

Sporting Topics.

(By "The Judge.")

Nominations for all events to be decided at the Summer Meeting of the Northern Wairoa Racing Club are due with Mr E. Stehr on Thursday, November 19.

Owners are reminded that several of the Auckland Racing Club's future classic races close on Friday, October 30, at 9 p.m. These are the Great Northern Guineas, 1905, the Great Northern Champagne Stakes, 1905, the 32nd G.N. Derby, 1905-6, the 11th Royal Stakes, 1905-6. (two-year-olds and yearlings) and the Great Northern Oaks, 1906. Entries for any of these events can be made either to Mr Percival, secretary to the A.R.C., or to the secretary of the C.J.C., Canterbury; D.J.C., Dunedin; H.B.J.C., Napier; W.R.C., Wellington; M.R.C., Blenheim; V.R.C., Melbourne; A.J.C., Sydney.

General entries for the Auckland Racing Club Spring Meeting are due with the secretary, at the club's office, in Durham-street, on or before Friday, October 23.

Midia showed good form at Napier Park, winning both Hurdle events. She is a six-year-old roan mare, and was got by Handsome Jack from a Southern Chief mare. Midia ran in the colours of Mr A. Leicester, that is, if black and white can be considered colours. On both occasions Mr Lowry's Quilt gelding Comfort finished in second place.

The most sensational incident of the week is the breakdown of the New Zealand Cup favourite, Lady Lillian, who is said to have pulled up lame after executing a two mile gallop. Everyone will sympathise with her owner over the mishap, for there is no doubt if all had been well with the daughter of Lady Zealand on the eventful day, she would have been one of the hardest to beat in the great Spring event at Riccarton.

An offer to-day to take 7 to 1 Wairiki for the Eew Zealand Cup did not lead to business, the best price obtainable being 6 to 1, and not much at that price. Machine Gun is a pronounced favourite in the Stewards. A number of inquiries have taken place for different horses. Roseal has been backed for a large amount, and is as good a favourite as any horse in the race with Southerners. There have also been enquiries for Mars and Shrapnel.

On Wednesday next the Wellington Racing Club will commence their Spring Meeting, and there is every indication that some exceptionally interesting racing will be seen at the gathering. A number of Cup candidates will be seen out, which will naturally tend to increase the interest. In the Wellington Handicap Battleaxe has been very leniently treated with 7st 6lb, but I expect to see him beaten by Pallas and Royal Fusilier. Evening should win the Hurdle Handicap, while Sharshoot ought to run prominently in the Shorts' Handicap. Bandmaster and Sea Lion look like fighting out the Wainui Handicap, while Madrigal or Black Reynard may have most to say in the Flying Handicap.

In the trotting column of this paper will be found a lengthy report of the first meeting of the New Zealand Trotting Association, which said meeting was largely taken up with the affairs of the Auckland Trotting Club, and in our news from Canterbury the same matter crops up. From this it will be seen that the local club desired every publicity given to the evidence taken at the recent enquiry into its affairs, but seemingly the Association was averse to this step. It would indeed be very hard to give any reason for this, unless it be that the Association is of opinion that the evidence submitted to the commission and their finding are too much at variance to be made public. This is the only logical conclusion to be arrived at.

That there is no such a thing as a certainty in racing was once again evidenced when Treadmill, the best colt in the Colony, went down before his stable mate Quarryman in the Hawke's Bay Guineas. That the aptly-named son of Bill of Portland and Catherine Wheel gave Quarryman fully a stone beating at Wanganui, cannot be disputed, but the latter very effectually turned the tables on his opponent at Hawke's Bay. He followed it up by winning the King Edward Handicap in fine style, putting down a strong field. It is quite evident that in the two Bill of Portland colts Sir George Clifford possesses two exceptionally high-class horses, who should win many a good race before their turf career closes.

Mr S. Bradley intends leaving for Christchurch to-day, to see his horse Wairiki undergoing the final preparations for the Cup.

Hesper (Lochness—Dreamland) and Miss Simon (Soult—Pikau) have each produced fillies to Flintlock.

The next payment for the New Zealand Cup falls due on the 23rd inst.

The Auckland, Strathavon, has only been given easy work since his arrival at Riccarton.

The Wellington Racing Club is inviting applications for the position of secretary at a salary of £350 per annum.

It is reported that the well-known horseman C. Jenkins is laid up with an attack of typhoid fever. A similar rumour was current a few weeks ago, but there was no foundation for it. If Dame Rumour is correct this time, I trust the popular jockey will have a speedy recovery.

I have to acknowledge receipt of the "Rules of Trotting" for 1903, which is published by the New Zealand Trotting Association. It is a very neatly got up book, and contains the Amendments by the recent Conference of the various Trotting Clubs.

The Hon. J. D. Ormond's Trent effected something in the nature of a surprise in the Maiden Hack Race at Napier Park on Tuesday, by putting down a warm favourite in Spoil, who, on form, certainly seemed to possess something of a mortgage on the event. Trent is a three-year-old bay gelding by The Officer out of Trentalto.

The programme of the Te Aroha Hack Meeting is advertised in this issue. The fixture is to take place on Monday, November 9, when seven races will be run off. Nominations for all events will be received by Mr S. Lawson, secretary, up till 5 p.m. on Monday, 26 October, and the Handicaps are due to make their appearance on the following Thursday.

The Hon. J. D. Ormond and Mr T. H. Lowry were in great form on the opening day at Napier Park. The former's cerise colours caught the judge's eye first on three occasions borne by Trent, Menura and Bandmaster, while Mr Lowry's navy blue and gold jacket was to the front on Royal Fusilier, Rose Madder and Madrigal.

Mr Stead has experienced a stroke of very bad luck in losing his Multiform—Aura filly. She was a beautifully made specimen of the thoroughbred, and as her dam has thrown such grand racers as Aururia and Aurum the loss must be a severe one, for she should have proved of much value at the stud.

It is good news to hear that the Auckland crack Wairiki has quite thrown off the effects of the cold which he contracted on the voyage South, and that he is doing good work on the track. The big son of Soult again ranks as first favourite for the New Zealand Cup, a good commission having been worked on his behalf during the week.

That clinking good mare Sceptre has added yet another race during the week to her ever-lengthening record. This was the Duke of York Stakes, of 1,500 guvs, which was run at the Kempton Park Meeting. The finish must have been very exciting, as the brilliant daughter of Persimmon only won by a head from Happy Slave. Sceptre is indeed proving a good investment for Capt. Hamar Bass.

The fastest mare in the States is said to be Divina, a four-year-old brown filly bred by John Mackay, Superintendent of the Rancho del Paso. She is by the imported sire Bassetlaw and her dam is Angelique by imported Darebin or Warwick, second dam Altitude by Alarm, third dam Beresina by Kentucky. Divina ran a mile a few weeks ago with 106 pounds up in 1:38½ and later carrying 114 pounds won the mile handicap in 1:39 eased up.

Those who heard the Westminster Abbey Glee Party when they were last in Auckland will learn with pleasure that the silvery-voiced vocalists will open a short season of three nights at the Opera House, commencing next Tuesday evening. As before old English glees, Madrigals, catches and ballads will be given in the inimitable style which the party have made peculiarly their own. To listen to some such song as "Sweet and Low" as the Abbey singers can give it is a pure delight, and it is a certainty that packed houses will be the rule next week, for the lovers of true melody are simply legion.

The following is an anecdote of Princess Louise of Schleswig-Holstein:—"The younger daughter of Princess Christian once had a very funny adventure while on board ship. She was taking a sea voyage for the sake of her health, and in the Channel the weather became so rough that the Princess was imprisoned in her cabin. Disgusted at her enforced seclusion, she looked with secret envy at the crew in their tarpaulins, until at last she could resist the temptation no longer. Entering one of the cabins, she arrayed herself in tarpaulins, which covered her from head to foot; then tucking her hair away under a sou'-wester, she went on deck, and, clinging to the rail, began to enjoy the air. All of a sudden a hard hand gave her a terrific thump on the back, and a voice shouted in her ear—"What the blazes are you doing here?" She turned indignantly round and faced the captain, who was flattering himself that he had caught one of his crew in a flagrant breach of discipline. Imagine his horror when he found out that the supposed Jack tar was the Princess Louise! The Princess, equally embarrassed, stammered out an apology for having stolen the tarpaulins, and the incident closed very pleasantly, with a hearty laugh on both sides."

It is a curious thing how horses acquire an affection for other four-footed animals, and one is closely associated with Charles XII., the hero of the St. Leger of 1839. He conceived so great a liking for a cat, grey in colour, which attached itself to him, that he was never so happy as when the feline was in sight. The cat always accompanied the horse when despatched to a race meeting, and when taken out of the stable for the great event at Doncaster the horse had a watchful eye after his faithful friend. Moreover, after travelling a short distance he "stood down" and absolutely refused to move a step further. The lad in charge at once took in the situation, and knew that he wanted his pet, and finding that his charge was in the sulky line, he fetched the cat, placing her in the muzzle which was attached to the saddle-bow, a necessary accompaniment to the equipment of Charles XII. As soon as this was done, and pussy placed where he could see her, the horse gave a neigh of delight and proceeded quietly on his journey. When his name went up on the number board as the winner, and he was taken to the stables, he gave a low whinny as a welcome to his feline friend. The cat at once jumped on his back, purring as though congratulating him on his success, which at once gave the colt his natural appetite, for he began quietly to munch his corn.

The difficulties which beset the path of the poor punter are amusingly described by "A Backer" in the August number of the "Badminton Magazine." The writer, who has evidently "been there," offers some advice:—"Only bet in small sums, the losing of which will not seriously inconvenience you, seems (he says) the soundest advice, but there are those who doubt whether it is so. In accordance with the eternal principles of arithmetic, these small sums have an ugly habit of mounting up, and the backer is apt to be careless about staking them. To adopt as a minimum some fixed amount which really makes a bit of difference is advocated by other mentors, because if this be done a man does not bet without carefully making up his mind on what seems to him sound premises; and on the whole it may be said that the more seldom anyone bets the less he loses. Assuming that the backer is a man of some knowledge and experience, I would lay it down, as a rule, that he should always stick to his own opinions, and act upon them. It is among the most exasperating things about racing to pick out a winner one's self, and to be put off by what one hears, and it happens not only daily, but not seldom several times a day. It requires much strength of mind to avoid being influenced by the rumour of the course; but I know two or three men who are judiciously inflexible, and who benefit by their practice. Favourites win about four races out of nine throughout the year. Frequently these favourites start at odds on, and a favourite always starts at a false price, for the reason that many men back it simply because it is favourite. A careful examination of any turf guide will show that, taking one day with another, to back all the favourites is inevitably to lose money, so obviously to do this is to do wrong. If a man goes racing constantly, and understands the game, he will do far better in the long run if he makes up his mind for himself, instead of letting it be made up for him, even by the astutest of his friends. To feel convinced that the strong favourite will not win, to have a confident belief that the second favourite will, to gather from the market that there is no money for any of the rest, that nothing is in the least fancied—when things are thus is the time when the backer really enjoys himself; and he needs such periods of enjoyment, for on the whole backing horses is a cruelly disappointing game."

The well-known stallion Wonderland died a few days ago. He belonged to Mr George Hunter, of Porangahau, Hawke's Bay, and had succeeded in siring some good stock. Most of his progeny showed proficiency at the illegitimate game, the two best known being possibly Evening Wonder and Evening, which were got by the deceased stallion from Vesper.

I am very glad to learn that the Auckland Racing Club has decided to erect a look-out tower on the Ellerslie course. It has long been evident that the spot the stewards are at present asked to occupy is without exception the worst on the course from which to witness a race. The best spot for the new tower would be in the vicinity of the band rotunda. If this is done the stewards would enjoy an opportunity at present denied them, of being able to closely watch what is happening in the straight.

The Wellington Park-bred Royal Fusilier won the Napier Stakes from end to end on Tuesday. The three-year-old son of Hotchkiss and Janet had, however, a certain amount of luck, as of his two opponents Melodeon swerved badly at the finish, while Galahad got a wretched start but ran exceedingly well.

LATE RACING.

NAPIER PARK RACING CLUB'S SPRING MEETING.

The Napier Park Spring Meeting was concluded yesterday, the results being as follows:—

PUKETAPU HACK HANDICAP.

Idea, 8.12 1
Defoe, 8.2 2
Time, 1min 45 2-5sec. Dividends, £2 1s and £1 6s.

SECOND HURDLE RACE.

Midia, 10.10 1
Comfort, 11.1 2
Time, 3min 25sec. Dividends, £3 12s and £1 9s.

TWO-YEAR-OLD HANDICAP.

Forest Ranger, 7.9 1
Hibernate, 6.9 2
Time, 60 2-5sec. Dividends, £2 4s.

RACING CLUB HANDICAP.

Asteroid, 6.9 1
Tradewind, 8.3 2
Dividends, £4 13s and 15s.

CALEDONIA HANDICAP.

Repulse 1
The Rioter 2
Dividends, £2 3s and £1 12s.

TELEPHONE HACK HANDICAP.

Trent 1
Wet Reef 2
Dividends, £2 13s and 15s.

GRANDSTAND HANDICAP.

Gold Dust 1
Perfection 2
Dividends, £5 12s and 18s.

THE OTAHUHU HACK MEETING.

A race meeting took place yesterday on the Otahuhu course. The following were the results:—

MAIDEN RACE.

Seatonia 1
Ngatoro 2
Simple Simon 3
Won by three lengths.

PONY RACE.

Cuisine 1
Solitary 2
Southbush 3
Won by two lengths.

OTAHUHU CUP.

Francis Lovejoy 1
Lavadel 2
Ian 3

TROT HANDICAP.

La Roesier 1
Miss Huon 2
Bell Boy 3

HURDLE RACE.

Inchcape 1
Tuni 2
Perseverance 3

RAILWAY HANDICAP.

Seatonia 1
Lavadel 2
Sly Miss 3