



(BY WHALEBONE.)

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

E. Sands.—Merman never won the City and Sutorban. He ran placed in the event in 1890, the winner being the Australian horse Newhaven II. Merman won the Caesarswath and the Ascot Gold Cup.

Subscriber.—Boris is a dark chestnut, but could easily be taken for a black.

TURF NOTES.

Some startling developments in local racing circles are expected shortly.

Mr. W. Lyons. the well-known sportsman left for a trip to Sydney on Monday. The South pony Poppy was shipped to Wellington by the Takapuna on Friday.

The weights for the Easter Handicap, Brighton Middle Race, and Autumn Steeplechase are due on the 23rd inst.

There are several new aspirants for jumping honours in the Brighton Hurdles, notably Ironmould, Scotty and Ghoorka.

The gelding Henry Havelock, which was purchased at auction on Friday last by Mr Hopewell, has gone into A. Barrow's charge.

The name of Snowfoot has been claimed for the colt by South-Helen McGregor, purchased at the last Glenora Park sales.

Suburban racing in Sydney seems to be in a bad way just now. There were only 26 starters for the six races at Moorefield on Saturday.

The South gelding Ngapuka, which won the Hack Race at the recent Papakura Meeting has gone into A. Robertson's charge at Ellerslie.

The Wellington Cup winner, Moloch, finished last in the Wanganui Cup, but not one of the reports mentions Zimmerman at any stage of the race.

The Ben Godfrey gelding Pukeani was started on no less than three occasions at the recent Waima Meeting. No wonder some horses lose form.

According to a Southern exchange, it took seven minutes to start a field of three in the Autumn Handicap on the second day of the Wanganui J.C. Meeting.

The percentage share of the Tasmanian Government in the totalisators during the fortnight was about £530. The aggregate amount invested was £22,941 10/.

Four Auckland horsemen in B. Deeley, J. Buchanan, A. Jullien, and A. Gray were riding at the recent Wanganui Meeting, but not one secured a winning mount.

The steeplechase horse Mooltan pulled up very lame, after working on Thursday last, and will probably have to be treated to a spell.

A noteworthy absentee from the A.R.C. nominations is Ulander, and his defection points to the fact that all cannot be right with the son of Ulian.

The South gelding Devonport, which went miss just before the last A.R.C. Summer Meeting, is being hacked about again preparatory to going into active work.

Auckland visitors who were present at the Wanganui J.C. Autumn Meeting, state that Atashua and Maui are a likely pair of candidates for the Grand National.

A. Hall, the well-known trainer who has been located at Feilding for some time, has shifted to Wanganui, and will in future have his headquarters there.

Mr. W. E. Bidwell informs "Advance," of the "New Zealand Times," that Elevation will make his next appearance on the 21st of the Manawatu Stakes, which are run on April 7th.

During the Wanganui J.C. Autumn Meeting the Leolanti gelding Cachuca was transferred from C. Weal's charge to that of D. Moraghan, and he was brought back from the south by the latter trainer.

The field nominated for the Brighton Hurdle Race at the A.R.C. Autumn Meeting is probably the strongest that has been engaged at Ellerslie outside a National great.

Mr. G. Dunnett, the well-known local sportsman, leaves shortly on a trip to England. Mr. Dunnett has been granted leave of absence by the A.R.C., of which club he is a committee man.

Nominations for the Avondale Handicap, Autumn Handicap, Railway Handicap, and Steeplechase, to be decided at the Avondale Jockey Club's Autumn Meeting, close on Friday, April 3rd, at 9 p.m.

Word from the South states that the three-year-old Downfall, having a bit about in his work, Downfall has been nominated for the principal events at the A.R.C. Autumn Meeting.

B. Deeley, the Auckland horseman, is at present at the head of winning riders on the flat, with 45 wins to his credit. A. McConor is at the top of the cross-country riders with 12 wins.

The time, 1.13, registered by Munjeet, when she won the Newmarket Trial at the recent Mentone Meeting constitutes a record for Victoria. In New South Wales, however, Lisimarte's 1.12, at Randwick, stands as the record.

The St. Leger gelding Scotty has not been nominated for the A.R.C. Easter Handicap, but appears in the list of the nominations for the George's and Autumn Handicaps, while he has also been nominated for the Brighton Hurdles.

Messrs. A. Buckland and Sons offered a number of thoroughbreds for sale by auction at their yards on Friday, but only two were disposed of, the gelding Pipil falling to Mr. Austin for 16gs., and the Bluejacket filly Mynota to Mr. I. Gray for 25gs.

Word from Taranaki states that Ulian, by Cuttassier—Aim—which won the Auckland Cup of 1898, and sire of Ulander and Uhandu, two good performers, came into contact with some barbed wire at Okato last week, and sustained severe injuries necessitating his destruction.

"The master of the hounds has to combine the tact of a Prime Minister, the astuteness of an archbishop, and the language of a costermonger," said Captain McTaggart, master of the Surrey Staghounds, at the hunt breakfast.

Prior to the mail leaving England frost caused two race meetings to be abandoned, and the postponement of another. One course was said to be as hard as iron. The weather was the most severe of the season in the district.

The defunct Australian sire Abercorn was represented by six winners on the Irish turf last season. He was an inmate of Captain St. John's breeding establishment. Entries were also represented on the list of winning sires last season.

The recent rains have worked wonders with the Ellerslie racecourse, and whereas last week everything looked dried and burnt up, this time it looks fresh and green, and a regular transformation scene has been enacted. The work from now until the A.R.C. Autumn Meeting should be of an interesting character.

At the recent rearing sales in Melbourne a chestnut colt by Seafoam, Dignity, and Dan, bred by Master Delaval and Co., realised 575gs., being knocked down to Mr. J. Turnbull. This was the second highest price of the sale, top price being given for a full brother to Scotland, which brought 500gs.

The running of certain horses in the Hurdle Race at the recent Waima J.C. Meeting was not deemed satisfactory by the stewards, and at the conclusion of the day's racing an inquiry was instituted. After several persons were examined, the inquiry was adjourned to a future date.

Before racing started on the second day of the V.R.C. Autumn Meeting, the stewards held an inquiry into the running of Apologue in the Essendon Stakes as compared with his Caulfield form, and after hearing statements, accepted the explanation as satisfactory.

Mr. Abe Bailey says horse-breeding is making good headway in South Africa. He is enthusiastic concerning the crossing of English thoroughbreds with Boer ponies. The result, he states, is an animal which has the endurance and wisdom of its dam, and the size and strength of its sire.

Are we to have a Bookmakers' Limited Liability Company? says an English paper. A strange story filters back from America, where the papers are booming the arrival of an American who claims to have occupied a prominent position on the English Turf as a bookmaker for the past ten years. His mission, so it is said, is to help out some of his brethren here, who possibly may be affected by legislation as to betting on the turf, and incidentally to form a company intended to be a syndicate, and with £100,000 capital begin operations on the English Turf at the commencement of the season.

The New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Co. offered the three-year-old colt Pohutu, by Explosion—Miss Rose for sale by auction on Friday, but failed to dispose of him, and he was passed in at 200gs. Henry Havelock and Nephrite were also offered, the former being purchased for 25gs by Mr. A. E. Hopewell and the latter for 15gs by Mr. F. Kelly.

No owner nowadays does his racing in quite the same princely style that the late Prince Bathurst, who bred St. Simon, did. The horses had scarlet clothing, and his wags the only jacks who wore livery. They looked uncommon on Sunday, wearing tall hats, clean linen, blue coats, and black trousers.

One of the greatest admirers of George Fordham was the late Sir John Astley. "What are you standing, Mate?" called out a member of the Jockey Club to him, as Eastern Empress, with Fordham "up," cantered down to the starting post. "The old man and the old mare coupled," was the reply. It came off all right.

English papers announce the death of a famous French sportsman in Mr. J. Robert Hennessy, and one of the heads of the Cognac firm. Mr. Hennessy was a founder of the French Steeplechase Society, and a steward of the Arc de Triomphe. Mr. Hennessy is probably identical with the gentleman who, some years ago, visited Australia, and sent to France a number of Australian brood mares for his stud.

During his stay in New York Mr. W. B. Furefox, the English sportsman, had a look over the Sheephead Bay stables of Mr. J. R. Keene. He may have something to say of the cracks Colin and Celt on his return to England, but already we are told by the New York papers that "Mr. Furefox thinks it lucky for the owners of prominent Epson Derby candidates that neither of them is intended for that race."

Colonel Hall-Walker is, we understand, says an exchange, cudgelling his brains what to say should he have to make a fourth Gimcrack speech. The subject does not suggest many ideas, and three speeches seem to exhaust it. Mr. Stevier will make a bid for the next race, and if he were to win it, we might have a few candid remarks on men and things expressed in a manner not conveying hesitation or doubt.

Mr. R. Wootton (late of Sydney) has moved from Down's Cottage, Epson (Eng.), to a large and commodious stable contiguous to his gallops. Here all the latest improvements and appointments are now to be noticed. The Australian having brought his establishment in every way thoroughly up-to-date. Besides a lengthy list of owners of horses, Mr. Wootton trains the horses owned by Mr. Lytham, and has altogether an imposing team so far as numbers go.

The nominations received last evening by Mr. J. F. Hartland for the principal events at the A.R.C. Autumn Meeting are highly satisfactory, and the quality engaged are a long way above the ordinary. Practically all the leading performers in the North Island have been nominated, and if Mr. Morse can succeed in enticing the majority to make the trip the racing at Ellerslie in the Autumn should be of a high-class character.

The local champion, Master Delaval, was brought from the South last week by the Rutra, after his unsuccessful efforts at the Wanganui J.C. Autumn Meeting. Master Delaval, which was made second favourite in the Wanganui Cup, ran very disappointingly, and his connections consulted with his trainer, Denis Moraghan, on his return, he informed me that the son of Seaton Delaval was clearly not himself, and his connections were fully prepared for his poor showing. Master Delaval finished seventh in the Cup, just behind The Lark, which was favourite.

The mares purchased on behalf of the Breeding Association of Germany at the Newmarket sales were re-cold in that country recently. The mares are bought out of the profits derived from the "particular" of a young untrained horse, who will reserve price put on a mare, with the result that many of the leading breeders could put their heads together and acquire some of the mares at a figure which did not represent their value. Now, however, in the event of a mare not reaching the minimum, she is made the object of a lottery among all the breeders.

In sporting circles a rather good story is told concerning the wit of the Duke of Portland. A few months ago his Grace the Duke of Westminster entered into competition for a young untrained horse at Sandown Park. The contest between the two was very keen, and promised to continue. At length something over five hundred pounds was bid for the animal. "Say, Portland," said the Duke of Westminster, "we shall soon be paying for the horse more than it will ever be worth; suppose we buy it between us?" The Duke of Portland agreed to this, and after a while the two had a discussion as to what the horse should be called. "Well, as we are going to share it, why not call it The Loaf?" asked the Duke of Portland, and The Loaf it was promptly named.

The English Derby winner of 1893, St. Blaise, for whom the American, Mr. Charles Reed, paid 100,000 dollars, is now a pensioner at the Nursery Stud of August Belmont. His stud some years ago was sent to America, and where he sired many stake winners. At the dissolution into a few seasons ago of Charles Reed's Privree Stud, J. B. Higgins bought St. Blaise, but soon after transferred the celebrated stallion to Mr. Belmont, so the horse might end his days in the Nursery Stud, the place he made famous in his earlier days.

The gist of the illuminated address presented by West Australian racing men to Mr. A. Blair, was as follows: "It is generally conceded that your efforts as a handicapper and attendant steward have been crowned with conspicuous success. The wonderful progress made by the Turf in West Australia is due in a large measure to the services lent by the racing administrators, and the deep, personal interest you have manifested in everything that conduces to the advancement of the local Turf, has won for you the confidence, as well as the thanks, of all true sportsmen." There were over 100 signatures to this high appreciation of Mr. Gray's services.

Despite the high prices which were paid in 1907 for English-bred horses, the industry in Great Britain, according to Government figures issued a few weeks ago, is on the decline. The total number of horses shows a further fall of 12,512, reducing the total to about the same as that of 1894. Wales was the only part of the Kingdom where the number of horses has increased during the past twelve months. The largest annual reductions appear in Lincoln, 1172; the East Riding, 946; and Suffolk, 809. All but six of the English and most of the Scottish counties show decreases. Severe weather during the foaling season, and the population of the country, are the two chief causes assigned for the decline.

Considerable annoyance and inconvenience has been caused to several horse-owners owing to the fact that they are unable to get horse boxes to convey their horses to the Government J.C. Annual Meeting. It seems incredible that in a city like Auckland there are not sufficient boxes for the number of horses that travel to country gatherings; but, nevertheless, such is the case, for on a well-known trainer arriving on Thursday last, he was informed that no boxes were available, but that he could have a cattle truck. Needless to say, the offer was not accepted, and the only alternative left was to abandon the trip, which was done.

After a long and exhaustive inquiry, during which voluminous evidence was taken, the stewards of the Auckland Trotting Club came to a decision in connection with the running of certain ponies at their summer meeting. The stewards decided that three ponies were in their opinion, and should be disqualified for twelve months from March 13. The decision of the stewards has only been arrived at after a great deal of hearing, and they are to be congratulated upon the attention and fair hearing they have given to the case.

Australian writers seem pretty well agreed that Apologue should have nearly won the Australian Cup, for which he was sent out favourite, and the "Sydney Morning Herald" says: Apologue was probably going faster than any other horse at the end of the Australian Cup, but Evans cannot be complimented on the race he rode, for he kept the horse too far out of his ground, and was near the tail of the field six furlongs from home. When he tried for an opening at the bottom of the straight Hereforders got in before him, and altogether it was an untucky race for Apologue. Another writer in the "Sydney Referee" says: The general impression was that Apologue should have won Evans rode a shucky race. He had him all over the course, but he finished very fast, and in another half furlong may have won.

In an article on American breeders, a correspondent in the "Sporting Chronicle" says: Readers will notice the heavy percentage of three and four-year-old horses, nearly 78 per cent, and, of course, it and the aged horses—the American breeders for the three great handicaps decided by the first week in July, will grasp that whether our horses are better than those in England and France—and it is a great question if they are better—the American horses certainly do not "stand up" so well. It is being freely argued here that our horses now are at their best at three years, and that shortly it will be two years. This may sound ridiculous, but it is not, and, unless something be done to change turf muscle training methods, and the too early—May and June—racing of two-year-olds for about the richest purses we offer to horses of any age, our really good ones cannot be expected to last. As for the lower grades, Great Scott, they are already racing at twenty months and upwards, in the South and West, running their poor baby legs off.

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