

That good colt Great Scot is now on his way to India in the steamer *Foranatus* (says the "Referee"). Before leaving Melbourne he was insured for £3500, and on arrival in India he will be sent to Bangalore. There is no doubt as to the chestnut being a very hardy customer. When he left Sydney for Melbourne as a two-year-old and before he had ever raced at all, he presented such a strung-up appearance as to suggest that he would be lucky to see the season through. However, so far from racing knocking him out, it improved him. Still, sprinting was generally regarded as his forte, and even when he ran Abundance such a great race in the V.R.C. Derby, many were disposed to regard his performance in the light of a fluke. His running in the Autumn at Flemington completely dispelled that idea, though, and his efforts in the St. Leger, Australian Cup, Champion Race, and Loch Plate demonstrated that he was a better colt than anyone outside his trainer credited him with being. Though unsuccessful at the A.J.C. Autumn Meeting, he ran well in each of his races, and if he retains his form in India, his present owner will have no cause to regret the high figure he paid for him.

The horse presents us with an example of one of the most perfect pieces of machinery in the living world. In truth, among the works of human ingenuity it cannot be said that there is any locomotive so perfectly adapted to its purposes, doing so much with so small a quantity of fuel as this machine of Nature's manufacture—the horse. And as a necessary consequence of any sort of perfection, of mechanical perfection as of others, you find the horse a beautiful creature, one of the most beautiful of all land animals. Look at the perfect balance of its form and the rhythm and force of its action. The locomotive machinery is in its slender fore and hind legs; they are flexible and elastic levers, capable of being moved by very powerful muscles; and in order to supply the engines which work these levers with the force which they expend, the horse is provided with a very perfect apparatus for grinding its food and extracting therefrom the requisite fuel.—Huxley.

It would seem that the Southern sportsman, Mr G. Ruthven, has a very fair gelding in Casque. He is a three-year-old chestnut gelding by Casket from Sweet Briar, and has won on five occasions out of seven starts.

Nor-West's fine showing in the Tally-ho Steeplechase suggests the fact that he would have been very dangerous in the big race if his rider had not come off. At the time he was going very strongly, while in the next race, despite a bad blunder, the son of Sou'-Wester won without an effort.

I do not remember having seen a larger crowd at any of the previous Ellerslie winter meetings than was present on the second day, the reason being that it was a holiday. The totalisator figures would have been far ahead of the corresponding ones last year but for the amount of money locked up while the Battleaxe protest was being considered.

Mr Alf. Adams, of Tattersall's Club, is paying a visit to Australia. During his absence Mr George Keven, junr., will look after his interests, and will attend to all customers.

It is hardly fair either to owners, riders, or horses, holding a steeplechase so late in the afternoon, as was the case with the Ladies' Bracelet. A big risk of a serious accident is run when horses are asked to go out and compete in a cross-country event when it is too dark even to see the colours of the riders. In future the club would do well to make the final event each day a flat race, when the risk would be minimised.

From time to time some remarkable exhibitions of horsemanship are given by our local amateurs, and this also applies to other parts of the globe. I have seen some shockingly bad riding at the military sports, at Sandown Park, in England, or at the Hunt Club meetings in Australia. Now it has become a maxim that when amateurs are up the rule is to pick out the best man and back him, and never mind the horse. I am tempted into making this remark after witnessing the wonderful performance on the part of the rider of Miss Drury in the Hunters' Steeplechase, on Saturday last. No doubt this gentleman considered that the correct way to win was to keep the daughter of Drury Lane so far back that the other competitors had nearly two hundred yards start in the last half-mile and then give the mare her head, but I am afraid he else agreed with him. As an exhibition of how a race should not be ridden it was masterly in the extreme, and I was not at all surprised to find the amateur horseman vigorously hooted on returning to scale.

Spalpeen has disappointed his owner on very many occasions when raced on the flat, but judging from the prominent manner he has been shaping over the hurdles his true vocation would seem to have been found at last. It is a mistake to expect too much from a three-year-old in this respect, but if the son of Gosssoon is not asked to do too much till he gets a little more age there seems a considerable probability that he will prove one of the best horses in the colony over the small sticks. His victory in the Second Maiden Hurdle Race was a very popular one, for Mr Marshall has stuck to the chestnut colt in the most plucky manner.

The big steeplechase to be run at the Wellington Meeting did not attract as many jumpers as was expected, but then high-class chasers are all too scarce this season. Eighteen horses have been entered, included among the Aucklanders being Nor'-West, The Pullack, Straybird, Marine and Haydn.

Dividends on the horses Durbar and Typewriter, who competed in the Otahuhu Trotting Cup, will be paid at Mr W. Bloomfield's office, in Durham-street, today and to-morrow.

Nonette is being given daily walking exercise, and appears to be all right. The son of Seaton Delaval is such a favourite with Auckland racegoers that they will be very glad indeed to see him carrying silk again.

Never was the truth of the old saying "There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip" better exemplified than in the case of Hipstone in the Second Maiden Hurdle Race. As he came cantering up the straight, with nothing else within many lengths of him, the race looked an absolute certainty for the son of St. Hippo, but there was just one hurdle between him and victory, and this brought him down. After negotiating the big jumps in such a proficient manner, it was hard luck to lose the stake when the win seemed assured.

What a host of good horses Persimmon has sired in the Old Country. Another descendant has proved successful in a big event lately, this being in the Manchester Cup, run on June 6, which fell to Zimfandel, a son of the King's famous stallion and Medria. Clifton Hall and Bachelor's Button filled the places.

The pigeon shooting tournament promoted by the Ellerslie Gun Club, was held yesterday at Ellerslie, and proved a decided success, most of the crack shots in the Colony competing. Messrs Gorrick, Fraser, Bloomfield, Kelly, Julian, Williams and Chavannes each killed ten birds without a break, and these seven gentlemen divided the stake. Subsequently, a sweepstake at £2 in was shot off, this falling to Mr Fraser, whose nearest competitors were Messrs Hollis and "Cashmore." I hope to be able to give particulars of the scoring in our next issue, together with some photographs taken while the competition was in progress.

It often falls to the lot of a writer on turf topics to be obliged to criticise the work of a handicapper, and accordingly I have often attempted to show the weak points or otherwise in many of Mr Evett's adjustments. It is always more pleasant to praise than to blame, and therefore it is with no small feeling of satisfaction that I am able to heartily congratulate the veteran handicapper for the good work done at the recent A.R.C. Meeting. A finer race, for instance, than the Prince of Wales' Handicap could not even be imagined, for the judge was unable to separate the first three horses, while three others were within a neck. This is handicapping indeed, and one of which Mr Evett may feel justifiably proud.

I cannot help thinking that Mr D. Fraser was looking for trouble when he made a match for £100 aside to shoot at one hundred pigeons, and agreed to give his opponent, Mr Gorrick, three yards start. When the offer was made it looked one of the greatest certainties it is possible to conceive of that the Sydney shootist would win, and Mr Fraser must be complimented on his pluck, if not on his discretion, in trying conclusions with such a formidable opponent. It is interesting to note that Mr Gorrick killed ninety-nine birds out of the hundred, but two fell just over the sixty yards boundary. He had to use his second barrel but fourteen times as against twenty-three times by Mr Fraser. This is, of course, irrespective of misses; the winner missed three birds, and Mr Fraser ten. A full account of the match appears in another column.

The large team of horses and ponies which Mr Sol. Green got together for shipment to South Africa were to have left Melbourne on June 9. Among the lot are Undecided, Composer, Insect, Santoi, Self-Defence, Altitude, Absolutely, Acorn, Little Swan, Bobadil, Tangle, Morning Star, Duration, Cast-off, Little Bess, Sal, Nightshade, a yearling colt by Musketoon from Keepsake, and a black yearling colt by Russey from Blodwin.

The law of George II., which prohibited pony racing, was still in force when an old "Guide" was published in 1787, and an extract from the Act is placed first among the contents, viz.:—"That from and after June 24, 1740, any person who shall enter, start, or run a horse, mare, or gelding, for less than £50, forfeits the sum of £200. Provided that every race that shall be thereafter run for any plate, prize, or sum of money, be begun and ended in one day" (those were the days of four mile heats, three heats if necessary deciding the race). "Horses may run for any sum on Newmarket Heath in the counties of Cambridge and Suffolk, and Black Hambleton in the county of York, without incurring any penalty."

About the most promising jockey on the Eastern Turf in America is a lad named Hicks, whom Mr Percy Belmont has paid 5,000 dollars for first call on his services this season.

Reversal of form has become so common in Sydney (says the "Referee"), and has been taken so little notice of by stewards, that the disqualification of M. Thompson and J. Brooks for two years in connection with the running of Australia came as a shock to several owners and trainers. At Tattersall's Meeting on May 16 Australia, with St. finished nowhere in the Flying Handicap, and though her running was not questioned by the stewards on that occasion, the handicapper was evidently not satisfied, as, when next he weighted her, he put her up 7lb. The result proved the correctness of his judgment, and the stewards thereupon took action. Possibly the punishment meted out may scare some of the waiting division.

It takes a lot of weight to stop a good horse when really well. Lady Lillian was given 9st 13lbs in the Provincial Handicap at Dunedin on Saturday, despite which fact she was made a very warm favourite. The brilliant daughter of Phaethon and Lady Zetland proved equal to the occasion, for, despite the fact that Terrapin passed her at the bottom of the straight, she came again in the most resolute manner, and won comfortably. It was one of Mr Gates' mares' most taking performances.

Messrs Macmanamin and Davies' head the list of winning owners at the recent A.R.C. Meeting, this result being entirely due to Haydn, who won for them £675. Mr F. Watson is second with £420, most of which was won for him by Battleaxe. Mr J. George ranks third with £365 opposite his name, while Mr J. Marshall's cheque, thanks to the efforts of Oannongate, amounted to £300. Others who won more than "century" are Messrs T. McKay, R. Hannon, F. L. Armitage, E. J. Sage, E. Cecil, and W. C. Ring.

Mr Henrys' adjustments for the first day's races at the approaching meeting of the Hawke's Bay Jockey Club have been declared, and will be found in another column. In the Hawke's Bay Hurdles the best-treated horse, to my mind, is Meteor. The little son of Mitiora won the Campbell Hurdles from end to end under 9.8, whereas at Hawke's Bay he has been allotted the minimum. It is just possible the two miles may find him out, but I doubt it. Waiwera is still loaded up with weight, and on his Auckland form can have no possible chance. Awahuri is very well handicapped indeed. Before the A.R.C. meeting I was strongly of opinion that the son of Kaiwhaka should have been sent for the big hurdle race instead of the steeplechase, and am more satisfied than ever that an error of judgment was made by his connections. He has been given a good chance to distinguish himself over the small sticks at Hawke's Bay. Otairi's exhibition at Ellerslie was of such a brief duration that no line could be found as to how the son of Kempenfeldt might have shaped, but he has not been harshly dealt with. Mr Evett gave Awahuri 110 and Otairi 10.4 in the big event at Auckland when they did not meet. Mr Henrys considers that the difference between them should be but three pounds, so that the advantage appears to lie with Mr Donnelly's gelding. If Battleaxe is started he must run well, while Princess of Thule on her North Shore form will take a tremendous lot of beating with only 9.9 to carry. Those mentioned seem to possess the best chances of the twenty horses handicapped.

THE BATTLEAXE INCIDENT.

There have been several unpopular demonstrations made at Ellerslie against owners who have been supposed to be "running a bye," but I doubt whether anything quite so bad has been seen or heard before, as when Battleaxe returned to scale after winning the Grand National Steeplechase. The public contrasted his form in the Remuera Hurdles with his easy victory in the big race, and appeared to have arrived at the conclusion that there was a screw

loose somewhere, that is judging by the tremendous storm of hooting which broke out immediately, and which was continued without intermission till the protest board was displayed, when cheering took the place of the groans and hoots. However, after a lengthy consideration, the stewards decided there was nothing wrong, in which connection it would be interesting to know how many present agreed with the verdict.

It is perhaps hardly fair to condemn a man unheard, as the great majority of the public who were present at Ellerslie on Wednesday week, did Mr Fred Watson, so it may be as well to give the owner of Battleaxe's version of the sensational incident. During a conversation with the Southern sportsman, he told me that up to three weeks before the National Meeting, the son of Hotchkiss was lame, and consequently restricted to the mildest of exercise on the beach. He had apparently strained a sinew in the near shoulder, and was simply led about. It was not till a fortnight before the Remuera Hurdles that he had a saddle on his back. When the time came for that race none of the stable had much confidence in the gelding's ability to win, and Mr Watson's investments on the totalisator amounted to a solitary fiver. Battleaxe was all at sea in the heavy going, and jumped poorly. At the last hurdle, when the gelding cut his stifle rather badly, Johnson eased his mount thinking he was more injured than was really the case. Mr Watson is of opinion that, despite this mishap, the gallop did Battleaxe so much good that he was able to show a remarkable improvement at the next time of asking. The rumour about a sensational double bet is the veriest rubbish, as the only double wager booked by Mr Watson was one of 200 to 4, Awahuri and Battlaxe, while about £7 was the total wager on the race straight out. Although, of course, those who witnessed the two races will have their own opinion in the matter, yet there is no getting away from the fact that a horse who was much backward in his work would be greatly benefited in a strong gallop in public, and also that the stewards, after considering the matter at length, decided that everything was in order. Mr Watson thinks that if the public had known the true facts of the case, there would not only have been no hostile demonstration, but instead some well-deserved cheering at the success of a good horse under difficulties.

THE SYLVIA PARK STALLIONS.

In another column a preliminary advertisement of Messrs Nathan's three stallions will be found, these being Seaton Delaval, Explosion, and San Francisco. The former is so well known as scarcely to need any description. The son of the English Derby and St. Leger winner, Melton, and Rosedale has already sired many winners, included among the list being such brilliant performers as Nonette, Rosella, Miss Delaval, Blue Paul, Val Rosa, Beddington, Laetitia, Idas, Northumberland, Gladisla, Porirua, Kamo, Gladstone, and many others. There will be no trouble whatever experienced in filling his list at thirty guineas a mare. It is worthy of note that Seaton Delaval's sire Melton is standing at the Westerham Hill Stud, in Kent, at the big fee of 400 guineas.

Explosion is also at the service of owners, and the black son of Cuirassier and Jadestone should soon make a name for himself at the stud. He was beyond question a most brilliant performer, while his breeding is on very fashionable lines indeed. Cuirassier is a full brother to Trenton, being one of the great Musket-Frilty family, while Jadestone is full of Stockwell and Fisherman blood. At 15 guineas Explosion's services should be freely utilised.

San Francisco has yet to make a name for himself, but that he will make it, and a great name at that, is as nearly a certainty as can well be. Being got by that prince of English stallions, St. Simon, from Isobel, he is consequently a full brother of St. Frusquin, and anyone turning up English records will be immediately impressed with the marvellous success of this sire. His sons and daughters have been scooping in most of the big races for the last two or three seasons, two of his best known representatives being Flotsam and Quintessence. St. Frusquin's younger brother, San Francisco, was a good performer, and is a very handsome stallion, so that in fixing his stud fee at 15 guineas the owners of Sylvia Park appear to have erred on the side of moderation. Unless one is greatly mistaken, it will not be very long before this son of St. Simon commands a much higher figure.

St. Hippo may be leased for the season. This great son of St. Leger and Hippona is proving himself a most reliable sire, and has already begot many winners, which, indeed, is not to be wondered at, for the New Zealand and Auckland Cup winner was one of the most brilliant horses that has ever carried silk in the colony.