

TARANAKI JOCKEY CLUB.

CHRISTMAS MEETING.

A RECORD GATHERING.

HENRY CLAY WINS THE HANDICAP.

(From Our Travelling Correspondent.)

NEW PLYMOUTH, Thursday.

The Christmas meeting of the Taranaki Jockey Club, which took place to-day on the club's picturesque race-course at New Plymouth, will long be remembered as the most successful in the history of the club. The attendance constituted a record, the crowd present being very much in excess of previous years, while the turnover from the totalisator showed an increase on last year's figures, which proves conclusively that the club has the confidence of the public.

Owing to the new totalisator regulations, there was considerable delay through the altering of the figures on the machine in practically every race, with the result that the last race was run over one hour behind the scheduled time, many of the club's patrons missing their trains home and being compelled to remain in town for the night. The delay in ringing up the final numbers on the totalisator was very tantalising, and there is undoubtedly room for improvement. It is to be hoped that the club will take action with a view to having the defect remedied before the Cup meeting comes up for decision in February next. Certainly the arrangements in this direction were a long way behind compared with previous meetings, when the final totals always appeared with promptitude.

Mr. A. Morse, of Stratford, officiated as starter, and his despatches were marked by an evenness that evoked much favourable comment from those present. The placings of the various winners were capably attended to by Mr. J. R. L. Stanford, who from his vantage post in the judge's box gave his decisions promptly and accurately. Despite the fact that he had some close finishes to decide his placings met with general approval.

Mr. T. H. G. Lloyd, a well-known solicitor of Dannevirke, who used to race a horse or two some years ago, acted in the capacity of a stipendiary official but owing to the cleanness of the racing, which has always characterised the Taranaki Jockey Club's meetings, there was nothing to necessitate an enquiry. The various contests were keenly fought out, the issues being in doubt in many instances right up to the moment the winning line was crossed.

Taken right through the racing was very interesting, affording a well-deserved tribute to Handicapper H. Coyle, who, by the way, was not present to witness the results of his excellent work.

The contest for the principal event, the Christmas Handicap, was productive of a very fine race. Winning Shot essayed to win from end to end, and it was only in the final stages that Henry Clay caught the bay mare, and a ding-dong battle ensued over the last four hundred yards, with the result that Henry Clay squeezed home by a neck, while the fast-finishing Dingle beat Winning Shot by a similar margin, with Paddington Green close up, fourth. Several capital dividends were paid out during the afternoon, those of Guianform and Tirana running into substantial double figures.

As is usual with Mr. E. P. Webster, the club's secretary, everything worked well in the secretarial department, and visitors, many of whom were present from Wellington and the Wairarapa, carried away with them many happy recollections of the kindness extended them by the officials of the Taranaki Jockey Club. Mr. Webster's efforts were ably seconded by Mr. B. H. Chaney, a steward of the club, who was assiduous in his attention to visitors to the meeting.

People came well provided with the sinews of war, for at the close of the afternoon's racing it was ascertained that the totalisator staff had handled £25,097, compared with £24,113 for the corresponding day in 1917, the increase thus being £984, which is considered highly satisfactory, as the Taranaki Club is one of the few clubs that showed an increase over the holiday meetings.

The Railway Department delayed several trains to meet the requirements of sporting enthusiasts, with the result that people were enabled to reach home the same night, although quite a large number missed

the trains through the delay experienced on the totalisator.

NOTES ON THE RACING.

In the opening event, the Huatoki Plate, a big surprise proved in store for backers, Guianform, a three-year-old son of Guianforte—Avaunce, coming with a late run and defeating Applaud comfortably in an exciting race up the straight, the favourite, Hallow, being third. Genskus, who was heavily backed, could only finish fourth. The winner was nicely handled by the capable lightweight N. K. McDonell. Romance showed up prominently in the early stages, but compounded after turning the bend for home, where he was in command.

The Advance mare Movement, who is owned and trained by Percy Johnson, was made a slightly better than even money favourite for the Stewards' Hack Handicap, in which Marquetteur and Momac were also well supported. The Auckland horseman, S. Henderson, took Movement to the front when the barrier lifted, and the issue was never really in doubt, as he easily maintained his lead, winning by six lengths from Momac, with Munition third.

P. Johnson also provided the winner of the Rahotu Hack Hurdles, in the St. Paul gelding Simple Sam, who practically led from end to end and returned his 342 supporters a good dividend. Veto, who was favourite and had the services of S. Henderson, and Golden Grafton monopolised the bulk of the investments on the totalisator, and proved Simple Sam's most dangerous opponents. Going along the back Golden Grafton drew almost on terms with Simple Sam, with Veto handy, but neither had a chance with P. Johnson's jumper in the run up the straight, the latter easily accounting for Golden Grafton by four lengths, with Veto third.

The good field of 13 starters lined up for the Borough Hack Handicap, a warm favourite being found in the ex-Karamu representative Piano, formerly owned by the late Mr. J. McKean, of New Plymouth, and now running in Mrs. M. McKean's name. Occasion and Carmel Arch also carried solid support. Jane Douglas, Piano and Carmel Arch made the early running, the favourite losing her position racing towards the bend into the straight, which Carmel Arch was the first to enter, with Jane Douglas second. The pair looked to have the issue to themselves when L. Nodder brought Madam Ristori along with a nicely-timed run and succeeded in securing the judge's verdict by a neck from Carmel Arch, with Jane Douglas half a length away third.

Rewi Poto and Hiero were the only withdrawals from the Christmas Handicap, for which nine were saddled up, Henry Clay, who had the services of S. Henderson, being elected favourite, with Alteration, Munster and Perfect Day most in demand of the others. The race was a splendid betting one, £3924 10s. being invested on the totalisator, being a record amount for any one event at the meeting. Winning Shot had charge from Dingle and Paddington Green passing the stand, the daughter of Signor—True Shot increasing her lead going along the back, where Munster displaced Dingle in second position, the favourite being fourth. The order was unaltered as the field raced to the straight entrance, Winning Shot commencing to tire at this stage, coming back to her field. Henry Clay headed her into the straight, while Dingle joined in the struggle, a fine race resulting in a win for the favourite by a neck from Dingle, who was a similar distance in advance of Winning Shot, Paddington Green being fourth.

The victory of the favourite, Nemaline, in the Lepperton Welter Hack Handicap gave S. Henderson his third winning ride during the afternoon. There were 18 starters, Nemaline being a very warm order, with Trombone the only other contestant to receive solid backing, the pair carrying over half the investments on the race. Nemaline won all the way, scoring comfortably by a length from Tiranga, with Trombone a similar distance away, third.

Vance was considered invincible in the Tikorangi Hack Stakes, and was backed accordingly, 1127 tickets being taken out on her number, Madam Ristori, who had won the Borough Handicap earlier in the afternoon, being second choice with less than half that number invested on her prospects. Eleven lined up at the barrier, where Passin' Through proved fractious, and was responsible for kicking A. O'Hare, the rider of Occasion, so severely on the thigh as to necessitate his removal to the hospi-

tal in an ambulance, this being the only regrettable incident at the meeting. Bisognio was smartest away, with the favourite next, and Passin' Through handy. The field was bunched entering the straight, and an exciting finish was witnessed, Madam Ristori, with a characteristic run, securing the verdict from Passin' Through by a length, with Vance a similar distance away, third.

The 13 carded for the Flying Handicap was reduced to six starters, Movement being about a £250 better favourite than Hushman, the pair carrying considerably more than half the investments on the race. The favourites were completely routed, for Tirana, the outsider of the field, took charge from the barrier rise and was never headed, winning by a length from Starengo, with Hushman, who finished very fast, a neck away, third. The favourite was fourth.

The results were:—

HUATOKI PLATE, of 135 sovs; weight for age. Seven furlongs.

- 10—N. Brown's blk g Guianform, 3yrs, by Guianforte—Avaunce, 7.13 (McDonell) 1
- 4—Conza Bros.' b g Applaud, 8.13 (D. Scott) 2
- 1—N. King's b g Hallow, 7.13 (W. Ayres) 3

Also started: 12 Takanganui 8.11 (Richmond), 5 Te Toa 8.13 (Henderson), 9 Reopai 9.5½, inc. 6½lb over (E. Stockman), 15 Khartoum 9.7, inc. 8lb over (Fowler), 7 Lord Formby 8.11 (Ruscoe), 14 Spinifex 8.11 (McCormick), 8 Romance 8.11 (Nodder), 13 Cammy 8.11 (McRandall), 2 Genskus 8.11 (W. Price), 3 Otonga 8.11 (Fitzwater), 6 Anserine 8.9 (Hale), 11 Halcyon 7.13 (K. Lambess).

Won by half a length, a similar distance between second and third. Genskus was fourth. Time, 1min 31 2-5sec.

STEWARDS' HACK HANDICAP of 160sovs. Six furlongs.

- 1—P. Johnson's blk m Movement, aged, by Advance—Officer mare, 9.2 (S. Henderson) 1
- 3—H. E. Card's b m Momac, 8.7½, inc. 1½lb over (A. O'Hare) 2
- 6—B. T. Bennett's b m Munition, 7.11, inc. 3lb over (Ayres) 3

Also started: 2 Marquetteur 9.3 (W. Price), 5 Kaimanawanui 7.12 (Nodder), 4 Self Alliance 7.2 (McDonell), 7 Sea Sprite 7.0 (McCormick).

Won by six lengths, half a length between second and third. Sea Sprite was fourth. Time, 1min 15sec.

RAHOTU HACK HURDLES HANDICAP of 175sovs. One mile and a-half and 100 yards.

- 4—P. Johnson's ch g Simple Sam, aged, by St. Paul—Foulshot mare, 9.7 (W. Ayres) 1
- 2—E. George's b m Golden Grafton, 10.0 (McRandall) 2
- 1—R. Brough's ch m Veto, 10.2 (S. Henderson) 3

Also started: 3 Polthogue 9.9 (Ward), 6 Speedwell Mac 9.7 (B. Clarke), 7 Master Grecian 9.0 (R. Turner), 5 Master Webster 9.0 (Hawken).

Won by four lengths, six lengths between second and third. Speedwell Mac was fourth. Time, 2min 54 2-5sec.

BOROUGH HACK HANDICAP of 150 sovs. Five furlongs.

- 4—E. George's Madam Ristori, 5yrs, by Marble Arch—Ristori, 9.0 (L. Nodder) 1
- 3—C. D. Tyler's b g Carmel Arch, 8.6 (W. Price) 2
- 7—Cecil Arden's b m Jane Douglas, 7.2½, inc. 2½lb over (McDonell) 3

Also started: 2 Occasion 8.2 (O'Hare), 1 Piano 8.4, inc. 5lb over (Henderson), 5 Munition 7.9 (W. Ayres), 6 Metallum 7.6 (Rowlands), 9 Elevent 7.0 (A. McCormick), 10 Havasack 7.4, inc. 4lb over (L. Jones), 13 Spreadagle 7.6½, inc. 6½lb over (A. Lee), 8 Huipoto 7.8, inc. 8lb over (Richmond), 11 Royal Divorce 7.0 (Hamilton), 11 Solita 8.9½, inc. 23lb over (McRandall).

Won by a neck, half a length between second and third. Elevent was fourth. Time, 1min 2sec.

CHRISTMAS HANDICAP (Open) of 250 sovs. One mile and a-quarter.

- 1—R. Johnson's ch g Henry Clay, aged, by Signor—Amal, 7.9 (S. Henderson) 1
- 6—F. Selwood's b g Dingle, 8.2 (W. Price) 2
- 8—A. Alexander's b m Winning Shot, 6.11½, inc. 2½lb over (Hamilton) 3

Also started: 2 Alteration 8.0 (Nodder), 5 Royal Park 7.13, inc. 3lb over (Lambess), 7 Paddington Green 7.10½, inc. 3½lb over (Ayres), 3 Munster 7.3 (McDonell), 9 Gipsy Gem 6.5, 5lb allow. (Johnson), 4 Perfect Day 6.7 (McCormick).

Won by a neck, a similar distance between second and third. Paddington Green was fourth. Time, 2min 11sec.

LEPPERTON WELTER HACK HANDICAP of 135sovs. Seven furlongs.

- 1—J. Dwyer's b m Nemaline, 4yrs, by Husbandman—Nora Paul, 9.0 (S. Henderson) 1
- 3—F. Hoskin's b g Tiranga, 9.4 (L. Nodder) 2
- 2—McDonald Bros.' blk g Trombone, 9.12 (McDonell) 3

Also started: 5 Clavis 9.7, inc. 5lb allow. (Johns), 9 Normanby 9.7 (A. Ward), 4 Applaud 9.4 (D. Scott), 7 Compel 9.4½, inc. 2½lb over (Fitzwater), 11 Lord Formby 9.0 (Ruscoe), 10 Prince Formby 9.0 (F. Anstis), 8 Marshal Neil 9.0 (W. Price), 6 Cadet 9.4 (Ayres).

Won by a length, a similar distance between second and third. Compel was fourth. Time, 1min 30 2-5sec.

TIKORANGI HACK STAKES of 125 sovs. Five furlongs.

- 2—E. George's b m Madam Ristori, 5yrs, by Marble Arch—Ristori, 9.2½, inc. 2½lb over (A. Ward) 1
- 5—R. E. Laurent's blk g Passin' Through, 8.0 (Nodder) 2
- 1—J. S. Parson's ch m Vance, 8.0 (W. Price) 3

Also started: 3 Occasion 9.0 (O'Hare), 4 Piano 9.0 (McDonell), 9 Cammy 8.12½, inc. 12½lb over (McRandall), 6 Bisognio 8.0 (Henderson), 7 Marble Bar 8.0 (W.

Ayres), 8 Some Boy 8.0 (McCormick), 10 Master Curran 8.0 (Lambess).

Won by a length, a similar distance between second and third. Time, 1min 2 3-5sec.

FLYING HANDICAP (Open) of 200 sovs. Six furlongs.

- 6—G. Mulrae's br g Tirana, aged, by Coronet—Tarina, 7.8 (McDonell) 1
- 3—W. Brown's b g Starengo, 8.7 (W. Price) 2
- 2—Clout Bros.' br g Hushman, 8.9 (L. Nodder) 3

Also started: 4 Royal Chef 8.11 (W. Ayres), 1 Movement 8.3, inc. 7lb pen. (Henderson), 5 Momac 7.0 (McCormick). Won by a length, a neck between second and third. Time, 1min 14 2-5sec.

MANAWATU RACING CLUB.

SUMMER MEETING.

NOBLEMAN WINS CUP.

Favoured with fine weather the Manawatu Racing Club's summer carnival was opened at the Awapuni course on Boxing Day under ideal conditions, and the prospects of some keen racing attracted a very large crowd, including visitors from all of the leading provinces in the North Island. Those present were rewarded with a highly enjoyable afternoon's sport, large fields going to the post, and with the track in excellent order a number of close finishes were provided, while in every instance the events proved of a most interesting character. The secretary, Mr. J. M. Johnston, had the arrangements essential for the success of the meeting well in hand, and the afternoon's proceedings were carried out with commendable smoothness and precision. The judge's box was occupied by Mr. J. H. Perrett, who acted for the club in that capacity for the first time, and his placings, which left no room for doubt regarding their accuracy, were hoisted promptly in every instance. M. A. Keith had some big fields to contend with, but this did not prevent him from despatching them in a fair and even manner. The Manawatu Cup resulted in a splendid contest, victory going to Mr. W. J. Phillips' Sir Laddo gelding, Nobleman, who also annexed the event last year and later on won the Wellington Cup. Favourites fared badly during the afternoon, Affection being the only one to score, Mr. J. E. Henrys having set backers a difficult problem.

The totalisator investments amounted to £40,240, as against £48,401 on Boxing Day 1917.

There were no defections from the Trial Plate, in which 19 faced the starter, Mr. F. Easton's Moutoa Ivanova being installed favourite, with Utuwal, Sacramento and Esperance best supported of the others. Papanui led from Yankee Jack in the early stages, but the Highden three-year-old Hurry Up was in charge entering the straight, and though challenged by Yankee Jack won comfortably, Papanui finishing third.

The 18 acceptors for the Tokomaru Hurdles were reduced in number to 11 as the result of late scratchings, the Wanganui representative Zola claiming most attention, with Kurapai, Vacuum and Ore Ore most in request of the other candidates. The last-named was leading as the field passed the stand, but was displaced by Zola going out of the straight, with First Line and Lord Nelson racing at the head of the others. Going along the back stretch Waipunua improved his position and was on terms with the leaders entering the straight. In the run to the post Waipunua quickly had the favourite's measure, and ran home an easy winner by a couple of lengths, Lord Nelson being third and Kurapai fourth.

Despite his indifferent running at the Avondale meeting, the topweight, Kipling, claimed most supporters for the Gillies Hack Handicap, Red Signal, Penury Rose, Ahika (who was bracketed with Gold Problem) and Mill Queen all coming in for solid support. King's Armour and Mill Queen made the pace a cracker, leading to the straight entrance, where they were joined by Ahika, a good finish, in which Cotillion put in her claim, resulting in favour of Ahika by a head from King's Armour, with Cotillion third.

All of the ten acceptors for the Manawatu Cup paraded for that event, the Fordell representative, Client, being a better favourite than last year's winner, Nobleman, with Battle Song, Dusky Eve and Detroit most in request of the others. Rewi Poto and Master Moutoa being the outsiders of the field. The last-named was first away when the barrier rose, with Multive, Nobleman and Ladogeur as his nearest attendants. Ladogeur was in command as the field passed the stand, with Master Moutoa, Multive and Nobleman racing in that order,