

Here with a smiling request to "write something funny." One would have thought the Autographs were funny enough themselves at times. How is it that you must always be facetious in an autograph album? Some people do write sensible things (you can always tell where they are, the pages are always turned over quickly), but only to excite pity in the bosoms of the guest who has the precious volume thrust into his hands. No, if you are anxious to shine in the autographic line you must be funny first and last. The old hand who knows how to preserve his reputation takes the book home, erases something from "Ally Sloper's Half-holiday," or some other repository of wit, and copies it in with a mild adaptation. Voila! his reputation is prodigious. The greenhorn, however, starts to work right away. Fancy being funny on paper in a roomful of afternoon-teasers! If he be an average young man, he chews half the penholder away, looks worried and warm for five minutes, and dashes off in a clerical hand some feeble squib. The child of his brain is handed round, and excites a gushing "Oh, how very funny," or "Quite too droll, Mr So-and-so," and the like, and he inwardly curses the day he learned to write. Yes, the autograph fiend is the fiercest of all collecting fiends, and, speaking personally, I would much prefer being asked for my name by a policeman than by the fair possessor of an autograph album.



TURF FIXTURES.

May 21 and 24—Takapuna J.C. Winter
 May 22 and 23—North Otara J.C. Winter
 May 24 and 25—Wangarei J.C. Winter
 June 3—Mania Hack B.C. Annual
 June 8 and 4—Dunedin J.C. Winter
 June 8 and 4—Otaki Maori R.C. Winter
 June 3, 8, and 11—Auckland R.C. Great Northern Steeplechase Meeting
 June 22 and 23—Hawke's Bay J.C. Winter
 June 28 and 29—Napier Park R.C. Winter

HUNTING.

PAKURANGA HUNT.

APPOINTMENTS FOR MONTH ENDING MAY 28th, 1904
 May 18th, Wednesday—Mangere Pound
 May 21st, Saturday—Star and Garter, Penmura
 May 23th, Wednesday—Green Lane, Remuera
 May 28th, Saturday—St. John's College
 Each Day at 12 o'clock.

WAIKATO HUNT CLUB FIXTURES.

May 18—Te Awamutu
 May 25—Pickering's Corner
 All Meets 12 noon.

TURF NOTES.

Haydn is doing good solid work at Ellerslie.
 Monoforn, the high priced colt, is doing useful work at Ellerslie.
 Cannongate has made his re-appearance on the track at Ellerslie.
 Soulfish has been transferred from C. Coleman's to T. Cotton's charge.
 Geordie is reported to be showing improved form on the Takapuna tracks.
 The totalisator turnover at the Egmont meeting fell short of last year's by £1821.
 Revealer is doing some good schooling work at Ellerslie.
 The double Up-to-Date and Cannongate was backed last Friday for £1300.
 Haydn and Dolania are to be taken to Wanganui to fulfil their engagements there.
 H. Cotter has a nice out of a hunter, half brother to Huku, by St. Ives, in work at Ellerslie.
 The pony by South—Bilt o' Fashion, in Toser's stable, is to be called Fashionable.
 Street betting is to be put down in Stratford if the local borough council can accomplish the object.
 Annoyed, who has been treated to a short spell, has made her re-appearance on the training tracks at Ellerslie.
 Kakino jumped a few of the steeplechase fences at Ellerslie during the week. She is improving in her jumping.
 A strong commission was worked each day in Wellington on Rose Petal in the races she won at Marlborough.
 The South—Musket maid filly in Frank MacLennan's stable has been named Lydia.
 Ringman, who was recently purchased by an Otara racing man, has begun work at Wigram.
 Merry South is striding along in good style at Ellerslie, and may run well at Takapuna.
 Flower of Gold was given a turn over the steeplechase fences on Thursday afternoon, jumping well.
 Dolores is looking well and may be worth watching in some of the welters at the A.R.C. winter meeting.
 Gleneg and his half-sister, Fate, by Steplark, have changed hands in the South during the past few days.
 Unless something unforeseen occurs, Aka Aka is to be shipped South next week to fulfil his Wanganui engagements.
 Inquiries have been made from the South for Waitara and Esclair for the Wanganui double, but no business resulted.
 Creepin and Papatu were taken to the Shore last Saturday, to be given a turn over the Takapuna steeplechase country.
 Mr W. Kelso's Fuselphone was offered for sale for 25 guineas just before he won the Warwick Farm Hurdle Race.
 Grand Rapids, Full Cry, and Lady Lilian have all been backed for the New Zealand Cup during the last week.
 Mr J. Cameron is his starting at Egmont was said to an fall. A pony called Pupin broke the barrier so often in one race that the start had to be made without him. Pupin is a five year old by Lakemill from Australia, and is said to be erratic.

Nugget, who won a number of races on the West Coast a few years ago, was brought up from Taranaki last week. It is more than likely that he will be hunted during the season.

Some of the trainers at Ellerslie are already letting their young charges sport along a furlong, and a few of them show great promise, although it is rather early to try and pick which are likely to turn out racehorses.

The tracks at Ellerslie, after the long spell of fine weather, are in first class condition. The outside of the course proper has been open the last few mornings, and trainers are not slow in taking advantage of it, to give their charges fast work.

Hippowal, who has a good outside chance in the National Hurdles, is going in good style at Ellerslie, and last Wednesday had the best of Val Rosa over a mile and a half on the flat, on the outside of the course proper, the distance being run in 3.1.

Spalpeen and Val Rosa were schooled over the hurdles on Thursday afternoon. Spalpeen improved a lot, on his display last Saturday, and his prospects for the National look a lot brighter than they did a week ago. Val Rosa fell at the last hurdle, and his rider, A. Julian, had his collarbone badly broken.

That the Hawke's Bay Jockey Club made a wise move when they decided on the dates of their autumn meeting from the 17th March to May 11th and 12th is evidenced by the fact that the totalisator investments show an increase of £4169 over the corresponding meeting last year.

Judging from the master of likely looking horses, as well as the proved ones, who were turned out at the opening meeting of the Pakuranga Hunt Club, the hunters' races to be decided at the A.R.C. winter meeting ought to fill well, and keen competition ought to result.

Pippo, the New Zealand steeplechaser, was awarded top weight, 30.7, in the steeplechase at the Sydney Club races, which were run last Saturday. The services were either estimating Pippo at least a stone above his N.Z. form, or else the steeplechasers in Sydney are a very poor lot.

A number of horses by the successful sire of Junipers, Ascetic, were sold in England prior to the commencement of the Lincoln meeting at the Sydney Club. One named Aunt May realised 150guineas, the seven-year-old Jubilee John and Jubilee Jack realised 70guineas and 50guineas respectively, and Ascetic's Anno (eight years) went for 50guineas.

On the same day that Moffat won the Grand National, Mr Edwards' Oasis, carrying 10.7, and described as another Australian bred one, landed the Liverpool Hurdle Race of 5000guineas. Oasis is by Cranbrook, Karakool, with 22.9, who ran in this event, is claimed to be one of the best hurdle horses in England. Oasis ran the two miles in 3.50, fast time for the course.

It is worthy of mention that Queen Bee, by Young Chevot, is the dam of four recent Southern winners in Slow Tom, Magical, Bealey, and Ability, and it is remarkable that Bealey, who won at Ashburton, is an aged pony and claims in turn as her son a trotter known as Brown Rib, who has a record of 5.30 or thereabouts. Brown Rib was got by one of the best-bred American trotting horses ever landed in these parts in Irvington, his dam being Belle of Ireland, a highly bred sire of thoroughbred and City-Deadend blood.

The ancient hunter Neck or Nothing, by Gladiator, who, if my memory serves me right, made his debut in the Liverpool Hunt Club meeting sixteen years ago, and who has been a conspicuous figure in the hunting fields about Auckland for a number of seasons, is to be pensioned off for the rest of his days by his owner, Mr C. Purches. It is pleasing to see owners showing such consideration for their old slaves.

The yearling brother to Flying Fox, in the Eaton stud, has been named Hippotrolo. He is described as being on a far larger scale than his brother was at the same age, and he moves in a grand easy swing. The yearling sister to Scipitoe will race as Crown Jew. She was a late foal, but is growing fast, and bears a striking resemblance to Scipitoe. Just before the wall left England Vampire foaled another brother to Flying Fox.

Concerning brood mares, an eminent authority on horse-breeding says with regard to the best conformation for a brood mare, it is impossible to lay down any but the most general rules. Mere size is of small account. A little mare, if wide and roomy, will often produce bigger and finer foals than will a much taller nutcracker. Width and roominess are essential characteristics of a successful brood mare, for it is rare indeed to find one that runs up right behind the saddle and is narrow to follow producing foals to any account.

A good year is told against one of the best trotting mares in the country in a certain district in the North Island, says an exchange. The men were engaged ditching, and asked to get off for the races. The employer, who is a cunning Scot, said they could go if they took the ditch as far as a

NOTICE TO MAKE RETURNS OF INCOME UNDER "THE LAND AND INCOME ASSESSMENT ACT, 1900."

Land and Income Tax Department, Wellington, 8th May, 1904.
 Notice is hereby given that, in pursuance of the above Act and the Regulations made thereunder, every person and company, within the meaning of the said Act, having derived income during the year ending 31st March, 1904, from any source, or by any means which is made the subject of taxation under the said Act, is hereby required to duly make and furnish to me, in the prescribed form, returns of such income on or before the 1st June, 1904.
 And, further, notice is hereby given that such returns shall in all cases be delivered at or forwarded to the office of the Commissioner of Taxes, in the Government Buildings, at Wellington.
JOHN MCGOWAN,
 Commissioner of Taxes.
 NOTE.—Persons who have not received forms of returns from this office may obtain them at any Postal Money-order Office, and any who have in previous years been permitted to make returns at a date other than the 31st March will, provided returns are furnished promptly after date of balance, be allowed the same concession this year without special request.

CROWN LANDS FOR SETTLEMENT.

MATAMATA ESTATE.
 District Land and Survey Office, Auckland, 22nd May, 1904.
 The opening of the Matamata Estate for Settlement has been gazetted for THURSDAY, 2nd June, 1904, at this Office, and at the County Office, at Matamata. The ballot will be held at Auckland on FRIDAY, 10th June, 1904.
 Pamphlets giving full particulars as to areas, rentals, quality of land, etc., will be available for distribution in the course of a few days. Poster Plans will also be exhibited at all Post Offices.
 Forms of application, pamphlets, and plans will be obtainable at this office. Guides to show intending selectors over the Estate at any time during the day, will be in attendance at Matamata.
G. MUELLER,
 Commissioner of Crown Lands.

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