

Those who predicted that the Canterbury Jockey Club Spring Meeting would suffer through the Wellington R.C. Spring Meeting coming before that gathering made a mistake. On the other hand, it may well be contended that the opposite was the case. The Wellington Spring Meeting tended to work up the interest in the big Southern feature.

Being a crowd in the vicinity of the watch tower or look-out, placed at the turn for home in the Ellerslie straight, where some of the stewards of the A.R.C. took up their quarters during each of the first and second days of the spring meeting, and noticing the little stand was fully occupied, someone asked, "Are they all stewards down there?" "No, no," remarked a wag, "just a few stewards and their body guards."

Mr Heurys must have concluded that Canteen won the New Zealand Cup very easily when he asked that horse to carry 9.5 in the Metropolitan Handicap, or 20lb more than in the Cup. General Symons who won that event, however, was ruled 8lb over his handicap in the Cup, and was handicapped within 10lb of Canteen for the Jockey Club Handicap, over a mile.

Nordenfeldt sires and Nordenfeldt mares are upholding the prestige of the defunct "bulldog," as that sire was called. Cruciform, Waitiki, and Nonette are from Nordenfeldt mares, while Achille is by Mandolin, son of Nordenfeldt. The name of Robinson Crusoe, full brother to The Onyx, dam of Nordenfeldt, has been prominent in the pedigrees of winners this season, both in New Zealand and Australia.

That a son of old Vivandiere should win an important stake like the New Zealand Cup is due to that good old mare, who has been so prolific. Her first brood, Son of a Gun, got second in Manton's year, just 15 years ago, in 1888, and he, like Canteen, was a fancy coloured one, a red roan, whereas Canteen is a grey. Several of her grandsons are in the Cup, including Three Stars and Tangle, full brother and sister respectively to Canteen.

Stepney, winner of the Te Aroha Handicap and Hack Handicap, and who finished second in the Maiden Plate the same day, was first known as Ding-Dong. He is a son of Steppiah and a Perkin Warbeck mare named Faith, whose only other foal to a thoroughbred horse was a useful gelding, by Beysayer, known as Melton. Faith bred Ohio, Kentucky Maid, Plover, and other trotting race winners, but had the blood of Perkin Warbeck, Golden Grape, and Sleigh of Hand in her veins.

Asteroid, who ran second in the Hack Race to Roseal at the Wanganui Spring Meeting on the second day, and after finishing second in a minor event on the opening day of the Napier Park meeting beat Treadmill in the chief handicap on the second day, won the principal race at the Taraaki-Carlton meeting on Monday, Asteroid is a grey filly daughter of Apprenton and Planet, by Castor from Victoria, who was a favourite in her time with Auckland racegoers.

McCormac, who was disqualified by the Canterbury Jockey Club, is generally recognised as one of the best horsemen in the South Island, but has frequently incurred the displeasure of stewards at meetings. It is a pity, for he is old enough to set a good example to younger riders. During his career he has won numerous races, including the C.J.C. Derby, Canterbury Cup and Oaks, Otago Cup, Forbury and Dunedin C.J.C. Handicap each once, the Dunedin Cup, Birthday Handicap and Timaru Cup twice, but until he won the New Zealand Cup on Canteen had never won that event before.

Rosalind, the most prolific mare in the New Zealand Stud Book, holds an unequalled record, I should say. She is still alive. Was foaled in 1878, and is therefore twenty seven years old. Had her first foal at 4 years old in 1880, and her last in 1902. Roseal was her eighteenth foal, and a period of nineteen years has elapsed since Black Rose, her second born, won the Canterbury Derby. To breed two Derby winners at an interval of nineteen years is an

unheard of thing, so far as my knowledge of stud book and turf history goes. Can anyone give a parallel case, and mention another mare that has bred eleven foals and eight fillies, all of which, with one exception, have raced? That is Rosalind's record.

That Treadmill should be defeated in the Canterbury Derby did not appear to be accepted as probable at Riccarton on Monday, judging by the support accorded to Sir Geo. Clifford's colt; but this colt, has several times disappointed the public as well as caused them surprise, and Sea Lion's indifferent running after Wanganui, his defeat by his stable companion at Hawke's Bay, led shrewd judges to regard Treadmill with suspicion, and he is evidently not the champion over a distance that so many anticipated he would prove, and the chances are he is not by any means an every-day sort, though just when at his best he may prove a tough customer to dispose of.

A few years ago England had a small invasion of American trainers and jockeys, and their methods were all the rage. One by one they have either returned to their own side of the Atlantic, or migrated to the Continent. There are but few now left, and the number of trainers is to be further reduced by the departure of McLaughlin and W. Duke, of whom the first-named is going back home at the end of the season, with no present intention of returning, and the last has accepted a very large retainer to take charge of Mr Vanderbilt's racing stud in France.

An American exchange says:—"E. E. Smeathers, who recently purchased Major Belmont, gave \$10,000 dollars for him. This is said to be the highest price ever paid for a gelding. Smeathers is one of New York's rich men with a taste for horse flesh. His agent bid for Lon Dillon when she was being sold at auction in the spring. She was being sold for \$10,000 dollars, but Smeathers, I believe, bought her, and felt more than repaid when she trotted a mile in ten minutes. Smeathers, he doubt, saw in Belmont a rival to game Long Dillon, and this is why he gave big money for the gelding."

At the N.Z. Metropolitan Trotting Club's Meeting, which closed on Friday, the large sum of £29,870 was invested on the totalisator during the three days, as against a £22,635 last year. This club is much more prosperous than most racing institutions. Some splendid performances were recorded during the meeting. Mr J. A. Buckland's St. Simou, by St. Louis, won the Champion Handicap of 300sovs, two miles, in 3m 58s, paying a dividend of £2 18s. Yasso won the Jewell and Swift Handicaps, paying dividends of £8 10s and £8 18s. Royal Money won the Innovation Handicap, Novice the Hornby Handicap, Verax the Stockburn Handicap, and old Monte Carlo the Final Handicap, in which he covered a mile in 2m 21 3/4s, and paid a dividend of £12 14s.

F. Macmuremin trained four winners of five races at the spring meeting of the Auckland Racing Club. They were his old favourite, Nonette, Delania (who won twice), Marline and Sonoma, and the last pair finished second twice, in addition to winning. J. Gallagher trained Rosetta, Bean Sention, and Onewa. J. Thorpe Kilmarlock and Rupa; J. B. Williamson Spalpeen (who won twice); while R. Hamon had Star (who won twice); French turned out 18; Yasso won the Jewell and Swift Handicaps, paying dividends of £8 10s and £8 18s, and Munro each trained a winner.

In the Birthday Handicap at Ellerslie on Monday Mr Friedlander's Rops was asked to carry 11lbs over his weight for age, while Nonette was awarded 8lbs over scale weight. On public form it was making Rops pretty good to make him out 8lbs better than Mr Ryan's horse. Idas had 3lbs under her weight for age, and Nonhonor, who has never won a race, or really run one good race yet when form is analyzed, was given 7.11, or 4lbs over her scale weight, being thus assessed at with 4lbs of its good as her brother. She did not run. Guineas form was not good—nearly so good as many people assumed; it was certainly very bad so far as everything that finished behind Rops was concerned, and not much to boast of so far as he was

concerned. Having on Monday disclosed these facts, Waitiki carried 7.12 when he won the Birthday Handicap last year, after winning the Guineas. Rops, who is said to be expected to have a chance carrying 8lb more, but failed badly.

According to an exchange, the jockey George Odum will earn about 50,000dol. (£10,000) in America this season. Captain Brown pays him a retaining fee of 12,000 dol. a year. This amount is increased by an additional fee of 25dol. for training, and 10dol. for losing mounts. Alex. Shields and E. R. Thomas have second call on his services for 50,000dol. with the usual fees. If he wins any of the important races he is to receive 30,000dol. for each event. His revenue from outside mounts will easily tot up 25,000dol. His earnings this season will exceed by 15,000dol. any of his rivals.

The following description by an English writer of the famous filly Pretty Polly, who recently added the Middle Park Plate to her numerous victories, will interest sporting folk:—"Pretty Polly's appearance is quite in accord with her performances. She is, indeed, a beautiful filly, massive and big everywhere, and yet with extraordinary quality. Probably the filly will always run big, but it must be understood that she has bone enough to carry her big frame, and, as far as we can judge, there is no fear of her breaking down. Her head is small and sleek, and her forehead most graceful, while her quarters are of the massive order, and she carries a very big barrel. She is, however, beautifully turned, and is especially good from her crop to her hocks, and in the past she has been noted for that she is only two years old. Most of the good Gallinias show their best form at about a mile and a quarter."

It came as a surprise when it became known that Sir George Clifford's three-year-old colt Treadmill defeated the Auckland colt Waitiki in the Canterbury Cup, and people are now wondering how it came about. There are numerous suggestions of course. One is that Waitiki had nothing to make a pace for him; another, that he got too big a doing in the N.Z. Cup. Others are that Treadmill was a long way better than his derby rival, and may not be so good at the post as he did before that event. Others are of opinion that a change of riders may have altered matters, as Pine rode him in the Derby and McCluskey in the Canterbury Cup. Then there is another suggestion as to the difference in weights. The things cannot always be summed up by the book. In the N.Z. Cup Waitiki gave Roseal 3lbs and beat him over two miles in an extremely fast race. Roseal two days later, in the Auckland Derby, was under a bigger scale, in which men were riding both. In the Canterbury Cup, two miles and a quarter, which was not run at such a solid pace as the N.Z. Cup, Waitiki failed to give 2lbs to Treadmill. Query: Was Treadmill himself when Roseal beat him, or was he beaten for pace by that colt?

After he won the St. Leger very easily from several indifferent three-year-olds (none of the French horses ran, and Zinfandel was not entered), says "The Ring" in the "Australasian," admirers of Rock Sand were confident that he would beat Sceptre in the Jockey Club Stakes. They argued that Rock Sand was not himself when Ard Patrick and Sceptre beat him in the Epsom Stakes, and that in the First Thousand Pounder Sceptre would have to show Rock Sand a special breeding allowance of 9lb, as well as ordinary weight for age. Well, the race for the Jockey Club Stakes took place on October 1, and the details are given in the "Asian." Sceptre carried 10.0 to Rock Sand's 8.0, and the cable report says she won in a canter by four lengths. The betting was very close, 5 to 1 being laid on Rock Sand, and 11 to 10 taken about Sceptre. It is very plain now that Sceptre and Ard Patrick are a long way ahead of this season's three-year-olds, and although the best of his year—excepting, perhaps, Zinfandel—Rock Sand cannot be a wonder. I see by the same "Asian" that Kano, by Treadmill, was only beaten a head in the Prince Edward Handicap, of £2000, run on September 26. Kano just previously won the Royal Borough Handicap of £2000 in Apr. There may yet be time for Treadmill to sire a good horse in England, but so far his

career in the Old Country has been very disappointing.

An experiment of more than ordinary interest has been in course of development in the United States during the last four or five years, and an exchange, this country is nothing less than offering fillies to see if their racing capabilities can be improved. Three fillies in Messrs Clay and Woodford's Hunnywade stud have been unsexed, and they have shown up to good advantage on the turf. A number of prominent breeders are so impressed with the apparent success of the experiment that they are having their filly foals unsexed upon it. It is also claimed that the form is rendered much more consistent than that of others of the same sex, but, of course, and it is thought that the operation will bring the unsexed animals on a racing equality with colts. However, the object, if it has something to commend to its application in the interests of a country, in this connection I may add that a breeder in New Zealand operated on a number of fillies five years ago, and they all died. The risk is always one that owners will not care to undertake, and veterinarians cannot always be found to do it.

The following story is told in a Queensland paper:—"We have a lot of horses and jockeys being 'tried up,' but I have decided novelty to find that even punters can be blocked from 'trying.' It happened this time at a pony meeting once held on Charlton's farm, a pony named, say, Mandolin, was known to lose 'tried up' by 'Spun,' and the gratification of half a dozen of the leading punters was great when the 'director' of Mandolin, a penholder in the way, approached them each under the seal of a postcard, and remarked: 'Mandolin's in two races on Saturday; he's dead in the first, and will win the second; let him go in the first, but bring it in quick in the second when I nod; lose's a fiver, but 10 to 6 or 7, and have a bit on yourself.' Mandolin appeared in the first race, and opening at 6 to 4 was steadily backed down to 6 to 4 on. Not by the punters, though; they backed 'the next best,' and so it was 'fading in' for Mandolin. At length the pointer faced the starter, and Mandolin took from end to end. The 'director' collected about a centurion from the books, scratched Mandolin's name for the second event, and then went round to his commissioner friends for the return of his bets. 'You're a beautiful take-down,' they indignantly remarked. 'Don't be cross, he only replied; 'if I hadn't told you punters up I couldn't have got a fiver about him; it grazed me, but it had to be done.'"

The appearance of Nonets at the post for the A.R.C. Birthday Handicap must have surprised most people after the reports published a week before to the effect that signs of soreness were present in his case. This was perfectly true, and much regret was generally expressed at the news, but his condition was not so serious as to cause him to be stopped in his work altogether, and as a matter of fact I mentioned that he was still being worked on the turf. I confess I did not think for a moment that he would be a starter at the A.R.C. meeting, but rain fell during the early hours of Monday morning, and took the sting out of the ground, and the gallant chestnut was sent to the post wearing a bandage on the fetlock that caused his start-up just a year ago. He started well backed, but there were several that carried more money. What a good one can do under unfavourable conditions which appear to weak opposition was never better exemplified, for he simply wore them all down one by one, and received a great ovation when he returned to scale, a cheer being also given for Mark Ryan, his rider; and I fancy most people were pleased to see his owner, Mr J. B. Ryan, have a turn of luck. Nonette trotted lame when pulled up and returning to scale. People may question the policy of running him, but with the chance of the ground continuing to be hard up to the midsummer meeting of his life, it was well to take the risk as matters turned out, for such an easy task may not be presented later on in the season, when the cracks are assembled at the headquarters of racing in the North Island. The victory of Nonette goes to show how mediocre the lot we have at Ellerslie are.

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