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OUR WICKEDEST SUMMER RESORT.

Nellie Bly Pictures the Wild Vortex of Gambling and Betting by Men, Women and Children at Saratoga.

MONEY-MAD BY DAY AND BY NIGHT.

The Shameful Story of Vice and Crime, Dissipation and Profligacy at This Once Most Respectable Watering-Place.

LITTLE CHILDREN WHO PLAY THE HORSES.

Reputable and Disreputable Women, Solid Merchants, Bankers, Sports, Touts, Criminals and Race-Track Riff-Raff Crazed by the Mania for Gold.

"CALE" MITCHELL, VILLAGE PRESIDENT AND BOSS GAMBLER.

His Astonishing Admissions of Saratoga's Reckless Lawlessness—Church Member and Giver to Charity—Rise of the Racing Czar Walbaum, and Guttenburg Ideas of Night Scenes in the Gaming Sport-Rooms and Hotels.

A SATURDAY NIGHT SCENE IN THE GAMBLING ROOMS AT THE SARATOGA CLUB-HOUSE.

Saratoga is the wickedest spot in the United States.

Crime is holding a convention there and vice is enjoying a festival such as it never dared approach before.

I was told so, I rather doubted it, and I went there to see.

I arrived on a Saturday, and such was the rush that, though I telegraphed in advance for a room, I could get no choice, but had to accept one just being vacated, and considered myself lucky to get it.

The first thing I did was to drive to the races. I supposed as it was Saturday afternoon I would see a great many people there and could judge from the appearance of the crowd something of the kind of visitors in Saratoga.

The Saratoga race-course is a very pretty one, and the wide boulevard that leads to it presents a lovely sight as vehicles of all descriptions fly gayly to and from the course.

Although I had expected a crowd, I was amazed when I entered the grand stand. There was a perfect mass of people in gala attire, and everybody seemed to be having the best of times.

A GRAND-STAND GROUP.

With some difficulty I found a seat. It was beside a very fat woman, who looked, with her chin buried in her bosom and her arms barely encircling her frontage, as if she sat within her flesh.

She had a daughter, not quite so fat as the mother, but promising.

They occupied the end of a seat, and when I stepped past them the decidedly shaped daughter deliberately put her feet upon the bench so as to cover as much room as possible.

I managed to squeeze on the bit of an edge. I did not say anything, but I thought a heap.

Especially when I immediately discovered that the two boys, two young men and three girls in the rear seat were the offspring of the bundle of flesh beside me.

The two boys were possibly eight and ten years of age. They wore watch-chains and rings. They hung their legs over the back of our seat and said what horses they meant to "play" in the next race, and almost quarrelled over the respective sums they had won and lost since the first race.

ALL IN THE FAMILY.

I have said they were possibly eight and ten years old—they were no older.

Their sisters wore a great deal of jewelry and had paint on their cheeks. They picked out people they knew in the crowd and said spiteful things about them. They were betting on every race. The three girls and the mother made pools of 25 cents each.

The young men talked horse nearly all the time they were present, which was only while races were being run. At other times they were "in the ring," they said.

On my right sat a young woman handsomely dressed. Her clothes cost a lot of money and she looked every inch a well-bred, well-dressed woman.

I thought she was respectable until I overheard the conversation she was having with her escort. Then I knew that some of her friends may still be cheated into believing as I did at first sight.

Behind them sat a couple with a little boy and girl, neither of whom was ten years old yet.

The boy was the older. He made all the bets for his parents, running back to the pool-room to place the bets himself.

BET FOR HIS MOTHER.

"You bet for us, my darling," the mother would say proudly, and the boy, with the wisdom of an ass upon his baby face, would say affectedly:

"I guess I'll bet Cactus one, two."

And the little girl, with her yellow hair hanging around her flower-like face, clung to her father's shoulder, saying:

"What's a scratch, papa? What's a scratch?"

Behind them, carrying their reputations in their painted faces and pencilled, inviting eyes, stood a group of women with racing cards and colored tickets and paper money in their hands.

Men passing would stop and speak to them, sometimes as if they knew them, more often as if they did not, and the women would instantly brighten up and laugh and simper until the men passed on; then they would gravely return to the study of their racing cards.

The golden-haired child watched these women with admiring wonder in her baby eyes.

"Mamma, did that lady get all those rings for Christmas?" she asked once, and again she said:

"Mamma, do the ladies get all that money from the horse races?"

And "Mamma" would say, "Yes, darling!" to everything, and smile and look proudly around to see if her neighbors noticed how clever the child was!

DRINKS GALORE.

Down before me was a sea of people, mostly women. Many of them were flaunting clothes and painted their cheeks. Waiters passed in among them bringing drinks, which were always something strong.

Many drinks went to the boxes. After every race almost.

Before every race the horses were marched past the grand stand, led by a conceited man in yellow skin-tight trousers and black velvet jacket. He rode a very fine horse, with a flowing tail, and seemed to think the march was for his especial gratification, as he made the horse do high-school pranks, and took off his hat very frequently, like an organ-grinder's monkey.

I was afterwards taken in charge by a friend who has always had a cottage at Saratoga in the summer and who knows the reputable by name and the disreputable by sight.

THE WOMAN'S POOL-ROOM.

She took me to the woman's pool-room, which is on the top landing of the grand stand.

It is quite a large room, with a counter at one end. The counter is wired around and behind it is the cashiers and the ticket-sellers.

Directly behind the ticket-seller is the blackboard bearing the names of the horses and the odds offered.

This pool-room, they say, belongs to the President of the track. The ticket-seller is a small, ill-looking fellow, whose forehead is about one inch high.

It is all very nice, if women will go to the races, to have pool-rooms for them. It is cheaper to the bettor than to have to pay 75 cents to make a cash bet and take a messenger boy's impertinence if they tip modestly and his neglect if they tip not at all.

But having a pool-room, there is no reason, so far as honest people can see, why women should not be given the same odds as the men. This is not done. The other day when a horse won with odds something like 200 to 1, I have forgotten the exact figures, there had been two bets sold in the woman's pool-room and the odds were only 40 to 1.

TYPES OF WOMEN GAMBLERS.

As one racing man said to me: "It made a howl, but it resulted in no good."

If one enjoys a democratic crowd then one would love this woman's pool-room.

If woman's suffrage would produce such a scene, then God prevent suffrage. I claim to be liberal in my views; I believe in liberty and the right to do as one pleases, but I don't think I should like to see such an assemblage again, even at the day of judgment.

There is a negro woman, with paint upon her yellow cheeks, diamonds as large as peas in her ears, her breast ablaze with costly pins and her gown straight from Paris and never worn before. She nods familiarly to a big fat white woman in black and gold silk, a woman who entertains every night in the year and is not particular about introductions.

The fat woman speaks to a slender girl whose eyes have an eager glitter not pleasant to see. The girl's clothes are cheap and as yet no paint is needed upon her flushed cheeks. She has 50 cents in her ungloved hand, and the fat woman smiles on her and asks if she has won to-day. She says no, and her cheeks grow redder. The fat woman opens the fat purse she holds in her fat hands. It is bulging with crisp bank notes.

The girl's eyes look at them hungrily; they glitter more than before, and the color pales in her cheeks and she breathes as if her dress had become too tight.

ONE LITTLE GIRL.

A woman, also big and fat, in black silk and jet, with enormous diamond pins upon her breast, presses forward. She is the wife of a horse-owner. The colored woman and fat woman both speak to her and ask her if she "knows of anything good."

They are being shoved by a girl. She is doubtless fifteen years old. Her clothing is well made and shows that she lives well at home. Her dresses just pass the knee, and her plump, well-turned legs in black silk stockings, and her small, tight tan shoes attract as much notice as her flowing yellow hair that covers her ears and gets in her eyes.

The colored woman smiles at her and she smiles back, as she goes over to the counter and cashes a ticket.

With the money in her hand she comes back and studies the blackboard and her racing-card. Then she advances, and speaking to the ill-favored, low-browed fellow behind the railing, gives him some money for a ticket.

He leers at her and they exchange remarks and then she pushes through the crowd again to go out to the stand.

Several women nudge each other and smile strangely. One tells the other who the girl is—the daughter of a well-known politician.

ALL SORTS AND CONDITIONS.

Dozens of children are in the room. Little girls from six years up, boys in knee-breeches. They are all betting, some silver—for 50-cent bets are taken here—and some have bills.

We all stand in one big crowd. There is the regular woman who follows the races all the year from one place to the other. She is always poorly dressed.

There is the poor colored woman and her sister in diamonds; there is a horse-jockey's wife and a horse-owner's wife; there is the woman who has a house of her own, carriages galore and who has no rich relatives and still never labored; there is a poor woman hushing a babe in long clothes on her shoulder as she waits to bet the bit of silver she clutches in her hand.

There is a fat, jolly-looking creature with a half-dozen gayly dressed girls with her.

There at the door, handing some bills to an English girl whose small sailor hat is perched on the back of her enormous bunch of hair that is gathered in a net, is a man who is worth millions and is known the world over. At his side is a man who has taken religious vows, anxiously consulting a racing-card, and nearby is a woman who certainly looked as if her sins were as scarlet.

It is a disgusting sight. I have enough of it and we go out.

We walk over to the club-house. At the tables upon the veranda sit a number of women, actresses and society women, but all women whose names appear frequently in print.

They are betting and drinking, but with the exception of one woman, who is rapidly and surely becoming intoxicated, they are orderly.

If women must bet, I suppose this is the least objectionable way.

The races are over and those who can drive out to the lake, where they drink and eat, in private rooms if they wish, until they are jolly enough to come back to the town.

Those who do not go to the races rush to their hotels, where they change their afternoon attire for evening dresses.

AT THE DINNER TABLES.

Dinner is the most respectable of all things in Saratoga. The dining-rooms are crowded with thousands of people, but no one drinks overmuch. There is the clatter of dishes by the dreadful summer waiter, a fall and a crash of breakage now and then, the constant buzz of voices, and that is all.

People do not eat at summer resorts as they do in the city. A dinner in the city is a time of enjoyment. At Saratoga everybody eats as if he wants to get his money's worth, and was in great haste.

They can't be blamed, for between getting what you don't order and the dirty dishes dining is not a thing of pleasure.

After dinner the corridors and veranda are filled with people. Women wear all the jewelry they possess and plaster their faces with paint and powder. Men dress as they please and talk to everybody with alarming freedom.

GAYETY AT NIGHT.

Gamblers, horse-owners, jockeys, millionaires and actors mingle together promiscuously. A man will leave his wife on the veranda and go in to talk with an actress or a woman of questionable character in the hall.

In the ballroom it is even worse. All women are there on the same footing. I saw a wife of a well-known physician sit beside a notorious woman. Men dance with resectable and disreputable women, turn about.

Children of all sizes dance from the beginning until the end. I saw a little flaxen-haired girl about four years old dance with a famous roué, who tossed her up and kissed her at the finish. I saw unholy women call little girl dancers to them and fondle and kiss them. I saw men of no standing and bad morals take pretty girls more than ten and less than fifteen aside to chat with them.

And then it came to an end, the whole shameful exhibition. The music stopped, the lights were turned out and the people wandered away.

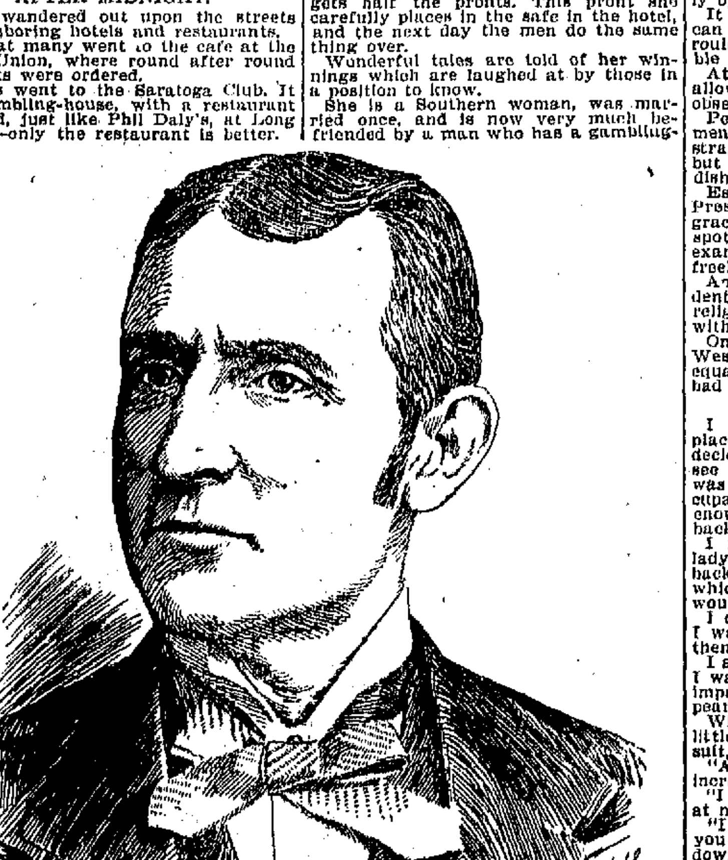
Not to their rooms, although it approached the hour of midnight.

AFTER MIDNIGHT.

They wandered out upon the streets to neighboring hotels and restaurants.

A great many went to the cafe at the Grand Union, where round after round of drinks were ordered.

Others went to the Saratoga Club. It is a gambling-house, with a restaurant attached, just like Phil Daly's, at Long Branch—only the restaurant is better.



SARATOGA'S BOSS GAMBLER.

CALEB W. MITCHELL, PRESIDENT OF THE VILLAGE AND PROPRIETOR OF ITS MOST NOTORIOUS GAMING ROOMS.

The restaurant is a long room, very well lighted, with gorgeous palms to make it look summery, and with real French waiters—the only good waiters in Saratoga.

Supper is ordered, and it is cooked and served excellently. The price is very beautiful, almost twice as large as prices in the best New York hotels.

After supper is ordered the men excuse themselves and go through the wide door to an adjoining room, from which comes the seductive whirl of the wheel.

Women can look on. They tell me so, and I walk to the door, as do others also curious.

WHERE WHIRLS THE WHEEL.

We see a long room with several tables, around which men are so densely packed that it is impossible to see the tables.

The men are very quiet. They are sober and intoxicated, in evening dress and business suits. No one looks especially happy, no one especially miserable.

The wheel keeps whirling and whirling. The men watch quietly and make no sign to show whether they win or lose.

The women at supper are loudly dressed. Some are loudly mannered. At one table is a bleached-haired actress. She is drinking, but makes no pretense of eating. She pays for the wine from her own purse, and hands money to a dark-haired man who accompanies her to take her into the other room to play.

She can't go, but she tells him how to play and sends him. He comes back after awhile, and she gives him more money and sends him again.

She does this every night. Everybody knows her. She plays the races all day and plays roulette all evening. She is always losing, but her purse is like a mountain spring whose source has not been traced.

SHE NEVER LOSES.

At another table is another actress of a different sort. She has an expression when she looks at men that would make pure women blush.

She never has a woman with her, but usually has from three to five men. She never puts up any money of her own, but men bet for her, and if they win she gets half the profits. This profit she carefully places in the safe in the hotel, and the next day the men do the same thing over.

Wonderful tales are told of her winnings which are laughed at by those in a position to know.

She is a Southern woman, was married once, and is now very much befriended by a man who has a gambling-house in Saratoga—a house which women cannot enter, and where things are not done on the square, above-board plan of the Saratoga Club.

The last night I saw her, there was a society man (married) at her table, a politician (married), the husband of an actress, a bookmaker (married), and an old Frenchman, who was very drunk, and who kept continually snapping his fingers in her face, which she only noticed once long enough to hit him in the face with her white boa, and went on talking in a loud voice.

NO SEASON LIKE THIS.

These are a few of the features that have helped to make Saratoga's season the best in nineteen years.

The hotel men, the race-track owners, the gamblers could tell you, only they won't, that they have made fortunes this season from the summer visitors. The business people—dry-goods houses, hat stores and the like—stand idly behind their counters with pale faces and black brows. They have no business at all.

But gambling flourishes. In fact, Saratoga is gambling mad. There are large poker games conducted by women for women in every hotel, and the amounts that change hands are said to be enormous.

There are several big gambling-houses and numerous small ones. The Saratoga Club I have described. The Boston Club is said to be the one I exposed in the Coleman House last winter, only since then women are considered dangerous and are not admitted. There is another large gambling-house kept by two bookmakers, where men only are admitted. Big games are played there, and men speak of it in whispers. Still another gambling club is run in rooms on the second floor of a house a few doors beyond Cale Mitchell's.

The small gambling houses are too numerous to mention, as are the disreputable restaurants and saloons.

Who is responsible for all this?

Everybody says Cale Mitchell. He is the President of Saratoga, and the power is in his hands to make the town moral or otherwise. It is decidedly otherwise.

CALE MITCHELL.

Cale Mitchell is said to have the worst gambling-house in Saratoga. It is nearly opposite the United States Hotel.

It is a saloon in front, and in the rear can be had any sort of gambling, from roulette to craps. White and black gamble together, poor and rich.

At the Saratoga Club no Saratogian is allowed to gamble, but this rule is not observed in other resorts.

People prominent in the reform movement say that the Saratoga Club is as straight as a gambling-house can be, but they speak very bitterly against the dishonesty of the others.

Especially are they bitter against the President of the town. They lay the disgrace of Saratoga being the wickedest spot on earth at his door. He sets the example, and lets vice flaunt itself freely.

And yet they say this same town President, in his official capacity, speaks at religious and Sunday-school conventions with tears in his eyes

One man told me that in the wildest Western days he never saw a resort to equal Cale Mitchell's. He said it was bad beyond description.

MITCHELL INTERVIEWED.

I was naturally curious about the place, but as women are not admitted I decided to send for Mr. Mitchell, and see what he had to say for himself. I was told that he was as tough as his occupation, and that his looks were enough to send the chills down one's back if one met him in a lonely spot.

I sent word to Mr. Mitchell that a lady wished to see him, and he sent word back if I would come to Barrett's store, which adjoins his infamous resort, he would see me

I did not tell him who I was or what I wanted, fearing he would not see me then.

I asked Mr. Barrett to tell Mr. Mitchell I was there, which he did, and I waited impatiently for the man to make his appearance, so curious was I to see him.

When he came I was disappointed. A little man in a well-made and neat gray suit, holding a Panama hat in his hand.

"Are you Mr. Mitchell?" I demanded incredulously

"I am," he said, smiling as if amused at my surprise.

"I want to ask you a few questions, if you please," I added, and we both sat down.

"Certainly; I shall answer anything you ask," he replied obligingly, but still in some wonder.

NOT AT ALL WRONG.

"I belong to a newspaper, and came here to ask you if you don't think it's disgraceful for you to have a gambling-house and to encourage the vice?" I demanded bluntly.

"No," he said in some surprise. "I certainly think it's right or I wouldn't do it."

"Other people—good people—say it's wrong, and consider you very wicked," I tell him rudely.

"Do they?" he laughed, indifferently.

"You don't deny that you have a gambling-house?" I ask, for I expected some sort of a protest.

"I can't say other than that I am in the gambling-business," he replied carelessly.

"What for?" I asked rather foolishly.

"For that which is the main hope in life, without which life is nothing—money," was the answer.

"I suppose, then, you think you are justified in doing anything to make money?"

"I don't say that by a large majority," he protested earnestly, shaking his head.

BUSINESS, THAT'S ALL.

"Why not? You run a gambling resort for men; that is wrong."

"Gambling is no worse than selling ribbon over the cost of production. It is business. I might define gambling as a difference of opinion. You might think you knew what 100 bushels of corn was worth. I might think the same thing. You would buy and I would sell, and my opinion would be matched against yours. That's all gambling is."

He leaned back in his chair and stuck his thumbs in the arm-holes of his vest. He looked at me keenly, and I looked at him.

"Of course I don't mind telling you that I think you are doing wrong and I mean to say all I can against your business," I told him, frankly.

"Go ahead," he said, cheerfully.

"And I suppose the public will want to know what such a man as you are looks like," I add. "Your hair is all there, but a little thin. It is parted carefully at the side and brushed smooth. Your eyes are blue and clear and keen and sharp; yes, very sharp, and you are"——

"Fifty-eight years old. I was born Feb. 12, 1837," he adds for me.

"You don't look so old," I say honestly. "Not by ten years. There are scarcely any lines in your face, and you have no crow's feet. Married, I suppose?"

VERY FRANK, THIS.

"Oh, yes, thank God!" he looked at me. His eyes were no longer clear. Tears filled them.

"I have been married twice to two of the best women that ever lived. I have nine children, all living, and three grandchildren. My eldest daughter married Edward F. Reilly, of New York. Yes, my home life has been blessed. It has been a most happy one and when the call comes I'm ready to go."

"What do you mean; that you are tired of life?"

"No; that I have nothing to complain of and that I feel at peace with Heaven," was the reply.

I looked at the man in surprise.

"You are not superstitious?" I asked.

"Not a bit," he said.

"You believe in luck?"

"No; I take the world just as it is, surroundings and all. I believe in God."

I look at him more closely. His blue eyes are filled with tears again. I don't know what to make of him.

"I'm sorry I've met you," I speak, thoughtlessly. "I could have said meaner things about you if I had hadn't. I don't believe in your business and I want to be true to my convictions."

"That is right, little girl," he said, laying his hand for a moment on my arm. "I can tell by your face you are honest. Be so; I shall not mind what you say."

SOME PERSONALITIES.

"As for the rest of your personal description," I return to the old subject, "you wear a light gray suit, well-made and carefully pressed."

"I buy my clothes in New York," he laughs, gayly.

"You have on a light vest and a black and red scarf and you wear an immense amethyst ring set round with diamonds, and a like stone in your shirt bosom. Are you fond of jewelry?"

"No; I only wear this because a friend gave it to me years ago. I wear this ring, also"—holding up the little finger on the left hand, on which there was a plain gold band—"my wife gave me that. She married me; not I her."

"You have good teeth," I add, "and your face is clean shaven—an interesting face." Mr. Mitchell laughed and winked his left eye in a highly amused manner.

"You might say that while I'm not good-looking I'm decidedly genteel," he suggested, merrily.

Mr. Mitchell goes to church Sundays when he is not kept up too late Saturday nights. He tells me he gives largely to charities, from $2,600 to $5,000 a year. He says he gave $300 the day I saw him.

"But you will soon make that back again?"

"Yes;" indifferently. "I might make it back in a minute or lose more.

MR. MITCHELL'S STORY.

"I heard a story the other night," he says, apropos of nothing. "A little boy in Wisconsin was promised a drive, but every day his parents would have his nurse carry him away until they got started, because they did not want him to go along, and neither did they want him to cry. One day they were delayed in starting, and the boy returned in time to see them go. 'Look there,' the boy cried to his nurse, 'there goes the two worst liars in Grand Rapids.'"

I laughed and I thought how strange it was that the story related in a lecture by an atheist should have, within an hour, been repeated to me by a gambling-house keeper and a church member. It had impressed them both and was the only thing in the entire lecture that was remembered.

After awhile Mr. Mitchell was telling me about the honesty of gamblers. He would lend a gambler any amount, he declared.

"And a church member?" I suggested.

He winked his blue eye and laughed.

"As the darky says 'White man's very unsartin,'" he observed.

"Of course you have lots of enemies; people like me who do not believe in your business?" I remarked.

GAMBLING AND THE BIBLE.

"I never knew a successful man who hadn't lots of enemies," he replied, "and I care as little for mine as the wind that blows. As for that, I heard a minister of the Gospel, and as good a man as ever lived, say he defied anybody to prove gambling was a sin."

"Does the Bible say people should gamble?" I asked.

"It doesn't say they shouldn't," he retorted, quickly.

"Are you an American?"

"I'm a full-fledged Yankee-Irishman," he replied. "My father was born in Ireland, and my mother near the Green Mountains, in New Hampshire. She was born on Pudding Hill. I always say my father was an Irish harp and my mother a star-spangled banner. My family are all dead except myself. There were six children of us. I was left without a home at nine years of age and never knew what one was until I married and made one for myself. I idolize my family and always have."

There were two boys and three girls born to the first wife and four girls to the last. One boy is a first-class machinist and the other a first-class bookkeeper. Neither of them ever used tobacco or liquor, and Mr. Mitchell himself never smoked, and has never gone further than a glass of mild wine, which he takes for sociability's sake. If his boys wished to gamble, he would not object, he says.

Mr. Mitchell says he always would work. He never had any great aspirations, and while he likes to have money, he never valued it, but likes to give it away. He claims to have two of the finest teams in Saratoga, behind which he drives every day.

Years ago he went to California, and once he worked on a ranch. He afterwards lived a year in New York, where he worked in a livery stable.

HIS BIGGEST STAKE.

"What is the biggest day you ever had?" I asked him.

"The biggest was when I once made $10,000 in twenty-four hours," he replied. "I've had one man, a rich man, win $17,500 within ten hours from me. The biggest bet I ever saw made was made by a man named Owen. The game was Spanish monte. Owen bet $50,000 on the turn of a card; lost, and bet it again and won."

"Don't you suppose men lose lots of money with you?"

"Yes," he laughed, "and just as often they win more than I wish they would."

"Supposing a woman would come to you and say her husband was losing all his money with you and she was being starved, what would you do?"

"I'd adopt her," he replied, promptly.

"And her husband?"

"I'd kill him and swear he died in a fit," he vowed so emphatically that I had to laugh.

"Did you ever kill a man?" I asked.

"Not that I know of, but I'd rather kill one hundred than let one kill me," he said.

"Do you think the gambling houses in Saratoga are honest?"

BOUND TO WIN.

"Yes; as upright and fair as any gambling business can be. It's the percentage that gives the bettor the worst of it. It must eventually win; no difference how the game goes. If it's only one hundredth part of a dollar it must in time get the money."

"Do you think it a nice business to be engaged in?"

"If I had my choice I know many a business I'd rather be in, I assure you; the Presidency of our beautiful bank, for instance, or some large mercantile business."

"Do you think Saratoga is the wickedest spot on earth?"

"Well, you can't make a camp-meeting out of Saratoga," he replied, dryly.

"Don't you think the people we see at the hotels are very disreputable?"

"There are a great many things objectionable here," he said, seriously, adding, "Upon my word, if honorably conducted, gambling is the least evil in Saratoga."

"But don't you think the gambling and presence of gamblers bring the other evils?"

"Where there's honey, there you'll find bees," he said, winking his eye. "Still, as I understand the laws of my Creator, it is for everybody to enjoy their own ideas of life. If the axe must fall, let it fall where it will. I have no more right to think for you than you have for me."

"Don't you think Saratoga will continue to get worse?"

"I don't see how it can get any worse," he laughed merrily, "and the only way I see to better it is to have people born different."

STORY OF THE BEAR.

"I am sorry I've met you," I say again, "but I must be true to my convictions and say your gambling resort is a wicked place."

"All right; give it to it," he said, heartily.

"But you will not like it when you see it in print?" I insisted.

He smiled, and laid his hand on my shoulder.

"Did you ever hear the story of the darky that met the bear on a lonely path in the woods?" he said, gravely. "The darky had nothing but his two hands with which to defend himself, so, sinking on his knees, he prayed earnestly, 'Oh, good kind Lawd, look down on dis poor nigger who haint got nothing to fight wid. I only ask yo', good kind Lawd, if you don't help de nigger, don't help de bar' an' yo'll see the mos' wonderful fight that ever took place.'"

He laughed at me, and ran away.

NELLIE BLY.

THE MONTE CARLO OF AMERICA.

Enormous Winnings by the Gambling Houses This Season—Where the Play Is Highest and Most Desperate.

SARATOGA, Aug. 17.—This town has gone mad with the mania of gaming. From the Carlsbad of America, Saratoga has become its Monte Carlo—a Monte Carlo with the reckless law-breaking of Leadville combined with the vulgarity of the Bowery.

Gambling is in the atmosphere. Formerly men of wealth and social position, statesmen, philosophers, students and artists gathered here to drink the waters that nature forces through a hundred fissures and enjoy the crisp, invigorating air and the picturesque scenery which have united in making Saratoga America's most famous summer resort. They came to ride, to drive, to dress and to secure that freedom from business and domestic care that gives perfect rest and brings back bodily health and vigor.

THE GAMBLER'S PARADISE.

Now the great summer population of Saratoga is largely composed of those gathered here to gamble or to live off those who do gamble. From one of the most reputable and most exclusive of American watering places it has been transformed into the wickedest and the wildest.

In the betting-ring professional men, solid merchants, bankers and brokers stand elbow to elbow with professional gamblers and the riff-raff of the racing resorts as they back their judgment on equine speed, and night finds them sitting side by side pursuing the fleeting dollar at their favorite games of chance.

Matrons of honest homes and the innocent daughters of reputable men touch shoulders with painted women with shady pasts in the mad scramble of the women's betting ring at the race-track, and dine side by side with them in the club-houses at night, and send in their attendants for a flyer at the wheel of fortune.

FOR WOMEN BETTORS AND DRINKERS.

There is one thing that woman cannot do yet in Saratoga. That is to play at the tables in the gambling-houses. At the racing track she has a special betting room set apart for her, the only race-track betting ring in America for women. In one of the largest hotels she has a bar-room set apart for her exclusive use where she can go for a morning cocktail after a night's dissipation. She can and does spend whole afternoons in a private poker party in her room with a few choice spirits of her own gender, but as yet she cannot walk into a gambling house and play her own money. Everything else, however, is wide open, and when she gambles she does so like a "dead game sport."

Gambling in itself is no new thing in Saratoga. There is a tradition that when the first church was being erected there was lacking a considerable sum

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