

POLO AT WANGANUI.

THE MATCH WEEK—DESCRIBED BY A LADY VISITOR.

THE following brightly-written account of the polo week at Wanganui is contributed by one of the most popular and certainly the most beautiful woman in Auckland society. We insert it with much pleasure, and we are sure it will be read with interest by all who take an interest in the fascinating game:—

"We arrived in Wanganui by train on Monday, as did most of those accompanying the polo teams. Such a lovely fresh day it was; such a scramble for rooms, for all the best hotels were packed, and polo ponies with their smart trappings everywhere! We three girls were lucky in having an invitation to stay at a private house, which, by the way, was quite full, owing to the arrival of unexpected guests, and the fun seemed to come in in finding places wherein to camp at night. Tuesday

THE TOURNAMENT COMMENCED

in a large paddock six miles out of town. A long drive you will say, but a very lovely one, with glimpses of Egmont and snowy Ruapehu en route. When we arrived, there was already a large crowd in cabs, carriages, brakes and on horseback, and lots of well-known faces.

ON THE CHRISTCHURCH DRAG

I noticed Mr and Mrs A. Rhodes, Mr and Mrs Heaton Rhodes, Mr and Mrs Chambers, from Gisborne, Mr Buckley and Mr O'Rorke, who is well-known in your part of the country, is he not? Mr and Mrs Dan Riddiford, accompanied by Miss Keiller, were on the Rangitikei brake, and in others I saw Mr and Mrs Ware, Mr and Mrs Bloomfield, Dr. and Miss Purchas, and Mr Philson from Auckland; Mr and Mrs Baker, Mrs Abrahams, Miss Lloyd and Mr and Mrs Sewell from Palmerston way.

"WHAT A LOT OF SMART, GOOD LOOKING WOMEN!" was the remark I heard made by a man behind me, and Mabel and I agreed that it was quite true. One very smart costume was in thick white serge, made with a long jacket and plain skirt, tight-fitting vest; and black hat with feathers; another was a charming combination of black net and coral pink-ribbed silk. But I am quite

forgetting about the polo, which of course was the interest of the day. Your own Auckland team was drawn first against Rangitikei II., and everybody said it was a moral for Auckland; but to everybody's amazement it wasn't, and after a very tough fight Rangitikei won by one goal; and yet the Aucklanders pressed the game round their opponent's goal nearly the whole time. "Verily, I think there must be

LUCK IN POLO AS WELL AS OTHER THINGS."

remarked Mab, *sotto voce*. We were all certainly disappointed that the defeated team had not come nearer the Cup. "Mr O'Rorke's play was perfect," so said an old veteran at the game. The next match, Christchurch versus Manawatu II, was very slow, as it was quite a foregone conclusion and a correct one this time; so our party left before the end, as it meant a six miles' drive, dinner, and a musical evening before we could seek our much desired couches.

"On Wednesday morning we all went out (about twenty of us) in a brake, and I really think the matches on this day were the most exciting of the week. There was certainly more

ELECTRICITY AND BLOODSHED IN THE AIR,

and at times sulphur and brimstone did not seem very distant. The opposing teams were Warrengate II., and Manawatu I., and Warrengate I. and Rangitikei I.; both the Warrengates went under. Mr Baker, of Manawatu, presented a gory appearance, having had a terrific blow on the back of his head, of which, happily, he seemed quite unconscious. A Warrengate and Rangitikei man had a great collision, both making the acquaintance of mother earth. However, no one suffered, but one of the ponies. It seems to me, they generally do come in for most of the knocks, poor willing obedient little beasts.

"After dinner the other two girls turned out to a private dance. I sacrificed myself and stayed at home, as I think to present three girls out of one party for a poor hostess to find partners for, must be rather trying to both parties, don't you? The girls came home and said it was delightful, and

tried to wake me up to tell me of their successes, but I was not to be drawn.

"Manawatu I. played Rangitikei II. on Thursday and won, and then came what we all expected to be the tournament of the week, Rangitikei I. versus the Christchurch team, the holders of the Cup. The pretty yellow and white colours of the former showed up first in the field, and then the more sombre red and blue of their opponents, and what ponies they were all mounted on—perfect in shape, perfectly groomed, perfect pictures in every way.

"FIVE TO ONE ON RANGITIKEI."

says one sport near me. "Done," replies the other, "they haven't got a show against Christchurch." But what a surprise we all got. Goal to Rangitikei, goal to Rangitikei, goal to Rangitikei, till even their own partisans forbore to clap. Time called and the score ten goals to one and the cup practically gone to Rangitikei, for we all knew that though Manawatu would make a good fight, they could never win, and events proved us right, and so ended the polo tournament for 1894.

"We all turned up at the ball on Friday evening given by the Wanganui Jockey Club, the victorious, the defeated, the maimed, and I was going to say the blind, only I don't think anybody actually did lose his sight, and it was such a jolly ball, a large hall beautifully decorated, good floor, good supper and

BEST OF ALL, PLENTY OF BRAVE MEN.

The Jockey Club must certainly be congratulated on the way they did everything. Most of us were very late the next morning, but the laziest of us managed to get out to the prettiest little race course in the colony in time to see the first race of the sports, and then Captain Edwin was unkind to us for the first time and sent a shower, but it was only a shower, though it looked black enough for anything. We supported Mr O'Rorke's Salvator in the Cup, but it went to Mr Watson's Queenie.

A POPULAR THOUGH UNEXPECTED WIN.

One poor fellow broke his leg in the Steeplechase, and another his collarbone, so there was plenty of excitement.

"Monday we said adieu to Wanganui, and it was so horribly fine. I always think it should rain and nature look sad when one is saying good-bye to a place where one has had a thoroughly good time. However, the sun shone brightly and showed no signs of considering our feelings. "Oh, if there was only another week of it!" sighed Mab, as she sank down in the corner of the carriage."

PRINCESS IDA.



A. Martin, photo., Wanganui.

NEW ZEALAND POLO ASSOCIATION.

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FIRST ROW.—H. P. HARRISON (Fordell), J. T. DALRYMPLE (Rangitikei), W. CHAPMAN (Fordell), JAS. CAMERON (Fordell), M. HIGGIE (Fordell), H. CAMERON (Fordell), A. W. SKERMAN (Manawatu), T. SPYERS (Manawatu), N. GOYTON (Rangitikei). SECOND ROW.—H. K. WATSON (Poverty Bay), J. F. COLEBROVE (Auckland), L. SHAW (Hawke's Bay), JOHN CAMERON (Fordell), G. A. M. BUCKLEY (Christchurch), R. H. RHODES (Christchurch), E. F. BLOOMFIELD (Rangitikei), W. B. SAUNDERSON (Rangitikei), W. K. CHAMBERS (Poverty Bay), T. H. G. LLOYD (Manawatu). THIRD ROW.—W. R. BLOOMFIELD (Auckland), A. C. PURCHAS (Auckland), E. D. O'RORKE (Auckland), A. E. G. RHODES (Christchurch), J. G. WILSON (Rangitikei), D. D. RIDDIFORD (Rangitikei), F. P. SNOW (Manawatu), W. A. KEILLER (Rangitikei), A. S. BAKER (Manawatu). FOURTH ROW.—W. E. LLOYD (Manawatu), A. WILLIAMS (Manawatu), F. LANCE (Christchurch), T. KEILLER (Rangitikei), F. W. SEWELL (Manawatu).