

along satisfactorily in his preliminary, local backers tumbled over one another in the desire to get on to him, and consequently he went out favourite, there being a total of 831 on him as compared with 619 on Merganser—212 more. This pair divided most of the attention of backers—indeed it may be said that nothing else was backed with spirit, but Pinfire and Coalscuttle. When they assembled at the post Brigand and Merganser occasioned a bit of delay by refusing to join their horses, but they were got away eventually to a splendid dismissal. St. Hippo was as quick as anything at beginning, but he was very soon steadied, and The Workman, in the interests of Coalscuttle, dashed away to the front. He had at the half-mile post a length's lead of his field, of whom St. Hippo was second, and Merganser, Scot Free, and Pinfire next. The Workman drew away a bit further rounding the bend, and when they landed in the straight he was a couple of lengths ahead of St. Hippo, Merganser, Pinfire, Scot Free, and Impulse being nearest to the favourite in that order, while Coalscuttle was last. Still forcing the running The Workman led out of the straight by quite two lengths, St. Hippo still, however, being nearest to him, while Pinfire and Merganser were at the head of the rest. Coalscuttle was still last, but had got a bit nearer her field. Merganser ran into third place in the next furlong, The Workman still bowling along with St. Hippo next, but when they had covered a mile and a quarter Gallagher took St. Hippo to the front, and, with The Workman retiring, Merganser made a forward movement, and Coalscuttle ran up third. Half-a-mile from home St. Hippo had a length's advantage of Merganser, Pinfire being third and Coalscuttle next. When St. Hippo led into the straight it was soon seen that it was "all over bar shouting," for he simply romped along at his ease, and won in a canter by two lengths from Brigand, who was a length in front of Merganser. Impulse was fourth, Coalscuttle fifth, and Scot Free last. It is almost needless to say that the success of such a good colt as St. Hippo, under the highest weight ever carried to victory in an Auckland Cup, would have been received with hearty acclamation, but the cheering that burst forth from all parts of the course when he passed the post in gallant style and returned to weigh in was accentuated by the fact that he is the property of a straightgoing Auckland sportsman like Mr. L. D. Nathan. It is an oft told story how St. Hippo has this season won the New Zealand Cup in the fastest time on record for that event, and in his win on Monday he tied that record and lowered Crackshot's time for the Auckland Cup by a quarter of a second. At the time he won the New Zealand Cup his full pedigree and previous performances were given in these columns, so it will suffice to say now that he is by St. Leger out of Hippona by Robinson Crusoe—Lamorna by Fireworks—Nightlight by Archy. Considering the work Brigand had done with Merganser on the training track, it was not thought likely that he would finish in front of her, but he did so, and his connections well deserved the 100sovs of second money for bringing him up from Gisborne. Merganser might perhaps have been second had she been persevered with to the end, but practically there was only one in it in the last six furlongs, and that one was St. Hippo. Coalscuttle and Pinfire both ran respectably, but never could approach the winner. It is not likely that they will often be called upon to meet such a "snag" as St. Hippo. Some idea of the pace at which the race was run may be gathered from the following figures showing the times of the various stages of the journey:—Half-mile, 52sec; one mile, 1 min 45sec; mile and a half, 2min 37sec; two miles, 3min 30½sec. Last year Pinfire got the distance in 3min 32½sec, with Coalscuttle second, so that this pair may be said now to have quite run up to their last year's form.

There was not a single scratching for the Handicap Hurdle Race of 150 sovs., 2 miles, so that 10 went to the post. When the weights appeared Never Miss was generally voted a good thing by those who had seen him run in this district, but though he was well backed the Napier representative Aorere had a decided call over him in the betting by the time the flag dipped. Again was the betting practically limited to a pair, for some owners were evidently going for a "feeler" as regarded future events at the meeting, and, on form, Never Miss and Aorere undoubtedly stood out as the best handicapped of the lot. Thus it was

that, bar the pair named, there was nothing else backed to any extent. For the first six furlongs Aorere and Never Miss were alternately in the lead, and by the time they reached the stand there was nothing to choose between them, and Mangere and Fishmonger headed the others. Never Miss and Aorere kept going in front along as far as just before breasting the hill, where Aorere cried "enough," and Mangere ran up second. Never Miss continued in front till about half-a-mile from home, but Mangere then set sail, and leading into the straight with a good advantage, got over the last hurdle with the greatest of ease, and won by three lengths from Never Miss, who was a couple of lengths in front of Marquis of Tewkesbury, who came fast from the home turn. Marechal Neil was fourth. The victory of Mr W. Paul was very popular, and Stenning also came in for congratulation for the way in which he turned out the son of Billingsgate, who it will be remembered won the Hurdles on the second day of the Auckland Racing Club's Second Spring Meeting. By winning now in 3min 51sec he established a record for the distance at Ellerslie. Flukem fell at one of the fences on the hill and his rider Johnson had his hand badly injured thereby.

Quadrant, The Dancer, His Worship, and Brown Alice declined the contest for the Railway Handicap of 100sovs, six furlongs, leaving eleven to weigh out. St. Clements, though he had top weight as the field now stood, had shown such good form during the present season over sprint courses that it seemed good business to back him down to a 2 to 1 chance, and so backers did. Tit was next in favour, and Loch Ness, Tamar, and First Nelson were also backed to some extent. Loch Ness was quickest to anticipate the starter's signal, but St. Clements was not long in asserting himself. He and Loch Ness, it may be briefly said, raced together all the way, and it was only through over confidence on the part of his jockey that St. Clements lost the race. As it was Bird was caught napping in the last few strides and therefore Loch Ness achieved a somewhat lucky win. First Nelson was a good third. Loch Ness, who is a half-brother to Merganser, being by Ingomar out of Albatross, paid the best dividends of the day, viz., £8 10s. inside and £6 13s. outside.

Half-a-dozen was the strength of the acceptances for the Nursery Handicap of 80sovs, five furlongs, and they all accompanied Mr. Cutts to the post. Though Taranna (who is full brother to Flinders and Tamar) had never been seen in public, the fact of Mr O'Brien having sent him up from Christchurch, and having come up himself to see him run, was enough to make him favourite, though he was giving weights ranging from 3lb to 21lb to his opponents. Tit's half-sister Cobweb was next in favour, a good many backers evidently supporting her because she hails from the same stable as Mangere. She got to the front soon after flag-fall, and made the pace merry till the home turn was rounded, where the lot bunched up. However, Cobweb was not headed till a few yards from home, where Heart of Oak challenged her, and a slashing finish ended in Heart of Oak winning by a neck from Cobweb with Captivity close up. Heart of Oak runs in the nomination of Mr. J. Forth, who bred her. She is by Nelson out of Corcyra, and is therefore half-sister to Alcinous and Bay King. Mr Firth still owns her dam, whom he this season sent on a visit to Dreadnought at the Hon. J. D. Ormond's stud.

With New Year, Mangere, Kate, and Nero scratched, five runners were announced for the Maiden Steeplechase of 100sovs, about 3 miles, and there was little to choose in point of favouritism between Aorere and Tupara. The last named once more sadly disappointed his backers, but Aorere managed to get home. Maritana made all the running up to about six furlongs from home, where Flukem and Aorere supplanted her, and thence out had the finish to themselves. A great finish it proved to be, too. Flukem led over the stone wall into the straight quite two lengths ahead of the Napier horse, but Aorere soon decreased the gap, and at the Derby stand had almost drawn level. Flukem had been running none too generously for the previous furlong, and now in breasting the last hurdle he ran right across Aorere. Redmond, however, was equal to the occasion, and coming along on the inside he had just enough left in his horse by dint of vigorous riding to get home by a neck from Flukem. Maritana was a moderate third.

From one cause or another the scratch-

ings for the Christmas Handicap of 100 sovs, one mile and a quarter, were so numerous that when it came to the time of starting only Tulloch and Brown Alice went to the post. The horse was undoubtedly in point of condition the best of the pair, Brown Alice seeming to me a bit stale. The wagering was well divided between the pair, Tulloch having a slight call. They ran together as far as the home turn, where Tulloch forged ahead and soon having the filly at the whip won with a bit in hand. This was rather a bad finish for the day for the club, as there were only £108 invested in the totalisator as compared with £1163 for the same race last year, when Major George's Fiesole beat a field of seven, among whom was Tulloch, who had 13lb less than he now carried to victory. This terminated a most enjoyable day's racing.

Auckland Trotting Club's Summer Meeting.

FIRST DAY—TUESDAY, DEC. 27.
WHEN the Auckland Trotting Club came out with such a liberal programme for their Summer Meeting of 1892 fears were expressed that they had launched out somewhat too extravagantly, but when we saw the entries they received and later on had a look at the acceptances, we felt sure that they had made no mistake in providing such a handsome bill of fare for the delectation of trotting enthusiasts throughout the colony. The more we were confirmed in our conviction when we were apprised of the arrival of a Sydney representative in the shape of Yum Yum, whose accession to the ranks of starters was strengthened by the later arrival of trotters from the South Island, and from Wellington, Taranaki and other Northern centres. It seemed like cruel luck for the A.T.C. in the face of all their liberality and enterprise when—after such a beautifully fine day as the Auckland Racing Club had been favoured with—it commenced to rain in the forenoon of Tuesday, and with only slight intervals it was showery all day at Potter's Paddock. However this—fortunately for the club—did not deter lovers of the sport from mustering in strong force, and there must have been nearly 3000 people present when the two principal events were decided. Speculation was very brisk, £5257 being put through the totalisator. The day's sport was excellently managed with one exception, and that was that too many events had been crowded into the card, with the result that the last race was not started until 7.30 p.m. Mr. E. D. Halstead wielded the starter's flag with even more than his usual efficiency—and that is saying a good deal—and several of his dismissals were so cleverly effected as to call forth hearty plaudits from the spectators. The day's business commenced with the Maiden Handicap Trot of 50sovs, two miles, for which Pihie was the only absentee out of the 13 figured on the card. The Broker was made favourite, with Sailor Boy next in demand, and the latter as soon as the flag fell went to the front, and won with ridiculous ease. The favourite was only prominent in the early part of the race, and soon fell away. The time, 6min 14½sec, was 6½sec slower than that for the same race last year, when Sandfly won. Sandfly ran in the name of Mr. S. Tanner, owner of Mount, who now finished second. Half-a-dozen scratchings reduced the field for the Maiden Pony Handicap of 40sovs, six furlongs, to 16, and Dove and Sally divided favouritism, little else being backed to any extent except Pearl II., Nigger Boy, and Ratan. Helena went away from the fall of the flag, and led into the straight, when Pearl II. challenged, and after a good finish, won by a length. Sally fell, and her rider (Geach) was badly shaken. The winner is owned by an Auckland, and was, I understand, sired by St. Leger. The great item of the New Zealand trotting world—the Auckland Trotting Cup Handicap of 300 sovs, 3 miles—next came up for attention. Of the 16 coloured on the card, Martha, Tinker and Mount did not face the starter. Thus there was left a field of 13, which is 3 less than contested the same race last year, when the added money was 100 sovs less than now. Edwards' mare Fairy, with her owner up and handicapped on the limit mark, was regarded as real "good goods" and out of £806 on the totalisator she carried £399—nearly half. She was not headed until rounding for home in the last lap, when Little Ben came along and wearing her down won by quite 50 yards. Ike, who was an outsider, gained the "score" of third money, just in front of

Nellie. The time, 8min 36sec, was 13½ sec faster than last year, when Rarus won with 25sec start. The winner is owned at Otahuhu, and has, I am given to understand, some thoroughbred breeding on the sire's side. The handicap allotted to Fairy was too much for Yum Yum and Clyde to pick up, and it was very quickly seen that they had not the remotest chance.

Pica, Contempt, Reuben, Rodney, Puthi, Glenmore and Ben declined the contest for the Pony Cup Handicap of 130 sovs, one mile, leaving thirteen runners. Pearl II.—who was penalised 7lb for her previous win—was again saddled up, and she shared the bulk of public favour with Little Jane, who was giving her 4lb. From a splendid start Vampire, Cupid, Pearl II., and Robin were the most prominent. Vampire led into the straight, but Little Jane then came through and won with a bit in hand from Sepoy, who passed Vampire a few yards from home. Silkworm and Walter Scott fell, and Patterson, who was riding the former, sustained a slight concussion of the brain, while Callaghan, who was up on Walter Scott, got off with a sprained wrist. The time, 1min 58sec, was 4sec slower than last year, when Lady Onslow won with 8.9. On that occasion Vampire, who now ran third with 8.10, was unplaced with 10.0.

Ike was served up very warm for the Pony Trot Handicap of 50sovs, 2 miles, and he ran well, though he failed to concede 31sec to Blueskin, who had the race practically in hand from the word "go." She is owned by a Papakura resident, and paid the nice dividend of £9 18s.

Not deterred by Fairy's previous defeat the majority of backers again rallied to her support in the Glasgow Harness Trot Handicap, and she was backed down to about 6 to 4. Peggy was second in request, and at the finish the pair named were split by Scotchman, from whom Fairy won very comfortably with Peggy a moderate third.

The Handicap Hurdles of 70 sovs, one mile and a half, served to further demonstrate what a good pony Pica is, for with all his 12.0 he was equal to winning with a bit to spare from Butterfly, who was receiving 49lb from him. Minnie Grey also achieved a good performance by carrying 11.12 into third place. This event last year was won by Lady Onslow with 21lb less than Pica now carried.

No mistake was made with Peggy in the Electric Trot Handicap of 60sovs, one mile, for which seven started. She was favourite, but Midnight and Yum Yum were also well backed. Peggy led the whole way, and won easily from Midnight, Clyde gaining the barren honour of third place.

Thames Jockey Club's Summer Meeting.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)
FIRST DAY.—MONDAY, DECEMBER 26TH.
THE Thames Jockey Club commenced their Summer Meeting as usual on Boxing Day, and quite 2,000 people were present. The weather was fine, and some excellent sport was witnessed. £1,256 went through the totalisator. The Maiden Handicap of 25sovs, six furlongs, was the first event, and seven went to the post. The Auckland mare Acacia was made a warm favourite, with Caprice next in demand. This pair, however, found more than their match in Viceroy, who won by a head from Caprice, with Acacia a good third. St. Mary came into contact with a post and threw her rider, who, however, was not injured. The dividend on Viceroy was £5 13s. The First Handicap Hurdles of 35 sovs, one mile and three-quarters, brought out a quartette, viz., Megoulet, Platch, Daisy and Mistake. Megoulet was made a very hot favourite, and as all the other competitors missed a jump she won easily from Platch. The other pair did not finish. Macmanemin rode the winner, who paid a dividend of £1 2s for each 10s invested. The Thames Handicap of 45 sovs, one mile and a quarter, attracted to the post a septette, namely, Ingorina 8.10, Ida 8.0, Peeress 7.0, Stanley 7.0, The Laird 6.11, Orwell 6.9, and Bulrush 6.7. Ida was favourite, Ingorina next in demand,