

We notice from the *Referee* that Mr. G. P. Williams has been appointed to handicap the three open events for the Kaikura Jockey Club programme.

Mr. W. T. Jones, a Victorian sportsman, has become the owner of *Penance*, by Grand Flaneur out of *Penitent*, the price paid was 2500 guineas.

Mr. D. Rutherford has sold *Ixion* to Mr. Blackwood, of Melbourne, for 3000s. From this it appears that good hurdle racers and steeplechasers are scarce in Australia, so that any horses showing form in New Zealand are eagerly looked after.

John Porter, who has charge of the Prince of Wales' horses, is said to have only one wish in his life and that is just for once he may succeed in training a horse for the Prince that would win the Derby. Then he would die happy he says. He has great hopes of the newly-formed breeding establishment at Sandringham, but still he is bound to confess that it is not this year that he will gain his ambition.—*Otago Witness*.

The Dargaville Jockey Club races take place on the 17th and 18th April. Being some distance away from Auckland and the weights for the second day not appearing until to-night, it is an impossibility to predict the winners. *Leorina*, *Priscilla*; and *Nap* have gone, and from their present form for whatever races they are started and wished to win their capability of annexing the stakes cannot be doubted. The principal company they will have to meet will consist of local horses, of whom we have not any authentic information as to whether fit to race or not. The fares issued by the railway to Helensville are not excessive, and the boat fare from there to Dargaville is exceedingly cheap.

The V.A.T.C. committee have decided on making an important innovation in regard to the conditions of the Toorak Handicap, to be run on the first day of the Caulfield Spring meeting. It has been resolved that the handicapper shall have power to re-adjust the weight of a horse that wins a race value £100 or over after the declaration of the weights. This departure from the ordinary custom has been much discussed in sporting circles, some approving of it, while others regard the plan as unworkable. A doubt has arisen as to whether the principle can be carried out under the rules of racing as at present constituted and it is thought that the V.R.C. committee may not, therefore, approve of the innovation.—*Sportsman*.

Canterbury papers shew that at a meeting of the N.Z. Trotting Association, the Northern Pony and Trotting Club, which was formed at North Shore, applied to be senior club for the Auckland district. It was duly appointed such by the Southerners, but as the Northern Pony and Trotting Club have never yet held a meeting, and that a formidable rival exists in the shape of the Auckland Trotting and Pony Association, which has held several successful meetings, it will be interesting to note what steps the New Zealand Trotting Association will take to enforce the power they have conferred on the Northern Trotting Club, more especially when the Colonial Secretary, we hear, has officially recognised the Auckland Trotting and Pony Club as the senior club for Auckland Provincial District.

My Adelaide *confrère* sent me the following:—I am told of an incident which occurred recently at a country meeting, which seems hardly creditable, but is vouched for in a reliable quarter. It was in a jumping event, in which two horses had fallen, and two non-triers were left to negotiate a jump partly hidden from the spectators by the scrub. One of the jocks, who kept running down the fence, and off at the side, told the other to go on, as he had no chance. "I have no chance, either" was the reply. "Yes, you have, your horse will jump anything; you're a blank blank." "What's that you say?" answered jockey No. 2; "I'll pretty quick show you what I am." And when some of the spectators got tired of waiting for the two jumpers to come out of the bush, they rode over and found the two jocks engaged in a six-round contest in which they were real triers, and not on Queensberry rules either.—*Sportsman*.

## MARLBOROUGH HUNT CLUB.

THE balance-sheet submitted at the annual meeting of the above club last week showed the receipts to be £124 17s and the expenditure £120 14s 6d, leaving a balance to credit at the bank of £4 2s 6d. The committee's report stated that that body were convinced of the wisdom of abolishing cap-money and allowing only members to follow the hounds, that policy having resulted in an increased subscription list, and a great saving of trouble and unpleasantness to those whose duty it is to prevent the destruction to fences and hounds, which, it was found in the past, was attributable to non-members. The committee's report concluded with a hearty recognition of the services rendered to the club by the master, Mr. Richardson, and the various farmers of the district, who had placed their lands at the disposal of the club for hunting purposes. The committee further recommended to a favourable consideration of members the question of holding a race-meeting on May the 24. The report and balance sheet were adopted, and the following officers elected for the ensuing year:—President, Mr. R. Soper; Vice-President, Mr. C. Watts; Master, Mr. Richardson; Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. P. Dowlin; Committee, Messrs. H. H. Dodson, J. B. Green, C. Earp, Seymour and F. Dodson.—It was decided to hold a race meeting on May 24, details of the programme to be left to a sub-committee. Mr. Dowlin was voted an honorarium of 100s. in recognition of his services as secretary and treasurer.—*Referee*.

## RACING IN INDIA.

### A VICTORIAN JOCKEY'S EXPERIENCES.

DURING the last few years Australians have taken a great interest in all that concerns sport in India, principally because of the number of our horses sent over here. Jack Allen, the well-known cross-country rider, took a trip to India a little over twelve months back, under the impression that there was a splendid opportunity for riding; but he returned a fortnight ago, thoroughly disgusted with the whole country. He tells us that on arriving at Madras with letters of introduction to several gentlemen, they managed to secure a few mounts for him, in which, unfortunately, he proved unsuccessful. An Australian flat-racing jockey, he says, will get along all right, if he has the luck to win a race or two soon after landing; but if he should lose every one the owners and trainers fancy he cannot ride at all, and in a very short time make this very forcibly understood.

Owners of ponies in India seem to be very bad hands at paying, especially when they lose a race. They can get Indian boys to ride for nothing, and when a white gets beaten they imagine he does not want to be paid. Soon after Allen arrived he was given a mount by a well-known sportsman, and had to wait seven months for his fee.

As showing the hard work which Allen had in India, he produced the following letter, which he says he intends framing as a reminiscence of his trip:—

Gadag, Ahunidnagar, October 17, 1890.—Dear Sir,—Herewith a cheque for 50 rupees as a present for your riding Lottery at the Lucknow gymkhana. Had I thought that you expected to be paid for riding at a gymkhana where I could win little or nothing, I would have got a gentleman rider to ride.—Yours faithfully, E. K. GRAINGER.

The fee in India for riding in hurdle races is supposed to be 100 rupees for a losing and 200 rupees for a winning mount; yet it seldom appears to be carried out, according to Allen's version. Whilst in Madras he met Mr. Elliot, who is a son-in-law of Mr. Haywood, Caulfield, and has a big string of horses in training. Allen, after riding for some time for him, went over to Rangoon, in Burmah, and requested a captain to allow him to ride his ponies. The captain agreed; but judge of Allen's surprise when his would-be employer said there would be no pay. Under the circumstances, Allen did not stay there very long. Trahan, he says is doing splendidly, getting first-class mounts, and intends to settle down there. With regard to the style of riding in India, Allen is of opinion that there are very few good riders. Jimmy Robertson, an Australian, is the Hales of India, and the others are not near him.

Australian horses, too, appear to be a better class; but in ponies we are a long way behind. Allen, being a rider with a good reputation in Victoria, felt very much annoyed at being told by an owner that he did not think he had ever ridden in a race before, because he could not win with his pony in a hurdle race. They have brush fences standing a little over 4ft. high, with a ditch on each side, and the sod walls are about 3ft. 6in. Whilst in India, Allen saw *Escapade* and *Cupola* run a dead heat, the latter being made a very warm favourite on account of his having done a half-mile spin in 48sec., but the timing is very much faster than ours, resembling the American style very much. The last mount Allen had over there was at the Calcutta races, in which he unfortunately got his leg broken. In conclusion, Allen said he would not advise any jockey to try his luck in India, unless he has hosts of friends who are ready to back him up. As far as hurdle-race riders are concerned, there is no chance whatever, because either gentlemen or native riders do all the work.—*Standard*.

## IN A TIGHT FIX.

WE take the following article from the *Sydney Referee*, which will doubtless prove of interest to our readers:—

Human nature is unfortunately prone to err, and when anything contrary to honesty crops up in a race people are more likely to blame the jockey than the owner. It must not be imagined for an instant that we are attempting to take sides with jockeys and hold them up as paragons of uprightness; far from it, as we know beyond contradiction that in the ranks of our riders are men and boys whose whole careers have been nothing more nor less than a series of barefaced robberies and plunder. Still there are others who have to the best of their ability done that which is right, and were the two classes ranged in line no doubt whatever exists as to which division would be held in the highest respect, and which is the better off. It is all very well for those looking at a race to cast slurs about So-and-So, designate him an unmitigated scoundrel, and such like. People should remember that the lad is carrying out orders given him from his master, failing which he will be told to stand down, and another will be secured who will obey. This state of things has existed for all time, but it was never half so rampant as at present, which is attributable to the fact that we have so much racing. We are perfectly aware that many jockeys are only too willing to lend themselves to anything of a shady nature; and we know for a truth that some of them live almost entirely by pulling horses, a practice in which they have become so expert that it is almost impossible to detect them. Names could be mentioned, which a year or two ago always found a place in a race; but it would take some searching in later days to find them mentioned at all, unless records of the last horses were given. While this goes undisputed, the question may be asked, "How does that come about?" It can easily be answered. To our personal knowledge we know of cases where the services of riders attached to what are termed "square" stables have been and are ignored for no other reason than that the lads will not be allowed to ride "stiff." This gives the "Johnny Armstrong" division an opportunity for a mount when they are required to pull, but it seldom occurs that their services are brought into requisition when the same animal is "wanted." The "stiff" jockey, as everyone knows, is of the impecunious class, and a losing mount is always welcome. There is no such thing known to him as throwing over the stable and annexing a race when his orders are "not to win." That would be treason, and one *dirty action* on his part in that direction would be sufficient to relegate him to oblivion for the remainder of his existence, as his *disobedience to orders* would be made known to other trainers and owners who might be in quest of his services, when they would argue that if he threw over Jack he would also throw over Jill. The ambition of every youngster when he first takes to jockeying is to win, and no monarch is prouder of his position than the lad the first time he passes the judge's box a winner. The novelty in hundreds of instances, however, wears off too soon, no matter how honest the lad may be, and he is easily led or