

One of the contestants for the Taranaki J.C. Summer Handicap is named Evert, probably after the well-known handicapper.

News comes from India that Highborn II. is troubled by his leg, and a Board of veterinary surgeons having expressed the opinion that the big splint which has been developing for some time past interfered with the flexion of the joint the gelding has been pensioned off, as he well deserves to be.

Newmarket Handicap and Australian Cup betting in the Sydney market shows that Marusa, Hova, Challenger, Cravat, and Homespun head the Newmarket list at 20 to 1, while Wallace is Australian Cup favourite at 7 to 1. Fort, Lord Richmond, and Acum are next best at 12 to 1. The double is quoted at 1000 to 3 to 10.

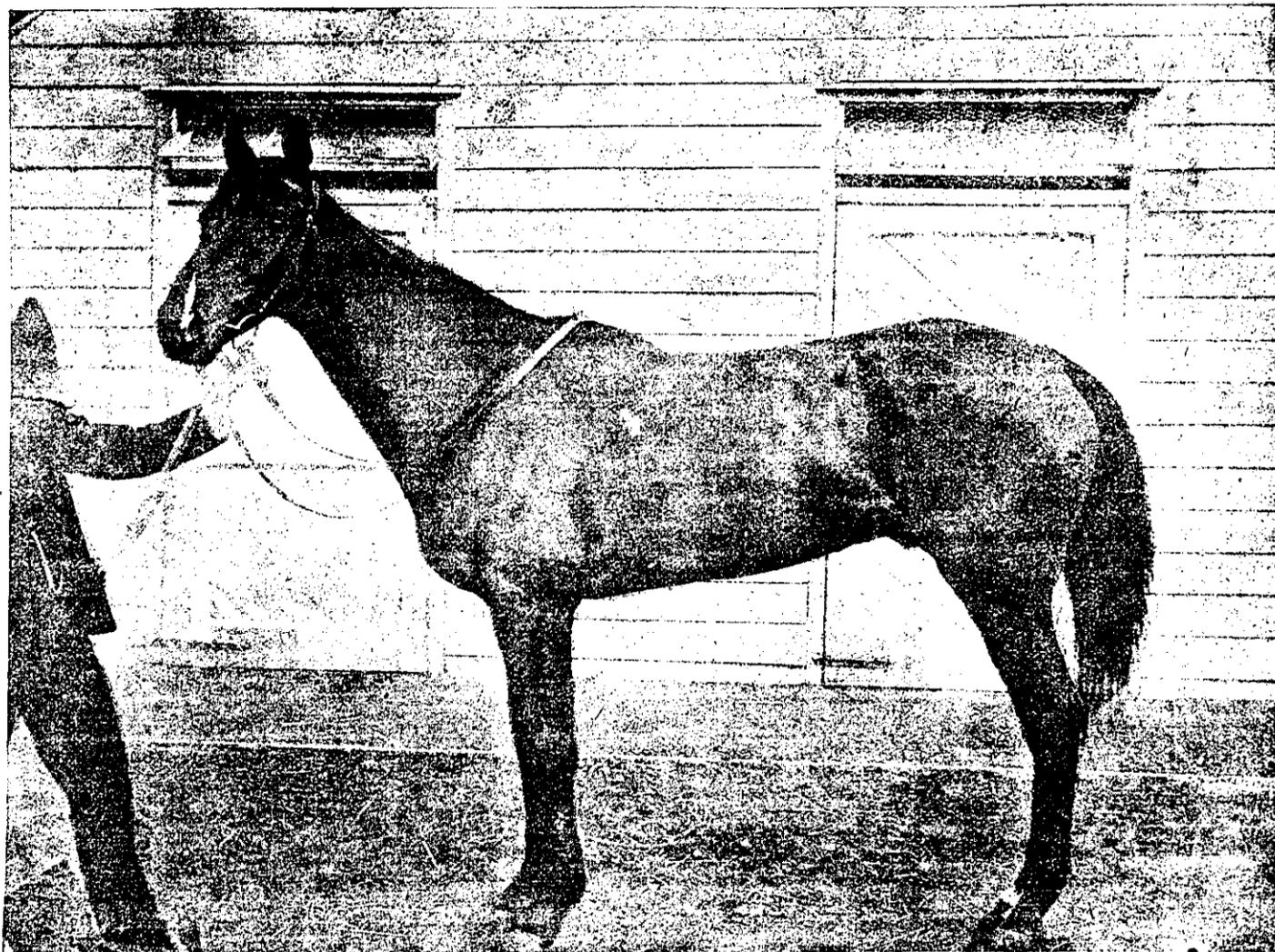
The special commissioner of the Melbourne Sportsman likes the following half-dozen for the Newmarket Handicap:—Mostan, Inspiration, Cravat, Home-pun, Pilatus, and Idolator. For the Australian Cup the following strike him as being best in:—Havoc, Torador, Fort, Wallace, Music, De Vere, Waterfall.

St. Clements has to give 7lb to The Workman and 11lb to Waiuku in the Taranaki Flying Handicap. If the Workman were well he would certainly beat St. Clements, and the latter can certainly not concede 11lb to Waiuku over six furlongs. It is very questionable whether there is any weight between them.

Starting machine inventor Gray has added a white flag to his apparatus. This white-flag accompaniment has long been a part of Gray's machine, but has not been used. It will do away with the necessity of sending a man to lower a white flag as the horses pass the furlong post in beginning their journey. As the barrier flies up the flag disappears, and the timing can be done with a certainty that barrier and flag go away together. Timing from a flag moved in this way will be done with the certainty that the record made is from a standing start, and will consequently be against fast records, such as might be got from a more or less flying start, secured by allowing horses to get under way by beginning a few lengths behind the correct starting post. Like many other innovations and improvements, it reduces the number of men needed on a race day, and the flag-man's occupation will be gone if the mechanical arrangement works in the manner expected.

It is again necessary to direct special attention to the lamentable state into which suburban racing is degenerating (says the Melbourne Age). It was thought that after the recent pointed criticisms in the Press there would have been a display of activity on the part of stewards, so as to check some of the abuses which even the most casual observer cannot help noticing; but the stewards have failed to bestir themselves in the slightest, and as a consequence improprieties continue to be most daringly practised, to the detriment of the sport and the disgust of the public. So marked has been the immunity which the shady section of owners and jockeys have recently enjoyed that those who desire to race conscientiously have found it difficult to resist the premium to act crookedly which the lethargy of the authorities unmistakably gives. As things stand at present the chances are that the evils complained of will increase in gravity rather than diminish, because the offenders do not appear to fear that punishment which should be constantly their dread and a salutary safeguard against even mild forms of wrong-doing. It is safe to say that the present system of suburban stewards has proved a hopeless failure; in fact, the stewards, in solemn conclave assembled to deal with any case that comes before them on a racecourse, constitute a tribunal which is now generally regarded as a farce.

THE WINNER OF THE SECOND HURDLES AT THE WELLINGTON R.C. SUMMER MEETING.



LIBERATOR (by Betrayer—Diana)

The following are the amounts won by owners over the Wellington Meeting:—W. Douglas, £403 15s; Hon. J. D. Ormond, £228; R. Allen, £209; W. Davies, £190; M. Hobbs, £104 10s; P. F. Tancred, £90 15s; T. H. Lowry, £85 10s; Kahu, £80 15s; J. Freeth, £66 10s; W. H. Chitham, £66 10s; W. Holmes, £61 15s; A. Hammond, £57; P. Butler, £47; J. Paul, £47 10s; J. Collins, £19; J. Chaffe, £14 5s; W. Robertson, A. Davies, F. Moeller, J. H. Prosser, H. A. Knight A. W. Cave, A. Rore, £9 10s each. Total, £1,857 5s.

Snakes are pretty plentiful at Randwick at present. A Sydney writer says:—"Mr S. Horden had a narrow escape recently of losing his youngster, Nor'-Wester, by Nordenfeldt from Miss Westbourne. The colt had been taken down to work at Randwick, and as the lad led him into a box at the back of the course a tiger snake sprang at him, and coiling round the colt's leg, bit him just above the fetlock. The trainer quickly settled the snake, and, aided by a vet., ligatures were applied and ammonia injected with most satisfactory results. This makes the eighth that has been destroyed, two of them close by the winning-post.

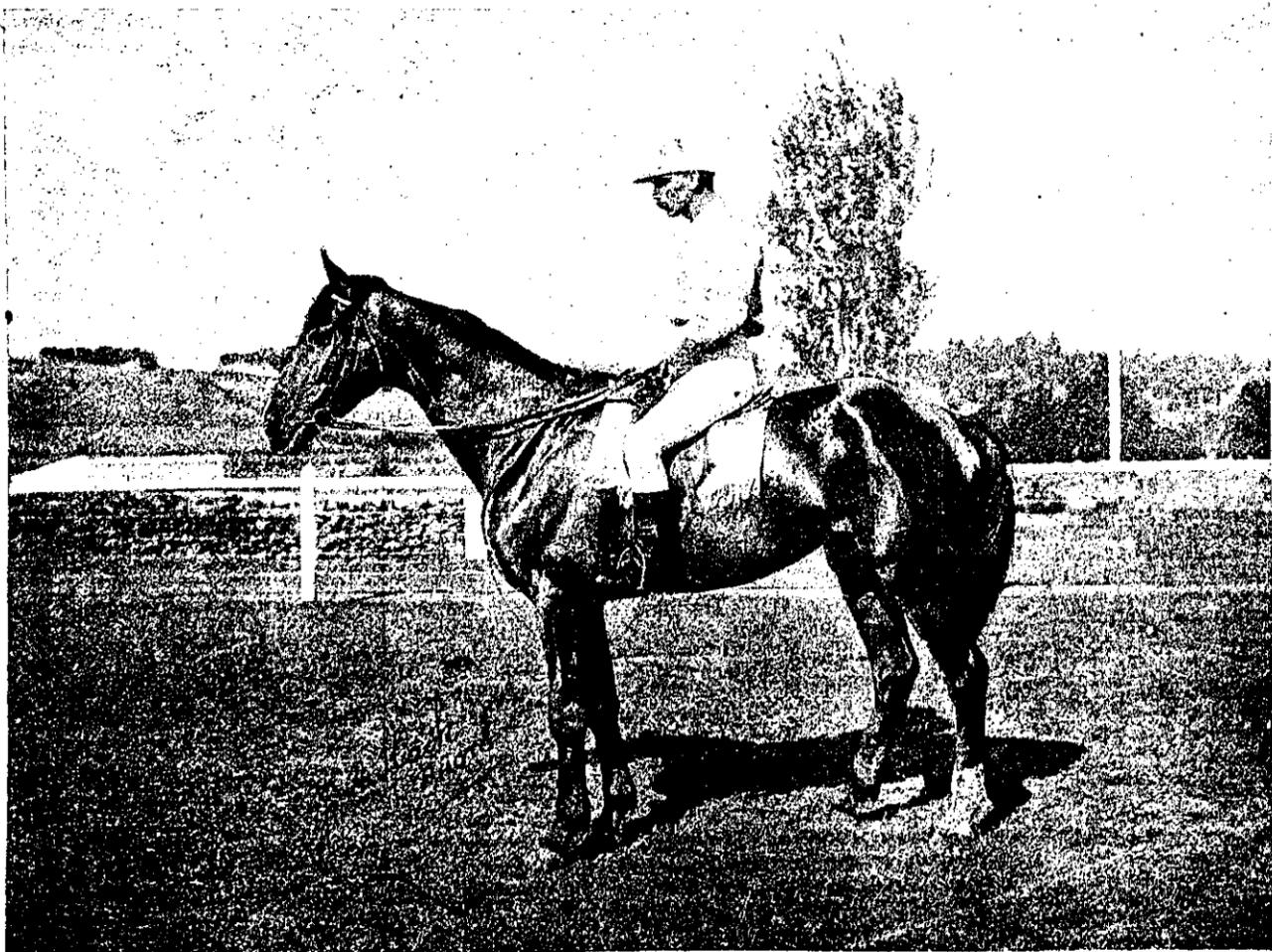
It is quite a recognised fact by this time that before dabbling in the "sport of Kings"—and punters—one requires some tuition. *Sporting Sketches* relates two good stories, illustrating what funny mistakes the uninitiated make sometimes:—"A young damsel of fourteen summers heard her father tell a friend that Missal was a good thing for the Duke of York Stakes, so she thought she would have a try to win some money if she could, and, going to a bookie, she put a shilling on for a win, asking at the same time how much she would get if it came off. 'Oh!' said the bookie, 'If it starts at 20 to 1, you will get 21s back; if at 10s to 1, 11s back; if at 5 to 1, you get 6s back.' 'I see,' said the girl, 'and if it starts at 1 o'clock, how much should I get back then?' * * * The second story is equally as good, viz.:—"She was a very pretty girl, and had just a smattering of racing knowledge. In attempting to 'hold her own' in a discussion upon the results at the Newmarket First October Meeting, she volunteered her astonishment at the result of the Jockey Club Stakes. 'Here's Lord Rosebery,' said she, 'declared to win with Ladas, and then the horse only got fourth. How can that be?'

Messrs McLeod and Cleland have opened a double book on the Newmarket and Australian Cup, for which they offer the liberal odds of £500 to £2 10s.

Our Melbourne friends are busying themselves with the question whether the time has not arrived when some serious attempt should be made to reform the Turf. But is the Turf of to-day worse than it was twenty years back? Our esteemed contemporary, the *Australasian*, whose word ever carries weight, thinks not, and points out that sportsmen who were acquainted with racing in the early seventies must smile when they are told there were no scandals at that time. The Turf of to-day has its faults, but you do not hear of horses being poisoned, as was then the case. There were the cases of Fishhook, Exile, and Newminster, three horses who were all supposed to have been got at when they were favourites for big races. In those days betting was much heavier than is now the case, and people were then ready to resort to desperate measures to block a horse from a win. Foul riding was much more prevalent some years back than is now the case. Of course there is room for reform in many directions, although the Turf is as free from malpractice as it has ever been. As the *Australasian* points out, the most glaring disability which the sport suffers under just now is the incompetence of our honorary stewards. I would like to see these gentlemen superseded by competent men, who shall be paid to do the work, and be entirely disinterested.

Apropos of the remarks made in a recent edition *re* the over-racing of two-year-olds, I notice the London *Sportsman* remarks:—"Lord Cadogan having withdrawn his proposal to limit the distance of races for two-year-olds to six furlongs, it seems that we are to go on with the old order of things, and that "business-like" owners of thoroughbred will be able to continue over-taxing the constitutions of their two-year-old slaves without let or hindrance. The words of warning with which Lord Cadogan coupled the withdrawal of his proposal should not be allowed to sink unheeded, as it must be evident to even the most casual follower of racing that some restriction ought to be placed on the reckless way in which two-year-olds are raced. What shape the restriction should take is a puzzle, as with the number of races for two-year-olds cut down—irrespective of distance—clerks of courses would be hard pushed to furnish satisfactory programmes; but I may say that the proposal to ameliorate the lot of the two-year-olds by limiting the distance of their races to six furlongs was not in accordance with my ideas. You see, close finishes will always occur, no matter whether the distances be a mile or only five furlongs, and it is here we must look for the cause of much of the shiftness of our thoroughbreds, owing to the far too frequent and often entirely unnecessary use of the whip by jockeys, whose apparently sole idea of finishing is to give their unfortunate mounts a liberal application of spur and whalebone. They seem unable to realise that they are not beating carpets. Occasionally, in the exuberance attendant on a whirlwind set-to, they miss their own horses and catch those of their nearest rivals. Not so very long ago I was travelling back from Hurst Park in the same compartment with one of the half-dozen jockeys who do know when to use the flail, and he had a beautiful weal across the back of his hand. 'That's one of so-and-so's finishing touches,' he laughingly remarked, naming a well-known professional.'

A CONSISTENT OLD 'CHASER



FISHMONGER (by Isak Walton—Accident)

Plates by N.Z. Photo-Process Co.

For fit and finish Geo. Fowlds' suits to measure excel all others