



SOUTH AUCKLAND RACES.

COMMENTS ON THE RACING.

THE Summer Meeting of this popular Racing Club was brought off on the Claudelands Racecourse, Hamilton, on Saturday. Fully 1000 persons were present, including settlers from all the adjacent districts. The excursion train from Auckland was well filled, and those who journeyed from town thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

The officers of the meeting were as follows:—Judge, Mr. L. Cussen; starter, Mr. J. McNichol; clerk of the scales, Mr. H. Biggs; handicapper, Mr. E. D. Halstead; clerk of the course, Messrs. F. Jolly and W. Chitty. Mr. G. H. Carter officiated as secretary, and under his direction and management everything passed off satisfactorily. The Hamilton Brass Band, under Bandmaster G. P. Meltam, played an excellent selection of music during the afternoon.

The first race of the day was the Handicap Hurdle Race, for which only three horses went to the post. Sentinel was a better favourite than Fishmonger, but the latter, who appeared with an ugly-looking knee, led from start to finish and won rather easily by three lengths. On returning to the paddock it was discovered that Sentinel had cut his off fore-foot by striking one of the hurdles, and he was consequently struck out of the Steeplechase. Peter was never in the hunt with the other two. Five horses were saddled up for the Novel Race, and Valentine was made a warm favourite. He could get no closer than third to Pirate, who led from start to finish and won very easily by three lengths from old Wideawake, who ought to have been pensioned off years ago. The principal event of the day, the South Auckland Cup, was then brought up for decision. When the numbers went up, eight names were left on the board. Patchwork was whispered around as a real good thing, and it was no secret that the stable had every confidence in the ability of the black horse, who certainly appeared to be in the pink of condition. Leorina, who had the services of that artistic horseman, Tommy Taylor, came in for more attention than any of the others, but the parties behind Tamora also backed their horse. Lochness carried too much beef to successfully stay out the mile and three-quarters, and Clarion, who eventually finished second, was considered quite out-classed. The start was not a good one, Patchwork getting all the best of it, while Capella and Leorina were also favoured. Capella was at once taken to the front and led Clarion and Loch Ness into the straight, but passing the stand Clarion had taken the lead, and was followed by Capella, Loch Ness, Leorina, and Patchwork, in that order. Thus early in the race Patchwork was clearly done with, and after rounding the bend Capella and Loch Ness had had enough. Clarion now had Leorina as his nearest attendant, but when it was seen that Taylor was hard at work on his mount, a shout went up in Clarion's favour. Rounding the turn into the straight Clarion was striding along a length in front of the top-weight, but once in the straight Taylor took out his whip on the mare, and never shirking the punishment, she gained on the leader until inside the distance she had him beaten, and coming on won all out by two lengths. Belmont, who came fast at the finish was third, two lengths

behind Clarion, and at a similar interval came Tamora fourth. Patchwork was never dangerous. Leorina paid the good dividend of £5 5s. Six started for the Christmas Handicap, for which Lonely was the favourite. They ran in a bunch until the turn into the straight, where Never Miss was leading by a length, but Lonely coming with a very fast rush managed to get up and make a dead-heat of it. The totalisator money was divided and paid out to the investors on the two horses. After the last race, the dead-heaters ran off, when Lonely led all the way and won easily by a couple of lengths. Only five horses were saddled up for the Steeplechase, and Silvio was made a warm favourite. The course is a very good one, and the jumps are by no means small. The start was on the course proper to the right of the Grand Stand, and the first obstacle to be negotiated was a rail and ditch. At this jump both Hurricane and Peter baulked, and Silvio was first over, followed by Fishmonger and Muscatelle. The second jump, a well-built sod wall with a ditch on either side, was taken by the horses in this order, and there was no alteration in positions when the next obstacle, a log fence, was reached. Going off the course the horses have to take a brush fence with a ditch on the landing side and then race across a ploughed field to a bridge. Fishmonger was the first to reach here, followed by Muscatelle and Silvio, Hurricane some distance behind. Coming onto the course proper again, there is a brush fence with a ditch on the take-off side, and here Fishmonger baulked. Silvio was first over, followed by Muscatelle and Hurricane, and so they raced over the hurdle in the straight, and over the water-jump and wicker fence which composed the double in front of the stand. At the sod wall at the back Hurricane had taken the lead, Muscatelle and Silvio, the latter pulling double, being close behind. The positions were unaltered until the horses again came into the straight, where Silvio passed Muscatelle. Each of the horses cleared the double in fine style, Silvio's jumping being universally admired, but the next obstacle brought down Hurricane, which left Silvio with a decided lead from Muscatelle. The race from this out was virtually over, bar accidents, and Silvio, striding along in easy style, won comfortably by about 30 lengths. He blundered badly at the last hurdle, but Collins made a good recovery. On passing the post he was loudly cheered by the on-lookers, who evidently enjoyed the race thoroughly. With Leorina scratched out of the Tradesman's Plate, the race was looked upon as the best of good things for Clarion. Nine horses started and Clarion was the favourite. He led all the way and won comfortably. Entering the straight he was six lengths in front of everything, but the boy, who had probably read of Ramage on Carbine declining to "risk" anything, took out his whip and flogged his mount all up the straight, much to the amusement of the onlookers. With a decent rider on his back, Clarion should make a useful handicap horse at the outside country meetings. Such a good thing was Hurricane considered for the Selling Hurdles, that backers freely laid 3 to 1 on him. He won comfortably, and was bought in at the upset price. Capella was made favourite for the Flying Stakes, but Haricot also carried a lot of money. The race was robbed of most of its interest through Capella

being left at the post. Entering the straight it was anybody's race, and the best finish of the day resulted in Belmont getting up in the last stride and winning by a head from Lady Marion, who was the same distance in front of Scot Free. The best dividend of the day—£16 5s.—was paid on Belmont.

A.R.C. SUMMER MEETING.

TIPS BY SOUTHERN SCRIBES.

THE *Canterbury Times* gives the following tips for the Auckland Summer Meeting:—Cup—Strephon, Hilda, Crackshot; Foal Stakes—The Workman or Rosefeldt; Nursery Handicap—Roie.

"Spectator," the well-known writer in the *Weekly Press*, records his tips for the approaching meeting in the last issue of that paper. They are as follows:—Cup—Strephon; Derby—Crackshot; Foal Stakes—Lebel; Steeplechase—Silvio. The Wellington correspondent of the same paper tips Dudu for the Cup and Asper for the Steeplechase.

"Sir Launcelot," the sporting writer in the *N.Z. Referee*, makes the following selections:—Trial Stakes—St. Andrew or Leolantis; Foal Stakes—The Workman; Cup—Hilda, Strephon, St. Andrew, with Leorina for a cockboat; Hurdle Race—Orlando or Sentinel; Railway Handicap—Cynical or Capella; Nursery Handicap—Roie; Maiden Steeplechase—Asper; Christmas Handicap—St. Andrew or Bay King; Derby—Crackshot; Steeplechase—Orlando, Asper, Hopeful Kate.

MR. G. G. STEAD.

REPORTED RETIREMENT FROM THE TURF.

IN the last issue of the *Canterbury Weekly Press* the following paragraph appears in "Spectator's" notes:—"For a long time past Mr. R. J. Mason, Mr. G. G. Stead's head trainer, has found his health none too good, and it will be remembered that some few months ago he was laid up for some weeks and in a bad way. He has decided upon moving to Australia, where it is thought the climate will suit him better, and in the autumn he will take his departure, when Mr. Stead will dispose of his stud of racehorses. This information I have on the best authority, and I can only say that I think it is about the worst bit of news that I have had to chronicle for some time. Mr. R. J. Mason is a first-class hand with horses, and his long list of successes for years past establishes the fact beyond doubt. Moreover, he has been with us so long that we will miss him; but though we may be able to fill his place, how; in these days when owners are so scarce, can we afford to lose from the ranks of owners such a thorough patron of the sport as Mr. G. G. Stead has been for a long period? No, this is really bad news indeed, and I am sure that all true sports will regret to learn that Mr. Stead has decided upon taking the course indicated."

Rae's cast-off, Donald, has been leased to Mr. R. G. Talbot, the well-known Tasmanian sportsman, and he will in future be trained by T. Wilson, at Dowling Forest, Ballarat.—*N.Z. Referee.*