

Romer's successful essays for his joint owners, Messrs. Joseph Davis and A. Knowles, Mr. Davis purchased Black Duck from his owner, Mr. Westgate, for 50sovs. Black Duck was foaled in 1889, and being by Galopin out of Call Duck, by Macaroni, it is not surprising that he has got stock to gallop, although given very few chances. It may be added that he is bred on the same lines as that successful stallion, St. Angelo, who was also by Galopin out of a Macaroni mare."

THE TOP WEIGHTS IN THE MELBOURNE CUP.

It is interesting to note that 10.0, the top weight awarded to Poseidon in this year's Melbourne Cup, is not often exceeded as the starting point in the handicaps for the big V.R.C. two-mile event. During the last 20 years the respective top-weights for the Melbourne Cup have been:—1889, Carbine, 10.0; 1890, Carbine, 10.5; 1891, Carbine, 10.12; 1892, Strathmore, 9.8; 1893, Strathmore, 9.10; 1894, Portsea, 9.12; 1895, Patron, 9.12; 1896, Wallace, 10.0; 1897, Wallace, 9.13; 1898, Amberite, 9.11; 1899, Bobadil, 9.10; 1900, La Carabine, 9.7; 1901, La Carabine, 9.12; 1902, San Fran, 10.5; 1903, Wakeful, 10.0; 1904, Abundance, 9.8; 1905, Emir, 9.8; 1906, Dividend, 9.5; and 1907, Tartan, 9.9. Though Carbine's weight in 1891, 10.12, seems stupendous enough, it is not the record for the race. In the sixties The Barb was weighted at over 11.0.

NOTES.

(By The Judge.)

The Wellington R.C. Winter Meeting takes place on July 18, 22, and 25.

The well-known rider A. Julian left for the South by the Talune on Tuesday. He will ride at Gisborne, Trentham, and Riccarton.

The annual meeting of the members of the Auckland Racing Club will take place on August 3. Nominations for committee must be in by Saturday next.

The late Mr. Geo. G. Stead's colours have been claimed by his eldest son, Mr. W. G. Stead.

The recently deceased old-time jockey, Henry Custance, who won three Derbies and innumerable other big races, left estate valued at £3081. In their respective days George Fordham left £19,903, and another famous jockey in Fred Archer £66,662.

In yesterday's football match between the Anglo-Welsh team and Manawatu the visitors won a well contested game by 12 points to 3, the score having been level at half time.

Mr. O'Connor went South on Tuesday, to do the starting at the Gisborne meeting.

The Wellington Pony and Galloway Club intend holding a meeting on August 22 and monthly thereafter.

As Celtic has not been accepted for at the Wellington meeting he may not be sent South as was anticipated.

In reviewing the English Derby prospects none of the turf writers even so much as mention the name of the ultimate winner.

The Perth Cup winner Post Town is a strong fancy for the Melbourne Cup. He belongs to "lucky" P. A. Connolly.

The New Zealander Waipu ran badly in the V.R.C. Grand National Hurdles, and as he failed in a race just prior to this it looks as though he was out of form.

Entries for the Fleet Race Meeting at Ellerslie are due to-morrow week.

The tracks at Ellerslie are very soft owing to the continuous rain.

The Gisborne Racing Club's Steeplechase Meeting takes place to-day and to-morrow. The acceptances appear in another column.

The Takapuna Jockey Club is making a strong effort to sift what is known as the Tauriki case to the bottom. Some sensational results are expected as the result of the exhaustive enquiry.

Rumours have reached Auckland that at the Napier Park Meeting, the out-for-an-airing brigade were very much in evidence, several of the runners most palpably waiting for the coming bye-and-bye.

Le Beau has been shaping very well at Ellerslie, but it has not yet been decided if he will be sent South or run at the Fleet meeting.

The Carbine colt Cargill is evidently more than useful, as prior to running second in the Princess of Wales Stakes of 6000sovs., he won the Newmarket Handicap of 1000sovs. at the Newmarket Second Spring Meeting.

Many people consider Scotty to be well treated in the C.J.C. Grand National Hurdles, and give the veteran a good chance. He may be a competitor at the Fleet meeting instead.

Sir George Clifford has been elected an honorary member of the English Jockey Club.

Readers of racehorse history have often seen mention made of "The Prophet's Mares," but perhaps have not happened across their origin. It is said in the East that Mahommed set great store by the readiness of horses to obey any signal to which they had been accustomed, and he selected mares for breeding purposes by a test of their obedience. He shut up a drove of mares within sight of water, and kept them without a drink till they were almost famished with thirst. Then the drove was released, and naturally started at a gallop for the water. When they were in full flight a trumpet sounded the "halt." Only five, some say three, obeyed the call and stopped, the rest being bent on assauging their thirst. The obedient ones were chosen as dams, and honored by the title—"The Prophet's Mares."

Owing to varicose veins, D. Maher was out of the saddle for some days in England, with the result that W. Higgs passed him in the winning jockeys' list. The figures for the leading quartette up to May 22 were as follow: W. Higgs, 159 mounts, 25 wins; D. Maher, 93 mounts, 22 wins; W. Griggs, 141 mounts, 18 wins and F. Wootton, 99 mounts, 16 wins.

The chestnut gelding Lion Heart was brought back to New Zealand by his owner a few days ago. During his stay in Australia Lion Heart won two jumpers' flat races and two hurdle races in Melbourne, and a jumpers' flat race and a Canterbury Handicap while in Sydney.

A New Zealand-bred sire represented on the list for the Grand Prix at Paris was Carbine, who was responsible for Mr W. Hall Walker's Caradoc, whose dam is the Galopin mare Warrior Queen. A couple of candidates from Australian-bred mares were among the nominations—the colts Ballymacmoy, by Winkfield's Pride from Beanba, and Shillelagh, by Le Roi Soliel (winner of the Grand Prix, 1898) from Seclusion. Beanba is by Wallace from Emmie, by Robinson Crusoe from Olga, by Piscator, and among her turf successes is the V.R.C. Oaks, 1901, which she won under the livery of Mr D. Smart. Seclusion was bred by Mr J. Wilson, jun., at the Bonny Vale stud, Victoria, and is by Carnage from The Nun, by First King. Seclusion was not raced until five years old, when she won three small races in Victoria, and the following season she captured a similar number of races for her breeder. These two mares were purchased in 1902 by the late Mr James Hennesey, of brandy fame, who bred and nominated the colts aforementioned.

I had a mournful reminder of the late Mr G. G. Stead the other day (says the special commissioner of the London Sportsman), when R. J. Mason, who is on a visit to England, presented a letter of introduction to me which his old employer had given him just before he sailed from New Zealand. The following extract from the latter will be read with interest.—"Mr R. J. Mason, who has been exclusively my private trainer for the past 21 years, is paying a visit to England for the first time. He has trained something over 400 winners for me of races exceeding £100,000 in value, which are fairly large figures for a small place like New Zealand, and as he trained Noctuniform and Multiform you might be interested in having a chat with him. My present team is weak, both in numbers and quality, but since my return from England I have won the biggest two-year-old race in New Zealand, as well as the Great Northern Derby at Auckland. The latter was won by Boniform, the

third son of Otterden. I have some nice young ones coming on, which I hope will be ready for Mason on his return. The above-mentioned Otterden, I may explain, is a mare I sent out to Mr Stead in 1908. She was then covered by Martagon, to whom she produced the great stayer Martian, to English time. Her second foal was Sun God, a very good colt, and the third, Boniform. The mare herself is of the Sunshine family, being by Sheen out of Springmorn, by Springfield.

In Russia there is a popular idea that billy-goats are essential to a healthy stable. It is said that the idea that goats keep away disease is quite as strong among Russian stable owners as is the flavour of the goat's presence.

Ampier, winner of the A.J.C. Epsom Handicap of 1900, was sold in Melbourne the other day for five guineas.

After failing to distinguish herself on the English turf, the New Zealand-bred mare Nightfall, by Multiform—La Notte, is to be retired to the stud.

At Paris in May the Prix Lupin, a three-year-old race of £4114, was won by Viscount d'Harcourt's Holbein (Winkfield's Pride—Hurry), from a field of eleven.

In his always interesting notes in the "Referee," "Boond" writes:—Custance, the old-time English jockey, made a very good starter when Mr. McGeorge decided to "stand down," but poor Cus, recently died at the age of 60 years, and it was in 1860 that he won his first Derby on Thormanby in a field of thirty-five horses, of which John Scott's favourite, The Wizard, went out favourite at 3 to 1, but could only get to the second place. That was a memorable Derby, too, for in addition to my winning my first wager of 6d on the "boy in yellow," two of the best-backed horses, St. Albans and Buccaneer, had been either partially or wholly incapacitated from doing their best. St. Albans, in fact, did not face the flag at all, but Buccaneer was so cruelly "nobbled" a fortnight before the race that his chance was settled, and he came in down the course with the ruck. The betting was the heaviest ever known, Thormanby, at 4 to 1, The Wizard, Horror, Mainstone (owned by Lord Palmerston), Nutbourne, Tom Bowling, High Treason, Wallace, and Umpire each being backed to win a sackful of sovereigns. Umpire had been specially brought from New York to "knock the spots out of the derved Britishers" by his plucky owner, Mr. R. Ten Broeck, who had engaged George Fordham, the best jockey of his day, to ride him, and money came over in shiploads to put on the brave little chestnut, which I think got third. The start was delayed a long time, and when the flag had at last fallen, and the field had travelled 100 yards, it was seen that one horse was fully fifty yards behind everything else, he having fallen on his nose and knees the moment the flag fell. Fred Swindell, the great turf agent, who owned Wallace, and his friend Mr. Thornhill, had their glasses trimmed on the field from the stand when Fred, watching the last straggler, said: "I pity the poor beggar that owns that 'un, laad. What is it?" Thornhill took a long look and replied: "Why, dang it all, Fred, it's yours!"

If it should ever happen that Turf annals come to be finally compiled no jockey's name is likely to be more closely associated with the Derby than that of Archer. There can be no doubt, indeed, that he is the hero of the most remarkable Derby ever decided, for how he managed to get up on Bend Or and win by a head in 1880, after it had looked a guinea to a gooseberry on Robert the Devil, only the gods and the late Judge Clark will ever know. Apart from being a fine jockey, Fred was also a splendid judge of racing, and he was so keen in the pursuit of his profession that he was always on the look-out for the best mount. "What makes Fred so thin," said a brother jockey on one occasion, "is that he frets because he can't ride two winners in one race." Very seldom did Archer make a mistake when he "begged off" one horse to ride another, and we well recollect his chagrin when, in 1886, he failed to be relieved of the mount on Saraband for the Two Thousand in order that he might get up on Ormonde. As Archer very well knew, Saraband was not himself in the spring of his three-year-old career, while as the result of riding him in his exercise gallops he had come to the conclusion that Ormonde was "a horse and a half."

In pursuit of his onward policy, Mr. J. Wren announces a series of mammoth racing events for discussion at the pony racecourses in Melbourne. On Monday, 6th July, the Richmond Thousand, of £1000, five furlongs, was decided. The Ascot Five Hundred, of five furlongs, is a feature for Tuesday, 1st September, and on the day after the Melbourne Cup the Ascot Thousand, of £1000, five and a half furlongs, is the attraction. These three events represent the largest series of races yet submitted on any racecourse outside registered auspices in the world.

The V.R.C. Grand National Steeplechase will be run for next Saturday at Flemington. The following made the first acceptance:—Bribery 12.10, Kuala Lumpur 12.7, Superstition 11.13, Napier 11.11, Seymour 11.11, Tarpon 11.7, Eclair 11.5, Ally Sloper 11.5, Cardinal 11.2, Alcine 11.0, Eucambene 11.0, Boldsdale 11.0, Federal Court 10.12, Abdallah 10.10, Quail 10.8, Swimmer 10.7, Boomerang 10.7, Tact 10.6, Dalny 10.5, Wolseley 10.3, Novik 10.2, Blend 9.12, Confederate 9.12, P.M.G. 9.12, Charlemagne 9.9, Zali 9.7, Maine 9.5, Revealer 9.5, No Trouble 9.5, Mayo 9.5, Post Boy 9.3, Middle-rise 9.3, Comus 9.0, Outcast 9.0, Level Lyne 9.0, Sufferer 9.0, Albert 9.0, Storm 9.0, Roma 9.0.

COURSING.

CONCLUSION OF THE JUNE MEETING.

The North N.Z. Coursing Club brought another meeting to a close on Saturday last, when, taking into consideration the bad weather conditions which prevailed, there was an excellent attendance. Mr. Coombes occupied the judge's box, probably for the last time, and his decisions were promptly given, while Mr. G. Stevens' slipping was excellent. Although there were but few trials run, those provided some excellent sport, the finals being particularly close.

In the third ties of the Railway Maiden Stake, Lochnagar led Multiform four lengths to a splendid hare, but the brindle had come within a point of working this off when puss escaped. Blue Boy, although unsighted from slips, led Heather Belle three lengths, and in a pretty trial won handily.

In the fourth ties the go between Blue Boy and All Night was a very even one, and with a stronger hare the black would have about won.

In the deciding course Lochnagar led Blue Boy three lengths to a grand hare. Once in Blue Boy got very busy, refusing to allow the black to use the hare. Had puss gone to cover a trifle sooner Lochnagar must have won, but as she kept out Blue Boy had a single point in his favour when the hare reached home.

In the second ties of the Sylvia All-aged Stake, Mikado led Blacknose two and a-half lengths, but once in the brindle got busy, and killing smartly, just got the verdict.

The deciding course was a desperately close thing for the judge to decide. A great hare came out of the box and the slipper got them away well together, but unfortunately Blacknose was unsighted for the first fifty yards, Lady Rosette leading him some three lengths. The bitch failed to show the dash she had exhibited in earlier courses, and Blacknose, working grandly, had a point in his favour when puss went to cover.

The particulars were as follows:—

RAILWAY MAIDEN STAKE of £50. First dog, £25; runner-up, £12; third dog, £6; two dogs at £3 10s.

Third Ties.

Mr. S. Barnes' blk and w d Lochnagar (5) beat Mr. J. Smith's brdl d Multiform (4).
Mr. F. McReynolds' blue d Blue Boy (6) beat Mr. A. Menzies' brdl and w b Heather Bell (2½).
Mr. D. Howard's blk and w d All Night a bye.

Fourth Ties.

Blue Boy (5) beat All Night (3½).
Lochnagar a bye.

Deciding Course.

Mr. F. McReynolds' blue d Blue Boy (6), by Equipoise—Blue Girl II., beat Mr. S. Barnes' blk and w d Lochnagar (5), by Glenore—Waireka, and won the stake.

SYLVIA ALL-AGED STAKE of £20. First dog, £12; runner-up, £5 10s; third dog, £2 10s.

Second Ties.

Mr. E. J. Honiss' brdl and w d Blacknose (4½) beat Mr. P. Gardon's blk and w d Mikado (3½).
Mr. Martin Taylor's brdl and w b Lady Rosette a bye.