Hurdle Race no fewer than forty-four, a record number for this particular event. In the Steeplechase he has had to deal with quite a number of practically unknown quantities so far as cross country work is concerned, but they have nearly all been seen over hurdles, and the fact that they are entered for the Steeplechase suggests that their owners are satisfied that they possess the necessary qualification to ascend and descend the hill, and there is a good deal in this, and negotiate the not difficult fences on the Ellerslie course. Eleven of the horses engaged have been over the course before, some of them a good many times. In the North New Zealand Grand National Hurdle Race there are a dozen or more engaged that are beginners, and a few that have had but little experience in public. There are two previous winners of the Great Northern Steeplechase engaged in Moifaa and Voltigeur II., and two previous winners of the Hurdle Race in Shylock and Cavaliero, while we have one winner of the New Zealand Grand National Hurdles in Haydn, and two winners of the New Zealand Grand National Steeplechase in The Guard and Gobo amongst those engaged. There are many well-performed and decidedly useful horses engaged in both events, and the new aspirants for cross-country or Grand National Hurdle honours comprise very many promising horses, and I am inclined to assume that the fields in both cases are, upon the whole, really the strongest that have been known since these races were introduced. At the same time I believe that we have had a few steeplechasers superior, so far as has yet been shown, to Moifaa, if they were not so at his age, and at least one horse superior to Cavaliero over hurdles.

In placing Moifaa at the top of the list in the Steeplechase, I am in accord with Mr Evett, and I consider that every ounce Mr Ellingham's horse has earned has been given him, notwithstanding that he received and carried more weight successful on the flat country steeplechase course in Hawke's Bay. Though Cavaliero has not been over country, and it would not have surprised me to see a lb. or two conceded by Moifaa, there is little cause for complaint on the part of Cavaliero's owner seeing him on the same mark. It, however, has to be remembered that 12.1 is the biggest weight yet carried to victory in this race. Remembering the size and quality of the field, the fact that Cavaliero failed last year in the North N.Z. G.N. Hurdle Race, carrying 13.1, which included a 7lbs penalty, and not overlooking the fact that he won the Remuera Hurdle race with 13.13 up, I am still of opinion that 13.6 is too great a weight to start an important event like the one under notice with, and it is to me positively absurd to call upon Cavaliero, good horse though he is, to give just on 3st. to such horses as Highlander and Mars, to say nothing of much greater allowances to so many horses that have been racing with success on the flat. Coeur de Lion, a fair flat performer, possibly no better than Highlander, and one that was not a good jumper, whose fencing caused him much effort, was equal to beating Cavaliero at a difference of 21lbs on heavy ground, and it is rarely any other way at this season of the year. Highlander with 14lbs less on his back, and Mars with 15lbs less than Coeur de Lion, should hold Cavaliero safe enough, especially as that horse has 5lbs more than he carried into third place. Cavaliero would require to be very lucky indeed to have any sort of chance in a representative field with 13.6 on his back. He was lucky about this time last year in meeting a number of horses a great deal below the form they have since been showing.

It is not my intention to go into an exhaustive analysis of the weights in this issue, as I propose returning to the subject next week, but there are some points that may be touched upon. A comparison of the respective imposts of horses engaged in both events shows that Cavaliero and Waiwera have each received 10lbs. less in the Great Northern Steeplechase than in the Hurdle race; Tim, who is a maiden over country, also has 8lbs less, and Frost 6lbs less. Rufus, Princess of Thule, Bellman, and Evening Wonder and others have each received less weight in the Steeplechase than in the Hurdle event. Plain Bill and Dr. Bill, by a coincidence, have the same weight in both races, but we find Shylock, who has already a Grand National Hurdle Race to his credit, in with less in the Hurdle Race than in the Steeplechase, being treated as a light of other days, and Tawara and Sudden, in contradistinction to those already mentioned, have more weight in the cross country race than in the Hurdle Race. These things may be capable of explanation, but some people might wonder at such striking differences, which will be more readily seen by setting out the figures thus:—

	Hurdle race.	Steeplechase.
Cavaliero	13.6 ..	12.10
Waiwera	11.2 ..	10.6
Sudden	9.9 ..	10.2
Tawara	9.0 ..	9.7

Mr Evett recently handicapped Evening Wonder at 11.12 for the Avondale Steeplechase and Rufus at 12.10, a difference of 16lbs. Evening Wonder started favourite and ran off at the third fence, and Rufus did not compete. Now we find the pair set to meet at a difference of 9lbs. Sudden, who did not run, was there set to give Rufus 4lbs, and is now set to receive 5lbs. Neither horses have started since they were handicapped. Princess of Thule was asked to give the same horse 4lbs. They did not meet; neither has run since. Now Princess of Thule is receiving 4lbs. These are little matters that people who own horses cannot understand. Then, again, if we look a few weeks back to the handicapping of Haydn and Waiwera in the hurdle races at Ellerslie and the running of these horses and the weights, and the running between Waiwera and Royal Conqueror at Wanganui, it must be seen how very inconsistent Mr Evett has been. The same remarks apply to some of the adjustments for the Wanganui and the Auckland hurdle events—handicaps, too, that must have been made about the same time. As I have said before, I intend returning to the subject, but I may here mention that I regard Waiwera as about the best handicapped horse in both races, though I do not recommend him to backers, as he was sore when here last. In the Steeplechase the three top weights, Moifaa, Cavaliero, The Guard; Princess of Thule, Evening Wonder, and Rufus are the half-dozen that may furnish the winner; but Frost, K Jam, and Oracle are three likely horses that have come under my notice, and some of the others, it is quite on the cards, may turn out well. Of those in the Hurdle Race I am not partial to the chances of the top weights. Mars should beat anything above him, unless Highlander has taken kindly to the game. These horses, with Frost, Oracle, Strathnairn, Reclaimer, and some of the others hitherto only known on the flat, may furnish the winner.

A peculiar betting dispute—in which a well-known Tasmanian sportsman and a prominent Melbourne commission agent are concerned—has, says the "Age," lately engaged the attention of the Victorian Club Committee. It appears that the fortunate drawer of Wakeful in Tattersall's consultation on the Sydney Cup, after generously laying portion of his anticipated winnings to the stable, telegraphed to the commission agent, whom he believed to be at Randwick, authorising him to lay £500 against Wakeful. The agent, however, was in Melbourne at the time, but the telegram was opened by a relative of his, who promptly replied that he had "taken £500 to £45 Wakeful." He signed this telegram with his own name, and not that of the agent to whom the original message had been addressed. The agent, and not the relative, made the claim after Wakeful had won the Cup, but the holder of the winning ticket refused to acknowledge the demand for the £500, his contention apparently being that his telegram was a private message to the agent in question, and he had no business with any third party. As the agent was not at Randwick, the instructions, he contends, were null and void. He further justifies his position on the ground that had Wakeful not won the lucky drawer of the mare in the sweep fails to see how he could, in the circumstances, have successfully established a claim against the agent for the £45. Eventually the dispute was referred to the Victorian Club Committee for settlement. The sweep winner applied for permission to be represented at the inquiry by counsel, and as this was refused he declined to submit himself to the jurisdiction of the committee. The dispute, however, was investigated, and it was decided that the commission agent was entitled to the £500. The winner of the sweep has since left for his home in Tasmania without heeding the finding of the committee, and the commission agent now talks of taking legal proceedings to recover the amount involved. Further developments will be awaited with interest.

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AUCKLAND TROTTING CLUB.

AUTUMN MEETING.

This meeting was brought to a conclusion yesterday, but the weather proved disagreeable, rain falling more or less heavily at intervals during the afternoon. The track was much cut up, especially for the concluding events on the programme, and many of the horses were apparently unable to act on the heavy going. The sum of £2161 was passed through the totalisator, making £4888 for the meeting, being £512 short of last year. The last race was started so late that it was almost dark when the horses were competing. The business of the afternoon was somewhat retarded by the weather, and the hearing of objections against two of the runners for alleged inconsistency, which were not entertained. Consideration of a protest against Cob, the winner of the last race, on the alleged ground that he galloped, was held over till this afternoon. Some good dividends were returned during the afternoon, the hitherto disappointing Nat Gould being so little fancied for the Trial Handicap, which he ran away with, that backers got £16 12/ for each 10/ invested, and backers of Duke C. in the Class Trot were rewarded by receiving £24/ for each ticket. Duke C. simply outstayed the opposition, and was ridden by Mr McBride, sen., his owner, who was congratulated on his success. Sierra stayed better than Lady Retford in the Easter Handicap, and the last named breaking when well in the lead, and again at a critical juncture, the visitor scored cleverly. The two pony flat-race winners, Little Wonder and Sportsman, were well handled by young Percival, and each paid fair dividends. The 'Pony Trot was easily won by Look-on.

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TURF TALK FROM THE SOUTH.

(Special to "Graphic.")

CHRISTCHURCH, Saturday.

After making final payments, the following remain in the Ashburton County Stakes of 150sovs, for two-year-olds and upwards, weight-for-age, with penalties and allowances, to be decided at the Ashburton Racing Club's Autumn Meeting: Golden Vein, Tercelet, Rosemere, Caliver, Wellbeck, Firebrand, Cruciform, Merrymaker, Lady Lillian, Pallas, and Pounamu.

The Canterbury Jockey Club has given notice to the Racing Conference of the following amendment to Rule 43: To strike out all words before "the relative," and substituting "and partnerships in every horse above the age of one year, and the names and addresses of any persons having any interest in such horse." The Club has also decided to submit a new rule regarding the handicapping of untried horses.

Sir Geo. Clifford has been appointed to represent the Club at the next Racing Conference.

At the usual monthly meeting of the N.Z. Trotting Association, held on Wednesday, correspondence was read from the Otahuhu Trotting Club with reference to the Heiress case, and it was decided "That this Association considers that the explanation forwarded is most unsatisfactory, and that the Club should have suspended paying out the totalisator dividend immediately the appeal was lodged; further, that any such gross breach of the rules in future will result in the disafflliation of the Club from the Association."

Mr W. E. Singleton, Onehunga, wrote stating that his horse, Taihoa, was beaten by Nobby at the Auckland Trotting Club's October Meeting, and asking the Association to enquire as to whether Nobby was identical with a well-known Canterbury horse.

The New Brighton Trotting Club's Autumn Meeting was concluded on Thursday. The weather was fine, the attendance fairly large, and the racing interesting. The principal harness event fell to the Electioneer gelding Senator, who won comfortably from Carl, with the consistent Monte Carlo third. Michael Malone accounted for the chief saddle trot, but he had very little to spare at the finish, and as a matter of fact got home only half a length in advance of St. George, to whom he was conceding 8secs. There was not a single protest during the afternoon.

A misprint in "Pentagraph's" list of winning two-year-olds, a summary of which I sent you as soon as the list appeared, placed Orloff as the head of the list. "Pentagraph," in the current number of the "Referee," corrects the mistake, and substitutes Porirua for Orloff.

Glenaladale has been scratched for all his engagements at the Ashburton County Racing Club's Autumn Meeting.

Anybody in want of a Lochiel stallion had better look this way. The Great Northern Foal Stakes winner, Reflector, by Lochiel—Iris, is announced for sale.

On more than one occasion I have descanted on the looks of Cannie Chief's two-year-old full-brother Deer Stalker. The son of Clanranald is the best-looking colt this year, in this part of New Zealand at any rate, but, unfortunately, hitherto he has not been able to stand a preparation. He is in work now, however, and Mr Cutts hopes that he will survive a preparation for his three-year-old engagements.

Mention of Mr Cutts reminds me that his recent present from Major George, namely, the stallion Nelson, is looking in rare fettle. The old son of King Cole put on a great deal of flesh since his arrival at Riccarton, and bears quite a rejuvenated appearance.

The Amberley Steeplechase Club has decided to hold its annual race meeting on August 1, before the Canterbury Jockey Club's Grand National Meeting, instead of after it, as is the club's annual custom.

McClusky, who was disqualified by the Wellington Racing Club for his riding of Goldenmere in the North Island Challenge Stakes, has withdrawn his appeal. The reason for his action lies in the fact that the owner of Goldenmere (Sir Geo. Clifford) is the chairman of the Racing Conference, and would therefore have had to consider the appeal. McClusky, in a letter to the Wellington Club, reiterates his innocence, and his protest is warmly supported by Sir George Clifford, who asserts his belief that the lad is not guilty. It is rumoured here that McClusky's sentence is likely to be reduced materially.

McGinnis, the Dunedin trainer, has had an addition to his team in the shape of a yearling colt by Grafton from Consistence (by Melos). The youngster, which was purchased at the Sydney autumn sales last month, is described as a singularly promising one. The remainder of Mr McGinnis' team are looking well. This is especially the case with regard to Pampero, who looks as if he were destined to compensate his owner for the disappointments he has caused him this season.

I hear very flattering reports from Dunedin concerning a rising two-year-old by Multiform from St. Ouida. This youngster is the only living colt of his sire by the distinguished son of Hotchkiss.

The West Coast horse Abydos, who has had a remarkable run of success during the past few months, and was returned a winner at the Wellington Racing Club's Autumn Meeting, cost only six guineas as a yearling.

T. Buddicombe, the Dunedin horseman, is again on the sick list. An arm which he broke some months ago was set so badly that it has had to be reset. A great deal of sympathy is felt for Buddicombe, who has been consistently unlucky for the last five or six years.

No Southern horses are engaged in the Auckland Racing Club's Grand National Hurdle Race and Great Northern Steeplechase, and the appearance of the handicaps for those events has not aroused much interest here. Moifaa is liked as well as anything in the Steeplechase, and Royal Conqueror, Mars and Cavaliero in the Hurdle Race.

CHRISTCHURCH, Tuesday.

The weather on Saturday morning promised none too well for the Christchurch Racing Club's Autumn Meeting, but it cleared before noon, and remained fine throughout the afternoon. The attendance was larger than usual, and the racing was fairly interesting, but the heavy going contributed materially to upset form; for instance, the West Coast representative Abydos, who was made a strong favourite for the Flying Handicap, palpably failed to act on the soft ground, although he got well away from a struggling start. Lady Dundas, who, together with the favourite, was favoured by the starter, won by a length from Antigone. Before the race the question of Abydos' connection with a disqualified trainer was enquired into by the stewards, with the result that although the stewards accepted the assurance that it amounted to nothing, they had the trainer removed from the course. Another horse whom the going appeared to affect was Dundas. The last named, who was second in demand for the Autumn Handicap, was never prominent after half the distance had been covered.

Calibre, who has apparently mended his ways, upset a strong Joe in Pallas. After the race it was discovered that the winner had injured one of his pasterns, and on latest information he was lame. The accident is a piece of bad luck for Mr Harris, as Calibre threatened to be dangerous in his engagements at Ashburton and Dunedin this month.

Skobeloff made his first appearance in the colours of his new owner, Mr Dalgety, but though supported by his connections, he ran absolutely last, while his less-fancied stable companion Huku finished third.

Calotype and Kotokoto, both by the Lochiel horse Reflector, had the finish for the High Weight Handicap to themselves. Bill Perkins, a promising three-year-old colt by Perkin Warbeck II., beat the Reflector filly Tuawai in the Maiden Plate. J.P., who is rarely bred for a jumper—being by Aprement from the hurdle racer mare Justice, by Winchester—was too good for the Welcome Stakes winner Romanoff in the Selling Hack Race, and the smart Rosemere annexed the Welter Handicap, beating a large field.

The two trotting events were accounted for by The Orphan and Van Diemen respectively, both of whom are by Van Clove.

The Ashburton County Racing Club's Autumn Meeting on Thursday and Friday promises to be a most enjoyable gathering. Cruciform is announced as a certain starter for the Ashburton County Stakes, a race for two and three year olds, and she is likely to be accompanied to the scene by her stable companions, Grand Rapid and Siege Gun, the latter of whom is an untried three-year-old full brother to Lancaster. Cruciform, if she starts, must have the stakes at her mercy; but although Siege Gun is said to be sound, I scarcely care to trust him for the Ashburton Handicap, in which he is engaged with 7.12. Instead I prefer to rely on Lady Lillian and Huku. Abydos or Bill Perkins may win the Flying Handicap, Mercator or Princess Perkin the Gallop Handicap, Scottish Minstrel or Lapidary the Fairfield Handicap, and Pallas or Magnificent the Grove Farm Handicap.

Recent arrivals at Riccarton are a half-sister to Lady Medallist, which has joined Lewis' team, and a full sister to Rosegnard, by Vanguard—Rosebud, which has gone into Pine's stables.

A local backer had a bit of bad luck over a recent North Island meeting. He wired the secretary of the club £4 to put on a winner which paid a dividend of £30, but unluckily for him the wire reached its destination after the race had started.

Mr H. Craig, a well-known Otago racing man, in whose colours Euroclydon achieved all his victories, has left on a visit to England.

Among the horses that have recently put in an appearance at Wingatui are Jupiter, Nihilist, and Mosca. The first-named will not be fit to race for some months, but Nihilist is well forward in his preparation and is expected to play a prominent part in the Tradesman's Handicap at Dunedin next week.

The Southland Racing Club made a profit of £120 over its Autumn Meeting.

McGinniss, the Dunedin trainer, is breaking two yearlings bred by the Hon. George McLean. Both are by Lord Roslyn. One is a colt out of Mistral, and the other a gelding from Tiara.

Mr Carncross, M.H.R. for the Taieri, who has acted as secretary for the Taieri Amateur Turf Club for some years past, is about to remove to the North Island.

The Dunedin Jockey Club have received capital nominations for the minor events to be decided at their May meeting next week. The number exceeds last year's total by twenty. Good reports come to hand concerning Pampero, and for the present I shall rely on the son of St. Clair for the Birthday Handicap.

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TAKAPUNA JOCKEY CLUB.

WINTER MEETING.

The following handicaps have been declared by Mr Knight for the minor events at the Takapuna Jockey Club's winter meeting on the opening day:—

Royal Handicap of 100sovs, 5 furlongs.—Highlander 9.10, St. Olga 8.3, Landlock 8.0, Telephone 8.0, Takapuna 8.0, Solo 7.12, Orange and Blue 7.12, Jewellery 7.12, Winwick 7.10, Camille 7.7, Anchorite 7.7, Hillflower 7.6, Scotty 7.0, Hikipene 6.10, Rosephele 6.10, Gold Web 6.7, Ambition 6.7, La Polish 6.7.

Handicap Maiden Steeplechase of 100sovs, about 2½ miles.—Cavaliero 13.4, Bellman, 10.10, Puni 10.2, Hylas 10.0, Suitana 10.0, Taranaki 9.12, Lady Dash 9.10, Peacock 9.10, Leona 9.7, Pollack 9.7, All Fours 9.7, Pilot 9.7, Tuirne 9.7, Hector 9.7, Sophia 9.7, Perseverance 9.7, Sirdar 9.7, Reporter 9.7.

Handicap Maiden Hurdles of 70sovs, 1½ miles and 100yds.—Reclaimer 10.8, Sundial 10.8, Sudden 10.0, Tresham 10.0, Perseverance 9.10, Hillflower 9.10, Miner 9.9, Pungarehu 9.9, Lady Dash 9.7, Hector