

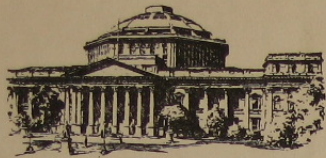
WHAT I KNOW!

Reflections by
A Philosophic Punter

COMMENTS AND OPINIONS:

- "This clever little book."
- "The shrewd jollity of it!"
- "Both interesting and clever."
- "*What I Know* is a treasure!"
- "A good tale amusingly written."
- "In many respects a unique book."
- "A most diverting parable."
- "That delightful phantasy *What I Know*."
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WHAT I KNOW!

REFLECTIONS BY
A PHILOSOPHIC PUNTER

*With an extraordinary dream of "The
Cosmic Mystery Cup" run at Randwick*

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What I Know!

Homo sum: humani nihil alienum a me puto

IT is now more than twenty years since I first went to a race-meeting. Since then I have attended a great many, not only in Sydney but in Melbourne and other cities of Australia—so many, indeed, that I have become a familiar figure to the bookmakers and the habitues of the course. I was a middle-aged man when I began to go, and now I am an old man, a fact of which I am frequently reminded when strangers in trains and trams and elsewhere address me as "Dad" or even as "Granpa."

What induced me to make my first visit to a race-course I can scarcely now say, but I think I caught the infection from my fellow-citizens, who seemed to think and talk of little else. Moreover, the Latin motto quoted above has always appealed to me, and, finding that horse-racing was very popular and interested so many human

beings, I became anxious to know what its fascination was.

No child could have known less of racing and betting than I did when I first ventured on the race-course, for it should be understood that I am not a racing man, nor indeed, a sporting man. By profession I am a philosopher, and my work in life is to try and understand the various systems of philosophy, ancient and modern, and to expound them to perplexed students. Although I have spent my life in this study and have gained some reputation as a philosopher, yet I have to confess that I do not understand the mystery of the Universe, and am not sure that any philosophic system has come near to solving it. When my students ask me to tell them what I know, I have to confess that I know practically nothing. I tell them, indeed, which philosophic system I prefer, and my reasons for preferring it, but I advise them to keep an open mind and to "wait and see." Not being a married man, I live according to custom in Darlington under the care and supervision of a housekeeper still older than myself. Bridget, who is a devout Catholic, has been with me for many years. She has frequently given notice to leave me on the ground that I am

too forgetful and absent-minded, but so far she has not carried out her threat. On one occasion, when I forgot to come home for dinner, she did leave the house for a few hours, but she came back again. What would happen to me if she did leave, I cannot imagine, and I dread to think of it.

When I first went to a race-meeting I tried to conceal the fact from Bridget—of whom I am a little afraid—but unfortunately I carelessly left on my study table a race-book, which she discovered. Holding the fatal book in her hand, she said sternly: "Professor, what does this mean? Have you been to the races?" The evidence against me being too strong, I admitted that I had just paid a visit of curiosity. She expressed surprise and sorrow, and prophesied that, if I continued to go to race-meetings, I should certainly be robbed or lose all my money. "For," she added, "if you can't look after yourself at home, how can you expect to do so on a race-course?"

Having begun to go to races furtively without the knowledge of my housekeeper, I now, I am sorry to say, frequently prevaricate as to the results of my betting.

On the rare occasions when I come home a winner I tell her that I have won handsomely, and give proof of it by making her a present. But on the occasions when I have lost, which, alas, are much more numerous, I do not tell her the exact facts, but I say in an off-hand way that I hardly paid my expenses, or that I came out as I went in, or that I was lucky to get out of it as well as I did.

Sometimes I think she suspects that I am not telling all the truth, for she looks at me in a peculiar way, and mutters to herself as she leaves the room. At first I thought it was on moral grounds that she was opposed to my going to races; but in this I was mistaken, for one day in a communicative mood she informed me that she sometimes had a little on herself. It appears that she has a great friend whose son is a jockey, and from this wellnigh inspired source she obtains now and again excellent information. How she can manage to bet without going to the race-course, I am unable to understand. No, it is not on the ground of morality that Bridget objects, but only because I am so helpless and absent-minded, and unable to look after myself—so at any rate she thinks.

The first race-meeting I ever attended was at Warwick Farm. Never shall I forget the impression made on me by the crowds, the noise of the bookmakers, and the excitement of the place. I was completely bewildered and knew not what to do or where to go, and I came near to taking the next train home. However, my condition seems not to have passed unnoticed, for several gentlemen who were complete strangers to me made themselves known and seemed to be interested in my welfare. I remember that I was agreeably surprised to find on the race-course so many men of goodwill who were prepared to go out of their way to help a stranger and a newcomer. In introducing themselves to me I noticed that these gentlemen invariably put to me a question—"What do you know?" I remember thinking to myself at the time: "Dear me, a race-course is like a philosophy class, for here too, I am asked what I know." I therefore replied to these gentlemen of the race-course in the same way as I replied to my students, and told them that unfortunately, although I was a professor of philosophy, I did not know anything about the Universe for certain, but that for some reasons, I inclined towards a certain system of philosophy. My

friends then made it clear to me that they were seeking my knowledge about the next racing event, and not about the Universe. Grasping the new situation, I had to allow that I knew no more about the result of the next race than I did about the Universe. Soon, however, I discovered that there was a difference between my new friends and my students, for the former, on learning my ignorance, began to impart to me assured knowledge. My students never do this. My race-course friends invariably did.

These men seemed to have known that I was a stranger lacking experience, and they were desirous of giving me the benefit of theirs. This greatly impressed me, and I was agreeably surprised to find so much altruism where I least expected to find it. Again and again these considerate gentlemen, after learning that I knew nothing, would inform me that a certain horse could not "get beat," or that he was "a moral," or that he would be "home and dry," or that he was "a dead cert," and then, having imparted this assured knowledge, they would most generously advise me to have a little on for myself as well. The terminology was a little strange to me, as we have no such phrases in use in works of phil-

osophy, but I soon got used to them, although some attracted me more than others. The phrase "home and dry" suggested comfort and repose, and was more pleasing than the term "dead cert." But I gathered that they all carried the same signification, namely, that the horse so described would win the race.

No sooner had I become master, as it were, of this new knowledge than I made another, and rather a disconcerting, discovery. I found that, just as philosophers do not agree as to the solution of the riddle of the Universe, so these new friends of mine did not agree as to which horse would be "home and dry;" for no sooner had one friend declared that No. 4 could not "get beat," than another friend with equal assurance would declare that No. 6 was a certainty. This was perplexing, certainly, but I was more and more coming to the conclusion that there is a close analogy between philosophy and punting, between a horse-race and the universe, and that the problems presented to the punter and to the philosopher are of the same order and equally difficult. Thus I soon recognized that philosophers and punters are brethren in distress, for they are both engaged in a search for the unknown. Sir Ray Lankester, a great

scientist, but not a philosopher and probably not a punter, has said that the pursuit of philosophy is comparable to the search by a blind man in a dark room for a black cat that isn't there. I do not agree with the last clause. The black cat is there. One day the secret of the universe will be understood, and the winner of the next race is known after the event. It appeared to me, then, that in adding punting to philosophy I had not changed my occupation, but only enlarged its sphere. What philosophers are to the universe, that punters are to a racing event.

Some weeks after this, on my way home in the train—for, acting on Bridget's advice, I had taken a return ticket—I meditated much on what I had experienced. I was aware that Bridget, loyal and devoted old soul as I knew her to be, was genuinely distressed about me. So, when I met her, I tried to relieve her anxiety by telling her that several gentlemen who were in a unique position to gain information had undertaken to see me through my difficulties. I had to confess that so far, at the Farm and other centres, they had been strangely astray, but that there had been quite unusual happenings. One horse had been "left at the post;" another had been "pocketed"

—whatever that might mean; certainly it was disastrous—and in a third case the jockey had foolishly "thrown the race away." They could not foresee—they could scarcely be expected to foresee—such events, but they assured me that at the ponies they were infallible, and if only I placed myself unreservedly in their hands I was sure to make a good deal of money.

I was dilating to Bridget on the high moral principles prevailing on the race-course, and on my good fortune in having come under the notice of men of such high character and good intention, when I became aware that Bridget's distress was for some reason or other increased by what I told her. "Do you know," she said, "who your gentlemen friends are? They are touts." And then, with a flow of language which was quite unusual, she went on to explain what touts are. My mind was, however, arrested by the word "tout," which I had never come across before in either my philosophic or my general reading. "Touts," I said to myself, "What a wonderful word!" And then I began to ponder the word and its application, and I recognized that, when I advise my students to adopt one philosophical system rather than another, I am then a philosophic tout.

True, I said to myself, I do not speak with the same amount of certainty as my new race-course friends, but then I do not know so much about philosophy as they do about racing. Still, when I speak in favour of Haeckel or Bergson I am touting for these men.

Thus was I musing when Bridget, losing patience, raised her voice in a way which is rare with her and exclaimed: "You are not listening to anything I'm saying. Mark my words, you'll be ruined. You're no more able to look after yourself than a child, and you'll be marked down as a simpleton. I ought to come with you to look after you." After this unusual outburst she left the room.

Many years have elapsed since the day when I first visited a race-meeting at the Farm. Since then I have visited hundreds of meetings on many courses, and, as a result, have gained considerable experience.

After a few months my tout friends left me alone, feeling, I suppose, that I was no longer in the same need of their valuable assistance, and possibly because other new-comers had presented

themselves as more in need of their aid.

So experienced am I now, that I am thought by many to be as good a judge as any, and many seek my advice. Yet, notwithstanding all that I have learnt during the last twenty years, I still remain of my first opinion that there is much in common between philosophy and punting.

Frequently, when I stand gazing at the face of the tote and examining the amount of support that each horse is receiving from the multitudes present, I think to myself that it is as difficult to read the riddle of the tote as it is to read that of the universe. But, I say to myself, in a few minutes we shall know the answer to the riddle of this race; shall we ever know the answer to the riddle of the universe?

The difficulties in both cases are of the same order. It is impossible to solve the riddle of the universe by counting heads; it is equally impossible to solve the riddle of the tote in that way. *Vox populi vox Dei* is a false motto whether in philosophy or in punting. It is true that in the case of a machine for making orange-juice the more oranges you put in the more juice you will get out—that is because oranges contain juice—but it does not follow that the more heads you

find supporting a philosophy or a horse the more likely they are to be correct, for heads do not for the most part contain wisdom. For a time, however, accepting the maxim *Vox populi vox Dei* as substantially true, and as certainly democratic, I followed the crowd and invested my money on the horse which had the largest number of supporters on the tote. I discovered by bitter experience that the tote is not democratic, that the *Vox populi* was only *Vox Dei* about once in four times, and that sometimes for eighteen events consecutively the voice of the people was not endorsed by the voice of God. Frequently, too, I noticed that the opinion least sanctioned by the voice of the people turned out to be the opinion sanctioned by the Eternal.

Thus, in racing as in philosophy, you can seldom get at truth by counting heads, and I discovered that both in racing and in the world at large the multitudes are as sheep to the shearers. In the one sphere they are shorn by politicians, priests, and profiteers, and in the other by the government, by the tote, and by the bookmakers. From these facts, observed on many race-courses, I came to the conclusion that some other criterion must be sought for; and so, instead of counting

heads, I determined to weigh them. Instead of listening to the voice of the majority I tried to listen to the voice of the wise. But here again, as in philosophy so in punting, there was no agreement among the wise; for just as in philosophy as many great minds support a materialistic philosophy as support an idealistic, so I found that in any given race the most experienced and astutest judges differed as to which horse would win.

As the years passed by, I discovered that many, finding themselves unable to solve the riddle of racing either by following the majority or by following the wise, had fallen back on mathematical and other kinds of systems. It appears that such people by studying the law of averages or some other mathematical law claim to have devised infallible systems which will relieve them of the necessity of picking winners, since their systems pick winners for them automatically.

A friend of mine once informed me in a confidential way that he had discovered such a system. He assured me that it worked like magic, and then he added more seriously, "I am afraid of what I have discovered. The secret is so wonderful, and the amount of money I am destined

to make is so great, it positively frightens me." He promised, as a special favour, to explain it to me on some subsequent occasion. A few months later, when I was going into the Paddock at the ponies, I saw my friend going into the Ledger, and I wondered why it was necessary to go into the Ledger to work his system. Not long afterwards he borrowed a fiver from me. I have a system of my own, the result of much philosophical reflection. I think my own system is quite infallible, but unfortunately I have not so far been able to work it with success—not, I am sure, because the system is faulty, but because *I* am; because I am too absent-minded and too forgetful.

I tried to reassure Bridget about myself and my prospects on the race-course by telling her that I had discovered a wonderful system. I did this one night when she was especially distressed because I came home without my glasses, which somehow or other had disappeared. I had placed them for a moment by my side on a seat of the grandstand, but when I turned to pick them up they were no longer there. I cannot imagine what could have happened to them. But Bridget was by no means reassured when I told her of

my system. On the contrary, she looked at me with pity and said that, while all systems were useless, any that I discovered would be especially so. I do not intend to make known to an unbelieving and unsympathetic public what my system is, but I merely say that it is based on the soundest principles. For many years I have been impressed with the idea that the workings of a race-meeting and its mystery are wonderfully similar to those of the universe, and I came to the conclusion that the same laws which are operating in society at large are operating on the race-course. The highest authority justifies us in believing that one such law is—"To him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away that which he hath."

If you go on to a race-course with £5, and try to make £100 with it, the chances are that you will lose the £5 you have; but if you go with £100 and try to make £5 with it, you have some chance of making it, if you know how to bet—but that is the rub. And that is my system, which I shall take with me to the silence of the Crematorium.

Others adopt other plans in attempting to solve the riddle of a racing event. Some rely on the stars; some on numbers; some on colours; others

on stray omens; some few there are who, scorning the opinion of the majority and the wisdom of the wise, and all systems whatsoever, fall back on intuition; and some dream dreams. But my experience goes to prove that the riddle of the race-course baffles all attempts to solve it, and the punter must confess himself to be agnostic until after the event, for even my system cannot guarantee success with any given race in particular, but only in the long run. On the other hand, success now and again awaits the punter when he least expects it. For instance, when, being in great doubt, he invests only a trifling sum, then his horse will probably win, whereas when with great confidence he invests heavily, his horse will almost certainly lose.

My absent-mindedness, which Bridget so greatly regrets, has sometimes led to disastrous results—as, for instance, when I have in a fit of abstraction torn up a winning ticket—but at other times it has led to surprising success. On more than one occasion have I discovered to my dismay that I have asked for a wrong number—and then the event has proved that I had got the winning horse. In a word, as in life, so on the race-course, there are surprising compensations. Fate seems

to play with us, and the universe is not always unfriendly.

My object in putting these reflections on paper is merely to provide an introduction to a remarkable dream I had on the eve of a recent Sydney Cup, and to explain how the dream took the form it did.

It is a well-known fact that in dreams the subconscious mind of the sleeper is influenced by the incidents, thoughts, and conversation of the preceding day. By some mysterious process the subconscious mind takes up these impressions, fashions them into the most fantastic shapes, and frequently weaves out of them a connected story. A classical instance of this is recorded in the Bible, which, by the by, is a great dream-book.

The story goes that St. Peter, being on the roof of a house and being hungry, fell into a trance and had a dream. In his dream he saw, as it were, a great sheet let down from Heaven, in which were all manner of beasts and birds. He then heard a voice commanding him to rise and eat. This he refused to do, on the ground that

the animals were unclean. The Voice then assured him that God had made them clean. Here plainly is a dream formed out of the thoughts and last sense-impressions experienced by the dreamer before he went to sleep. His thoughts had been about the question then vexing the Apostolic Church, as to whether the Gentiles should be admitted into it. He was hungry when he went to sleep, and the last impression made upon his senses would be the sight of the ships at sea with their sails bulging with the wind. Out of these thoughts and sense-data the dream was woven and the solution of a vexed problem arrived at by the Apostolic Mind.

Descending from great matters to small ones, the same thing seems to have happened with the dream I am about to record; for not only had I for many years been impressed by the similarity of the puzzles presented to the philosopher and the punter, but on the eve of the Sydney Cup I was one of a party of men at which both philosophy and punting were discussed. I will relate in a few words what happened.

I arrived at my friend's house about half-past eight and found a number of racing but thought-

ful men already assembled. I was the last to arrive.

"Good evening, Professor," said my host, "glad to see you. You know all these men. Before you sit down, help yourself to a whisky and soda."

When I was comfortably seated, my host said: "Well, Professor, what do you know?"

I recognized the inevitable question, and knew that he was asking my opinion about the great race of the next day. I replied that I came with the hope of receiving knowledge rather than with the intention of imparting it, especially to men who knew much more about such matters than I did.

Then one by one the men present gave their views about the probable result of the race, and many different horses were championed. One man said that he had no special fancy; that he thought the race was a very open one, and that he would not be surprised if a rank outsider won. A quiet man sitting in a corner remarked that it was as difficult to guess the result of a horse-race as it was to understand the meaning of life.

"Yes," I said, "I have thought that for many years, and the fact has appealed to me strongly, being a professor of philosophy."

From that we passed to the discussion of philosophical problems, and it was astonishing how differently the men thought about things. One was an avowed materialist; two or three confessed themselves to be agnostics, and one said that he was content to accept the authority of the Catholic Church as a refuge in a storm. The quiet man in the corner suggested that possibly we were all wrong, and that some obscure philosophy corresponding to a rank outsider in a horse-race might eventually turn out to be right. And so we talked, and talked, now about horses and now about philosophy, until it was time to go home.

I was very tired that night, and with these thoughts as the last companions of my waking consciousness I soon fell into a deep sleep, and experienced the remarkable dream which I have at length determined to make known to the public.

THE DREAM

In my dream I arrived at Randwick race-course in a Yellow taxi, feeling extraordinarily young—at least forty years younger than I actually am. I noticed that vast crowds, vaster than any I had ever seen on any previous occasion, were hurrying

ing from all directions to the course. I asked an attendant at the turnstile why the crowds were so great.

“Why,” he said, “they’ve come to see the greatest race of all time. It has never been run before, and it will never be run again. Now we shall all know for certain.”

And then I noticed posted up in all directions great placards, on which were written the words:

THE COSMIC MYSTERY CUP
RUN AT
RANDWICK TO-DAY

I paid for my ticket and passed through the turnstile; and there to my great joy I met Lucille. I should explain here that Lucille is a dream-girl whom I frequently meet in my dreams but nowhere else. She lives in the dream-world only, but in that world we have met ever since I was a child. Lucille and I have known each other in dream-life as long as I can remember, and in that life we are devotedly attached to each other. She is young—younger even than I am when I am at my dream age—exceedingly beautiful, and altogether a most graceful and gracious being.

I was rather surprised at meeting her at Rand-

wick, and I told her so, but she assured me there was no reason for surprise. She had made up her mind to come and meet me there, as she wanted to be with me when I learnt the result of the great race; "for," she added, "you will be greatly surprised at the result—as every one else will be—and you will know something to-day you have never known before."

Crowds were continually pouring through the turnstiles, and I noticed that the elements composing them differed from those which usually composed such meetings; that is to say, new elements were present. I saw many professors and students from the universities, all animated with interest in the forthcoming great race. I saw many barristers and judges wearing gowns and wigs. Then I noticed, but with no surprise, a large number of priests of the Anglican and Catholic churches, and many ministers of the various Protestant bodies moving about and discussing the forthcoming event. The archbishops and bishops and many of the priests came in their vestments, and so added much to the brilliancy of the meeting.

Nothing in all this seemed in my dream to be at all out of place. On the contrary, it all

appeared quite normal and proper, for a peculiarity of dreams is that the most absurd and fantastic things happen without appearing to be such at the time.

Another quality of this dream, as of all visions of the kind, was its intense vividness. Never in my waking hours were my faculties so alert and clear; never did things stand out so vividly as did Randwick race-course and its appointments in my dream; and the voices of the bookmakers as they called the odds were heard with a distinctness I had never known in my waking moments.

As we had plenty of time to spare before the great event, I proposed to Lucille that we should have some oysters and stout, and this we did. We secured a table by ourselves in a corner, and, while fortifying ourselves for the coming fray, we discussed the possibilities of the race. Herrick's line, "Gather the rosebuds while you may," suggested itself, and we drifted into love-making. The girl who was serving us was manifestly interested and, I think, sympathetic.

"Lucille," I said, "It is some time since we met. Are you sure you love me as much as ever?"

"Don't be silly," she replied. "Have I not explained to you many times that it cannot be

otherwise—that we are each other's fate? You must not forget what I tell you. When anyone is a Fate, then he is a Fate always. Once a Fate, always a Fate; a Fate at the beginning is a Fate at the end, and a Fate all the time." And then she began to say things dreamily.

"But why," I asked "do I only meet you sometimes?"

To this she replied in a way I did not understand at the moment: "Because you are seldom over here," she said.

"Shall we ever be married?" I asked.

"Of course," she replied, "when you're over here finally."

And then, greatly daring, but looking the other way, I asked: "Shall we have children?"

"Oh, yes," she answered, "but love and marriage and children are different here. Here our love and marriage will be entirely mental and spiritual, and our children, as the products of such marriage must be in keeping, our children will be ideas, the results of the love of two minds."

"Ideas!" I exclaimed. "Ideas! I have plenty of them already, and they are no"—I was going to say—"they are no damn use," but, remember-

ing that Lucille did not approve of my swearing, I corrected myself and said: "my ideas are of no possible use. Few understand them and nobody appreciates them, and, to tell the truth, I don't think much of some of them myself, and I don't always agree with my own ideas. I often wonder where they come from, and some of them won't stand up, but sprawl on the ground."

"That," said Lucille, "is because they are the product of one mind only. Living ideas, real ideas, ideas that can stand up and make themselves influential are the result of two minds loving each other."

By this time my mind was beginning to wander, and I was even beginning to feel sleepy. So, to avoid falling asleep and thus losing Lucille and the race, I said: "Let us have some more stout and oysters. Waitress, please let us have some more! Forgive me, Lucille; it was very rude of me, but I was getting sleepy."

"Yes," she answered; "I saw you were, but you must stay here till the race is over."

When we had finished our repast I suggested that we should go and see how the betting was getting on. As we walked towards the betting ring I said:

"By the by, Lucille, do you know anything about this race? Do you know which horse will win? I should like to have a little on it."

To this she gave a cryptic reply: "This is a unique race, and naturally will have a unique ending. More than that I am not allowed to tell you."

"But," I said, "if you know what the result of the race will be, you will surely tell me."

"Wait and see" she replied laughingly. More than that I could not get from her.

We were now walking between the lines of the bookmakers as they were calling the odds for the great race. Examining the book, I found that a large number of horses were entered—about thirty being left in after the scratchings—and I remarked to Lucille that many of them had not a goat's chance of winning and that it was a wonder their owners should have entered them at all.

"Seven to one, bar one; five to one the field," roared the bookmakers.

"Five to one the field!" I said. "I wonder which horse they have made favourite?"

Just then I heard another well-known bookmaker call out in stentorian tones: "Here you

are. Five to one The Agnostic. Seven to one Pantheism; eight to one The Idealist or Buddhism; twelve to one Materialism or Islam; fourteen to one The Papacy; twenty to one The Protestant; two hundred to one Runners."

In another direction I heard a bookmaker call: "Six to one Pantheism; twelve to one Monism or Dualism; fourteen to one Determinism; thirty-three to one Anglicana; fifty to one Theosophy or Christian Science; anything you like Runners."

"I see they have made The Agnostic favourite," I said to Lucille. "Well, he is certainly a great horse and has a great chance, but somehow I don't think he will win. I don't think the public can choose the right horse in a race like this. Still, there is a lot of money for him, and he doesn't lengthen at all. Pantheism is second favourite, and that is a horse I like better than The Agnostic. I see a good many heads are backing him heavily. The Idealist and Buddhism are being well supported too. There are a whole lot of horses being backed. It is one of the best betting races I have ever seen. Look, Lucille, there is the Catholic Archbishop having a bet on something. I wonder what he's on? The priests get good information sometimes, and so do the police."

Moving near to the bookmaker with whom the Archbishop was betting, and looking over his book, I saw that the Archbishop had taken £1400 to £100 on The Papacy; at a neighbouring bookmaker I saw some Protestant ministers taking twentys about The Protestant.

"Lucille," I said, "this is a puzzler. I wish you would give me some advice, for I believe you know more about this race than you admit. What shall I back? What do you advise?"

"I advise you," said Lucille, "to wait and see."

The phrase "wait and see" was beginning to get on my nerves. It is advice I often gave to my students, and possibly for that very reason I did not like it being given to me. I was as near to getting angry with Lucille as was possible, but she was so bright, and seemed to be enjoying it all so much, that I could not be angry with her long.

"Let us go and have a look at the tote," I said. "I may get an inspiration there."

So we soon found ourselves jammed in among crowds of people gazing at the inscrutable face of the tote.

"Many a time," I said, "have I stood opposite this tote trying to discover a winner by watching

the way in which people are betting, and almost always I have been wrong; but to-day it is infinitely important that I should know which is the winner, for thereby I shall know the answer to the riddle of the Universe. Of course we shall all know after the race is over, but I can't wait so long. I want to be able to pick it myself beforehand, so that I may turn round to the others and say: "I told you so!"

Money is pouring in on The Agnostic and Pantheism, and there is a lot coming for The Idealist and Buddhism. The Papacy is still receiving a good deal of support, and so is The Protestant, but not nearly so much, and Islam is receiving greater support than either. What is No. 10—Anglicana! Well, there is some money coming for that mare. And No. 7—Pragmatism—that is being well supported too. Then there are Nos. 13 and 14, whoever they are—they're being backed a little—Theosophy and Christian Science. Most of them have a little support, although a few of them have scarcely a ticket on them.

"Well, I am just as much in the dark as ever. I'm blest if I know what will win. I shouldn't be surprised if one of these horses with scarcely a ticket on wins—a regular roughy—a two hun-

c

dred to one chance; but which one, I don't know. Some of these horses I have never heard of before."

The crowds, which were now enormous, were moving towards the grandstand.

"Let us go down to the rails and have a look at the horses while they do their preliminaries. Sometimes I have been able to pick a winner just by looking. You hold the book, Lucille, and tell me the names of the horses and their riders when I mention the numbers, and tell me the breeding too."

And so, chatting gaily, we moved towards the rails. Meanwhile the grandstands were closely packed with people, the smart dresses of the women and the vestments of the priests of the Church adding greatly to the effect. It was, in fact, a brilliant display.

"Look! The horses are coming out! What's this, No. 18?" "The Methodist!" "I don't give it a dog's chance. The jockey is not a bad one, but the horse is not dependable. He has tricks, and is uncertain; besides, he is not experienced enough and will not be able to go the distance."

"Here's No. 1." "That's Materialism." "A fairly well-backed horse; plenty of muscle; firmly

set. Who is riding it? Haeckel! A great jockey, and the breeding is good, if I remember rightly. By Reason out of Facts. Great horses, both of them in their day, but never popular with the crowds. Still this horse must be given a chance."

"Here's another coming—No. 7"—"Pragmatism." "A nice-looking horse. Plenty of life and energy about it. They say he works well on the tracks. Who is riding him, Lucille?" "Schiller!" "Schiller of Oxford!" I exclaimed. What made me mention Oxford I do not know, for what had any jockey at Randwick to do with Oxford? But at the time it seemed quite natural. "What is the breeding of the horse, Lucille?" "By Work-well out of Experience." "That horse," I said, "might have a chance. I shan't be surprised at anything."

"I like this thing coming along now. It is a real racehorse, whatever it is. Let me see; No. 8"—"Oh, that is The Papacy." "No wonder I was struck by it. He was once a great champion—used to beat everything that opposed him. Lord, I remember the day, some years ago now, when he carried everything before him. He could win anything from six furlongs to two miles. Then came the historic day when he was really

shaken up. I remember it as though it were yesterday. Were you with me, Lucille, that day when he first met The Protestant, with Martin in the saddle? God, what a race it was! It was the first time The Papacy had ever been properly extended. Then they met on many different courses. Sometimes The Papacy would win, and sometimes The Protestant would. It was remarked at the time that The Papacy liked some courses better than others. The Protestant also favoured certain courses. It was the classical instance of 'horses for courses,' and to-day they will meet for the last time. Personally I don't think either of them will win, but I shouldn't be surprised if The Papacy puts up the better race of the two. There are a lot of younger and better bred horses in who are carrying less weight, and I cannot see either The Papacy or The Protestant beating them. A certain proportion of the crowd supports them because of their prestige, but the heads and those who study recent form won't have them. What do you think, Lucille?"

In reply, Lucille quoted a Latin sentence: *Tempera mutantur et nos mutamur in illis.*

"Bless my soul, you're a strange girl. I didn't know you knew Latin."

"Oh, yes," said Lucille, "I know much more than you give me credit for, and I know *you* like a book, and why you don't like me to say 'Wait and see.'"

"Oh, do you," I retorted, "well, tell me what is the breeding of The Papacy without looking at the book."

"Oh, that's easy. By Authority out of Revelation."

"Good for you! Great horses in their day, but, as you say, times are changed. Whether improved or not, I am not prepared to say, but certainly changed, and so are we.

"Here's another one. How he prances about and struts like a peacock, arching his neck as proudly as though the place belonged to him! No. 13. What do you say that is?" "Theosophy!" "There is some money for this horse in some quarters. Somebody or other thinks he can win. I don't give him a hope myself. The jockey riding him used to be a better jockey years ago when he rode The Rationalist. I don't care for the horse's breeding. By Superiority out of The Occult. Do you remember how he was specially trained for the Advent Stakes on the Balmoral Course a short time ago? He was trained to

perfection and went out a red-hot favourite, but never showed up at all. If he cannot win a race like that, what chance can he have in this? Since then many of his admirers have forsaken him, though others still support him, for horses, like men, live on the fact that people have short memories."

Then a whole bunch of horses went by together and we were unable to distinguish one from another. "The winner," I thought, "may be amongst them."

After this The Idealist went by at a great pace with an attractive and easy movement. The horse seemed scarcely to touch the ground. That great horseman Berkeley was in the saddle.

"Do you know, Lucille, I give that horse a great chance. He's a little on the light side, perhaps—not a nuggety horse like Materialism—but he certainly can move, and I know he is a stayer."

After him, attracting universal attention, came the favourite—No. 6—The Agnostic, with Huxley in charge. The horse moved leisurely down the course with long strides and appeared to be quite unconcerned by anything around him. He seemed to take things as a matter of course; his condition was perfect.

I said to Lucille: "It is difficult to see what horse can beat that," but yet somehow I have a presentiment he won't win, although he will come near to doing so. The only horse I can think of that is likely to beat him is the second favourite—"Pantheism"—No. 5.

Talk of the devil and he's sure to appear. Here he is, with Spinoza riding him. Can you beat it? Why, they move down the course together in perfect rhythm. I think, if I were asked to pick the winner in one, I would plump for Pantheism. He's a beauty.

"There goes No. 14 on the other side. That is Christian Science. Another showy little horse. Looks well groomed and cared for. They tell me his relations have a lot of money. He is an imported horse, and has won some minor events in U.S.A., but hasn't a dog's chance in a race like this. Besides, the horse has no breeding. If I remember correctly, he is by 'Words without Meaning' out of 'Nescience,' and his rider is hopeless. What these horses are entered for, I cannot imagine.

"Here's another one coming down on the rails—close in—so that no one can see him. Why doesn't he get out in the middle of the course so

that folks can see what he's like, instead of concealing himself in the way he is doing. Can you get his number, Lucille?"

"No. 15," said a bystander, "only a rough outsider."

"What is his name?"

"Unitarian!"

"Lord, what's that? I never knew there was such a horse in the race. I have never heard of him; but he has a good jockey—one of the best—Emerson—and I see the book says he was trained by Martineau. How is he bred, Lucille?"

"By Reason out of Science."

"A well-bred thing, certainly, but you can get two hundred to one about it."

"Yes," said a bystander, "you can write your own card. My old moke at home could beat him."

Just then No. 10, Anglicana, went by at a great bat. "That is a classy little mare and has some pace; looks well, too. By the by, it is half-sister to The Papacy by the same sire Authority, but out of a different dam, Queen Bess; trained by Hooker; a nice mare and could win some six-furlong races, but I should be surprised if she shows up in a race of this kind."

Just then Lucille called my attention to the fact that a man was taking down the name of one of the jockeys from the board on the flat, and putting up another name.

"Lord," I said, "that is important. Whenever that happens at the last moment you may be sure that something is up. Why, he's taking down Doyle from No. 20—The Spiritualist—and is putting up Blatchford. Now that is strange. Doyle has always ridden The Spiritualist in other races. I wonder what has happened."

A bystander, raising his hat courteously to Lucille, told me that Blatchford, who had always ridden either Determinism or Materialism had lately been having some trial gallops on The Spiritualist, and that he had come to the conclusion that he had a better chance of winning on The Spiritualist than on either of the other two, and that he had been given the mount. I thanked the courteous stranger for his information and said that I thought The Spiritualist had a chance, for he had great pace, was thoroughly well trained, had no superfluous flesh, no jockey in the race could steer a horse through an opening better than Blatchford, and, if there was a chance to get through, The Spiritualist was thin enough to get through the smallest opening.

Turning to Lucille, I said: "I think it is good enough to have something on the tote; he might run into a place, although he will scarcely win. What do you think, my dear?"

Just then Lucille said: "What on earth is happening on the grandstand? Let us go and see."

When we got in front of the stand, we heard an official of the A.J.C. announce amid loud cheers that a great *prima donna* had offered to sing her last farewell song before the Cosmic Mystery Cup was run. And then the *prima donna* sang, with a voice that was heard by the many thousands not only in the enclosure but in the Ledger and on the flat, the haunting poem of "Bliss Carmen" called "The Juggler." Never have I heard such a voice. The vast audience stood spellbound and listened with absorbed attention, and when the last verse was reached the mighty concourse sang it all together again and again.

"THE JUGGLER"

Look how he throws them up and up—
The beautiful golden balls;
They hang aloft in the purple air,
And there never is one that falls.

He sends them hot from his steady hand,
He teaches them all their curves,
And whether the reach be little or long,
There never is one that swerves.

Some like the tiny red one there
He never lets go far,
And some he has sent to the roof of the tent
To swim without a jar.

So white and still they seem to hang,
You wonder if he forgot
To reckon the time of their return,
And measure their golden lot.

Can it be that, hurried or tired out,
The hand of the juggler shook?
O, never you fear; His eye is clear;
He knows them all like a book.

And they will home to his hand at last,
For he pulls them by a cord
Finer than silk and strong as fate,
That is just the bid of his word.

Was there e'er such a sight in the world—
Like a wonderful winding skein,
The way he tangles them up together
And ravel's them out again.

If I could have him at the inn
All by myself one night,
Inquire his country, and where in the world
He came by that cunning slight!

Where do you guess he learned the trick
To hold us gaping here,
Till our minds in the spell of his maze almost
Have forgotten the time of year?

One never could have the least idea;
Yet why be disposed to twit
A fellow who does such wonderful things
With the merest lack of wit?

Likely enough, when the show is done,
And the balls are back in his hand,
He'll tell us why he is smiling so,
And we shall understand.

When the lines:—

If I could have him at the inn,
All to myself one night

were being sung, I said to Lucille, "What a pity we could not have him with us when we were taking our stout and oysters; perhaps we might have got him to tell us which horse would win; for if anyone knows, he must."

"Yes," she answered, "He knows, He knows, but He would not tell us. He sits in the heaven and does nothing," quoted Lucille—"and says nothing," she added.

"Oh, Lucille; I don't think you're right there. He does juggle with stars in a wonderful way, and that is something to do, isn't it? They couldn't juggle themselves, could they? If they juggled themselves, they would crash against each other and cause confusion."

"But that is just what they do, now and again," said Lucille.

"Yes I know," I replied, "but He keeps them going just the same. Oh, yes; I think He does something; in fact He's always doing everything, and though He's wonderfully silent, yet I think if we had Him with us at our table I might have learnt something from His expressions when

I put questions to Him about some of these horses. For instance, supposing I suddenly asked Him 'Will The Agnostic win?' I might have been able to guess from the look of His face what He knew."

"No," said Lucille, "you could not. If you cannot understand the face of the tote, how could you understand that of the Juggler. If you cannot understand a part, how can you understand the whole?"

As we were talking away in this strain, the last verse was being sung, and Lucille and I joined heartily in it with the rest of the crowd. We sang again and again the line, "We shall understand."

Then suddenly it all stopped, and some one cried out: "The horses are at the post!"

We could see through our glasses that a great many of the horses were playing up dreadfully. Again and again the starter was just getting them in line when about six of them would back away or turn round and face in every direction except the right one. But one or two—old tried racers—stood quietly the whole time. I noticed especially that The Papacy stood as quiet as a sheep—unmoved by anything the younger horses were doing.

Then at last the barrier went up and a mighty cry arose: "They're off!" It was a wretched start. Some of the horses turned at the last moment and had their tails to the barrier when it went up. Christian Science was one of them. But the favourite and The Papacy, Materialism, Pantheism, and several other horses got a capital start.

As they came past the grandstand for the first time, The Theosophist, The Adventist, and some other outsiders were well out in front, followed by The Methodist and Islam. I noticed that The Papacy and The Protestant, with Materialism and Buddhism, were lying close together in a big bunch. The favourite was farther back, but going easily. Pantheism was upon the rails in a good position. So they went round the course, but when they had gone a mile, Theosophy and The Adventist had fallen back, the last-named being plainly done for. When they had gone about a mile and a quarter, I saw Pragmatism move up on the outside into about fifth place, closely attended by The Idealist and Materialism.

When they had a little more than half a mile to go, there was a mighty roar, for The Papacy came with a great run into the lead and there he

stayed till the turn into the straight. The supporters of The Papacy in the grandstand leapt for joy, and the air was rent with the cry: "The Papacy! The Papacy!" and many who had not backed him could not refrain from applauding the splendid way in which the old champion was running. "The Papacy is 'home and dry!'" they cried. "Why, he's sitting on him!" cried the on-lookers in a frenzy of excitement, and it looked as if the race was over.

Suddenly however, as they were passing the Ledger, some shouted out "What is that on the outside?" Then another roar arose from the Ledger, which was soon taken up by the grandstand: "The favourite! The favourite! On the outside!" And, sure enough, The Agnostic, coming with a run which simply smothered the rest, was soon up with The Papacy. For a few strides they came along together, The Papacy being now ridden for all he was worth, but The Agnostic drew away from him, and The Papacy fell back, a beaten horse. Never have I heard such a roar of applause from the crowd as when The Agnostic forged ahead—about a length in front of any other horse. The closest in attendance, as far as I could see, were Pantheism, The

Idealist, and Materialism, but there were several other horses close together. Most people thought the race was over.

Then suddenly we saw a horse come like a streak of lightning on the rails. "What's that on the rails?" people cried.

"What is it, Lucille? Can you see? Quick!"

"Why, it is Unitarian!"

"What?" I exclaimed. "That rank outsider? Oh, my God, look, he's up with the favourite, who is all out. He's in front of him. This is awful."

The vast audience was stupefied with dismay when they saw that great horseman, Emerson, take The Unitarian into the lead and keep him about a length in front of The Agnostic.

Then another surprise happened, for Blatchford was seen steering The Spiritualist cleverly through what seemed an impossible opening, and then he came on with a wonderful run and in a few strides was level with The Agnostic.

Never shall I forget the battle that followed during the next few yards, nor the roars, shouts, and yells that went up from the enormous crowds looking on. Twenty yards from the winning-post Unitarian was a short length ahead of The

Spiritualist, who had his head in front of The Agnostic. A short length behind came Pantheism, followed by The Idealist and Buddhism. The Papacy headed another batch of horses; then came the tail, among which I noticed Plymouth Rock, Theosophy, and Christian Science, which later came up the straight riderless, having parted with his jockey when coming round the corner through colliding with another horse which he thought was not there.

When the leaders were about twenty yards from the winning-post, then, as so often in dreams, a most absurd and fantastic thing happened. The horses continued to gallop, and retained their positions relatively to each other, but, although they galloped with all their might, they did not get any nearer to the post. They galloped, and galloped, and galloped, and yet remained as far from the post as ever.

"What on earth will the judge do, Lucille? What can he do? There is no precedent for this."

"Of course there's no precedent," said Lucille. "How could there be a precedent? It is a race without a precedent. How can a race without a precedent have anything but an end without a precedent? What is unprecedented in its whole must

be unprecedented in its parts. There is no precedent for such a race as The Cosmic Mystery Cup, therefore there can be no precedent for its ending."

"Well," I said, "what you say seems reasonable, but the Juggler—I mean the judge—must put up something."

"Don't worry," said Lucille, "the Judge will know what to do, for he is in an unprecedented mood."

Just then the judge was seen leaving the box, and carrying in his arms three black-boards with white letters on them, while round his neck he carried a circular thing, also with white letters on it. Every one was watching him with feverish anxiety, and somehow every one knew the judge would do the right thing. Instead of putting up the numbers of the three leading horses, he put up the three boards, on which were written the sentences:

1. "The last shall be first."
2. "We know in part."
3. "Wait and see."

and then he took the circular thing and put that up round all three of them, and on it were the words: "World without end."

"Now," said Lucille, "you understand why I told you not to bet, but to wait and see. There is no finality. The pursuit of truth is eternal."

"Lucille," said I, "why did every one disregard the claims of the Unitarian? He was the best-bred horse in the race; he was ridden by a wonderful jockey, and his trainer has no superior. Besides, if you go behind his sire and dam, what a wonderful strain of racing blood he has in him! Reverence, Caution, Awe, and Liberty are all among his ancestors, and they were all champions in their time. Well, in future, I will not neglect the breeding of a horse. I expect this horse has been kept in the dark and was specially trained for this race."

Then I saw some one hand up to the judge a hammer and nails, and the judge began to hammer the nails into the boards, thereby causing a great noise. I looked round in a dazed kind of way, and saw that the horses were no longer on the course, and to my dismay Lucille had disappeared.

"Lucille," I cried, "Lucille, where are you? Don't go away yet!"

And then the judge gave a tremendous blow with his hammer and I woke up and saw Bridget

standing in the doorway surveying me with critical eyes.

"Professor," said she, "I've been knocking at this door for some time while you've been shouting at the top of your voice. And who, pray, is Lucille? During all of these years I've never allowed any woman—"

"Now Bridget," said I, "you needn't worry about Lucille. She's merely a woman of my dreams whom I frequently meet when I'm in the dream-world. And, Bridget, last night I had a very peculiar dream with which I am vastly impressed, and, if you will put the tea down and leave me, I will get out of bed and write it down immediately before I forget it." And this I did, though much of what I had seen and heard I had already forgotten; but still, what remained in my memory I put down as best I could, and now I give it to the public for what it is worth.

Later in the morning I said to Bridget, "I'm going to see the Sydney Cup run. If I win, as I hope to do, it is the last race-meeting that I shall attend."

On the way to the course I meditated much on my dream, and I gained the impression that it was symbolic of the day's race. Anyway I

determined to act upon it and to look out for a well-bred horse among the complete outsiders. I was standing at the rails, exactly where I stood in my dream with Lucille, when a horse came by, close in.

A bystander said: "There goes a complete outsider. A roughy, if you like. A two hundred to one chance. In fact you can write your own card. My old moke could beat him."

I looked up the horse's breeding and found that he was by Comedy King. Without delay, impelled by a secret force, I went up to a bookmaker whom I knew well and said: "What price Murray King?"

"Anything you like, Professor," said the bookmaker, making ready to write out his card.

"Will you give me two hundred to one?"

"Certainly, Professor, anything you like."

"Very well," I said, "I'll take £2000 to £10," and he immediately gave me the ticket, which I put away in my pocket.

"You're a real old sport," said the bookmaker.

The result of that race is well known.

That night, when Bridget came in with my dinner, I assumed my most official manner and said to her: "Bridget, I wish you to understand

that for many years you have looked after a Professor of Philosophy of some reputation. I wish you to understand that you are now looking after a wise and successful punter. I have to-day won what is to me a considerable sum. I have beaten the game. Having solved the mystery of racing in a manner satisfactory to myself, I shall now no longer go to races, but devote my time entirely to an attempt to solve the riddle of the Universe."

I then handed the dear old soul a wad of notes, which she received with emotion, and, as she left the room, she turned and said:

"You are unable to look after yourself, and I have been unable to do so, but I have often prayed Our Lady of Darlington to bless you, although you are a heretic, and I think she has answered my prayer."

Advice to his Fellow-Citizens
By a Philosophic Punter

1. Don't go to races at all. It is a game for mugs and millionaires.
2. If you must go, don't bet.
3. If you can't help betting, don't bet on every race, but only on one.
4. If you can't help betting on every race, then begin small, stop when you show a profit, and go home. It is tempting Providence to expect more.

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Dear Mr. Walsh,

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Yours sincerely,

J. M. BARRIE.