

Racing Reflections.

[By "BRONCHO,"]

The good fortune of the Wellington Racing Club in having fine weather on the opening day of their Summer Meeting was extended to the second day. In some respects this was more enjoyable than the opening day, for the sky was cloudy, the heat of the sun being thereby moderated, and although it threatened rain about four o'clock, and a few drops fell, they were not sufficient to damp any sportsman's ardour, and the down-pour did not take place until the pleasure-seekers had returned to their homes.

The sport was again excellent, and the public enjoyed it the more as the favourites got home in six races out of eight, which considering that such dividends as L5 4s., L2 18s., and L2 10s. were paid, gave those who followed the money a handsome credit balance on the day. The arrangements were again A1, and all the officers worked like Trojans. There was the President, Mr. H. D. Bell, making himself agreeable to all the distinguished visitors from other parts, Mr. J. W. Wilkins, the clerk of the scales, an officer often overlooked in reports of race meetings, but one who has the most onerous and responsible duties, was tout au fait at his work; Mr. G. H. Scales as judge, gave his decisions promptly and correctly, the dead heat he gave in the Hack Race on the first day being the fairest I have ever seen; Mr. G. Cundy, the starter, though slow, did his best to get the various fields away on equitable terms. That he will stand no nonsense from the jockeys he showed at the start for the January Handicap, when he fined "Billy" Brown, the rider of Retina, and Barry, the rider of Musket, L5 and L3 respectively. The boys appealed from their sentence, but the stewards very properly upheld their officer, and refused to remit the fines. Mr. Grace was careful and correct as time-keeper, and Mr. "Dick" Roake, as Clerk of the Course, did all that was required of him energetically and well. Mr. W. O. Johnson in the grand stand bar and luncheon room catered with satisfaction to his numerous patrons, and Mr. W. Williams was equally successful outside. The afternoon tea on the lawn was again a feature of the meeting.

And now for a chat about the sport. The January Handicap was a good opening of the programme, for of the nine starters no fewer than six were nearly equally backed, and thus it came about that Kent, the speedy son of S. George, and Red Rose, though favourite, paid the handsome dividend of L5 4s. It is not too much to say that he won all the way, and his time for the mile and a furlong, 1 mile 58½ secs. shows that he must be a clipper. Still he is only a handful, and I doubt whether he would successfully carry a heavy weight any distance. Dr. Reed's grey mare Dreamland, who was giving the winner, 13 lbs., ran a creditable second, and Johnny Faa, with the

same weight as Dreamland, was third. The Hurdle Handicap proved a repetition of that of the first day, except that Langley the Devil did not start. Clarence and Oaklands again finished first and second, and Clarence was so warm a favourite that he paid only L1 16s. In the Hack Hurdles Mr. Prosser intended to start both Pumau and Slave Girl—but owing to a nail being run into her foot in the process of shoeing, he had to depend upon Pumau. Tenby, who won the first day, was also unexpectedly withdrawn, but this, it is understood, was owing to a dispute between the owner and the lessee. It is a pity that owners cannot settle their disputes before race-day. Vivacious ran very shiftily, and over the last half of the distance could not foot it with Pumau. Brooklyn having come down at the same hurdle which brought him to grief the first day, Pumau had only to keep going to win easily.

The Wellington Racing Club Handicap produced a field of six. Kent's owner declined to run him with his 7 lbs. penalty, which brought his weight up within 7 lbs. of Vogengang and 6 lbs. of Clanranald, but this was the only withdrawal. Clanranald, who was meeting Vogengang on 12 lbs. better terms than in the Cup, was made favourite, and Prime Warden, who had 4 lbs. off, third. It was a pretty race. After a rather long delay at the post, principally owing to the fractiousness of Queen of Trumps, a fairly good start was effected, the order when they had settled into their strides being—Queen of Trumps, Clanranald, Rosefeldt, Vogengang, Pegasus and Prime Warden. At the back the field became bunched but Queen of Trumps held a slight advantage until approaching the road turn. Here Clanranald forged ahead, and Prime Warden was also seen emerging from the ruck. To these two the remainder of the race was confined. Prime Warden ran gamely, but Clanranald carried too many guns for him, and beat him at the finish by nearly half a length. Rosefeldt was again third, and the Cup winner close up fourth. The time was fast, 2 min. 12 secs., and the dividend small, L2 10s. The Juvenile Handicap saw four of the previous days' runners in the Nursery Handicap come out to oppose one another, Blarney being the absentee. Mr. G. Hunter's Tartan, 7 st. 7 lb., and Mr. Cutts' King Wai, 8 st., were nearly equal favourites. The latter ran disappointingly, finishing last, but the former just got home after a rattling set-to with the Hon. J. D. Ormond's Lyre Bird, by St. Leger-Lyre. The dividend for a favourite was again a good one, viz., £2 18s.

The Hack Flat Handicap brought the largest field of the day to the post, the whole of the ten acceptors facing the starter. The Blenheim mare, Princess Cole, by King Cole—Contessa by Puriri, looked a cut above the others, though Brookfield, Delusion and Dandy (the last named a "dark" candidate by Betrayer,) all are fine specimens of the genius hack. The result showed that good looks and running powers on this occasion went together, for after the first half

of the distance had been traversed Princess Cole drew away and ran home an easy winner. The "good thing" was public property, and the dividend consequently only L2 10s. The finest race of the day came about in the Second Welter Handicap. This was thought a monte for Musket, who is famous as a weight-carrier, and if he were destined to be beaten all were pretty certain it would be by Liberator, 10st. 10lb. or Pallisar 10st. 2lb. But the unexpected often happens at the racing game, and it happened on this occasion. A quarter of a mile from home Musket appeared to have the race won, as he was two lengths ahead of everything and pulling hard. But what is that going up so strongly at the home turn. It is that rogue, Revolt, who is evidently in a good humour for once. J. Reed is riding him. Collelo, on Musket, looks at him with scorn, but at the same time sits down to ride a finish. And what a finish. Both riders are hard at it fifty yards from home. Musket answers with his usual gameness, but the weight tells its inevitable tale, and Revolt gets home by a head. Termagant though he is, Revolt is known to be fast, and the happy few who stuck to him through evil repute and good repute reaped a nice little harvest, for on every pound invested they receive £16 18s. The "talent" were again unfortunate in their selection for the last race, the Metropolitan Handicap, 6 furlongs. Rebellion has been such a public pet and he looked so well in with 8st. 7lb. that the money went on him like water. The adherents of little Krina, who was in receipt of 5lbs. from the favourite, was also in strong demand, and next came North Atlantic, 7st. 7lb., who was the latest quiet tip for the Cup. He looked in splendid condition, but neither in the Cup nor in this race did he show any of his two-year-old form. Rebellion got well away, and so fast was he in beginning that before a furlong had been covered he had established a lead of three lengths. Along the back he holds his lead, but Krina catches him at the road turn. The old favourite is evidently not himself, for he seems unable to pace it with the mare. Her backers are jubilant, but all too soon. At the home turn there is a bay filly carrying green and gold hoops, who is making up her lee-way fast. She catches Krina in the straight, and after a keen struggle we see by the numbers that Persuasion is first and Krina second. Harry Lunn's face is for the second time lit up with smiles.

Now that Mr. Stead's horses, Stepniak and Ich Dien, have been scratched for the Newmarket Handicap and the Australian Cup, and Major George's Pegasus has returned to Auckland, we can form a more correct estimate of the horses likely to constitute the field for the Dunedin Cup. Of the thirteen acceptors it is probable that eight or nine will make the final payment on the 19th inst. Mr. Stead will be likely to start Ich Dien, 7st. 5lb. in preference to Stepniak, 9st. 4lb. Mr. Stephensen, as he has Hippomenes in the Publican's Handicap, will probably send last year's winner, Tempest, who has only 2lbs more than when she won.