

May 31, 1894.]

CHARLEY'S AUNT has taken on splendidly at Dunedin, and a successful New Zealand tour is a certainty.

ONE of the strongest programmes yet presented by Mr A. H. Gee was given at last night's popular concert. He had the assistance of Miss Warren, Miss Heywood, and Messrs Archdale Taylor, Martin, Brett, Montague and Herr Zimmermann, and every number was well chosen and most creditably rendered. Mr Archdale Taylor was a strong support to Mr Gee, and both gentlemen's singing gave the greatest pleasure. The attendance was in keeping with the programme, which may take rank with the best presented by Mr Gee. These concerts have taken a strong hold of the public, and while Mr Gee caters for them in the splendid manner which has marked his work up to the present he need have no fear of the continued popularity of the series.

HARDLY had he returned (writes "Call Boy") to Melbourne from his New Zealand tour than Frank M. Clark, of the Alhambra Company, was called upon to appear in the Carlton Police Court to show cause why he should not support the child of Hilda Catherine Briscoe. The complainant, who was not devoid of attractions, stated that she arrived in Victoria about two years ago and became a member of the Variety Company at the Gaiety Theatre, Melbourne, which was then being run by Mr Clark. A close intimacy between them sprung up, and they lived together at Hastings as man and wife. The child was born in December, 1892, and though she had on two previous occasions taken out summonses against him she had been persuaded not to go into court. The defendant denied the parentage of the child. He admitted being kind and attentive to Miss Briscoe, "as he was to others who required his help." Intimacy with the complainant was not denied. The Bench made an order for the payment of 10s 6d per week.

WELLINGTON JOTTINGS.

[By PROTEUS.]

THINGS musical and dramatic present a thriving appearance here, all the theatres and halls being engaged at the date of this memo.

The performance given by Bessie Doyle and Co. at the Theatre Royal is unique and immensely popular.

The Opera House is run by some amateurs under the designation of "Dramatic Students," and their delineation of Masks and Faces, and especially Nan the Good for Nothing, effectually suited the title of the piece, as their conception of Tom Taylor's comedy was not of the best. The secretary, who is an impressionable person as regards height (nothing else) very discourteously refused to "Proteus" admittance as press representative, and he being more than seven I naturally wondered at his demeanour, but consoled myself with the reflection—"Where ignorance is bliss," etc. When he is acquainted with the fact that a person unconnected with any newspaper in the colony reserved two seats ten minutes before the performance and partook of refreshments provided on the stage (all for "nix") he will visit the opticians for glasses.

The Prince of Wales' Minstrels, another amateur organisation, occupy the Princess Theatre with good biz.

Donald Dinnie's Champion Step Dancing Co. have the Criterion Theatre, and the attendance nightly is fair.

Speaking to Mr Levi, the energetic secretary of the Wellington Operatic Society, he assured me the amateurs were having excellent rehearsals of Gilbert and Sullivan's opera The Mikado, which is to be played about August.

Totalisator Paying Out.

THE following letter from Mr O. Samuel, a prominent member of the Taranaki Jockey Club, was read at the annual meeting of that club on Friday night:—

The Hon. Sec. Taranaki Jockey Club.
DEAR SIR,—I have several times brought under the notice of members of the club and persons in the habit of attending race meetings, the question of changing the mode in which totalisator money is divided, and to some extent adopting the system which is in vogue elsewhere of paying on placed horses instead of only on the winner. The suggestion has found favour with nearly everyone to whom I have mentioned it, and I propose to submit it for

discussion at the annual general meeting to be held on Friday evening.

My suggestion is that in future the totalisator money (after the usual deductions) should be paid out on the first and second horses in the proportion of two-thirds on the first and one-third on the second. In case of a dead heat the money would be distributed as at present; and if only two horses are backed on the totalisator the present rule of paying on the winner only would be retained.

I have worked out roughly what would have been the results if the rule which I propose had been adopted at our Autumn Meeting, and they would have been as follows:—

First Handicap Hurdles.—Total 331, first horse 82, second horse 101. Dividends paid £3 12s; would have been, first horse £2 8s, second horse £1.

First Handicap Hack Hurdles.—Total 398, first horse 185, second horse 82. Dividends paid £1 18s; would have been, first horse £1 5s, second horse £1 8s.

Jockey Club Handicap.—Total 616, first horse 140, second horse 143. Dividends paid £3 19s; would have been, first horse £3 7s, second horse £1 4s.

First Handicap Hack Race.—Total 551, first horse 183, second horse 40. Dividends paid £2 10s; would have been, first horse £1 16s, second horse £4 3s.

Welter Handicap.—Total 180, first horse 81, second horse 48. Dividends paid £2, would have been, first horse £1 6s, second horse £1 2s.

Hack Scurry.—Total 380, first horse 34, second horse 65. Dividends paid £10 1, would have been, first horse £6 14s, second horse £1 15s.

Flying Handicap.—Total 516, first horse 255, second horse 85. Dividends paid, £1 16s, would have been, first horse £1 3s, second horse £1 15s.

Grand Stand Handicap.—Total 376, first horse 112, second horse 63. Dividends paid £3, would have been, first horse £2, second horse £1 18s.

Second Handicap Hurdles.—Total 372, first horse 92, second horse 51. Dividends paid on two horses which ran a dead heat.

Second Handicap Hack Hurdles.—Total 449, first horse 29, second horse 159. Dividends paid £13 18s, would have been, first horse £9 6s, second horse 16s.

Autumn Handicap.—Total 500, first horse 109, second horse 92. Dividends paid £4 2s, would have been, first horse £2 15s, second horse £1 12s.

Second Handicap Hack Race.—Total 352, first horse 214, second horse 56. Dividends paid £1 9s, would have been first horse 19s, second horse £1 7s.

Shorts Handicap.—Total 420, first horse 240, second horse 50. Dividends paid £1 11s, would have been first horse £1 1s, second horse £2 10s.

Farewell Handicap.—Total 453, first horse 128, second horse 42. Dividends paid £3 3s, would have been first horse £2 2s, second horse £3 4s.

In order to bring the subject forward I beg to give notice that at the Annual General Meeting I will move that a sub-committee, consisting of the stewards and the committee, and with power to add to its number, be appointed to consider the expediency of altering the mode of division of totalisator moneys, and that the stewards and the committee be empowered to carry into effect any recommendation which such sub-committee may make.

Otaki Maori Meeting.

[FROM OUR WELLINGTON CORRESPONDENT.]

THE Otaki Maori Club were favoured with a good day for their meeting, although it rained the night previously and the sky wore a threatening aspect. However, the rain kept off. There was a large attendance of sports from all parts of the district and from outside centres. The gathering was of an essentially native character, nearly all the officials being Maoris. Mr Eager did his best to make the meeting pass off without a hitch, and Mr Lyon, secretary to the Wellington Club, who was present, lent him valuable assistance. The programme of the races was a regular botched-up affair, though. In the Trial Handicap Aotea's name was left out altogether, and he ran a good second. In the Stewards' Stakes the name of Huia did not appear in the book either, although accepted for, and this was the subject of a nice old row, because the animal had run second in the big event to Pihanga, and a great many did not know of the later engagement at all. There were 22 names in the book and Huia made the 23rd. This number was hoisted on the board, but the animal was coupled with Unfortunate

(No. 13) on the machine, and the devil's number got home comfortably. There were two bays in the race—Huia and Silent Friend—and they both bore green jackets and black caps, so that people thought Silent Friend had won, but they were soon disillusioned. The dividend paid was £23 17s. People were very wroth at the name not appearing in the book, but the secretary said it was the fault of the printer and not his. Any how, Mr Buick, owner of Silent Friend (who ran third) entered a protest on the ground that the horses were started in front of the post. Evidence was taken and the locality examined, with the result that the protest was dismissed. There were other omissions from the programme also in the shape of colours and names from the pedigree list.

The Trial Handicap saw a complete boil-over. Comfort, by Somnus, getting home from Aotea, Tuiwhai, Langdale, Princess, Rankawa, Ripo Ripo and Lady Kilburnie. Overseer, Sweet Dream, Vain Glory, Miser, Nihilist and Milford were scratched. After a short delay the field were sent away to a fairly good start. When settled in their strides Riporipo took command and led to the bend, where Comfort came along, followed by Aotea. There was a good race up the straight, where Tuiwhai got up, but could not pass the other two when the pinch came. It was a very close finish, but Comfort got home from Aotea, Tuiwhai a good third. Langdale was out of it. Totalisator, 377; dividend, £19 19s. The winner is by Somnus.

Spreydon was the public fancy for the First Hurdle Handicap, in which there were nine starters. Lord John, Pihanga and Pembroke were scratched. A bad start was effected, Karamea, Austral and Mac being left behind. Chrystal and Rangipai went away, and were together at the hurdle in front of the stand, followed by Result, Tricky Jack and Spreydon. Rangipai had the lead at the back, where Result was going strongly, but fell back, seemingly having struck a hurdle. Tricky Jack went up and passed Rangipai in the bend, and coming on won easily by three lengths from Spreydon, who could not get up. Then followed Rangipai, the rest pulling up. Totalisator, 558; dividend, £6 17s. Tricky Jack is by Emin Bey.

Then followed the Boyle Plate of one mile, in which the starters were Jacobite, Miser, Tuiwhai, Langdale, Aroha, Juanita, Tomboy, Aotea, Blunderbus, Swordfish, Raukawa, Athlene, Comfort, and Lady Kilburnie. When the flag fell Miser rushed to the front, and led his field at a merry bat right round into the straight, where Jacobite came at him and won comfortably. Tuiwhai was third, and Aotea next. The field tailed off wonderfully for a mile race. On machine 441; dividend, £2 10s. The winner is by Escutcheon.

There was brisk speculation over the Glasgow Plate Handicap of a mile and a half. The majority were very well backed. The starters comprised—Pihanga, Huia, Kalmea, Swift, Mairua, Tangaroa, Silent Friend, Roll Call, Trickery, Vain Glory, Tamarere, Jacobite, Makomako, Unfortunate, Bouquet and Sweet Dream. The scratched horses were—Waiuku, Bonovoree, Buckler, Tuiwhai, Merryman and Equi. Trickery and Vain Glory were bracketed on the machine, as were Unfortunate and Bognet. There were repeated breaks away, and when the flag fell Jacobite got the worst of the start, but it was afterwards seen that Vain Glory was left standing at the post. She took no part in the race. Silent Friend, Trickery and Swift were prominent coming up the straight. At the back Trickery rushed to the front, Silent Friend being a couple of lengths away next. Jacobite had made up a lot of his lost ground, and was lying in a fair position, but on the outside. Trickery led round the bend, where Kalmea, Pihanga, and Roll Call commenced to move up. Before the straight was reached Pihanga, who was going well, assumed command, and coming on won easily by two lengths and a half from Huia, who came up on the inside under the whip. Kalmea was third and Silent Friend fourth. Unfortunate, who was never in it at any part of race, was last. On the machine, 786; dividend, £11 5s. The time was given as 2min 50½sec. The winner's breeding is Feve—Miss Constance.

There were five starters in the Second Hurdles, and Rangipai, by Souwester, went off at a great bat and was never caught, winning from Spreydon, who was conceding her 20lbs over the mile and a half. Romeo being third. Tricky Jack and Mac also started, the latter

falling. On machine, 193; dividend, £4 16s.

There was a good field for the Flying Handicap, the starters being Voltaire, Bonovoree, Mairua, Marama, Langdale, Tangaroa, Roll Call, Tamarere, Overseer, Merryman, Besant, Equi, and Vain Glory. Bonovoree was favourite. The Toad, Delusion, Jacobite, Waiuku and Tramore were scratched. After several breaks away Marama jumped to the front, and led the field at a great bat. In the bend Voltaire had run up second, but the race seemed all over. In the straight, however, Voltaire caught the leader, who died away to nothing, and did not get a place. Bonovoree came well, but had to be content with second place. Mairua was third, Vain Glory and Marama being next. On machine 608; dividend, £6 4s. Voltaire is by Master Agnes out of Polly.

Then came the concluding event of the day, the Stewards' Handicap, in which the following carried colours:—Huia, Tenby, Silent Friend, Bonovoree, Kalmea, Pihanga (who carried 10lb penalty), Swift, Makomako, The Toad, Vain Glory, Miser, Unfortunate, Trickery, Sweet Dream, Merryman and Silver. Huia and Unfortunate were bracketed, as were The Toad and Vain Glory, and Miser and Silent Friend. The distance was a mile and a quarter. Aroha, Tomboy, Buckler, Tuiwhai and Mairua were scratched. There were repeated breaks away, and when the field were despatched Makomako had the advantage, Trickery and Tenby being next. Owing to the fading light the colours were not distinguishable at the back, but Trickery seemed to have command, Tenby being second and Makomako pulling back into third place, which he had lost in the bend. There was a great race up the straight, where Silent Friend came up and challenged Tenby, who now had command. Another green jacket appeared on the outside, however, and it proved to be carried by Huia, who eventually got home by a length, under the whip. Some of the others that competed were distanced. There was a great row made over this win, as Huia's name did not appear in the book as a starter. The secretary said he was an acceptor, but the printer had left the name out. However, his number—23 as the book went, but placed on No. 13 with Unfortunate—was hoisted up on the board. There were only 22 on the pair. Mr Buick entered a protest on the ground that the race was started in front of the post. The stewards met, examined the locality, and dismissed the protest. On the machine, 583; dividend on Huia and Unfortunate, £23 17s.

During the day the sum of £3546 went through the machine, which was worked by Mr J. Ames.

Coursing.

THE Piako Coursing Club held their meeting on 22nd and 23rd May. Mr Henderson acted as judge and Mr Ferguson as slipper, and both gave every satisfaction. Although it was very wet, there was a large muster of people present. The final course took place on the 23rd, and was witnessed by about fifty people, including a dozen ladies. The following are the results:—Course I.—Victress beat Nelly, Commoner beat Blue and White, Rock beat Lady Lynne, The Imp beat Fly, Countess ran a bye. Course II.—Commoner beat Victress, Rock beat Countess, The Imp a bye. Course III.—The Imp beat Commoner, and Rock ran a bye. Final—Mr M. Foley's white and brindle bitch. The Imp beat Mr J. Russell's black and white dog Rock, and won the stake. It was decided by the club to hold another meeting at the end of June.

Investment was better down Dunedin way this year than was the case last year. The Birthday gathering shows an increase of £1360.

The disposal of the English Royal Stud is spoken of at Home, and according to the sporting writer "North Yorkshireman" this proposed withdrawal of Royal patronage is to be attributed to the "Radicals, cranks, and faddists," in Parliament. Certainly the breaking up of the Royal Stud would have a prejudicial effect on thoroughbred interests.

Speaking of backing systems, "Rapier," in the *Sporting and Dramatic News*, tells of one which has lately come into fashion:—"This is to back the animals that were favourites for, but beaten in, the last race for which they started. The idea is not unreasonable. In all probability, it is assumed, the animals would not have been made favourites without good reason; and I should say that this applies generally, but not always. It is assumed, furthermore, that they were very likely beaten through some of the little mishaps and accidents which so frequently upset results, and that it remains for them to vindicate the judgment of their previous backers who lost their money."