



We are sure all good sportsmen would learn with satisfaction of the initial success which attended the running of the New Zealand-owned mare Desert Gold in her patriotic campaign on Australian soil, which commenced at the Victoria Amateur Turf Club's meeting at Caulfield on Saturday. The race was the St. George's Stakes, of 650sovs., with second and third money deductions from the stake, and on weight-for-age terms, with an allowance of 14lb. to horses that had not won 250sovs. in any one race. The course, nine furlongs, was the first over that particular distance that the mare has started for during her whole career, but if any experts in New Zealand conversant with the mare's form had been asked to pick a distance to suit her on her performances of the past two seasons, or since she was two years old, they would have found none on the autumn calendar run in the Commonwealth more calculated to give her a better opening. It is a distance that she can run from end to end, and one over which she was not likely to meet a big field, and in which she had a fair racing weight. Opposed to her she had some of the best horses that could be produced in the Commonwealth at the present time, and they included several leading race winners of note. Cetigne, who got second to her, has won a lot of money, was a brilliant two-year-old, and has all along been regarded as best up to a mile or a mile and a quarter, rather than beyond. Though he has been a good finisher, he has not been as good a beginner for some time as his best friends could have wished. His form this season pointed perhaps to a little less early speed in some of his races than formerly, and gave an indication of the prospect of better staying credentials. As he gets older he may get two miles really well, as he is a horse with a good turn of pace, and his mile and a-quarter in the Melbourne Stakes in 2min. 5¼sec., last November, is one of the best ever accomplished in Australasia, and, moreover, he is by a Grafton horse that has left good stayers.

Cetigne's best performance over a mile and a-half was his second in the Caulfield Stakes against his old rival Wallace Isinglass, who he beat in the Melbourne Stakes and again beat in the St. George's Stakes referred to above. The best achievement he has registered over a mile was done in the Challenge Stakes at Flemington, when he covered the distance in 1min. 38¼sec., after running in a back position most of the way. He nevertheless was handicapped in the Newmarket Handicap as inferior to a number of those engaged and as 9lb. below Desert Gold, and in the Australian Cup as some pounds inferior to quite a number of others. In these estimates the weight adjuster seems to have taken the view that he is not now the brilliant horse he was, and that he might perhaps stay better. Wallace Isinglass has never been regarded as a champion, but has run some good races, and having run most of them over distances beyond a mile and a furlong, it can be contended, would have been better suited over a longer journey than one like that on Saturday. He was only awarded 8.1 in the last Melbourne Cup, in which he received a 10lb. penalty. When he beat Cetigne in the Caulfield Stakes over a mile and a-half, he somewhat surprised people. He would probably have won the Melbourne Cup had he just missed that race, as the 10lb. very likely made the difference between success and defeat. One thing about the race on Saturday is that the three place-getters are each the same age, five years old. The name of only one other of the starters in the cable was that of Prince Bardolph, but as he was apparently only in the picture for a short part of the journey, and was behind Wallace Isinglass, who was four lengths away from Cetigne, who was another length from Desert Gold, it does not matter.

In estimating the value of Desert Gold's first race in Australia, we can take into account the time, 1min. 52¼sec., which was a Caulfield course record. That everything was in the New Zealand mare's favour for making time goes without saying, as in a preceding race, the long-established Oakleigh Plate, of five and a-half furlongs, Poltrina, a performer of some note, beat a field of 23 others and put up an Australasian record, covering the distance in 1min. 6¼sec. So much for Desert Gold's first achievement. She won as she has won all her races since she was three years old, and, indeed, most of her races, by getting to the front early and cracking up her fields. We are not surprised that the Sydney "Daily Telegraph" says she won decisively, and that there was never a more popular win at Caulfield. It is to be hoped that she will follow up her St. George's Stake win by annexing the Futurity Stakes on Saturday, which carries with it a money value greater than any race for which the Queen of the New Zealand Turf has competed.

Another New Zealander to win on the same afternoon as Desert Gold did was Kilfinn, whose first success it was in Australia, and her first since beating Desert Gold in the North Island Challenge Stakes ten months

ago at Trentham. As the daughter of Kilbroney beat 27 others over seven furlongs in 1min. 28¼sec., there must have been some pretensions to form. Bourlang was second and Sauci third. Signal and Kill'em were two other New Zealanders that ran. Beltane was amongst the also-ran division in the Bond Cup. It is gratifying that Mr. Lowry's All Black mare has made such a good start. With increased weight on her back she may possibly have a stiffer task on Saturday in the Futurity Stakes, for which late entries are taken, and we have not been advised of the possible opposition. However it goes, she is likely to race with distinction, and may follow in the footsteps of other New Zealanders that have won the race, which, by the way, was at one time a handicap, and not one in which penalties and allowances played a part, as has been the case for some years past.

We have been advised by cable from Melbourne that Desert Gold's engagements include the Futurity

Stakes, Essendon Stakes, E. M. Lloyd Stakes, Government Plate, and C. B. Fisher Plate. Whether she will meet anything more formidable than Cetigne and Wallace Isinglass remains to be seen, but the first-named, notwithstanding the assessments of the weight adjuster for the Newmarket Handicap and Australian Cup, which made him so many pounds inferior to Desert Gold over both those distances, was the one colonial bred that we some little time ago mentioned as about the most likely, in the absence of Biplane, to give Mr. Lowry's popular mare a race. McLaughlin rode Desert Gold, and would do her justice, but we are sorry that her old pilot, who has won so many races on her, was not able to leave these shores to ride her on Australian courses. In publishing her photo., taken in New Zealand, a number of Australian papers have represented her with her popular Auckland rider up. Desert Gold's sire, All Black, is to go to Australia to continue his stud life, and he has there another splendid advertisement in Bunting, probably the equal of any gelding in Australasia over two miles. Desert Gold's dam, Aurarias, was got by Malster, long time a leading Australian sire, and descends from a splendid family. Desert Gold is one of the best-legged mares to be met with, and there is no reason why she should not, with the same care as

The occasion of the annual meeting of the Hamilton Racing Club has for several seasons past been made use of to call together the representative heads, or delegates, of the country clubs of Auckland, to discuss matters for their mutual benefit. In the past they have had business of considerable importance before them, and it can be said have handled it in a manner showing that they take a very live interest in the sport and are not unmindful of the importance of racing in their several districts. The natural advantages the country offers for breeding thoroughbred stock, and the disadvantages suffered by country clubs from insufficient representation in the councils of the district boards of control, and under the existing system of representation on the Racing Conference, are matters that have received their attention. On the basis of population, Auckland certainly does not get its due proportion of racing throughout the province. In the re-distribution of seats there will be more members from the North in Parliament than heretofore, and in due time, when war regulations are relaxed and the Auckland province receives its due, there will be more meetings—or, at least, more days on which racing will be held. We do not know that the present is an opportune time to ask for increases in the direction our country friends seek; indeed, we regard it otherwise, and would be sorry to see any move made for additional days of racing while war conditions remain as they are. People should continue to concentrate their thoughts on the best methods for getting the war over. True, a lot of revenue is going to the Government from the taxing of racing, and the payment of profits thereof to patriotic purposes is doing a lot of good, but we must guard against pursuing the sport to excess. No change in the constitution of committees will be likely to meet with any immediate favourable results in the direction mentioned, desirable as the change may seem.

The present position with regard to racing permits to hold meetings is really a compromise between what the Racing Conference wanted and what the National Government wanted, and any attempt to bring about a change for some time is not calculated to be in the best interests of the sport or the clubs that are keen on getting more days of racing. We are led to understand that some of the country clubs' executives go so far as to suggest that increases of days of racing in the country districts could be made by reducing the days of racing of some of the city and suburban clubs, a course likely to be very strongly resented, and somewhat unfair. When we come to remember the provision made for the training of horses at Ellerslie and the large number of horses trained there, that make the country meetings largely what they are, it is absurd to ask for a reduction in that quarter. This paper has always strongly urged the claims of the country racing clubs to consideration, but some of the existing meetings held in country districts are, in our opinion, crowded too close together, and the same thing applies to some of the city and suburban meetings, or has done during the past couple of seasons. These matters need regulating better. Circuit racing is right enough, but the country meetings are all got over in a few weeks in the most favourable season of the year, and then we have long and unreasonable waits, all because the dates committees or district committees agree to what the different clubs are clamouring for. The owners of horses would arrange these matters differently if they had any voice in such matters, and we would suggest that, through their association, they should express their views on this aspect of affairs. We have gone over the ground before, and there is no need to say more just now.



THE LATE MR. A. J. BRAY, secretary of the Waipa Racing Club and a prominent figure in commercial and social circles in Te Awamutu.

she has had in the past, go on racing with success for several years in weight-for-age events, holding her own with those of her own age. She may have most to fear from the three-year-olds, though there seems at present no chance of her meeting the best that have been in commission this year. Her running in Australia is sure to revive over there the arguments as to whether she or Biplane would win on w.f.a. terms. There will be many regrets because Mr. Greenwood's colt is not on hand to give her battle, and some disappointment should they never meet—a disappointment in which Mr. Greenwood and his trainer, Mason, may share, for they threw down the gauntlet a good many times with Sutala and Nones, and only beat her once with Emperor, the first older one than herself to beat her. It would have been pleasing, no doubt, to Mr. Greenwood if Biplane had been found good enough and could be produced good enough to try and put paid to the account.