

Sporting Topics.

[By PETRONEL.]

The acceptances for the Wellington Cup are due with Mr H. M. Lyon on Friday, January 4.

Hastings ran a good half mile on the grass on Thursday morning.

St Peter and St Ursula worked together over seven furlongs on Thursday morning at three-quarter pace. Both moved freely, but were not required to exert themselves.

Advance, who is looking very well but hardly in such racing trim as he can be got, galloped a fast round with Tortulla and Whitney on Thursday morning.

Winsome's go over three-quarters of a mile on the tan on Thursday was a pleasing one. She is considered likely to run well forward in the Railway Handicap on Wednesday.

Calibre showed rattling good form in a half-mile flutter with Real Blue on Thursday morning. Dan O'Brien's colt should win at the forthcoming meeting.

Renown, who is still a bit sore, worked slowly over a couple of rounds on the tan on Thursday. The Drednought colt will have to improve if he is to win the Great Northern Derby.

Formula is meeting with increasing support for the Railway Handicap, and probably the Hon Hugh Mosman's filly will be very hard to beat. In every succeeding gallop she shows improved form.

Takapuna, the North Shore candidate for the Railway Handicap, is, I am told, in splendid fettle, and it is anticipated that the St Hippo colt will take a lot of beating.

At the Woodville Jockey Club's Summer Meeting held on Wednesday and Thursday, the totalisator investments amounted to £7862. This is £641 more than was speculated at the corresponding meeting last year.

Mr Martin Taylor, the Christchurch bookmaker and well-known owner of greyhounds, has arrived in Auckland in order to be present at the Summer Meeting of the Auckland Racing Club. Mr Taylor looks as well as ever.

Macmanemin's two-year-olds, Scotty, Cressy, and Kissaline, had a gallop on the course proper on Thursday morning. The trio ran about half-a-mile, and on this occasion Cressy appeared to have the best of the go.

Daytree covered two rounds on the tan on Thursday morning in a nice manner. The first part he travelled alone, but The Needle brought him along over the last seven furlongs. They finished together, both showing good form.

Bluejacket worked over a couple of rounds on the tan on Thursday morning. He had Nor-west with him for the first part, and Motor joined in over the last mile. The Cup horse moved well throughout. He was not asked to go fast, but accomplished a good working gallop.

On Thursday morning Skobelev, Fulmen, Ideal, and Paphos were companions in a mile and a-half gallop on the plough at a strong pace. The first three finished close together. In this effort Fulmen showed better form than he has yet exhibited at Ellerslie, and in consequence he advanced to 7 to 1 during the day.

The last has been seen on the Turf of that good mare, Auld Lang Syne, who distinguished herself at the V.R.C. Cup Meeting. In the company of her sister, Twine the Plaider, and Phillip, she has been sent to her owner's place near Parkes. Mr Foy, who has decided to breed from her, desires that she shall have a long rest before going to the stud.

The bookmakers do not care to cultivate the Black Rose. The Australian-Waitara mare is a kind of hardy annual, for she only blossoms once a year, and Woodville is the place where she best thrives. I believe the books throughout the colony were struck over her win on Wednesday, and the connections of the mare are reported to have had a good win.

Cuirasette, who is one of the well-treated ones in the Railway Handicap, must possess a big chance if she has come on since the Takapuna Meeting. There she ran some good races, and was evidently coming into form. Two years ago she won the race with 7 to 1 up, and paid a sensational dividend. This year she only has 4 to 1 more to carry.

Malatua's gallop on the tan on Thursday morning with Military and Peerage showed that Dan O'Brien's horse is improving. After the news got about his price for the Cup shortened several points. In this gallop Peerage tumbled over, but he was quickly up again none the worse for his spill. The boy riding him also escaped injury.

Miss Delaval was not worked on Thursday morning. Dan McLeod's filly was walking about in the middle of the course, but she was given no galloping. The rest will do her good, but I do not now think that she has much chance in the Auckland Cup. Miss Delaval has been kept up to the coker for a long time.

Mr W. Ryan, the Wanganui penciler, arrived in Auckland on Friday morning, looking as fit and well as usual. As is customary, he thinks he has laid the winning double-Cup and Railway Handicap—for the simple reason that he has laid La Gloria and the other favourites with very nearly everything in the Railway.

On Thursday morning La Gloria galloped over a mile and a half on the tan with Hengist as a companion for the first part of the journey, while Formula rattled over the last six furlongs with the Cup favourite. For some reason or other the mare did not altogether please the touts, and in consequence she eased slightly in the market. I do not attach much importance to the idea that La Gloria is going off, and expect to see her finish fairly close to the winner.

Paphos and Cavaliero ran a round on the tan on Saturday morning in 2 min 2 sec.

The Hon J. D. Ormond's two-year-old I. trepid is a big fe low. He looks very well. On Saturday morning he worked at half-pace.

Daytree, who was assisted by Blue Paul and The Needle, covered a mile and a-half at a sound pace on Saturday morning.

Kissaline, Scotty, and Cressy galloped three furlongs on the course proper on Saturday morning in 37 sec. The latter appeared to have a little the best of it at the finish.

The Hon George McLean arrived from the South on Monday in order to be present at the Summer Meeting of the Auckland Racing Club. He puts up at the Grand Hotel.

Advance, Tortulla, and Whitney worked together on Saturday morning. Whitney was given a good start, but the others rapidly overhauled him. Advance is looking in splendid fettle.

Mr J. Boreland, the owner of Fulmen, arrived from Dunedin by the Waihora on Thursday, and is staying at the Grand Hotel. Another Dunedin sport, Mr J. Gibbie of the Provincial Hotel, accompanied him, and is putting up at the same comfortable hostelry.

The Hon Hugh Mosman's property at Greenlane is in the market, and will either be sold or leased. It is a very handy little place. There is a capital little house of six rooms, the stables are excellent, the paddocking good, and altogether it is a compact racing establishment.

An English sporting paper declares that Mornington Cannon is the finest rider of the day, and well worthy of being ranked with the best jockeys of bye-gone times, of which Fordham, Jim Robinson, and Fred Archer are the greatest examples.

Hohoro galloped six furlongs on Saturday morning in company with Sparkling Water. He gave the filly a good start, and at first he moved slowly. At the five-furlong post he was fairly in his stride, and, catching Sparkling Water easily, he ran the six furlongs in 1 min 15 sec, hard held.

Coronet's gallop over two miles on the tan on Saturday morning was a very useful one. He had various horses to assist him, and made the following times: Three furlongs, 41 sec; half-mile, 54 sec; five furlongs, 1 min 5 sec; six furlongs, 1 min 20 sec; one mile, 1 min 48 sec; first round, 2 min 13 sec; and the two miles, 3 min 42 sec.

Bluejacket, who is at the time of writing favourite for the Auckland Cup, on Saturday morning executed a slashing gallop over a mile and a half on the tan. He was accompanied by Motor, but the St Leger horse very quickly left him behind. The first six furlongs were run in 1 min 17 sec, the first round in 1 min 57 sec, and the mile and a-half in 2 min 36 sec. Bluejacket moved well throughout and finished up really well. The gallop impressed the onlookers considerably.

On Friday, January 4, nominations close with Mr H. M. Lyon, the Secretary of the Wellington Racing Club, for the following events to be run at the Summer Meeting:—Anniversary Handicap, President's Handicap, the three Hack Handicaps, Nursery Handicap, Telegraph Handicap, January Handicap, Electric Handicap, Juvenile Handicap, Welter Handicap, Metropolitan Handicap, Summer Handicap, Fitzherbert Handicap, Pencarrow Welter, Federal Handicap, and Zealandia Plate. In each race the entry fee is one sovereign.

A big contingent of young thoroughbreds has arrived from Tucks Tucks at T. Payten's place, Randwick. The draft numbers 22. It includes three year-old fillies by Gozo from Old Maid, My Own, the I.L. filly, Marjorie and Doris; two-year-old geldings by the same sire from Pastime (leased to W. Miller, Rosehill) and Sea Frog (owned by W. Forrester). By Metal there are three-year-old fillies out of Weegoo, Hannah, Bay Rose, Housemaid and Border-maid; geldings came from Madge, Lady D., Tallagalla, Carmen, Rehua, Dairy Maid, Schoolgirl, Staylace, Dora and Morna.

I take the following about the St Albans sale from the Sydney "Referee":—Havoc comes to New South Wales as a result of his purchase by Mr C. Baldwin for the Durham Court Stud. At 730gs Havoc will probably be a good investment, and Mr Baldwin does not make mistakes in judgment often. There was a spirited competition for some of the brood mares. Aura was perhaps entitled to distinction as the gem of the stud. She was secured by Mr G. G. Stead, who probably got a bargain at 500gs. I believe she is to be mated with Stepiak, and if she throws another Aurum or Auraria Mr Stead will be more satisfied. Melodious, with a promising colt foal by Bill of Portland, brought 500gs. Mr J. McDonald secured two grand mares in Bonnie Rosette and She, giving the top price of the sale for the first named. She has a colt brother to Kinglike at foot, and has been served by Wallace, so that Mr McDonald is likely to get his money back soon. She should prove a valuable addition to Mr McDonald's stud also. The Robinson Crusoe mare Emmie was bought by Mr I. Karnshaw for himself, but the chances are he will be asked to part with her at a profit. She is the dam of Beans, and has a colt brother to that filly at her side. Elsie, the only St Simon mare in the colonies, brought a good figure, 525gs, and considering she has a colt with her by Wallace, Mr Phillip Russell could not have made a bad deal. Mr A. S. Chirnside bought Tortilla, and perhaps means to build the Newminster Stud up. That fine mare Symmetry was secured by Mr James Thompson at 460gs, and several other Trenton mares come to New South Wales, whilst Sir George Clifford got others, including Eleusive and Madowla, for New Zealand. The total of the sale was £37,847, which, added to £2284 got for the racehorses in August, totals £46,131.

Mr G. G. Stead left Christchurch for Auckland on Friday.

Ideal, Fulmen, and Skobelev galloped in company on Saturday morning over a mile and a-half on the plough. Fulmen displayed improved form, and the others also moved over the ground very freely.

Mr Drake, one of the rich American owners who invaded England this past season, sold off all his horses at the end of October, owing, it is stated, to the Tammany Boss, Mr R. Croker, requiring his services—and his money—during the Presidential Election. Many other wealthy Americans departed about the same time, the reason for their leaving being the same as in Mr Drake's case.

The Wellington Trotting Club's Summer Meeting will be held at the Recreation Ground, Petone, on Saturday and Wednesday, January 19 and 23. The stake money for the two days amounts to £430. Nominations close with the secretary, Mr E. W. Garner, at the Clarendon Hotel on Tuesday, January 8. I have not yet received a programme, so I cannot refer in detail to the various races. I hope, however, that the Club will receive good nominations and that many of the Auckland owners will be represented.

On Saturday morning a large attendance assembled at Ellerslie to see the winding-up gallops. Bluejacket's mile and a-half was the best of the morning. In addition to those I have mentioned elsewhere the following did sound work:—St Peter, St Ursula, La Gloria, Beddington, Estitia, Rosella, Hastings, Formula, Winsome, Jim Kea, Jabber, Hengist, Soulfish, Toros, Lady Dash, Calibre, Peerage, Knight of Athol, Admiral Hawke, Balbirnie, The Waster, Formosan, Tim, Dingo, Lena, Chief Miss, Mamos, Kissaline, Scotty, Cressy, and Miss Drury.

Nominations for all events to be run at the Autumn Meeting of the Taranaki Jockey Club, to be held on February 13 and 14, close on Wednesday, January 9, with the secretary, Mr Russell Fleetwood. Of course the principal event of the fixture is the Taranaki Cup, run over a mile and a-half. This year the race is worth 850 sovs, of which the second horse receives 35 sovs, and the third 15 sovs. The big race on the second day is the Autumn Handicap, worth 200 sovs, and run over a mile and a-quarter. The other races requiring attention from owners and trainers on the date mentioned are the following: Steward's Handicap, Henui Hack Handicap, First Hurdle, First Hack Hurdles, First Hack Flat, Flying Handicap, Grandstand Handicap, Hautoki Handicap, Second Hurdles, Second Hack Hurdles, Second Hack Flat, and Farewell Handicap. In each case the nomination fee is one sovereign. Weights for the Cup, Stewards', First Hurdles, and Flying Handicaps are due on Wednesday, January 23. Further particulars may be found in the programme which appears on another page.

The other day I had a hurried look through the Grand Hotel. The lessee, Mr A. Johnston, has had many marked improvements effected, and now the Grand is one of the best appointed and most comfortable hotels in the Australasian colonies. The house has been considerably enlarged, the principal additions being a fine large and well lighted dining-room, a capital billiard-room, some new sitting rooms, and twenty new bedrooms. The furnishing and upholstery has been done in the best taste by Messrs Tonson, Garlick and Co, who have carried out the ideas of the host and hostess with a very pleasing result. The large drawing room has been refurnished, and a very pretty sitting-room is the Pink Room, painted and decorated in accordance with Mrs Johnston's ideas. The single bedrooms are all light and airy, and are furnished very tastefully and very comfortably. The double bedrooms are in every way excellent, while there is one big room most elaborately decorated and fitted up. Mr and Mrs Johnston are well-known to the travelling public, and now that they have a hotel second to none in the colony, they are sure to become better known. The cuisine at the Grand is excellent and the wine list shows that some first-class vintages are stored in the cellars.

Florizel II.'s subscription for 1901 has been full for some time, and it is now stated that the preposterous price of 1,000 has been offered for each of two subscriptions, writes "Vigilant" in the *Sporting Times*. Surely this is an exaggeration of the following advertisement which appears in the *Racing Calendar*:—

WANTED—A subscription to Florizel II. for 1901. £100 premium would be paid.

As the fee for 1901 was 100 guineas this would mean 200 guineas, which would be a fair price seeing that the horse is advertised at that price for 1902. All these have, however, been taken, and a list has been opened for 1903 at 300 guineas. This booking forward is on a scale that is calculated to meet with the approval of Mr George Edwards, who says that he never beat even in the best days of the Gaiety, which we take it are the present. If 1000 guineas is really been offered, or a subscription to Florizel II., all that we can ask is, What is the world coming to? That his first season has been a great success we allow; but a couple of good two-year-olds and one or two others as a first attempt would not have been sufficient, only a few years ago, to have raised a sire to even hundred guineas rank. Many will recollect what a tremendous season Thormanby had in 1869, when winning two-year-old followed winning two-year-old, and Sunshine, Normanby, Hester, and Camel were of the number. His fee did not go beyond 50 guineas. Stockwell, notwithstanding his great career, which has not been eclipsed, and never will be, was advertised in the same "Calendar" at 75 guineas, Voltigeur at 20 guineas, Parmesan 20 guineas, Speculum 15 guineas, and Wild Deyrell at 15 guineas.

In referring to the sale of the St Albans stud, Terlinga, in the "Australasian" writes:— "Aura the queen of the stud, and as grand a looking brood mare as ever man clapped eyes on, was next to Wallace, the bargain of the sale. Foaled in 1886 and with nothing at foot, buyers were chary, and Mr W. F. Dakin, for Mr G. G. Stead, of New Zealand, secured the dam of Aurum and Auraria for 500 guineas. If she throws one good foal to Stepiak she will be dirt cheap at the money."

The handicapping of Diplomat and Romany in the Nursery Handicap, run on the first day of the Christchurch Racing Club's Meeting, led Mr Stead to write to the President. I herewith append Mr Stead's letter and the reply received from Mr C. Hood Williams, the President of the Christchurch Racing Club:—"From G. G. Stead, to the President of the Christchurch Racing Club. Dear Sir,—May I request your club to ask your handicapper on what principle he handicapped Diplomat and Romany for the Nursery Handicap on the first day of the meeting, Diplomat being awarded 8st 7lb and Romany 7st 13lb. Both are two year-olds, and so far neither had, I believe, started in public. It is true one is a gelding, but that only accounts for 3lb difference. I am making the enquiry on principle.—G. G. STEAD." "From Christchurch Racing Club to G. G. Stead. Dear Sir,—With reference to your letter of 14th inst., on the subject of weights given to your horse Diplomat at the meeting of the Christchurch Racing Club, I am directed to inform you that it was laid before the stewards, who came to the unanimous opinion that it would be most undesirable to involve a handicapper in any discussion upon the adjustment of the weights of his handicap, more especially when he possesses the confidence of the stewards of a racing club. Were every dissatisfied owner encouraged to question the handicapper's weights and enter into a discussion with him upon the merits or otherwise of his handicaps, it would be the introduction of a system the stewards of the Christchurch Racing Club cannot countenance or encourage.—C. HOOD WILLIAMS, President Christchurch R.C."

The judges appointed to consider the appeal of R. W. Paterson v. Hawkes' Bay Jockey Club gave their decision on Friday night in the case of the disqualification of the former. The findings of the stewards as to the offences alleged to have been committed by Mr Paterson and the disqualifications imposed were confirmed, and that part of the appeal dismissed. The secretary of the Club intimated that the Club was willing to re-consider the period of disqualification if application were made by Mr Paterson. The judge thought the interpretation of rules 111, 118 and 137 adopted by the Club was incorrect. The decision as to the stakes was reviewed and it was directed that the stakes won by Ringlet and Dr Bill be paid to Mr Paterson, as neither he nor the horses were disqualified at the time when the races were on. Appellant's deposit was ordered to be returned. The judges were Messrs H. D. Bell, J. A. Cook and the Hon O. J. Johnson.

Inter-Provincial.

[By OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS.]

CANTERBURY.

HORSES AT THE CHRISTCHURCH R.C. MEETING—RAGERS FOR THE COAST—RACING TALK.

CHRISTCHURCH, December 21.

Sant Ilario only started once at the Christchurch Club's Meeting, and in a five horse race he finished last. He seemed unable to keep pace with Dundas, Hermosa, Spinner, and even Clytie. The son of St Leger appeared to be a trifle sore, but there cannot be much wrong with him, as he was taken over to the West Coast on Monday last to fulfil engagements there.

F. Holmes' team, consisting of Cameo, Cadet, and Hypnotist, left for the Coast on Monday. The trio are in capital form, and should more than pay their way.

Woodroffe's horses, Sant Ilario, Derry, Sarah Jennings, The Shaughran, in charge of M. Goodger, Garmoran piloted by J. Sullivan, and several trotters have also left for the Coast.

W. McDonald took Mr Victor Harris' horses, Paladin, Straithsairn, Magnificent, and Skipper North on Saturday. The quartette have engagements at Manawatu, Rangitikei, and Wairarapa Meetings. Mr Harris usually sends his horses over to the Coast for the Christmas Meetings there, but this year he resolved to patronise North Island Meetings. I wish him a successful trip.

George Hope had no luck with the Spinner and Terrapin at the Christchurch Meeting. He had the pair looking bright and well, but neither got place money.

Cadet, who won two Welter Handicaps at the Christchurch races, is a six-year-old gelding by Vanguard. He has been taken over to the Coast.

First Blood, who has been under a cloud for some time, ran in something like his old form at the Christchurch Meeting, and managed to win a race. Now that he appears to have struck form he should win some more races before long.

Dundas is another animal who broke a long string of also started at the late meeting. He was beaten by Hermosa on the first day, but in the mile and a-quarter race on the second day he simply romped away from Hermosa at the finish. Dundas is seen at his best over a mile to a mile and a-quarter distances.

The hurdle racer, Skipper, who has gone North, was given a run in the welter races last week, and performed creditably.