

The form may not have been very impressive, perhaps, seeing that only medium distances were run, but the winner could do more than that, and winners at the South Canterbury Spring Meetings in the past have frequently run more than respectably at the Spring Meeting of the Canterbury Jockey Club later on. The victories of the horses that competed have been of a very pleasing shortening great deal, though it is significant that three of the winners were quoted during the week at the long odds of one hundred to one each.

When Sir Leonard beat Metal and La Carabine at Randwick in the autumn, many regarded the victory of the son of Impetus as a lucky one, but like his second 8.5 to Wicket, 8.15, in the All-Aged Stakes, in which that mare ran a record mile in 1.34, there was more merit in the performances than was generally supposed, and some of his achievements were distinctly those of a high class colt. At Randwick he was again unbeaten, and he carried 9.5 into a place in the Hampden Stakes, one mile and one furlong, behind Abundance, 7.8, and Glenore, 9.4. Brakpan, 8.5, Sequence, 10.0, and eleven other startings. He was apparently unbeaten in the old established Hawkesbury Spring Handicap, now run over a mile and a quarter and 100 yards, he won, carrying 9.12 from a small field, and possibly not a particularly strong one. In the last named race in the Sydney Metropolitan Handicap, run on the 8th, 9.7 in the Caulfield Cup, and was given 9.2 in the Melbourne Cup, or 3lb less than Nonette, who is the same age, received. He will now have penalties to contend with in the named events of 3lb and 5lb respectively, and apparently he is not fancied much.

San Fran, who has been purchased by the New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Co. on behalf of Mr W. J. Douglas, of the Te Mahanga Stud, for so good a performer and so well bred a horse, should be well worth the guinea he cost. He is a horse of medium size, and comes on his dam's side from the same family as Merganser, Teksum and Brigand, and claims the same taproot as Stepiak, but also the same as Menschikov, Nelson, Spade Guinea, Merry England, Trailleur, The Guard, and many really first class horses of the No. 5 line of descent. He is the first Gozo horse imported to the colony, and should mate well with mares with Musklet blood, and one in particular in Mr Douglas's stud that should select, especially on blood lines, would be Melinite, for this horse, her three-quarter sister industry having produced the Gozo sire of the Argens, his Grafter and Gaulus, Melbourne Cup winners. Merganser, in Mr Matbone's stud, should find a suitable mate in San Fran also, and there are members of Florence Marbury's stud that should suit this horse admirably. In the same family as Hawke's Bay, Mr S. H. Gollan has Nelson's half sister Bonnie Ide, by Nordenfeldt, and a number of other mares of the same family in the Maungaturoto stud.

The weights declared by Mr Henrys for the C.J.C. Stewards' Stakes Handicap, which is run over a six furlong course, must have taken a considerable amount of thinking out. That good filly Cruciform has received 10.3, top-weight, or 22 lbs over weight-for-age, a record impost for one of her age and sex. Blazer, who has carried some 10 lbs and won with them, too, has 9.9, or 7lbs less than he had last year, when he failed to run into a place, though he beat the winner (Royal Artillery) a bare half-head on the last day of the meeting, when the difference in weight was Blazer carrying 8.12 and Royal Artillery 8.2, and the distance only half a mile. The time was 47 3/8 sec, so that both horses were galloping. Blazer's form at the N.Z. Grand National Meeting was all wrong, but he will be better when he runs next year from all accounts. He is a better runner than Hohoro, who is on the same mark, but does not finish so resolutely as Mr Lovett's gelding, who would be considered well treated if he were all right in the wind, and there is no doubt he is a first-class horse. Hohoro has been making less noise than he did some time back, and he may race well this season. He will meet Cruciform on much better terms than he did last summer at Auckland. Fampore (8.9), who ran second last year with 9.4, and who was previous year with 7.8, should be one of the hardest to beat if specially trained for this distance. I have much respect for Ostiak, with 9.5 on his back, however. He is trained for sprinting, and can get every inch of six furlongs. Another horse there are few that can muster up to a pace that should race well in Red Gauntlet. There are so many brilliant ones engaged that a good race may be looked for, but all in the best of those get to carry over 10 lbs, and it is not likely that any of the three-year-olds may run as well as those of that age that have shown any form to speak of are weighted to quite their full deserts.

Longevity in horses is a subject to which reference is occasionally made. An American authority is responsible for the statement that the oldest horse in the world is a bay gelding, which is certified to be over 20 years old. At all events, he is a veteran of the Mexican campaign of 1833, a memento of which he carries on his flank, in the shape of a big scar; and he was also used as an ambulance driver in the Civil War. For twenty years he has done his work, and as all his teeth are gone, his principal food is boiled corn and mash, upon which he seems to thrive. In the great satisfaction of his owner, Major Mans, at Lovell's, Kennerly, near near home, Hella, the grand dam of Zip, dam of Cateshore, lived to the age

of 26 years, and what may surprise readers to know had a foal at the age of 33 years, and at two years old this youngster, Lohair by name, ran second for the first time in a race, and was the Wanganui racecourse. It was claimed that a mare known as Blink Bonn lived to the age of 40 years in Wanganui. Five bred foals for over twenty years, and was owned by the Hair family, near that town.

"Encouraging steeplechasing" is the subject of an article in the "Town and Country Journal." It winds up with the following reference in the two following chase courses in Australia:—"There are many who think that the steeplechase course at Randwick is nothing like so severe as that at Flemington. They will be surprised to read in the table given below that at Randwick one of the fences—the log wall, opposite the stand—is higher than the stone wall, known as the cathedral, at Flemington. The fences, together with their number, position, and height, according to private measurement, are as follows:—"

AT RANDWICK.		AT FLEMINGTON.	
	ft. in.		ft. in.
1. Logs	at home turn... 3 3/4	1. Palings	off to stand... 4 0
2. Stone wall	3 1/2	2. Stone wall	2 1/2
3. Palings	... 3 10	3. Logs	... 3 8
4. Fence opp.	... 4 14	4. Fence at	... 3 10
5. Fence	... 3 7 1/2	5. Fence	... 3 10
6. Logs at drain	... 3 9	6. Fence	... 3 10
7. Palings, off course	... 5 5/8	7. Stone wall (Cathedral)	4 0
8. Brush	... 3 9 1/2	8. Fence (abandoned)	... 4 8
9. Logs	... 3 9 1/2	9. Fence (sheds)	... 3 7
10. Brush	... 3 8	10. Fence on course	... 3 8
11. Palings on course	... 3 9 1/2	11. Fence off course	... 3 7
12. Kensington	... 3 9 1/2	12. Fence in straight	... 3 7
		13. Fence in straight	... 3 9
		14. Fence in straight	... 3 11

The last few years have witnessed a great addition to the numbers of bookmakers doing business in Australia (says a writer in the "Town and Country Journal" in an article dealing with the favorites in races). The remark is often made that there is not nearly so much money betted now upon a race as was the case some years back. Perhaps not, but we are firmly of the opinion that more money changes hands now over racing in a year than in any other year in Australian history. Take the sport itself, which has changed from the old days of heats and long distances; so has wagering. In the betting clubs can still be found the double look on the two cups, but he that is working it is invariably one of the "old timers." The most recent addition to the "ring" is a smart, active individual, keen on figures, with a good voice, who has the assistance of a clerk who is possessed of excellent hearing, smart with his pen, and almost a lightning calculator. These are the men that nowadays back thousands on a race, and do it at express speed. They would not be as much astray at the old line of business as would the old-time bookmaker, were he to try the new system. This we have seen proved over and over again. The old-fashioned bookmaker, with his little pocketbook, fastened with a clasp, and metallic pencil, are gone for ever. The modern bookmaker, betting to figures, is quite satisfied with his fair percentage, and from the bulk of business done makes a decent living; in some cases a fortune. Backers, however, with experience, and much racing, have also become adepts, and rarely do we find them so badly beaten as in the old days. Looking over the returns of the bookmakers, which were run through on Saturday, we find that of the 22 horses made favourites for their respective events no less than 16 got home, while at least four of the others were heavily backed.

The death of the famous jockey, John Watts, is thus referred to in an English paper of July 20th:—"Upon the very threshold of another Goodwood John Watts, who will always be held in popular remembrance as 'the King's jockey,' has passed away. He was seized with epilepsy on Saturday week at Sandown Park during the race, and he died in the hospital here at four o'clock yesterday morning. One of the earliest messages of condolence which his widow received after his death was announced was one from His Majesty expressing his sympathy with her in her bereavement. John Watts was in the prime of his strength, and was one of the most successful of the modern jockeys. He served an apprenticeship at Houghton with Tom Cannon, and with such a good teacher his name quickly appeared in the list of winning jockeys. His first successful season was that of the Stewards' Plate Stakes in May, 1886. What nominally was Watts' earliest important victory was obtained upon the rugged course at Lansdown the following year. The Bath meeting was his own, the down line, and the Bournemouth taking the 'grit' in the race. Watts won on Strudwick for Tom Cannon by forty lengths. In 1888 he made his first handicap hit with the American horse Foxhall in the Cambridgehire. It was poor Fred Archer's constant failure to secure the even which proved the last straw in the upsetting of his mental balance. The 'classic' successes of

Watts were of the most brilliant character. He was the hero of the two most notable Derbies of modern times—the 'Prize of Derby,' and the present field secured in the fight with Fernwood, and the 'Prime Minister's Derby'—the long-delayed triumph of Lord Rosebery's turf enterprises. Besides these he rode two other Epsom champions in Merry Hampton and Kingbird. Five times he won the St. George, four times the Oaks, four times the One Thousand Guinea, and twice the Two Thousand Guinea. Either under 'retainers' or with casual mounts he had carried nearly every prominent prize known to the English turf during the last quarter of a century. In the years 1887 and 1888 he stood at the head of the list of winning jockeys. A year or two since Watts became trainer, as the difficulties of keeping down weight could not be overcome. In this new department of work he did very well, and his sagacity in buying was unquestionable.

According to an old proverb, early rising is conducive to health, wealth, and wisdom. This may be so, but those whose business takes them out in the morning to watch the work of racing men, and to dispute it, it is probably every bit as healthy, and certainly more enjoyable, to be snugly curled up in bed than to stand about a racecourse on a windy winter's morning. As regards owning winners, there would be very much to be said in it, while, as for wisdom—well, the knowledge gained by visits to the track is occasionally so confusing as to put you off a winner which you might have backed but for allowing private friends to influence you. Thus writes "Pilot," a Sydney scribe, who has seen some service in the capacity of a chronicler of the doings on the training grounds. According to this authority, touting at Randwick in these times has nearly occurred now that it was a few years ago, when to keep pace with some of the clever division it was necessary to almost live on the course for a few weeks prior to the commencement of the meeting. On bright mornings were gallops of one trial, and more than one spin was brought off as early as 8 o'clock, the course at that time being open at all hours. One effect of this sort of business was to boom horses whose chances of success were small, while a cold contracted through galloping in the early hours settled the prospects of more than one good horse. An accident or two eventually caused the committee to regulate the hours of work, and now the five o'clock in summer, while in June and July they are not available until 6.30, and even then very few trainers put in an appearance, with the exception being W. Kelso, who believes in getting through as soon as possible all the year round. At one time Randwick was open to anyone who wished to see the horses at a gallop, so that at the meeting hundreds ran into hundreds. Finally this state of affairs was considered undesirable, and the committee decided that outside of owners, trainers, jockeys, and others immediately interested only casual reporters should be admitted to the course. Possibly the pressmen, too, would be debarred if some of the trainers could have their way, but even if the training reports did not appear in the papers there would be plenty of chatter of springing a surprise on the bookmakers, who would continue to be well informed concerning track doings, even if the public were not. Then, again, some of our trainers pay as much for the care of their own, and are often responsible for booming some animal or another.

Recently it was stated that about 250 horses were in work at Randwick, and the following on the subject of "Touting the Training," from the pen of "Pilot," about the tracks there is interesting: Numerically, Randwick is well off as regards the number of all the courses. If the proper, then inside of that there is a grass track (A), outer tan (B), which is separated from the inner tan (C) by a cinder track, top dressed with sand. Next comes another grass track (D), while in the center of the course there is a fine cinder track. The jumping division is also well catered for now, a recent improvement being the formation of a mile steeplechase schooling track. As a rule, one of the grass tracks, in addition to one of the cinders, and the sand, and is opened three mornings a week—Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. In wet weather it is unusual for any of the grass tracks to be available, and then, as the tans are seldom used, the cinders are used. A pretty well confined to the cinders and sand. When working on the outer tan it is possible to cut off a lot of ground, and if a trainer for any particular reason should wish his horse to be credited with a particularly good gallop on this track, there is no difficulty about it. The inner tan, however, is a measured track, and anything accomplished on it can be relied upon. Just before any of our big meetings the grass track is used for final gallops, with hurdles out about twenty yards from the inner rail. Owing to the continued wet weather none of the Epsom candidates have done anything in the watch-breaking line, so far as the seat of the matter is concerned. Most of the horses in the past, with the hurdles out the distance mentioned, any horse capable of running 1m 4sec has invariably played a prominent part in the decision of the race. Most of the horses at the station themselves in line with the winning post, and, except when horses are pulled off up the straight, the time is generally taken pretty accurately. Of course, it is not possible to do so as to the identity of horses as well as the time made by them, but taking everything in-

to consideration, errors of this description are not too numerous. Naturally, trainers include in a little dodging when possible, and some trainers will just off at a finish at unusual posts. However, most trainers' an adjustment of the weights, and it is the easiest way, too, as though the onlookers may be pretty confident a horse is carrying more weight than in eight they have to take to the ground. When a horse comfortably beats another one morning, and then a couple of days later the tables are turned, it is in nine cases out of ten a matter of weight. There are a few trainers who do not believe in weighing horses up for dodging purposes, contending that a big load on an animal gallop after gallop takes a lot of dash out of it, while it also makes a breakdown a possibility. Then there are trainers, men of long experience, too, who have such a weakness for the use of the watch that if one of their horses shows a particularly good gallop, it is sent along on subsequent mornings to see if it can hold it off its previous work, with the result that a race is often lost on the track. The watch, unfortunately, is not an infallible guide to winners, as horses, like men, are differently constituted, and some can do much better in private than in public. Some of the most brilliant track gallopers have been failures with the colours up, while others whose work really gave them no chance, have surprised everybody connected with them by winning in good style. Still, those horses which show best form in private generally come out on top in public, and more particularly does this hold good in connection with the big mile races run at Randwick. Many racing men (trainers included) profess to scoff at the use of the watch, but all the same they are generally anxious to know what has made the fastest time at some particular distance, and would sooner risk their money on the horse that has run out a mile in, say, 1m 4sec, than the one that has taken a couple of seconds longer.

TURF TALK FROM THE SOUTH.

(By Telegraph.—Special to "Graphic.")

SOUTH CANTERBURY J.C. RACES, CHRISTCHURCH, Saturday.

The South Canterbury Jockey Club's Spring Meeting was resumed on the first of the palmiest days of the club. The weather on both days was lovely, the attendance large, and the amount of speculation indulged in may be gathered from the fact that in spite of the opposition of a party of public sportsmen, the total receipts exceeded the returns at the previous spring meeting by £1024 10/. The racing was interesting. The quality of the horses which contested the principal events was perhaps lower than the standard of 10 years ago, but was high enough nevertheless to provide enjoyable sport. One feature of the racing was the disappointing running of Somerled. The son of Cianran had been well tried at home, and the Riccarton critics scented the possibility of his being beaten. He was, however, in both his engagements, and in a measure disgraced in his Timaru Handicap. The best that he could do was to finish a poor third behind Count of Kolmar and Magnificent, and in the Rhodes Memorial Stakes he was unable even to get a place. Another feature of this Saturday was the success achieved by horses hailing from Lewis's stable, Ashburton. Count of Kolmar appropriated the Ti-

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