

guide, visited Turakina and the Rangitikei districts, where they interviewed some first-class blood stock, amongst them being an Ascot colt, five-years-old, out of that well-known steeplechaser Loch Lomond's sister, for which colt the owner asks £100. Gladius (by Gladiator—Don Juan mare), the hurdle horse, was also inspected, and the price set on him was also £100. Mr. Baldwin, their owner, declining to take less for either of them. Leaving Turakina they journeyed to Mr. Donald Fraser's, of Rangitikei, where the following horses were shown to them:—King Cole, colt out of Wainui, who is a nice bay colt, showing great promise of furnishing into a first class racer. The next was Gun Cotton (by Nordenfeldt—Patch) which Mr. Fraser declined to sell, but offered Mr. Henshaw first refusal if ever he is for sale. After him came Sovereign, by Guinea—Hippona. This horse has served a few mares, but has been in work for the last few weeks, and has taken very kindly to jumping, and his trainer, Mr. Champion, intended to nominate him for the Hurdle Races at the Manawatu and Rangitikei meetings. After carefully looking him over Mr. Henshaw was greatly taken with him, and eventually purchased him at a satisfactory figure. After leaving Mr. Fraser's, Mr. Henshaw purchased at Bulls a handsome brown colt by Fisherman, bred on the same station as Mahaseer. Uranus' half-brother Strephon, another hack, was also priced, but the owner declined to sell. These horses that Mr. Henshaw purchased will be taken to Wellington en route for Melbourne during next week. W. Laing, the cross-country rider, will go in charge, and he is to have the mounts on them whenever they start, and I wish the plucky purchaser may succeed in annexing a number of races with his team.

Jack's the Lad (by Natator—Kneecap's dam), runner-up in the two Hack Hurdle Races at Wanganui, has gone into A. McCormick's stable, and will very likely be a starter at the Wellington R.C. meeting on the 28th and 30th. The following horses will go from Wanganui to take part in the Wellington meeting, viz:—Stranger (by St. Clair—Kaikatea), Otara Lass (by Rangitira—Otara Lass), She (by Daniel O'Rourke—Equation), Te Ata (by Pap-a-pa), and La Petite Fille (by Sou' wester—Lady Grey). All of these horses are in first-class condition, and should run well forward in their different events.

Fred Tilly, who trains for E. J. Chapman, has in hand at Fordell the undermentioned horses:—O'Rourke, Taihaire (by Piscatorious—Rangipo), Commotion (by Somnus), well known as a hack hurdler during last season, and Tilly also intends to shortly take up White Rose (by Anteros—Martonian's dam). This young trainer since his return from Australia has had his hands full, and judging by the way he turned out O'Rourke at the Momohaki meeting, I should say that he fully understands his business. Tilly had charge of Rob Roy when he went to Australia, and while in his charge over there he annexed one or two races with him.

TARANAKI SPORTING NOTES.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

NEW PLYMOUTH, Nov. 20.

FROM inquiries I learn that there are several horses in training and to be trained at Waitara. Mr. Ogle has a pony called Nox in training for the New Plymouth and Waitara meetings, and according to report the pony should give a good account of himself. Mr. T. Elliot has a one-year-old bay colt, Aldershot, by Foul Shot—dam Anterina, by Anteros—dam Yatterina. The youngster is nicely proportioned, and should be able to gallop. Mr. W. Elliot is the possessor of a one-year-old bay colt, Grape-shot, by Foul Shot—dam Fishlass, by Leolinus—dam Fishwoman. Both these youngsters are nominated for the Hawke's Bay Guineas of 1893. He has also a four-year-old chestnut filly, Silverlock, by Flintlock—dam Maid of Honour; a two-year-old bay colt by Woolbroker—dam The Jilt; and a pony, Cigarette, by Flintlock—dam Skylark. The stallion Cruiser (Robinson, Crusoe—Radiance) in the same stable, is being ridden in view of racing, I believe, this season. Mr. H. Knight, late of Christchurch, is trainer for Mr. W. Elliot. Mr. J. Telfar is training a Flintlock bay filly for a resident at the White Cliffs.

There are about sixteen horses—mostly hacks—training on the New Plymouth course. J. Russell is working Flukem and Lady Onslow; D. Teed—Sirius; Shela, and The Orphan; F. Watson—Snapcap, Ionic, and an Izaak Walton mare; Sole Bros.—the jumper Atlantic; W. Barnard—the jumpers Recruit and Lock; G. Scott—the pony Poppy; W. Russell—the pony Rodney; and Jas. Noaker—Tattler. There are several other hacks in training in the district.

The handicapping of the pony Fibre in events at the Onslow Trotting meeting was a bit harsh, to say the least of it, and I think J. Russell had cause to growl this time. The mare has never won a race, and has only been placed once in a race that was done in funeral time, and on what basis therefore the handicappers for the Onslow Club estimate her quality I fail to conceive. A little of such handicapping (very indiscriminate) goes a long way to stop owners from nominating. A horse should be treated on its merits and not on a reputation that is generated in the imaginations of some people.

A number of sports here have started a hunt to be held every Thursday afternoon, which is a holiday in this town. The sport was inaugurated on Thursday last, but owing to no official public announcement being made it was not as well attended as it would have been had the public got a formal notice. The locality for the meeting is at Moturoa.

CRICKET.

We have two cricket clubs in New Plymouth now, the second one—the Star—having sprung into existence last week. A good deal of interest is being manifested in cricket in consequence, and the first match between the rival clubs is sure to cause a bit of excitement as the partisan feeling is running pretty high. The New Plymouth members have been in practice for some time, and therefore have a much better show of winning the first match than the Star. Notwithstanding this fact the friends and players of the latter club are betting level money that they win. They might, but the chances are against them.

RANDOM RACING REMARKS.

[BY PEGASUS.]

THE recent V.R.C. Derby was the largest field that has started for that event during the last seven years. During the last ten years the time—2min 41½sec—has been equalled once and beaten on four different occasions.

The Maribyrnong Plate, on the other hand, was the smallest field since 1872, on which occasion the number of starters was the same, viz., twelve. The time this year—1min 7½sec—was considerably the slowest since 1878, except in 1886, when Hortense won it in 1min 7½sec.

Ettra-Weenie is an Australian aboriginal word and signifies "go quickly." But she didn't.

The Wellington Spring Meeting takes place to-day and Saturday. The Hutt Park Handicap, 1½ miles, reads well for La Petite Fille, Pearl Powder and Krina, but at the time of writing I am very much in the dark. Somnambulist ought to win the Hurdles at this meeting.

The Takapuna meeting takes place on Saturday next at the North Shore. Very few except Shore horses are left in. This is certainly a great pity, but the powers that be are alone to blame. It is a great pity if only for the fact that Takapuna is one of the pleasantest places to go to for an afternoon's racing. The trip across the water with the cool and refreshing sea-breeze is far before the smoke, grime and dust consequent upon a trip by tram or rail. Therefore it is a matter of regret that so many should assume that the meeting is a one-stable one.

The attendance at Potter's Paddock on Saturday was large, considering counter attractions, and some good trotting eventuated, especially in the big trot. By comparing my last week's tips it will be seen that of six events four came off exactly, while Scotchman "upset my pot" in the Maiden, Sailor Boy only getting third; and in the Pony Trot Maud S. beat Lady Bird and Captain Russell, my two fancies, which ran second and third respectively.

I was highly amused to overhear the following conversation in front of the totalisator last Saturday. Two "sports" were in doubt what to back, when one noticing that Rambuster

would pay a big div. remarked, "In case the fire bell should ring, and Rambuster should take a fright and win, it would be advisable to back her." Needless to say they could not have been Review subscribers, or they would not have been in doubt what to back. The result was a £14 dividend. And the firebells didn't ring either.

I intended to have had a "spoke" on the "reversal of form" discussion that has been going on lately, but owing to shortness of space must reserve it for next week.

The Otago Cup is run to-day and as the acceptances are now before me I incline to select Cruchfield, Crackshot and Cynisca to fight out the finish. It is a very difficult matter to deal with this event, as little or no information is to hand for guidance.

Very mixed "cattle" are entered for the Northern Wairoa races. The handicappers will have a nice "contract" before them to bring such fields anyway near together. About as easy as weighting Carbine with some of our six-stoners.

ON HANDICAPPING.

I have repeatedly "remarked" on this subject, and only last week I asked the question, "What is the difference between handicapping and weight-juggling?"

The office of handicapper is the most responsible one in connection with racing, and the different clubs cannot be too careful when making choice of some person to fill this responsible position.

As a rule, however, the appointment goes (like kissing) more by favour than by merit or ability.

A large number of men think the whole art lies in "jumbling" a lot of weights together and calling them "a handicap."

The utter fallacy of such a proceeding is very apparent. Every week or so we have samples of this before us; and the poor acceptance lists bear ample proof that instead of handicapping, that "so called" individual has only been "juggling with weights."

As I pointed out in my "remarks" last week this work is a science, and requires to be performed in a scientific manner. Many of those now doing this work fancy they can frame a handicap when they are really no more fit to do so than to fly in the air.

There is an old proverb which says, "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread," and nowhere as in handicapping do we find the truth of this proverb so fully exemplified; for, without doubt, some push themselves in to try their hand at the game, and by their wanton compilations prove themselves nothing more or less than fools.

If the committees of racing clubs were more careful in their selection of expert handicappers, they would find a very substantial increase of their funds in a very short space of time indeed. When we come to consider the fact that a good handicap means a long acceptance list; a long acceptance list, a "big" attendance of the racing public; and a "big attendance" a substantial increase of "gate money" and "totalisator investments," does it not seem suicidal that clubs persist in appointing and re-appointing persons who have so repeatedly proved their complete inability to frame even "a very ordinary handicap?"

If racing is to improve and progress as it ought to, I feel convinced the time is not far distant when clubs will be compelled to give this question far more consideration than seems to have obtained amongst them heretofore.

While on this subject, a few samples of some of the methods in vogue amongst "weight-jugglers" may be opportune, and illustrative of my "remarks."

A "sport" buys a horse and gets, say, 6st 12lbs to carry, with which he wins. In the next race he will get something like 8st 10lbs. Should he start with this and *not win*, the "juggler" reckons the horse is, of course, stiff; but never for a moment considers that his method of handicapping (?) is at fault. Oh no! He is just the class of man that fails to see the matter in that light. Thereafter he keeps "piling on the agony," and eventually the owner gives up in disgust, or, having expended his small capital, is compelled to desist, or sell his horse again without having had a reasonable chance of recouping his outlay.

Not long ago a very third-rate horse won a hurdle race (not easily mind) with 10st up.