A well-known punter recently laid a local owner £30 to £1 that Savoury beat his horse in the Railway Handicap, both to start and one to win. The punter, who is generally noted for his shrewdness, must think that the race is a moral for Mr Stead's colt, as the horse he backed him to beat has been given a chance by some of the turf scribes.

Bellman, who raced so well at Takapuna on the opening day, must be put down as one of the most surprising of equine timber jumpers. He has pulled up very lame on at least five occasions to my knowledge, apparently broken down, and not expected to see the post again, but he comes up smiling at regular intervals, and it is doubtful whether he was ever very much better than on Saturday last.

After Loch Lomond's faulty jumping on the opening day of the Takapuna Jockey Club's meeting, which resulted in the death of his rider, A. Butler, he did not find many supporters for the hurdle race on the second day, which we won, paying the good price of £10 odd in a field of six. Loch Lomond's display of jumping, both in the Hurdles and Steeplechase, was perfect.

At the monthly meeting of the committee of the Auckland Racing Club, held on Thursday, the previous resolutions granting licenses to bookmakers other than members of Tattersall's was rescinded, and another passed to the effect that only members of Tattersall's Club be allowed to bet at the club's meetings. The passing of the latter resolution will be greatly appreciated by members of Tattersall's.

Otto Madden is gradually creeping away from W. Lane in the list of winning jockeys in England, but racegoers will be glad to know that the injured jockey is improving, though slowly. Madden had scored at last count 129 times out of a possible 640, as against Lane's 124 out of 568. D. Maher has got over his century by one, but he has only had 370 mounts. Halsey is next, but a long way behind.

At the recent Agricultural Show, a good looking sort of a gelding named Pat, by Leolantis out of a Natator mare, dam of Taniwha, was awarded first prize for best three year old filly or gelding. Pat attracted the attention of a patron of C. Coleman's stable, with the result that an offer was made to his owner for his purchase, which was accepted, and Pat is now in training at Ellerslie.

The issue of the Auckland Guineas has at last been finally settled, and the stewards of the A.R.C., at a meeting held last week, instructed the totalisator proprietors to pay out the dividends on Boris as first and on Gladstone as second. The dividends payable are: Boris, £3 19/, and Gladstone 8/6, and can be collected at any time at the office of Messrs H. H. Hayr and Co., High-street.

A short time ago Gwenlad's owner was advised by H. French that it was useless to persevere with the mare, as there was very little chance of her standing a preparation. This fact came to the knowledge of Frank Ross, with the result that he made overtures for her lease which were successful. As again evidencing the fact of Ross's skill with cripples, the little Brigadier mare faced the starter in the Stanley Handicap last Wednesday, and getting to the front early made no race of it, winning easily by a couple of lengths.

The winning sires at the Takapuna Jockey Club's Spring Meeting were—Soult (3), Seaton Delaval (2), and Brigadier, Flintlock, Gilead, Recluse, Freedom, Lord of the Isles, Hilad, Muskapeer, Tasman, Hotchkiss, Tetford, and Cuirassier one each. R. Hannan is at the head of winning trainers with three wins, P. Conway and McLennan two each, and Ross, McKinnon, Hunter, Gill, Deeble, Mutmanmin, Scott, Weal, Barr, and Butler one each. Of the jockeys, Jones, Marchant, Fisher, Chaffe, and Deeley had two winning mounts apiece, and Gray, Murray, Deeble, Ryan, Sutton, Howard, and Meeks one each.

In a private letter from a friend who saw Pretty Polly meet with her first defeat which was in the Prix Du Conseil Municipal at Bourgtheroulde, France, the writer says he never saw a worse example of bad judgment than Maher exhibited. He was watching what he thought was his only danger, Zinfandel, and the selling plater, Presto II., was presented with a win which in a true run race would never have happened. This was very annoying to Major Lodor. The best of horsemen everywhere make mistakes; we find this the case in New Zealand.

Writing from Ireland anent the defeat of Pretty Polly, the correspondent of the "Sportsman" says:—"For Pretty Polly's defeat I can find no excuse. The mare looked and went well. I have seen it stated that Maher on Pretty Polly and M. Cannon on Zinfandel should have gone after Presto II. sooner. Had they done so, I do not believe that the result would have been different. Doubtless the going, which was holding, was against Pretty Polly and in favour of the winner, who is a much better horse than most people give him credit for. It is said that those closely connected with Presto II. landed a good stake. He is trained by Lowrence at Maisons-Laffitte."

When Bellman and Hinau finished first and second in the hurdle race at Takapuna, a good many people appeared to have forgotten that Hinau was the same that raced at Ellerslie, winning the first maiden hurdle race of 18 miles at the winter meeting of the A.R.C. 1901, in 3.22 3-5. Hinau raced in the spring of 1901 in two steeplechases and two hurdle races, since which time, three years, he had not carried colours. Hinau is getting on in years. He was considered a very useful gelding when taken to Australia to race about five years ago, but was generally very unlucky. He may be considered so to have bumped up against Bellman on Saturday.

This is how American "Sports of the Times" refers to a disqualification imposed: "J. K. Hughes, the elongated owner and bookmaker from Dennison, Texas, will race no more at Delmar. He has been prominently connected with St. Louis racing for several years, and owns a very useful lot of platers, but they couldn't run in form, and Judge Murphy has ordered that entries from the Hughes stable be refused. The stable has frequently offended, particularly with Edgardo and Perquoi Pas. It was a very dull race run by the latter that resulted in the banishment of the stable. Mr Hughes is free to race on any other track, but he is not desired at Delmar."

At the inquest touching the death of the Messrs R. and R. Dodet's trainer, Butler, caused by the blundering of hurdle horse Loch Lomond at the Takapuna races, a question was asked as to whether any of the jury knew if the deceased had backed the horse he was riding, as that, said the coroner, would indicate whether he wanted it to stumble. One can scarcely imagine that such a question should have been asked. Horsemen don't go out in hurdle races with the fixed intention of trying to bring their mounts down while racing at a speed of better than two minutes to the mile, and don't contemplate suicide in that way. It is painful to think that a suggestion of such a thing should have crossed the mind of anyone, the case having been a sufficiently distressing one.

Another pressman has passed away to the Never-Never Land in the person of Mr Andrew Jackson—"Hippona," who attended to the sporting columns of the "Auckland Star" for many years. Until about four years ago, when overtaken with a serious affliction which incapacitated him from further literary work, the deceased was an energetic news-gatherer, but from that time dropped quietly out of sporting journalism, but continued on in commercial business for the Brett Printing and Publishing Company, with which firm he had been connected in various departments for about 20 years. A few weeks ago he was suffering from paralysis, and was removed from the Hospital to his father's residence at Glasgow terrace, Grafton road, where he passed away on Sunday. He was buried at Parewa last Tuesday. In writing the obituary notices of sportsmen, my late confrere invariably closed with a hope that the sod might rest lightly o'er their graves—a nice sentiment, which may be repeated of deceased, and will be endorsed by a great many of his friends and acquaintances.

During the progress of the Te Aroha meeting I paid a visit to John Lennard's farm, which is situated a few miles from the Te Aroha township, and had a look over the three yearlings which it is John's intention to offer for sale at one of the forthcoming yearling sales. The lot, which are three in number, comprise a bay filly by Seaton Delaval—Vieux Rose, by Hippocampus—Hesarina, full sister to Val Rosa, Alba Rose, and Carl Rosa. The filly, which was foaled in October, is well grown, and should produce keen competition when she appears in the ring. A brown colt by Phoebus Apollo—Roxana, by Cuirassier—Vieux Rose, foaled in September, is a fine, compact little fellow who looks like coming to hand early, and is just the sort likely to win the Avondale Stakes. He ought to fetch a good price. The bay colt by Hotchkiss—Dorothy, by Dauphin—Bragela, foaled in October, is a fine, commanding colt, and has every appearance of turning out a racehorse. Altogether the trio are equal in looks and conformation to any that I have seen this season, and the Te Aroha sportsman should have no difficulty in quitting them at a payable figure.

The fact that a couple of gentlemen held opposite ideas as to the age in which a horse develops his best pace brought about an interesting match last month in Chicago. Mr Williams held to the theory that thoroughbreds are raced too early. He is working on this idea, and has saved a number for racing purposes. These are not raced until after they are four years old. A Mr Sydney Paget is of just the opposite opinion. He believes in early two year old racing. The argument became so strong that it ended in a match being made between a four year old and a maiden 2 year old to gallop over three furlongs for £500 a-side, owners up, the winner to take both horses. The match aroused a lot of interest, but it was a poor contest, as the two year old won easily. This is only what I should expect. The youngster would beat the old horse over such a distance. Of course there are exceptions, but I should say that it would be good business backing the youngster every time.

The Middle Park Plate was first run in 1866, and has been won by many horses of note, including Melton, Minting, Donovan, Orme, Isinglass, Ladas, St. Frusquin, Galtee More, and Pretty Polly. Jardy's sire won the Derby and other classics in 1886, and his dam, Airs and Graces, captured the Oaks in the previous year. She was purchased by M. E. Blanc for 3000 guineas, while for Flying Fox the French owner bid up to 37,500 guineas. Both have well repaid him. Not since 1899 had a French horse carried off the Middle Park Plate prior to yesterday. Gouverneur won the race that year for M. E. Blanc, ridden by J. Woodburn, and nine ran. History is repeated somewhat on the present occasion, for Jardy credited M. E. Blanc with the race recently, and there were again nine starters. It was in the corresponding race in 1898 that Caiman (8lbs an op) defeated Jardy's famous sire, Flying Fox, ridden by M. Cannon, by a length and a half, the pair being equal favourites at 7 to 4, and nine faced the starter.

The Budapesth correspondent of an English paper says that Mitchell, the American jockey, who had an engagement for two months for the stable of Mr Blaskovich, has left, his engagement having ended. The continual misfortune which pursued the bearers of the Kincsem colours this season, he says, seems to have lessened the credit of American training, and Mr Blaskovich will try to change fortune by returning to the old fashion. Dyer, the American trainer of the stable, is negotiating for a new engagement as trainer in one of the largest racing stables, while the establishment at God, where Dyer is training the horses of Mr Blaskovich, is to be leased. It is a time honoured establishment, connected with the name of the families of Hesp and Madden, where Hesp, the father of the present generation, trained the famous mare, Kincsem, in the "seventies," and innumerable winners for Mr Blaskovich. And Madden, father of the present English champion jockey, I think, used to ride these winners.

The following story of Fred Archer, the famous jockey, is told in the reminiscences of a well known turfite. It appears that when Archer was at Doncaster one year for the St. Leger, he received the evening before the race, a parcel, which on opening he found to contain £100 and a slip of paper, upon which was written a promise to send him another £100 if the horse which he was to ride on the following day did not win. Archer went at once to the owner of the horse, Lord Falmouth, told him what had happened, and asked that another jockey should be given the mount. But Lord Falmouth would not hear of this, and told Archer to keep the money, and also his engagement to ride. The great jockey accordingly rode the next day, and was, unfortunately, beaten by the shortest of short heads, after a ding-dong race. On his return home Fred Archer found on his table the other £100, as promised, and a letter thanking him for having obeyed the behest of his anonymous patron. "But," said the letter, "please do not cut it so fine another time."

Robert le Diable achieved a great performance in winning the Duke of York Stakes. He gave weight away to all his fifteen opponents, and to several of them nearly one-third of his impost. To Fermoyle, who followed him home, he conceded 23lb, and to the third, Flower Seller, 32lb. Few bookers looked far beyond the son of Ayrshire (writes the "Sportsman") for the winner. "Robert" had previously won the City and Suburban and Doncaster Cup this season, in addition to other races of less importance, and is probably our best handicap performer. The field of sixteen was one more than did duty a year ago, when Sceptre scored, and it was Maher's first success in this event, in the canter down, Fermoyle, Phariseo, and Antonio went best, and of these the first two were prominent, almost from the fall of the flag, their colours being difficult to distinguish from one another. They stayed right in front for a long way, and rounded the bend together, but Maher had got Robert le Diable nicely placed on the inside, and it was quickly seen that the top-weight was master of the situation. Flower Seller was running well, but nothing had any earthly chance against "Robert," who won without a serious effort.

Bachelor's Button competed in the Champion Stakes instead of waiting for the Cesarewitch. Only four ran, but the field was representative of quality, and was quite in keeping with the history of the race (says the "Sportsman"). Indeed, not since Friar's Balsam won in 1883 have more than a quartette faced the starter. A year ago Sceptre had only a couple of opponents. Yesterday the first three were quoted at 2 to 1, with Kronstad at "tens." Mr S. B. Joel's five-year-old won handsomely by three lengths from William Rufus, who relegated the Derby winner into third place. Speaking of the performance, the "Special Commissioner" writes: "Bachelor's Button's stylish performance in the Champion Stakes yesterday puts the son of Winkfield quite in the front rank, and, when retired from racing, magnificent specimen of a thoroughbred as he is, he should prove a very valuable stud horse. Had Mr S. B. Joel reserved the five-year-old for the Cesarewitch, I am inclined to think that, with all his weight, he would as nearly as possible have won, and another third to a foreign horse—reference is made to the winner of the Cleerwell Stakes—Shah Jehan—is likely to do further good service for Sir Edgar Vincent, and credit to his sire, Persimmon. The youngster is evidently a rare sticker."

From the moment that M. E. Blanc expressed his intention of sending Jardy across the Channel (writes "Vigilant") to throw down the gauntlet in the Middle Park Plate, grave apprehensions were entertained lest our premier juvenile prize should be taken to a foreign shore, and yesterday the worst fears were realised. Not that we begrudge our Gallic neighbours their handsomely-earned success, for, after all, Jardy is English-bred on the side of both his sire and dam, but the poverty of the land was so glaringly exposed that the outlook for our classic races next year is decidedly grave. Indeed, the situation would look well-nigh desperate if the rumours that There has become a little thick in his wind could be proved to have any foundation in fact, for Jardy is certainly not the best candidate that M. Blanc has engaged in the Two Thousand Guineas, Derby, and St. Leger of 1906. The son of Flying Fox created anything but a favourable impression in the paddock owing in the main to the fact that he was badly broken in his coat. He is a hard brown with a white off hind stocking, and has the white step down his nose, that distinguished his sire, but he certainly does not inherit the excitable

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