

The popular Wanganui sportsman who races as "Mr. Narelli" is making something of a record for getting into second place with his horses. Last season Shannon Lass ran nine consecutive seconds. At Blenheim this owner's Waikaraka ran second on each day, making his list four seconds since Christmas. It must be very aggravating to get so near to a score without actually achieving it, as the horse's weight goes up all the time. The reverses never seem to affect the good spirits of the owner in question, who always takes his defeats as a sportsman should.

The New Zealand Cup winner, Downfall, who was purchased in Sydney by the Queensland racing man, Mr. E. G. Blume, a few weeks ago, has gone wrong, and in consequence has been struck out of all his Q.T.C. (Brisbane) engagements.

A horseowner, writing to the London "Sportsman," wishes the English Jockey Club to pass a rule that where a cup or trophy of any kind is given for a race, the owner of the winner should have the option of taking the specie instead. At present, he says, if a man wins a cup of the nominal value of, say, £100, his horse has to carry a penalty for doing so up to that amount, and yet if he tries to realise his cup he will probably not get £20 for it. He instances the case of a friend of his who won a cup at Ascot, the advertised value of which was £250, and he can't get £50 for it.

A meeting of the New Zealand Trotting Association was held last week. Further correspondence was read from the Westport Trotting Club in connection with the Lady Belle case, in which it had been reported to the stewards that the mare had started before the time. In the absence of any actual protest the stewards had taken no action and paid the stakes to the owner of Lady Belle. The owner of the second horse subsequently claimed the stake, but the owner of Lady Belle declined to repay the amount. It was decided to inform the club that the association was of opinion that the owner of the second horse was entitled to the stake. The president reported that he had had a very satisfactory interview with the Minister for Internal Affairs, who had expressed his willingness to be guided by the advice of the association in issuing licenses to clubs.

Under the Stamp Duties Amendment Act, of 1909, the Hawke's Bay Jockey Club will have to pay, in round figures, £378 to the Minister for Internal Affairs on account of the revenue collected from the totalisator and bookmakers over their late autumn meeting. Under the old order of taxation, the Treasury would only have benefited to the extent of £217 from the totalisator, the bookies' license fees not having been made to bear the stamp duty fee previously. In addition 2½ per cent will have to be paid on gate takings, sale of privileges and race cards.

Very little betting has resulted from the appearance of the weights for the Great Northern double, backers evidently holding off to see what the Takapuna and Wanganui meetings bring forth.

Dan Patch has arrived safely back in Australia, and sportsmen on this side are waiting to see if he will be matched against Denver Huon or Sal Tasker.

At the Forbury Park Trotting Club's meeting last week the Canterbury champion, Revenue, successfully attacked the trotting mile record of 2.16 1-5 down against Wilkie. Revenue covered the distance in 2.11 4-5s and established an Australasian record for a trotter.

When the news that Dan Patch had established a world's record for a mile was received in Australia, Mr. Playfair, owner of Ribbonwood, disputed the claim on the grounds that Ribbonwood held the record of 2.9 or 2-5s less than that registered by Dan Patch. Ribbonwood's record is not disputed, but his performance was registered on a banked dirt track, while Dan Patch paced his mile at Alexandra Park on grass. The record claimed for Dan Patch is for a grass track.

Maiora, who will make his appearance over hurdles at Takapuna, has been giving poor displays over the schooling hurdles the last couple of mornings and, indeed, gave better exhibitions a couple of months ago.

Kakama will probably be sent to Wanganui to fulfil engagements. If the daughter of Soutl makes the trip she will be ridden by B. Deeley.

The North New Zealand Coursing Club have decided to hold the meeting, which was postponed on Saturday last owing to the death of the King, on Saturday next.

The Stepniak gelding, Sir Artegal, has been purchased by Mr. C. Morad and is now in W. Mobberley's stable.

The best handicapped horse in the Century Hurdles at Wanganui and the Great Northern Hurdles at Auckland is the Australian gelding Woolloomooloo. In letting him in at the minimum he has been thrown into the race. He has some fair performances down against his name over the sticks in Australia, while he is credited with winning a mile and a-quarter race at Moorefield in 2.10 1-5s.

Aberbrothock, who broke down badly on the eve of the Auckland Cup, is going along the right way and is expected to be quite himself again in a few months.

Thus the Hawke's Bay writer "The Squire," chatting with Mr. R. Paterson the other day regarding his luck in obtaining Penates to carry his colours, he told me that he knew he had the best horse in the Dominion over six furlongs and that he was prepared to back him at level weights to beat the champion Bobrikoff for any distance up to three-quarters of a mile.

In the Champion Steeplechase, at Liverpool, there were only five starters, and four came to grief. The only one to stand up was the thirteen-year-old Leinster, who won the same race seven years before, and the victory of the veteran caused great enthusiasm.

There is a difference of opinion as to the items of racing club revenue that are exempt from the recent extension of taxation, and the Racing Conference has asked that a case be stated for argument before the law courts.

In connection with the Great Northern Hurdles this year it is noticeable that neither of the placed horses in last year's race claim an engagement. On the other hand, Capitol, Kiatere and Le Beau, who filled the places in the Great Northern Steeplechase are engaged in next month's race.

Continuance followed up his success at Hawke's Bay by winning at Egmont yesterday.

D. Maher, the American jockey, has completed his thousand wins in England.

Cavallero, Leo and Westerley, all members of T. Williams' team at Ellerslie, are getting through some good work over the steeplechase fences at Ellerslie.

Major Eustace Loder has bestowed the name of Coriander on his yearling by the Carbine horse Spearmint from Admiration. This youngster is a half-brother to the brilliant Pretty Polly, who some well-versed critics aver was one of the best mares that ever graced the English turf.

In South Africa last month Mr. A. Robertson sold the New Zealand-bred sire Uniform (Hotchkiss—Formo) to Mr. Abe Bailey. Last season Uniform's progeny did particularly well in South Africa, and his son Tancred is credited with being the best two-year-old of the present season.

Several of the trainers in Auckland are preparing a petition to the Auckland Racing Club against the length of time horses are required to be out of the bird cage and waiting at the post before the race is timed to start. It certainly seems unreasonable that horses should be kept waiting the time they are required to.

The Wellington Racing Club at a recent meeting resolved that the time has arrived when the Wellington Racing Club should make an effort to secure holiday dates for its race meetings. Following on this resolution it was decided to instruct the Otaki Maori Racing Club to select another date for its spring meeting of 1910. The metropolitan body declined to approve of the Otaki Club racing on Labour Day, as this date will be applied for as one of the days of the Wellington Racing Club's spring meeting at Trentham.

Te Aral essayed the big country again on Tuesday morning, but refused at the old water jump. Gordon Regal jumped well till he reached the first fence on top of the hill, where he came to grief.

In the spring of 1888 Mr. Donald Wallace went out to Newmarket to buy Tradition. He found that his jockey, M. O'Brien, and P. T. Heywood were determined to have Tradition, so he had to console himself with Carbine. That (says "Terlinga") was luck if you like. Tradition never won a race, Carbine won twenty-six times for Mr. Wallace, and was sold for 13,000 guineas! As a yearling Carbine might have been bought by Mr. T. Chirnside or Mr. W. Pearson—I forget which. Both gentlemen were training with the Dakins, and the late Northland Goidd attended the Sylvia Park sale on January 4, 1887, to buy. Mr. F. F. Dakin had marked the colt by Musket from Mersey as one to get, but Mr. Goidd was so frightened of his forelegs that he would not bid at all, and Dan O'Brien got him for 620 guineas. In spite of his doubtful-looking legs Carbine lasted for four seasons. At that sale Mr. Chirnside gave 1100 guineas for the Sylvia filly, 1040 guineas for the Onyx filly and Mr. Pearson got the Leila colt for 510 guineas. None of them were any good as race-horses. There is a terrible lot of luck in buying yearlings. I have heard Jas. Scobie say that the only really good judge of a horse he ever knew was Mr. George Glasscock. Still, Scobie cannot be bad himself. He and T. Payten have picked good yearlings again and again, but this season Scobie, Earnshaw and Payten have all been without a good young one. Scobie gave 1000 guineas for Vigilante last year and up to now he has no more pace than a good steeplechaser. However, Emir, Hautvillers, Alawa, Sweet Nell, F.J.A., Sylvanite and Malster are a nice little lot to set against.

The New York correspondent of the London "Sportsman," writing in March, stated that the annual report of the State Racing Commission showed that in 1909 the number of racing days was 132, which was 26 less than in 1908, and 97 less than in 1907. The attendance, amounts distributed in purses and stakes, and the amount of tax on gross receipts all fell below the preceding year; the gross receipts were £210,967, as against £385,716 in 1907; the amount distributed to owners was £164,000, as against £530,000 in 1907; the Belmont Park and Jamaica meetings paid out more than they received. The amount of the 5 per cent. tax was £10,540—less than for any year since 1896. The total amount of this tax levied under the Racing Law since 1895 is £374,172. This money is for the benefit of the agricultural societies and town and country fairs, and when it was found that the Agnew Hart law would materially affect the tax, the Legislature decided to take from the school fund a sum sufficient to bring the amount up to £50,000, and this has been the procedure for the past two years.

Jenkinson, winner of the Liverpool Grand National, was bred in Co. Meath by Mr. P. Leonard, from whom Mr. Jas. Daly bought him as a four-year-old. He subsequently sold the gelding to Mr. Stanley Howard, who has now carried off two Grand Nationals with animals procured from Mr. Daly.

Bookmakers have various designs and shapes of tickets recording wagers made with clients. It is impossible in some cases to distinguish what is written on them. With a view to making the record of a wager clearer, the V.R.C. committee has decided that in future there must be at least 2½ inches square of blank space on each ticket, so that the wager recorded may be distinctly written.

During the recent racing at Calcutta the most successful owner was Mr. Galstaun, whose stake winnings amounted to 39,025rs. next on the list coming Mr. Holmes with 37,500rs. Whalley, with fifteen wins out of 48 mounts, did best among the jockeys. P. Firth coming next with thirteen wins for 52 mounts. Norton and Ferguson, with fourteen wins each, were at the top of the trainers' list.

The much-discussed question of stipendiary officials is one which has baulked rather largely this season, and there are two well-defined camps amongst racing people who come to Calcutta: one is for the paid official, the other for the amateur, writes "Indian Daily News" of March 21st. Personally I am a strong partisan of the former camp, with the reservation that

if you are going to pay anyone, it is as well to take care that he is really an expert. A stipendiary steward who is told off solely for one purpose, that of doing the work of a racecourse detective, is never likely to be popular. It is a thankless and a difficult job, slightly worse than the position of an official handicapper. The stipendiary steward can only report and ask for an inquiry, and it is discretionary with the honorary body to proceed, but what seems to be the present complaint is that sometimes an enquiry has been construed to mean a "sentence." But this I think is a wrong view. If an explanation is asked for and is accepted, what harm is there done provided it is made known to the public that this has been the upshot? Where the injustice comes in is in not advertising the results of these "trials."

The Sultan of Johore, who recently bought Storey, also purchased San Pedro (son of San Francisco—Erminie) and Dalrymple (Dalmeny—Malaria). The three horses are now bound for Singapore.

The owner of Full Rate has decided on a change of stables for The Officer gelding, and the Opaki trainer R. Knox, has sent him down to N. Williams, who is best known as the trainer of Leahora, Leapuki, and one or two others at Carterton.

The details of the Grand National Steeplechase were scarcely to hand by the mail when the Messrs. Fuller put on a picture at His Majesty's Wellington, of the big jumping event at Aintree. The start was in a snowstorm, and everything was against good cinematograph work, yet the result is surprisingly good. The horses are seen going to the post, many of the big jumps are portrayed, and the numerous falls depicted, as well as the finish. Excellent life-size pictures of the winner, Jenkinson, as well as prominent competitors in Jerry M. and Judas, are clearly shown. A feature of the race not mentioned in the reports, but which comes out in the picture, is the fact that quite a large number of riderless horses accompanied the remaining competitors over the latter portion of the journey, one and all jumping beautifully, while several actually finished with the leaders. Only five horsemen completed the race.

There can be no doubt that the popularity of English horses as racing machines is increasing, especially with the small owner, who is always willing to take a gambler's chance (writes "The Shaughraun" in the Calcutta "Indian Planters' Gazette.") This was bound to come after the performances of Retort and Fizz. Australian horses were woefully out of luck last year, but nothing is so certain as that luck will turn, and I am willing to stake my reputation that those owners, like Mr. Apar, who remain steadfast in the water, will laugh best at last, especially in our classics.

AUCKLAND METROPOLITAN COMMITTEE.

The ordinary meeting of the Auckland Metropolitan Committee was held on Tuesday evening Mr. H. T. Gorrie presiding. The appeals of P. E. Pope against disqualification imposed on him by the Helensville Racing Club and A. E. Pearce against the Paengaroa Hack Club were upheld and their deposits ordered to be returned. The following licenses were granted:—Jockeys: H. Erwin, W. M. McKinnon, R. Gibson, F. Tonge. Gentleman rider: Mr. L. E. Kerr-Taylor. The following dates for the season 1910-11 were recommended for the approval of the New Zealand Racing Conference:—Auckland Racing Club: Spring meeting, November 5, 9, and 12; summer meeting, December 26 and 29 and January 2 and 3; autumn meeting, April 15, 17 and 18; winter meeting, June 3, 5 and 7. Takapuna Jockey Club: Spring meeting, November 26 and 30; summer meeting, January 28 and 30 and February 4; autumn meeting, May 20 and 24. Avondale Jockey Club: Spring meeting, September 17, 21 and 24; autumn meeting, April 26 and 29. Ohinemuri Jockey Club: March 17 and 18. Rotorua Jockey Club: February 15 and 16. South Auckland Racing Club: February 24 and 25. Te Aroha Jockey Club: March 6 and 7. Thames Jockey Club: Summer meeting, December 26 and 27; autumn meeting, March 11. Waihi Jockey Club: March 4. Whangarei Racing Club: January 13 and 14.