

A VISIT TO ELDERSLIE.

[BY PETRONEL.]

A brief time at Oamaru was all that business vouchsafed to me, but during my short stay I was enabled, by the vicarious duties of Mr Jack Sewell, to pay a thoroughly enjoyable visit to Elderslie, the North Otago breeding establishment. Calling on Mr Sewell, a walking encyclopedia on matters sporting, he kindly arranged my visit and agreed to take me out to Mr J. F. Reid's stud farm on the morrow, and next morning, with Mr Morris Evans as an agreeable third, we travelled through some splendid country behind Mr Sewell's cream colored pony, a nag as cute as a waggon-load of Simian gentlemen, and one with a decidedly humorous turn of mind. The journey to Elderslie, about eight miles from Oamaru, lies through some of the best land of a most prolific district, and a man with the scantiest acquaintance with matters agricultural could not fail to note the general promise of abundance adorning the face of the country. With just a little more rain "right now," as the Yankees say, the country would be "sound as the goose," a remark also hailing from across the Herring Pond, and such crops would be assured as those which filled the granaries and pockets of the farmers in the "good old times." May the rain fall and the excellent promise of the present become an accomplishment of the future! As we bowl along my companions point out the prominent places of the country. To the left, stretching away for miles, is Mr W. Holmes' estate, where so many Clydesdales have been bred, born, and reared, and where Ayrshire cattle of equally proud records and sheep of high degree have first seen the light of day. To the right is Mr Menlive's extensive property, also a home of the Shire horse, and away and beyond the hills is the Ardgowan Estate, lately cut up and leased by our paternal Government. By the way, I may note as an instance of domestic legislation that in one small hamlet we pass there are two hotels almost side by side, and that for miles around the licenses of other hotels have been extinguished. Soon we are in sight of Elderslie, and as we near our destination our four-footed intelligence department sweeps round a turn on "his own" and travels at a sprint up to the gate leading to the stables. Well, Elderslie is a delightful place, and as a home for the thoroughbred must be recognised as one admirably adapted for the purpose. The many paddocks are all suitable for rearing young stock, the pasturage is excellent, and there is a splendid water supply, as the Waireka runs through the property. Mr J. F. Reid and his brother, Mr Douglas Reid, very quickly got us under weigh, and in a very short time we were passing the time of day with Mr Dan Foley, one of the stud-grooms, and Gipsy Grand. The son of Gipsy Grand was running in a small paddock with a pretty high fence, a good safeguard, for his highness evinced a keen desire to break something, Jack Dewell being, perhaps, the special object of his attentions. Gipsy Grand has developed into a fine fellow, and judging from the strong lot of his foals I saw running about later on, I do not fancy his stud career will be anything but a big success. He may be put into work again presently, I believe, but I would not like to lay odds on such an event happening, for he is too good a horse to be played with. He has got some splendid foals, with any amount of bone and strength, and if all goes well with them they cannot disgrace their sire. Stepniak is a very "big little" horse, with wonderful loins, rare good shape, and a set of legs as sound as they were when the son of Nordenfeldt won the Canterbury Derby of '92. We had a good look at Stepniak, who is a well-mannered gentleman of exceedingly graceful carriage, and then made a move to the paddocks where the mares and foals were enjoying the luxuriant feed.

In the first enclosure Corolla (the dam of Gold Medallist), Ich Dien (by St. George—Ravenswing), and Bellicent (by Maxim—Iris) were leisurely passing away the sunny hours. Corolla and Ich Dien have visited Gipsy Grand, and Bellicent has been stinted to Stepniak. Mr Stead's three mares were looking wonderfully well. In the same paddock was the New South Wales mare by Patrol—Firearm. She has visited Stepniak, and though not a mare to go into raptures over, the result of the union should not be disappointing. The three-year old daughter of Whirlpool, by Stepniak, was also in this paddock. Owing to an accident, she was never raced, but she should undoubtedly be of great service to the Elderslie Stud. Chestnut in color she is a fine, roomy mare, with good length, and I will predict that her progeny will be no mean cattle.

A tramp through a very healthy looking paddock of oats and down the road leading to the stallion stables and we are amongst a larger group of mares and foals.

The first to come under observation are Vaultress, who has a fine brown colt by Stepniak, and Tempest who is also accompanied by a bay son of Stepniak. The latter youngster is a taking customer, and as the daughter of New Holland—Tornado won, amongst other races, the Dunedin Cup of '93 his career looks promising. Of a verity, his dam is a fine brood mare.

Next comes Illusion, by Apremont out of Fallacy. A smart looking mare is Illusion, and she has by her side a smart filly foal by Gipsy Grand.

Further along we come to Lady's Maid the dam of Vanilla and Vandyke. Lady's Maid also has a filly foal by Gipsy Grand, then in a cluster are Reel, by Medallion out of Pibroch, a nice brown mare with a big brown colt by Gipsy Grand; a chestnut sister to Lady Emma with a foal by Beadonwell, Emmalea a sister to Brisa with a foal to Musketry, a bay mare by Medallion—Huguenot with a foal by Apremont, a sweet mare in Seashell (by Chainshell out of Nautilus), Iris (the dam of Bloodshot and Bellicent) with a pretty filly foal by Gipsy Grand, and Britomarte, who has a grand chestnut colt by Gipsy Grand. The full sister to Euroclydon is growing into an extremely fine matron, and her latest offspring is certainly a credit to his dam.

A little distance away were Ambush, by Vanguard out of Fairy Maid, a really good dam; the brown mare Fairy Maid, by Albany out of Titania, and dam of Tolstoi; and the dark brown matron, Cobweb, by Le Loup—Titania. The two first-named have foals by Gipsy Grand, while Cobweb has a youngster by Stepniak. All three have this season visited the Nordenfeldt sire.

Another walk to a further paddock and we are introduced to Rosepur, by Hotspur out of Rosemary. The speedy Goldspur's dam is looking very well, and has with her a good-looking young Stepniak. Close together are St. Florence and Royal Salute (by Artillery out of Titania), each with a foal by Gipsy Grand. By herself is Mr Stead's Australian mare, Marion. Motto's dam is in blooming health, and her foal by Stepniak is very promising. The same mating has been followed this season, and if Marion's next foal is as good-looking as the one with her now, Mr Stead will have no cause to grumble. I much admire the full-sisters, Rancee Nuna and Whirlpool, by St. George out of Watersprite. Rancee Nuna has a filly by Stepniak and her sister a filly by Gipsy Grand. Pibroch, by Lochiel out of Fallacy, has a very nice Stepniak colt, and Huguenot, by Apremont from Martyr, has a filly by the same sire. Pibroch is the dam of Reel and Skobeloff and of a very nice brown filly lately sold by Messrs Pyne at Christchurch. Of Rancee Nuna, Huguenot, and Whirlpool I can only say that they are grand mares; later on their progeny, I am sure, will gain fame for the Elderslie breeding establishment.

Looking at the mares I have mentioned took considerable time, and I am only sorry I could not see some of the famous draught stock. But I did not leave Elderslie without having a brief inspection of the St. Leger—Ich Dien two-year-old colt. He is a brown fellow and of a nice stamp; his fore legs are a bit straight for some people's fancy, but that does not stop them from galloping (vide Multiforum). The St. Leger colt's companion is a brown gelding by Stepniak out of Illusion. He is not by any means a bad one, and I think he will make a racer. He has a nice set of limbs and a good body.

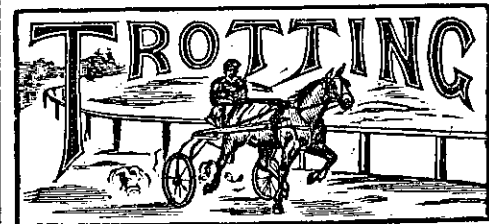
During our rambles we covered a good bit of ground, and Mr Jack Sewell, who has become a votary of the laze-inducing bicycle, though not played out, seemed to desire the rest he had undoubtedly earned, so we rather regretfully bade adieu to our hosts, yoked the fiery steed, and left the Elderslie stud farm. Truly is it a place to spend a happy day. May all luck visit it during the coming year.

During my excursion to Oamaru, "the white-stone city," I just had time to look up Mr O. R. Wise, the owner of Ilex, Lobo, and Glenore. These three jumpers are all the horses at present in the hands of George Robertson, who trains and rides for Mr Wise. Both owner and trainer are rare good sports, and the latter has acted as mentor for Mr Wise for the past twelve years, and during that time he has won a few races. I had a look at Ilex, by Le Loup—Susie, in his box. The old warrior was looking fit and well, and who knows but what he may win an Auckland Grand National Hurdles yet? He will win a race or two before then, I have no doubt. Lobo, by Le Loup—Winifred, is a nuggety-looking customer, and I expect he and Glenore, who is by First Lord out of Young Alice, will have something to do with the finishes of the hurdle races to be decided at the Forbury at Christmas. Glenore looks every inch a hurdler, and I should imagine that he has a bit of pace. At the last Palmerston Meeting he won a treble, annexing the Palmerston Cup, the District Handicap, and the Flying Handicap. That was undoubtedly his day out. Mr Wise is a devoted coursing man, and in his kennels I saw Favonius, who has grown and thickened since he left Auckland, and a nice litter of pups by Shyllock out of Pretty Maid. A slut and a dog take much after "good old Shy," and Mr Wise has a special penchant for the lady. These two are brindles, the others (all dogs) are all fawn and white.

A HARD CASE.

What appears to be an unjust decision was recently given in an American court. The circumstances of the case were these, says the Horseman.—A boy named Davis was, it appears, injured by a fall sustained from a horse, and caused by a defective strap. The boy, it is admitted, pointed out to the trainer that the strap was defective, but the trainer ordered him to get up or go about his business. We all know what exercise boys may do if they elect to disobey trainers, and it is not to be wondered at that the lad decided to take his chances, got up, the strap broke, and he was injured. That seems to be the history of the race in a nutshell. The case finally reached the Supreme Court, which took the extraordinary view that when the boy got up, knowing that the strap was defective, and likely to break, he undertook all coincident risks, and, therefore, was not entitled to recover. This is to say, that, in pointing out to the trainer that the strap was defective, he acknowledged that he knew its condition, and, therefore, accepted all risks of injury that might ensue if the strap broke. Justice Knowlton did not agree with this view of the case, nor will any justly-minded man who understands the ways of training stables. The members of the bench can have given no weight to the circumstances surrounding the case. They apparently did not attach any importance to the fact that discipline is remarkably strict in a training stable. The boys must do as they are told or they must go. In the words of one of Hawley Smart's best characters, if the trainers "take a notion to keep tigers, they must do 'em properly or go." The boy in question was hardly a free agent indeed he was nothing of the sort, and while it may be good law to hold that because he pointed out the rotten condition of the strap to the trainer he accepted all risks, it would be but common justice to hold that that act laid the trainer and his employer liable for the damage done. It is all very well to say that everyone is a free agent; perhaps men among men are in the

eye of the law; but a ninety pound boy in a training stable, doing business with a man of ordinary size, is not a free agent in any sense of the word, especially when the horses are ready for their work and the signal has been given to mount. The boy was hurt because the materials furnished him to do his work with were defective; yet because he discovered this fact, and drew the attention of the defendant's agent to it, the boy can recover nothing—he knew the material was rotten, and yet because he knew it, because he was intelligent enough to know it, he is barred from recovering damages for injury. What would have happened had he done as the court implies he should have done in the circumstances—refused to mount? He would have been thrust from the premises as speedily as possible, perhaps his departure would have been accelerated physically, for men have been known to kick exercise boys from their grounds, and then he would have been without the means of earning a livelihood, branded as insubordinate, and thrown out on the world without a character or credential.



NORTH ISLAND TROTTING ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND.

Affiliated Clubs to the North Island Trotting Association.

Table with columns: NAME OF CLUB, SECRETARY, TOTAL PERMIT. Includes clubs like Auckland T.C., Hawke's Bay T.C., Palmerston North T.C., Wellington T.C., Johnsonville and Hutt County T.C., Hawera T.C., Otahuhu T.C., New Plymouth T.C., Normanby T.C.

TROTTING CALENDAR.

- FIXTURES. December 24, Sat; 27, Wed; 31, Sat.—Auckland T.C. Summer. December 26, Mon.—Canterbury T.C. Summer. December 28, Wed.—Inangahua T.C. Summer. NOMINATIONS. January 8—Canterbury T.C. Fourth Sires' Produce Stakes yearlings. HANDICAPS. December 28—Canterbury T.C. Summer. ACCEPTANCES. December 22—Canterbury T.C. Summer. December 29—Canterbury T.C. Summer. FINAL PAYMENT. December 24—Exhibition Cup, Auckland T.C. Summer.

AUCKLAND TROTTING CLUB'S SUMMER MEETING.

[BY ATLAS.] The Summer Meeting of the Auckland Trotting Club should be a great success. The club deserves that result because of the liberal nature of the prize money offered. The entries received are certainly good, but it is unfortunate that accidents at sea have robbed the big event of the meeting, the Exhibition Cup, of an inter-colonial interest. The liberal prize offered encouraged Mr Fitzgerald to enter that sterling good performer, Kathleen, and Huon Leigh, but it is now history that on the passage from Sydney Kathleen—who I think would have gone very near winning—was killed, while Huon Leigh was so badly injured that he has since been sent back to Sydney. This was not only bad luck for the owner, who I am sure has general sympathy, but it was bad luck for the club. However, Mr Mark and his energetic committee will survive this misfortune, and I feel confident that the entertainment they will place before their patrons during the ensuing Christmas holidays will be the best on record for trotting meetings in the Auckland district. Splendid fields are sure to start in every event, and I am assured that the track was never in such good order before. Excellent arrangements have been made for the rapid transit of passengers to and from Potter's Paddock, and I hope the meeting will in every way be a success. I have now to use the prophetic pen, and venture on the following predictions:—

Table of race predictions: WAITEKAURI, EMPRESS, MISS EMERSON, Maiden Pony Handicap, AUSTRALINA, PLAYBOY, REPEAT, Exhibition Cup, GOLDEN KING, LUSITANIA, OTAKEHO.

I hope to see a great race for this event. It is a thousand pities that the death of Kathleen by accident at sea, and the injury at the same time sustained by Huon Leigh, should have deprived the contest of an inter-colonial character. Still, the race should be an interesting one, and some of the unknowns should make matters merry. The Honolulu mare, Judah, for instance, has all the appearance of being a good one, and may be

worth watching, but I do not apprehend that she will be dangerous just at present. Bagby has not had her long enough here to cause me much apprehension. Pioke should have a chance on his spring form. La Rue has been breaking badly in his work, and that causes me to neglect his chance. Old Judge, I hear, has struck himself in his work, and may not start; if he does I am afraid that his having been eased in his work will seriously affect his chance. Yum Yum has recently thrown twin foals and cannot possibly race.

Pony Cup. OBTAIN, KIT, ISRAELITE.

We always hear good things of Nora, but she is such a mad-cap that she should not be trusted. Her vagaries tried the patience of even J. B. Williamson, and, after that, backers should fight shy of the bonnie little mare.

Electric Trot. MISS HUON, COB, LUSITANIA.

Handicap Hurdles. REPEAT, NEW BOY, THE DOVE.

Telephone Handicap. The probable result of this race will be best indicated by the performances of the ponies in the preceding events of the meeting. For the same reason I refrain from attempting to pick the winner of the December Handicap.

Juvenile Handicap. I anticipate this will be a walk-over for WAITEKAURI.

NOTES.

The sale of privileges in connection with the Auckland Trotting Club's Summer Meeting, held by Messrs Churton and Co. on Friday last, was only moderately successful. The publican's booth was knocked down to Mr A. R. Dunn for £120, the refreshment booth to Mr Murphy for £5, the cards to Mr W. Adams for £91, and the gates to Mr Marks for £140.

Racing Results.

CHRISTCHURCH RACING CLUB'S SUMMER MEETING.

FIRST DAY—FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16. The weather was fine and the sum of £3010 was passed through the machine. Results:—

HANDICAP HURDLE RACE. Powder Monkey, Time, 3min 24sec. Dividend, £1 12s.

MAIDEN PLATE. Huku, Time, 1min 35sec. Dividend, £4 4s.

CHRISTCHURCH CUP. Skirmisher, Malatua, Jewel, Time, 2min 13 3/5sec. Dividend, £8 12s.

BRIGHTON HANDICAP TROT (harness). Johnny III, Time, 5min 34sec. Dividend, £3 16s.

HANDICAP HACK RACE. Bristol, Time, 1min 18sec. Dividend, £2 12s.

ELECTRIC HANDICAP. Jewel, Time, 1min 18sec. Dividend, £3 4s.

SUMMER HANDICAP TROT (saddle). Spec, Time, 5min 41sec. Dividend, £6.

WELTER HANDICAP. Matlock and Huku dead-heated. Time, 2min 3 1/2sec. Dividends: Matlock, £3 8s; Huku, £2 2s.

SECOND DAY—SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17. FINAL HURDLE RACE. Nicholas had a walk-over.

NURSERY HANDICAP. Hawthorn, Dividend, £2 8s.

WINDSOR HANDICAP. Alcestis, Jewel, Sequin, Time, 2min 1sec. Dividend, £8 6s.

BURWOOD HANDICAP TROT. Rossignol, Time, 5min 30sec. Dividend, £7 16s.

FLYING HANDICAP. Jewel, Time, 1min 30 3/4sec. Dividend, £3 16s.

SELLING HACK RACE. Bogengang, Time, 1min 18 3/4sec. Dividend, £2 4s.

AVON HANDICAP TROT. Shyllock, Time, 2min 39 4/5sec. Dividend, £2 18s.

HIGH-WEIGHT HANDICAP. Matlock, Time, 1min 46 3/4sec. Dividend, £13 14s.