part. It was estimated that from 5,000 to 6,000 more telegraphers would be required throughout the country as the result of the new law.

Vice-President Harris of the New York Central said last evening that the New York Central had established a school for railroad telegraphers some time ago and was able to meet the new conditions at once. No proposition had been made to reduce wages, he said, and as far as he knew there was no movement on the part of the other roads to reduce wages.

"All I can say," he said, "is that we will live up to the law. In some places where it is not so easy to make preparations the carrying out of the law will cause some hardship. In the East we will be able to meet all contingencies at once, but on some of the Western connections of this road there will be a good deal of embarrassment at first. It remains to be seen how this adding to the running expenses of the railroads will result ultimately. There is a logical limit to everything."

The Pennsylvania Railroad put 500 extra telegraphers to work along the line east of Pittsburg and will put 200 more to work west of Pittsburg. A representative of the company said that the company would live up to the law.

A representative of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad said that it was too soon to say how many extra telegraphers would be required. "We will not require so very many telegraphers," he said, "as we have been developing for some time the telephone system at the different points and will develop it further."

The Lehigh Valley and one or two other railroads had taken on some of the idle commercial telegraphers, who had to be broken in to the work. According to President Perham of the Order of Railroad Telegraphers there were 2,000 railroad telegraphers idle before the new law went into effect and these men got the first chance of employment.

Secretary C. P. McInerney of the New York local of the Commercial Telegraphers' Union put the number of commercial telegraphers still idle throughout the country at 2,500. He thought there should be work for all these men on the railroads.

DATES FOR VISIT OF WALES.

Canada Hears Quebec Celebration Must Be Between July 22 and 29.

OTTAWA, March 4.—In a letter from Lord Grey, read in the House of Commons yesterday by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Lord Grey said that the Prince of Wales would attend the tercentenary of the founding of Quebec next summer in the event that the celebration could be held between July 22 and July 29.

The Prince of Wales's proposed visit is directly attributed to King Edward's deep personal interest in the Quebec tercentenary. The Prince himself, however, is entering into the plans with the warmest sympathy. The only regret, according to advices from London to-night, is that the Princess finds that family reasons make it impossible for her to accompany her husband, as she greatly wished to do.

It was announced to-day from the naval headquarters at Portsmouth that the Prince will use the battleship Renown for his trip to Canada, and will be accompanied by the battleship Dominion, with other vessels. The Renown has remained at Portsmouth yacht fitted ever since she took the Prince and Princess to India.

As it is known now that the Prince will be here the Dominion Government will vote at least a quarter of a million toward the celebration and most of the provinces will contribute.

DEWITT C. BLAIR'S FORTUNE.

Trust Funds Left by John I. Blair Closed and He Gets What's Left.

Vice-Chancellor Emery in Newark yesterday terminated the executorship of DeWitt C. Blair as to five trust funds of $500,000 each left by the late John I. Blair of Blairstown to five grandchildren at his death in December, 1899. The will designated the securities of which the five trust funds were to be constituted. Subsequently it was found that the conditions of the will in this respect could not be carried out.

The Court of Chancery decided that the executor should fill out the funds from other assets of the estate, which amounted in all to about $15,000,000. It was shown that DeWitt C. Blair had properly fulfilled his duty as to the five trust funds.

These funds now to go the following: Isabella Scribner Fitzhugh, Charles Scribner, Arthur H. Scribner, Clarence Blair Mitchell and Emma Scribner Larned. The residue of the estate goes to the executor.

GRANT FINALLY DEAD.

He Made Many Attempts at Suicide—Jumped Once From Brooklyn Bridge.

John G. Grant, who tried to end his life a few days ago by diving off the Brooklyn Bridge but came up between the ice floes uninjured, killed himself yesterday by inhaling gas in the home of his brother at 187 Dean street, Brooklyn.

Besides his attempt to commit suicide by diving off the bridge Grant had tried several other times to take his life, but each time had been unsuccessful. He cut his wrists before he leaped into the river, but even this did not aid him in his effort to end his life.

Early yesterday morning Grant's sister-in-law detected the odor of gas in the house. She called her husband and together they went to John's room. They found him dead on the bed. All the gas jets were turned on and the windows were closed.

Grant had been a prizefighter in his day. He had fought a draw with George Dixon and at one time was considered to be a comer in the pugilistic game. He got a knockout, however, which he never got over. He had not been working much of late and had been very despondent. Since his leap off the bridge Grant had been keeping close to his brother's house.

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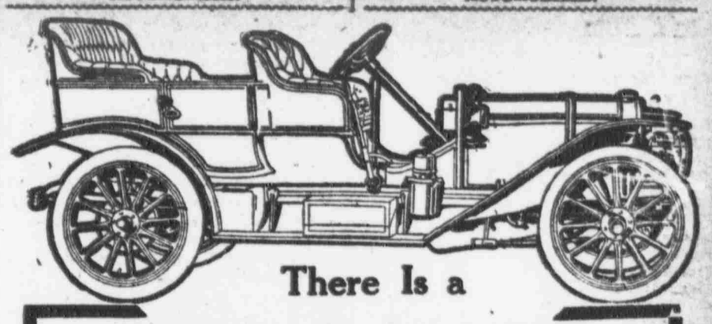

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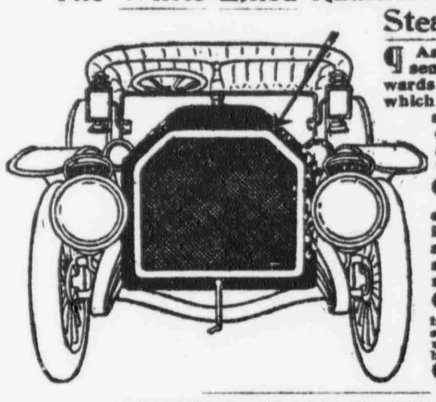

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