

The singular accident which befel the Pony Lady Isabel in a blacksmith's shop at Paeroa, whereby she got so badly cut about, having her nose almost completely severed and her cheeks cut, reminds me of a case that occurred many years ago in a blacksmith's shop at Marton, when a horse, after having a shoe put on his hind foot, started kicking violently, as if trying to get rid of the shoe. In doing so, extraordinary and impossible as it may seem, the patient took care not to injure himself, which, if I remember right, was owned by Sir William Fox, had to be destroyed.

Though country clubs in Auckland do not give so much money in stakes, or such of them as have permits do not put so much money through their totalisators, the attendances compare favourably with the small country meetings in southern parts. The most prosperous country meetings are to be found as a general rule where there is good land, where cattle fatten and nick well, or where sheep are carried to the coast and not sheared, or where the sheep, where saw mills and flax mills are in full swing, and where crops yield a good harvest. In poor parts of the country the totalisator returns are invariably small.

Mons. Misoune paid a visit to Wellington Park during the week. Of the steees there he seems most impressed with the muskikot. With the brood mares and foals well pleased, and having visited the French Haras declares that none of them come up to Wellington Park in the matter of arrangements and completeness. He was charmed with the surrounding country at Mount Wellington and will carry back with him to France the most pleasurable recollections of his visit. The view from Mount Eden obtained during one of his morning rides - for he takes plenty of exercise in the saddle, was about the best he had seen in all his travels since leaving his native country, seven months ago.

Weights for the Easter Handicap and Brighton Handicap at the Auckland Racing Club's autumn meeting do not appear until Monday. This is a mistake. Weights for the more important handicaps should be out earlier, as also weights for the minor events, which do not appear until five days before the meeting commences. Owners at a distance are really asked to send their horses to the meeting before seeing their handicaps, and this is what few care to do. There was no necessity to take nominations as far ahead as three weeks. The idea in deterring the appearance of the weights was, I understand, so that the form at Hawke's Bay could be known, but since this was arranged the Hawke's Bay Jockey Club's autumn meeting was put off, and there are few horses engaged at Napier Park and Auckland as well.

The riding of V. Cotton at the Wanganui meeting and at other Southern meetings has been so favourably commended upon his win on Jewellery that a double record. It was his first over a mile and a half, and the first Jewellery he registered over so long a distance. W. Young, a very capable light weight, was seen to advantage also at Wanganui. This had a hard horse, to ride in the Wanganui Cup in Heronua. Very few of our young horsemen ride long distance races well. It is pleasing to see light weights coming on to take the places of older horsemen who, from increasing weight, growing in disfavour, and from various causes, drop out of the ranks. There is always a demand for light weight riders, and those who behave themselves properly deserve to succeed.

Thus a writer in the Sydney "Referee" it seems almost incredible that in these advanced days of racing anyone could be found with such a small amount of brains as to imagine the possibility of successfully "ringing in" a well known racehorse in one of the principal racing centres. Such a person has seemingly been found, in a man named Jack Cox, who is at present after purchasing the Antwerp gelding Antwerp from Sydney for a Brisbane sportsman, took him on lease to the central districts of Queensland, and altered his name to Primo, with the attitude of a gambler, he "chickened" won a race of two there and then came on to Brisbane, and had the

sobriety to run him as Primo in a Trial Handicap at Albion Park, which he won. It did not take long for Primo's identity to leak out, and the stewards of the Jockey Club, after possessing themselves of the above facts, wrote the horse and Mr. Cox off the register for the term of their natural lives. There is no very little doubt but that the disqualification will be endorsed by the J.C.C. committee.

The method of buying polo ponies wholesale in Texas 20 years ago was curious and simple, says a Home paper. It was apparently the way in which the San Antonio dealers always sold their animals when the purchaser required a number. Around the town are dozens of "corral" fenced enclosures, into which the horses for sale were driven. The intending buyers spent one day going round these enclosures to inspect the animals, and the next day began buying. This they did by offering a certain price per head for a given number of a corral of horses, the pick resting with them, not the seller. A small enclosure was hired, and the ponies, which were bought in "bunches" of half a dozen or so, were driven thither as soon as a bargain was struck. In this way the two purchasers bought all the ponies they wanted, seventy-eight head, by the afternoon of the fourth day, the average price being between £4 and £5. As much as £15 was given, however, for some very fast ponies which were already broken to saddle.

Why was Canteen made such a favourite for the Wanganui Cup? This was a question raised on the evening after the race in a company of some dozen or more sportsmen. One suggested that it was because he had good staying ability in the New Zealand Cup. Another referred to the comments that had appeared on his running in the Dunedin Cup, and expressed his opinion strongly that a section of the people who help to send our racing ponies had been deluded into the belief that the grey had been in reserve for the Wanganui Cup, when one of those present - an Aucklander - endorsed this view, but at the same time informed the company that Mr. Moss had sent him a substantial amount, which had been invested for him on his horse in the Dunedin Cup, a refutation of the silly report that waiting tactics had been adopted. Mr. Moss has a horse who has become state and sored by racing, and it may be the spring before he will run decently again, if indeed he ever shows the form he did in the New Zealand Cup. Canteen would be put to harness racing if he belonged to some people. I know he is just the sort to win a Grand National Hurdle race.

My visits to Wanganui in the autumn are invariably of a pleasant character. There one met with so many fellows, and so many old associations are recalled; still, a touch of sadness comes when one misses old familiar faces, and in recent years between the meeting the great sorrow-bearer has carried off prominent men in the world of sport. Aucklanders endorsed this view, but at the same time informed the company that Mr. Moss had sent him a substantial amount, which had been invested for him on his horse in the Dunedin Cup, a refutation of the silly report that waiting tactics had been adopted. Mr. Moss has a horse who has become state and sored by racing, and it may be the spring before he will run decently again, if indeed he ever shows the form he did in the New Zealand Cup. Canteen would be put to harness racing if he belonged to some people. I know he is just the sort to win a Grand National Hurdle race.

Just before the Wanganui meeting Achilles galloped five furlongs in 60.45 seconds with a flying start, and another gallop he registered was six furlongs with a flying start in 1m 13sec. Machine Gun registered a stunner over the six furlongs, and another over five furlongs he ran in 1m 13sec. On the day the Jack-

son Stekes was decided the ground bore evidence of having been cut up on the previous day, and the rain had made it heavy, yet the winner, Achilles, was able to cover the distance in 1m 13sec comfortably, while Machine Gun, who was ridden out, was beaten a nose for third place by Exmoor in 1m 13.25sec. The wet day and the course were against all four runners, but Machine Gun on account of his wind ailment was the one most likely to be troubled, and he was carrying 12lb over his weight-for-age, while Achilles had 5lb over. Exmoor and Achilles were never in the contention. Exmoor has shown himself to be a useful gelding on several occasions, run well on soft going. There is no doubt that Achilles is a good two-year-old, and on the improvement, and it is quite possible that the blacings concerned would have been the same had the going been good.

A huge jump was achieved by Mr. Spencer Gillan's Moftau while running in the open steeplechase at Hurst Park on Saturday (over the distance of 1m 13sec) on Feb. 23. This horse is now an admirer termed a "pretty considerably hard puller"; he wants a good man on his back to steer him, and he should go, and he is a bold fencer. At the first ditch he was asked to take off almost as soon as he got inside the wings, and even so, he landed over with a scramble, but without a fall. His only competitor, Newell of Foxbury, Nightingale, who rode him, "but I shall be glad when he settles down a little more and jumps like a respectable citizen." The effect of such a brilliant acrobatic display was to certain the New Zealand Cup. Short odds were laid on Lord Gerald Grosvenor's Hidden Love, though he could only run second to Mr. "Bob" Stevier's Bobbie - a sterling competitor whom it is a pleasure to see galloping on as if the fox were snapping in the next field for him, and bounds were running from seat to view.

While the members of a well known city sporting club were busy "adjusting the averages of fortune" over the Epsom meeting on Wednesday, February 17, says the "Australasian," they received a shock quite as severe as any experienced by the "Tussock" battler during the Port Arthur go. A sporting horse attached to the humble afternoon milk cart, hearing that independence was to be tried, rushed down the right-of-way with the back of the club. It is believed "to get a bit on." The milk cart in his rear, however, frustrated his intentions. The members, hearing the clatter at the back door, and always on the alert for the expected, may be the other door almost to a man. The half-furlong sprint down Royal Lane they were all on it is said to have been a record one. The sudden falling-off in attendance at the very great racehorse over all distances. At the stud, however, he gained even greater fame, and for a good many years past he has been at the top of the tree, or near the top, among the winning sires at the Antipodes. Yet, without exception, such of his stock as were brought to England proved woefully disappointing. Survivor and Oban may be named, and the thought of them awakens bitter memories, yet each was a good horse in his own country, and Oban has shown over hurdles and across country that he can go right enough when he is so inclined. Another, which came to England was Amiable, but she was too nervous and high-strung to stand any work, and she did no good here, though she could gallop like the wind. Then there was Old (to another Lochiel, who certainly won a race, but was always more or less of a wreck when in training here. Major Edwards has Wallaby, a Lochiel four-year-old, which he has bought, and he promises of doing any better than the others.

At country meetings in Auckland it occasionally happens that horses are started as many as three times a day. Half mile and five furlong dashes, with intervals of about 40 minutes between, will not hurt at horses. I heard a man recently talking of the cruelty of this sort of thing. It is absurd to suppose that our horses are all as tender as a dove, and that they will not saddle up twice in an afternoon, but if a horse would rattle over short courses half a dozen times a day if required, without suffering any injury. In the days of heat racing, it so happened that before a horse would race it had had to run eight miles over steeplechase, 3m 9m high. This was at Rangitikei, and some of the race-gobs of the time who were present remember the event well. Not only did the horses run eight miles, but they carried water weights, 12.0. I don't think anyone will claim that they travelled as fast, say, as Sulphur or Walwara, but it is certain they did not receive the same care or such a long course of training. There used to be quite as proficient jumping horses in the old days as can be found now. They were well broken, and the courses were not what they are now.

Had Cannie Chiel been as fit to race at Wanganui as he was at Christmas-time and after he had been out of the country would most likely have won the Wanganui Cup. At Wellington he gave Ghooka 14lb in the Cup and 10lb in the Racing Club Handicap. At Manawatu he beat Cannie Chiel over a mile and a-half at a difference of 9lb, but next day, at a mile and a-quarter, Cannie Chiel beat him easily at a difference of 3lb. Convoys ran both times. Cannie Chiel is probably seen to best advantage at a mile and a-quarter. We have probably seen the best of him, however, and Ghooka, like most of the Lochiels, may improve with age. No great merit, however, can be attached to his running at any time, though he out-stayed Bonco, who will still improve in the Cup. Jewellery's winning achievements since she left Auckland on her Taranaki Wanganui-Edmonton trip should not be too highly assessed. Like most of her sex, she is better suited in the autumn than in the summer, and it may be allowed that her "favourable" weight through ordinary handicap races. Ghooka has invariably been raced to the front, but at Wanganui was reserved for a finish in both his races, and may likely race better that way.

The V.A.T.C. lost about £150 on their last autumn meeting, and although stakes have been slightly reduced, the loss will not be less this year. Referring to the diminished attendances at the Australasian" says: "Last Saturday the takings were £200 less than on the corresponding day last year. The weather was threatening in the morning, but from noon onwards it was fine, and there was nothing to stop people from going to Cavendish. We do not know how the V.R.C. got on at Flemington on New Year's Day, but presume they fared badly. The V.R.C., however, had to contend against the first day of a test match. All the six suburban clubs are complaining, and it would seem that for the time being racing is not popular in Victoria. For that matter, the clubs in South Australia are not doing well, but in New South Wales all the clubs are getting good gates, and record attendances were noted in connection with the Tasmanian and West Australian Cup meetings. Why the dearth of interest in Victoria? Is it over-racing, or are people pinched for money? The sudden falling-off in attendances can hardly be due to over-racing. No one will deny that we have too much racing around Melbourne, but there is not as much as there was a year ago. Racing is an expensive amusement, and the public can see an afternoon's cycling for less than a tenth of the money it costs to see a race meeting from the best seats. There is no variation in the cost of racing to spectators. The charge for the grandstand enclosure is the same at Ascotville Park as at Flemington. And still the tariff is cheap in comparison to what a man has to pay in England if he wants to see racing in comfort. When the A.J.C. secured a record attendance at Randwick last Derby Day it was put down to the great interest

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