



The demobilisation of the horses used in the different theatres of war is already one of the problems being dealt with by the authorities, and it will take some time to absorb them all. That the females used in the service will be preserved for the raising of stock for future requirements for utility purposes goes without saying. It is known that in Germany the shortage of horses towards the end of the war was a serious drawback to the operations of the enemy, while the Allies were able to do work in which they could not have succeeded without well-conditioned and suitable horses for the purpose. In earlier wars horses played a big part amongst the civilised nations, and, indeed, it would be hard to estimate what their possession has meant in advancing the interests of those nations which have done so much to keep up the standard. The British Navy has played its great part to the admiration of the world, airmen have done wonders, and motor traction on the roads and steam traffic on the railways has had to be utilised to the full. Camels and mules—even dogs—have done their share in different parts. The horse has been in commission in all theatres, and his part, in helping towards the speedy termination of hostilities in Egypt and Palestine, in breaking up the Turkish forces there, where it would have been hard indeed to have succeeded without, not to say impossible,—for nothing was impossible which the Allies had to tackle in this war with right on their side—has been fully recognised. The high praise paid to the work of the men who with their horses brought the guns into action or took them off the fields when it became necessary, and to the mounted men or cavalry everywhere, is proof. Yes, the horse receives his tribute in the great reckoning, and his passing is yet a long way off we may be sure.

In the Financial Statement made by the National Treasurer, Sir Joseph Ward, on Thursday night, amongst the items of interest to the thousands who help to keep the great racing game going appeared the figures showing the amount the Government received from the totalisator for the financial year, together with a pretty conclusive reason for the falling off of revenue from that source as compared with the previous twelve months, when a high-water mark total was reached. Our racing menu was cut down by so many more days. That fact was given prominence to by way of explanation. Sir Joseph Ward did not enter into details, however, but if he had looked up the facts he would have found that in proportion to the number of days that were cut out there had been an increase of business, actually a very largely-increased turnover per day. This was, of course, to be expected with continued prosperous times and plenty of money available. In the ordinary experience, had there been no cutting down or racing there would have been an increased total over previous years, so much larger are the attendances at most meetings. A lot of revenue was lost through the check put upon racing, and a lot more through the cutting down of the railway service and not running some of the trains to fit in with meetings, thus preventing many people from getting to those meetings to swell the crowds. This is another aspect of the position, but each year for some years past the Government have received more than the National Treasurer estimated would be got, and he has no reason to be dissatisfied with the Treasury's "cut." There is more than enough to pay the interest on the cost of our Dreadnought.

There are some of us who remember that there is a matter of about £16,000 owing by the National Government to the horse-breeding industry of New Zealand. The £4000 a year voted in the first session of Parliament after the war started, to be expended in the encouragement of horse breeding, has not been so expended—not a penny of it. Is it to be expended and faith kept with the

people who have been finding this easy money? When is a start to be made? It is to be hoped that this important little matter will receive early attention. That it is worth attention settlers throughout the Dominion have shown. The Associated Country Racing Clubs in the Waikato have done what private enterprise has had little encouragement to attempt in war time. They have placed two high-class thoroughbreds they imported at the service of breeders at a reasonable fee. In time to come the value of those importations, it is hoped, will be abundantly proved. Some of the money got from the totalisator should be used for the encouragement of breeding good utility horses. They will be wanted. We have had the promise only of a few thousands so far from the Government.

It will come as welcome news that the Minister of Railways, who we have all been railing at—no pun intended—is going to relax the stringency which to many appeared a short-sighted policy, and let us have

Ellerslie and suburban courses of Avondale, Takapuna and Alexandra Park. These things should be satisfactorily adjusted. Instead of crowding so many days of racing and trotting into such a short space of time they should be spread out. It is too heavy a tax upon the resources of the people, and besides making very hard work of our pastimes and being hard on the horses, it is so on their trainers, attendants, owners and riders. A good deal more money may be got through the totalisators at certain meetings which are run by clubs which are practically allowed to choose their own days, but the interests of owners and the public must be considered, and the interests of other clubs as well who do not enjoy a monopoly of the most suitable dates must not be overlooked.

At the approach of every recurring meeting and at intervening periods we hear of what this or that horse may do in a weak field. Despite the fact, too, that races are run faster and faster over all distances on some

timed. A hundred years ago it was won by a horse called Reveller in 3min. 15sec., and it was not until Caller Ou in 1861 covered the distance (carrying 8.2, colts 8.7) in 3min. 14sec. that it was run faster, and then came another long interval before it was reduced again. This was in 1883, or thirty-five years ago, when Ossian, by Salvator, who held the American mile record until quite recently, won in 3min. 10sec., the weights then being 8.10 on colts and 8.5 on fillies. In 1900 Diamond Jubilee got the distance in 3min. 9 1-5sec., and next year Doricles won in 3min. 8 2-5sec., and this averages out at a fraction over 3 minutes for a mile and three quarters. The Australasian record is 3 minutes. The times have been also gradually reduced in the Derby, and now the record stands at 2min. 35 1-5sec. for that race.

The English Derby and St. Leger and other races were almost invariably run in a different way to what they are now, being begun slowly and with stronger finishing efforts over the last half of the journeys. The advent of Sloan and his American system of riding brought about a change in the way most races were formerly run, and the times, particularly for the Derby and for the St. Leger as well, improved. Sloan's methods were at first strongly criticised, just as was the starting of races by machinery, but even now, when fast times are mentioned at Home, old ideas stick. Good trial horses are believed to be of more value, but with the watch as well trainers would be less likely to make mistakes. In the colonies good trial horses are not always to be had, and some owners cannot afford to keep horses that are not serviceable for winning races. Colonel Soult with a light impost would be still of some use to a big racing stable that wanted to ensure a fast pace in trial work with younger horses, though he might not win so many gallops if horses he defeats on the tracks were specially set to try and take his number down. He does not like anything now in the shape of a stiff task in a big field, and was never a reliable beginner in public.

A compilation of fast times which appeared in a southern exchange indicating what had been accomplished over varying distances in the colonies from four furlongs to three miles is instructive, as showing that, though there are no three-mile races in New Zealand and only one at w.f.a. over two miles and a-quarter, and none over a mile and five furlongs, New Zealand-bred horses or horses in which the blood of New Zealand-bred horses or at one time New Zealand-owned horses figure, have been responsible for more than half the Australasian records. The four, five and six-furlong records are each held at Riccarton, the mile record at Ellerslie, and the two-mile record at Trentham, and the horses that registered them, and the best times in Australia, were each good ones. Two of the holders of time performances were bred in England, and one was over a mile and five furlongs and the other over two miles and a-quarter, both handicap events. Some day we may have a compilation of the best weight-carrying performances registered at different distances. Such a list would bring in the names of Carbine, Advance, Achilles, Cruciform, Nonette, Record Reign, Machine Gun (again), Gold Medallist, Forrester, Chortle, Waiuku, Signor, St. Hippo, Nelson, Wairiki, and many others, not to go away from New Zealand-bred horses that occur to us without reference to the book and without extending the number. Carbine's Melbourne Cup performance with 10.5 has never been equalled, neither has that of Advance (10.4) in the Wellington Cup. Machine Gun's performances stand good. Signor's Canterbury Cup performance, 3min. 53 2-5sec., with the weight, has not been equalled, neither has that of Wairiki 9.8 at 4yrs. in the Auckland Cup, and St. Hippo's win at 3yrs., with 14lb. over w.f.a., in the same race takes some beating. The best times are almost invariably done by the best horses in the colonies.



THE LATE MAJOR CLYDE MCGILP, D.S.O., whose death from pneumonia occurred at Featherston Military Hospital last month. Major McGillp left with the Main Body, and saw over three years' continuous service at Gallipoli and in France.

some race trains which at great inconvenience we have managed to do without for so long. The demobilisation of the soldiers in camps will not be long in accomplishment, and the use of the trains for getting returning soldiers back to their homes or nearest towns, and in helping them through with their business before disbanding them, will in course of time not be a heavy tax upon their resources. So we may confidently expect a return to pre-war times with improvements upon the old system, which was far from perfect and always left people grumbling because they did not get what they paid for and were entitled to. It may have been due to the expected change for the better that a number of clubs which might easily have held meetings, and whose not doing so has proved a great hardship to owners, have quietly submitted, if they are not actually satisfied at having them put off until some time in the New Year, when they could have held them this month if they had put forth a little effort. At such places as Handwick and Flemington and at Brisbane, there is racing practically every month of the year. There certainly should be meetings every month, if not all at Ellerslie, on the

of our courses, including those that have not undergone much improvement to make them so, and that fields on the average are larger than formerly, there are those who talk of some of our horses as champions, and then in the next breath declare that they have been given their full deserts or been over-weighted, when not asked to do really more or even as much in the weight-carrying line as the good ones of earlier days. The term champion has an elastic application apparently. There are champions and champions, cracks and cracks, according to the distances they are best adapted for and their ability to carry weight and go fast. There are some writers in the Old Land with a consistency that is remarkable who cannot get away from an antiquated idea that no value attaches to time. For many years very few important races in England were timed as a regular thing, but the St. Leger at Doncaster was one of the exceptions, and the distance, a mile and six furlongs and 132 yards, with 8.10 on colts and 8.5 on fillies, was often run in time that would be considered good in the colonies for three-year-olds to accomplish over a similar distance under similar conditions. For over a hundred years the St. Leger has been