

Turf Gossip.

By WHALEBONE.

age of 73.21, wins the prize of the Class 2 and 3 section, and Mr Hayward, with a percentage of 72.72, the other.

In connection with the ladder competitions, no fewer than 62 challenges were issued during the year. Of this number three have not yet been completed from a variety of causes, four were withdrawn, and seven were won by default. Among the uncompleted games are those to be played in the challenge issued by Mr Miles to Mr Grierson for Rung 1. This challenge was delayed until very late in the year—it was really accepted during the close season—and upon the result of its games the title of club champion and the allocation of Mr Myers' gold medal for the holder of that title, depends. Mr Miles has successfully resisted challenges for Rung 2 from Mr Miller and Mr Davies. Mr Morgan has made the most progress during the year, having ascended from Rung 17 to Rung 12. Mr Moir has been the champion challenger, having issued no less than 9, being successful in 5 of this number.

By a rather singular coincidence, challenges were successful in 24 cases, and the challenged players maintained their right to their positions in an exactly similar number of instances.

While on the subject of competitions, it must not be omitted to mention a fact familiar to everybody present, and particularly gratifying to this club, viz., that it includes amongst its members the champion of New Zealand. Mr Grierson, for the second time, has honoured himself and his club by taking first place at the Annual Tournament of the New Zealand Chess Association, held this year at Nelson, and in commemoration of this a presentation will be made to him in the course of to-night's proceedings.

A Smokers' v. Non-smokers' match was played during the year, and fortunately for the Non-smokers—or the Smokers, according to the point of view—resulted in a tie.

The reading of the minutes of the final meeting of the club, held on March 20th, will remind you that shortly the club will enter into occupation of a new club-room. The committee regret that there was not a larger meeting to discuss and decide this step, but they hope that the larger, airier, and less noisy room, which it has been decided to occupy, will please the members and conduce to the increased success of the club.

The membership of the club at the end of the year was 60, 47 full, and 13 honorary members. The committee regret to record the loss to the club by death of Mr J. O. Barnard, and by resignation of Mr Vincent Rice, and Rev. A. Miller. Mr Rice was an old member and officer of the club, and Mr Miller an enthusiastic and skilful player.

Application has been made for the forthcoming congress to be held at Auckland during the Exhibition period, and there is little doubt but that this request will be accorded to. It is hoped that entrants will be attracted from Australia, and that the tournament will be a memorable one.

Your committee has met on 12 occasions, the following being the attendance of members:—

Rev. H. B. Wingfield, 7; Mr Grierson, 7; Mr Harland, 1; Mr Harvey, 12; Mr Miles, 7; Mr Wilson, 7; Mr Morgan, 11; Mr Wright, 10; Mr Sachs, 3; Mr Freeman, 5; Mr Layland, 12.

The prospects of the club for the session entered upon are excellent—the treasurer will present a satisfactory balance-sheet presently—and the committee hope that all the members will work together for the good of the club, and that its flourishing condition may be maintained.

Signed on behalf of the Committee,
H. BARNARD WINGFIELD,
President.
A. E. LAYLAND,
Hon. Secretary.

April 14th, 1913.

Solution of Problem No. 206.
By Arthur Mosely, Brisbane.

Position: 2Q5, 5p2, 3K2b1, 1pP5, pP5R, g8K12p1, 2S3Rp, rBaaB1b1.
Key move: 1. Q—Kt4.

Thousands and thousands of families in all parts of the world always keep Ayer's Cherry Pectoral in the house. They rely on it for coughs, colds, weak throats, weak lungs. Sold in three sizes.

The stewards of the Wellington Racing Club have decided to increase the stakes for the winter meeting by £400 over last winter, and have also resolved to restore the St. Leger Stakes on the autumn programme.

The Rover has been purchased by G. Delaney, who is now in Australia, and who was presumably acting for an owner on the other side. The Advance gelding will shortly be shipped across to Sydney.

Mr G. G. Stead won the first New Zealand St. Leger with the not very celebrated colt Altair in 1899. In subsequent years he scored with Cruciform (a top-notcher) and Isolt.

The Monoform gelding Monotone was in the paddock at Avondale on Wednesday, but had to be withdrawn from his engagement in the Maiden Plate because no rider was available at the weight.

The Spaarpeen gelding Plymont is earning an unenviable reputation, and at present two riders, C. Percival and R. Conway, are receiving attention at the hospital through his failing to negotiate the obstacles safely.

The Soult colt Marshal McDonald is improving with every race, and when next season rolls round may be found winning a decent race for his popular owner, Mr Donald McKinnon.

Two Auckland horsemen, in B. Deeley and J. Deerer, were successful at the recent Hawke's Bay meeting, the former piloting Zeus and Historiette to victory, and the latter having the mount on Flingot when he won the Mangatarara Hurdle Race.

The Maoriland-bred pacer Ribbonwood, though not eligible for the class prizes at the Royal Agricultural Show in Sydney, won the championship for trotting stallions. He has now won more championships at Sydney shows than any other light harness horse.

On appearances, Kaween was the last of the field that one would have selected to win the Avondale Handicap on Wednesday, but, nevertheless, the daughter of Spaarpeen ran a great race, battling it right out to the finish, and securing the 20sovs. attaching to third position.

After a long absence from the racing track, Master Theory made his reappearance under silk at Avondale on Wednesday, when he was saddled up to contest the Handicap Hurdles. The son of Soult made a creditable showing, and should not be long before he adds something to his winning account.

The Soult gelding Admiral Soult made his first appearance over hurdles at Avondale on Wednesday, when he contested the Handicap Hurdle Race. The hitherto disappointing son of Soult made a very good showing for a maiden, but banged the fences a lot, and his legs suffered in consequence.

After her efforts at the Manawatu meeting, the Wellington-owned mare Aema was thought to hold a mortgage on the hurdle race at Avondale on Wednesday, but the best daughter of Stepiak could do so to run third. Aema was showing symptoms of soreness when she returned to the paddock after the race.

Candoua, the winner of the Sydney Cup, is related to several well-known performers in this country. His third dam is Aurelia, who was got by Muskiet from L'Orient, the dam of Aida, Mans, Francotte, Orientale, and others. Aida produced Impulse, a New Zealand Cup winner, and Ublan, an Auckland Cup winner.

The St. Ambrose gelding Virtue did not make a very promising showing in his first attempt over hurdles, and at Avondale on Wednesday he was last throughout the journey. Virtue jumped carefully throughout, and when he gains experience through racing, may pick up a stake or two at the illegitimate game.

In declaring his weights for the Mount Roskill Handicap, on the second day of the Avondale meeting, Mr. Morse put Topic in the pride of position with 9st. After the weights were issued, it transpired that Topic was not eligible for the race, and, as a consequence, a 2lb rise all round was necessary in order to conform with the rules.

The Birkenhead gelding Presently, which has been off the scene for about twelve months, is to rejoin P. Jones' team at Ellerslie next week. Mr. L. B. Harris, the owner of the gelding, is contemplating a trip to Sydney in the spring, in which case both Presently and Torador will be taken across to the other side, and given an opportunity to measure strides with the Australian cracks.

Labour Day gave another disappointing display in the Hawke's Bay Cup, finishing out of a place, while, on the second day of the Hawke's Bay meeting she came to grief through falling over Canute while contesting the Burke Memorial Handicap. The daughter of Soult may yet repay Mr. Lowry for the money he has expended on her, but at present she can safely be written down as the best-sold mare that has raced in the Dominion for some time.

The support accorded the Invercargill non-trotting meeting, says a Southland paper, is not as good as might have been expected, seeing the large number of trotters in work in Southland, but officials of the club are to a great extent responsible for more entries not being forthcoming. A leading local owner informed the writer that no programme had come to Gore, and further, that he had made personal application to the secretary for a programme, which had not come to hand.

A unique proposal is under the consideration of the Christchurch trotting clubs at the present time. The idea is to hold an exhibition trotting race in connection with a public demonstration which is to take place during the visit of H.M.S. New Zealand to the port of the Cathedral City. The suggestion is that the race should be a handicap one of one mile and a-half, and that the only prizes should be three trophies, while the field would include seven or eight of the best harness horses in training.

Bluestone showed greatly improved form in his races at Avondale, and the son of Bluelight won both his races in convincing style. In the Oakley Handicap his win appeared to have something of the fluke about it, for he got a lucky run through on the rails, but in the Railway Handicap, the concluding event of the day, he dispelled this idea, for he never gave the rest of the field a look in, and simply made a one-horse race of it.

Mark Ryan, who recently handed in his jockey's license, in order to set up as a public trainer, has had a three-year-old gelding by Extractor, and a three-year-old gelding by Monoform, placed in his charge, and the pair are to arrive at headquarters next week. The one-time prominent horseman has secured stables at Ellerslie, and, now that he has made a start, should not be long in getting his boxes full.

A horse that sadly disappointed his party at Avondale on Wednesday was Decorate, which was a good second favourite in the Maiden Plate. The half-brother to Watch-chain never really got going, and was a long way back at the finish. Too much notice, however, should not be taken of the form of several of the competitors in the Maiden Plate, however, for the bulk of them had their chances spoiled before a furlong was covered, by the bumping and jostling that took place just after the start.

The president of the Auckland Racing Club, the Hon. B. Mitchelson, has sufficiently recovered from his recent serious accident to take a motor drive, and on Thursday afternoon paid a visit to the Ellerslie Racecourse, and inspected the various works in progress. The president takes a very keen interest in the beautifying of the Ellerslie course, and his many friends will be pleased to learn that he is able once more to keep in touch with what is going on at headquarters.

The Soult filly Brieriot has won all the three races she has contested at Avondale this season. In the spring she accounted for the Avondale Cup and Avondale Guineas, and on Wednesday the Avondale Handicap fell to her share, these events being the three principal events on the club's programme. On Wednesday Brieriot was sent out a very warm favourite, and returned the shortest price returned in a handicap event in Auckland this season.

So far Antiphone has not proved to be a worthy descendant of the successful racing family he springs from, and, although he has not raced very often, his essays have been very disappointing. In the Maiden Plate at Avondale on Wednesday he carried the confidence of his party, and was sent out a good favourite, but not once through the race did he appear to have a winning chance, and eventually finished out of a place. Time may do a lot for Antiphone, but at present he is a good many removes from first class.

It is again stated that it has been definitely decided to retire Lady Medallist, and that she will go to St. Savin. As Lady Medallist's sire, St. Alwyn, is a grandson of St. Simon, and St. Savin is by St. Simon, that sounds fairly close breeding; but it is only natural Mr "B. J. Craven" should be inclined to experiment to some extent with his very fine stallion, which has already been represented by two winners in England, Horstena accounting for two races and Durbar one last season. Lady Medallist proved a profitable purchase on "Mr Craven's" part, as she won him well on towards £6,700 in prize-money in her various races, and it is understood he scored heavily in the way of bets when she won the Caulfield Cup.

Backers never seem tired of making Tri-poli favourite for the races she contests, and in two-thirds of the events she has started in this season she has been at the head of the quotations, but has yet to make good. In the Chevalier Handicap, at Avondale, on Wednesday, she carried a lot of money, but was never seen. Her rider, however, struck trouble in the race, for, in addition to getting bumped on to the rails, was hit in the eye by a sod thrown back by one of the other horses, and consequently was unable to do his mount justice.

The recent showings of Mr. J. R. Reid's colt Rinaldo adds further to the puzzle as to which is the champion two-year-old of the season, and it is a thousand pities that Soliano, Mowbray, Rinaldo, and Nightwatch all fit and well could not be brought together over six furlongs. It is a long time since four such good colts have been seen out in the one season, and their meeting would create universal interest. Probably the quartet will have their first meeting as three-year-olds in the next Great Northern Derby, which is the first classical race of importance in which all are engaged.

The latest improvement at Avondale, that of providing a separate enclosure to enable trainers to saddle their horses for their engagements without any outside interference, is one that could be copied with advantage by other clubs, and more especially the Auckland Racing Club. On all the courses previously, and Ellerslie in particular, trainers, especially those who had to get the favourite ready, have been subjected to all sorts of annoyance by people crowding round and, in numbers of cases, actually filling the box while the horses were being saddled. All this sort of thing the enclosure at Avondale prevents, and it is, without doubt, one of the most advanced improvements effected on any course in recent years.

The Works Committee of the Auckland Racing Club visited the Ellerslie racecourse on Thursday, and looked over the various works in progress. The forming of the new entrances is being pushed on with all possible haste, and, though there is an enormous amount of blasting to be done, in order to remove the large quantity of solid rock that has to be shifted, very satisfactory progress is being made. The long spell of fine weather has greatly assisted operations, and the completion of the big job in time for the summer meeting is now practically assured. When finished, the entrances will be easily the best in the Dominion.

Mr. W. Casey, the contractor for the erection of the new stairway to the top of the main stand at Ellerslie, has made a start with the work, and a large staff of men will be put on in order to have everything in readiness for the A.B.C. Winter Meeting. The stairway, which is an outside one, begins about the middle of the old publican's booth, and goes to the corner of the building, then turns at right angles, and runs along the end of the stand to the top. The grade is a very easy one from top to bottom, and, as the stairway will be 6ft wide, there should be no complaint as to the means of access provided for those who wish to view the racing from that point.

A number of brood mares, unbroken horses, and horses in training were submitted at auction at Palmerston North on account of Mr D. Bulck, M.P., and other owners. There was a large attendance at the ring side, but buyers were conspicuous by their absence, and a number