

The Turf

[BY OLD TURFITE.]

THE acceptances for the Auckland Racing Club's Summer Meeting and general entries were received last Friday. Though fairly numerous the quality is not as good as was anticipated, a great many of the Southern horses failing to pay up for the principal events. There are only eleven remaining in the Auckland Cup. Freedom's defection caused me some surprise, as Dan O'Brien had nothing to complain of as regards the weights of either him or Flinders. He should, however, have got a line of most of the horses in New Zealand, so he is in all probability intending to take Freedom to the other side. Most of the others I was prepared to see drop out, as they were either infirm or had done a great deal of racing this season. Of those left in Hilda, 8st 11lb, heads the list. If she was the Hilda of old she might have had a chance, but her running of late has been of such an in-and-out character that I cannot fancy her, notwithstanding the weakness of the field. It must be remembered that she has only 5lb less than weight for age, and there is a smart youngster or two in the race. British Lion, 8st 5lb, has been running well lately, but chiefly under light weights, but if all right on the day he will be galloping on when others are stopping. Fraternite, 7st 13lb, is a nice colt, and has not had too much racing this season. When he ran at Napier and Wanganui he had not been wound up, so I fully expect him to run a good horse. Brigand, 7st 9lb, is reported to have been off, but let that pass; he has never done anything to entitle him to that weight. He is a little horse, and his wins in the spring were chiefly due to his condition. One next comes to Lebel, 7st 7lb. D. O'Brien ought to have his line to an ounce, and if it was only for the reason that he scratched his pair, Freedom and Flinders, he should be treated with respect. Queen of Trumps, 7st, is leniently treated, but she has never given one an opinion that she can stay; but as she is the only one Mr. Ormond has paid up for, there may be something more than meets the eye. The Dreamer, 7st, is out of place. Leorina, at the same weight, is getting too much of it. Patchwork, 6st 10lb, is an arrant rogue that ought to have been added to the list long ago. If Pinfire, 6st 10lb, could be brought fit and well to the post he would have an outside show, but if the ground continues hard that contingency is very remote. Coalscuttle, 6st 9lb, is better adapted for country meetings. Until all the horses arrive it would be folly to try and pick the winner, although it would not surprise me if either Lebel or Fraternite was returned the winner, with British Lion close up, but I will make a final selection nearer the day.

Ten have paid up for the Derby, which is a great many more than could have been expected, but as they can get out with the payment of a fiver the night before the race several will be sure to drop out, and the race will be left to the following:—Mr. Stead's Silver Knight or Lebel, Flinders, Fraternite, and Clanranald. The Workman can not have done sufficient work to meet the above, and the rest are moderate.

There are nine remaining in the Great Northern Foal Stakes, which reads a good thing for Stepniak or North Atlantic, though it is reported that St. Hippo can gallop a bit.

The weeding out for the Steeplechase has been great, and those left in are very moderate. There will be plenty of time to consider the chances of the different horses engaged nearer the day, but at time of writing I prefer the chances of Sentinel, Bit o' Blue and Fishmonger.

The other stakes have filled fairly well, and if the hard ground does not find some of them out there should be some good racing during the three days.

THE Takapuna Jockey Club have issued a capital programme for their Summer Meeting. Entries for Takapuna Cup of 200 sovs., Takapuna Jockey Club Handicap of 75 sovs., First Handicap Steeplechase of 120 sovs., and Second

Handicap Steeplechase of 80 sovs., close next Friday. These meetings are the pleasantest of any in the neighbourhood of Auckland, as the course is easy of access. The committee are most liberal in all their dealings, and this year have largely increased the stakes. Two things, however, mar the pleasure. The first is bad handicapping. You see two or three horses at the most that are brought together, but the rest of the field are spread all over the course. This does not show competent adjustment of weights. The other is the wretched starting there has been for the past two years. People do not mind losing their money when they find that they have backed the wrong horse, but they are dissatisfied when they do so owing to bad starting. Are the committee bound to these two persons? The recent meetings around Auckland have proved there is one that is able to act in the dual capacity. Why should they not try him at their forthcoming meeting, and let us for once have some good handicapping and starting? It is sure to be appreciated.

THE minor handicaps for the first day of the Auckland Racing Club's meeting do not at all redound to Mr. J. O. Evitt's credit. The compilation of the weights for the Nursery Handicap is the most wonderful production I have ever come across. Is it Mr. Evitt's intention to introduce a new system of handicapping, so as an influential man can keep his horse in the stable until he is thrown into a handicap, and then come out and slaughter his field? Mr. Evitt must well know that it was always Admiral Rous' (the best handicapper there ever was) custom to allot a horse that had never run weight for age—most of the others following his example. Secondly he should well know that it is impossible to make a good handicap unless he sees the different horses run or has a competent man that he can rely upon to send him a report of the condition of the horses, how the race was run, and how many stiff ones there were. It is not my intention to go thoroughly through the handicaps until the acceptances appear next Friday, only point out what I consider the most glaring mistakes. There being most of them in the Nursery Handicap I will take that first. St. Hippo and Swiftsure, two two-year-olds that never started, are let in with 6st 12lb each. They are well-bred horses that are thought good enough to pay the first forfeit for in the Great Northern Foal Stakes, in face of the cracks. Lower down the list we come to Cabri, 6st 6lb, E.Q.V. and Lottie, 6st 7lb each, all non-performers. Now take those that have run. His Worship is placed within 9lb of Whakawatea. What has he done to be placed there? In the Welcome Stakes he got home third, being a length away from Glenora, who was beaten a head by Adelaide. In the Nursery Handicap he gets home half a length, receiving 14lb from Brown Alice, who was a length in front of Glenora, and was giving the winner 10lb. Now he has to give the latter 33lb, while it makes Brown Alice better than Whakawatea. His other race was the Devonport Handicap, when the wretched start would have enabled the most moderate two-year-old to win. Then for what reason has Tit to give 7lb to Puerewere and 9lb to Glenora. Her only performance was when in receipt of 24lb from His Worship in the Devonport Handicap she could not get within four lengths of him, though she got away second best—Adelaide never persevering. If this can be called handicapping by any judge of racing I shall be surprised. In the Hurdle Race Orakei receives 4lb from The Colonel, who he beat easily at the A.R.C. Meeting the second day, 1½ miles (his favourite distance), when meeting him at a difference of 11lb, so now he only receives 7lb for a stone beating and an extra quarter of a mile, which does not suit The Colonel. Sentinel is the best horse over sticks in Auckland, and if the handicapper had ever seen his performance at Ellerslie he would never have kept him at the same weight while the others are most of them raised. There are several that have to give weight to Try Fluke, when it ought to be the reverse way. When the acceptances appear it does not seem as if it will be a difficult thing to pick the winner

SOUTH AUCKLAND SUMMER MEETING.

THE acceptances for the South Auckland Racing Meeting are very good, and complimentary to the handicapper, but when one comes

to analyse the different events it will be seen that there are more than one horse from the same stable accepting, so when the numbers go up there may be a diminution in the starters. Mr. Halstead has dealt very leniently with J. B. Williamson's stable, which he should not have done, as it is not one to be trifled with when they mean business. The course is said to be in first-rate condition, and the committee have done all they could to make the meeting a success. The railway arrangements are completed, the return fares being fixed at 18s. first and 12s. second class, available until Monday. There will also be a cheap excursion on Saturday. Two good day's racing may be anticipated, though it was rather a mistake publishing the weights all at the same time, though penalties are attached to certain winners.

There are nine remaining in the Maiden Plate. Should Tulloch, 7st, be sent for it he should have little trouble in winning it. In his absence Vieux Rose, 7st 12lb, or Ma Boughal, 7st 2lb, might do it.

Williamson's stable should win the Maiden Hurdles with either Capella, 10st, or Yardman, 9st 7lb.

Eight have declared content for the South Auckland Cup. Tulloch carries a 10lb penalty, which brings his weight up to 7st 3lb. Ingorina, 8st 13lb, should beat Leorina, 9st 8lb, on recent running, but he is not a safe horse to back. Dolosa, 8st 3lb, is an uncertain animal. Loch Ness, 8st, reads well, and his owner would like to win this race. Pinfire, 7st 12lb, does not like the hard ground, so the race should, I think, fall to either Ingorina or Loch Ness, though Dolosa might take it into her head to try.

The Steeplechase has six very moderate ones engaged. Bit o' Blue, 10st 12lb, if he is sent for it, should have no difficulty in winning, but if he is kept for the A.R.C. meeting, Yum Yum or Yardman should win.

There are twelve remaining in the Tradesman's Plate. As there is a penalty of 10lb for the winner of the South Auckland Cup, and 7lb for the winner of any race after the declaration of the weights, it is not a race to touch before the numbers go up, but Pinfire or Tulloch read the best.

The Novel Race had better be left alone.

There is the good acceptance of thirteen for the Flying Stakes, to which penalties are attached, so it will greatly depend on previous running, but either Helen McGregor, Vieux Rose, or Kupe should furnish the winner.

This concludes the first day's racing. The weights for the Christmas Handicap, Publicans' Purse, Railway Stakes, and South Auckland Steeplechase are published the night of the first day's racing, also the second forfeit for the Waikato Produce Stakes, for which six have paid up, has to be declared. From what I can learn it is looked upon as a good thing for Mr. Breakell's E.Q.V., by Fusillade—Kit.

There are only five remaining in the Handicap Hurdles, which reads well for Bit o' Blue, 10st 12lb, but in his absence Barshot or Tommy should win.

The other races I shall not attempt to touch, as they are dependant on previous running.

Brigand has been scratched for all engagements at the forthcoming A.R.C. Summer Meeting.

It is now reported that the doctor has pronounced "Tommy" Hodson's collar-bone broken. His face is healing up remarkably well.

The following horses arrived from the South by the "Te Anau" for the A.R.C. Summer Meeting:—Lebel, Stepniak, Clanranald, Flinders, Tamar, Yattaghan, British Lion, Whakawatea, and Wyvern.

We regret being unable to oblige those of our subscribers who have asked for "Old Turfite's" review of the Wellington Park yearlings to be sold shortly. We wrote Mr. Morrin to that effect, but have not received any reply. Our readers are well aware that "Old Turfite" writes his own opinion of what he sees, and not what is told him. We are informed by a competent judge who has lately visited the farm that there are a few good lots to be offered, but that some of them would show to better advantage if unnoticed by a truthful pen. For all we know there may be a few *Hildas* among the lot.