

# Our New Horse

Banjo Paterson

The boys had come back from the races  
All silent and down on their luck;  
They'd backed 'em, straight out and for places,  
But never a winner they struck.  
They lost their good money on Slogan,  
And fell, most uncommonly flat,  
When Partner, the pride of the Bogan,  
Was beaten by Aristocrat.

And one said, 'I move that instanter  
'We sell out our horses and quit,  
'The brutes ought to win in a canter,  
'Such trials they do when they're fit.  
'The last one they ran was a snorter—  
'A gallop to gladden one's heart—  
'Two-twelve for a mile and a quarter,  
'And finished as straight as a dart.

'And then when I think that they're ready

‘To win me a nice little swag,  
‘They are licked like the veriest neddy—  
‘They’re licked from the fall of the flag.  
‘The mare held her own to the stable,  
‘She died out to nothing at that,  
‘And Partner he never seemed able  
‘To pace it with Aristocrat.

‘And times have been bad, and the seasons  
‘Don’t promise to be of the best;  
‘In short, boys, there’s plenty of reasons  
‘For giving the racing a rest.  
The mare can be kept on the station—  
‘Her breeding is good as can be—  
‘But Partner, his next destination  
‘Is rather a trouble to me.

‘We can’t sell him here, for they know him  
‘As well as the clerk of the course;  
‘He’s raced and won races till, blow him,  
‘He’s done as a handicap horse.

‘A jady, uncertain performer,  
‘They weight him right out of the hunt,  
‘And clap it on warmer and warmer  
‘Whenever he gets near the front.

‘It’s no use to paint him or dot him  
‘Or put any ‘fake’ on his brand,  
‘For bushmen are smart, and they’d spot him  
‘In any sale-yard in the land.  
‘The folk about here could all tell him,  
‘Could swear to each separate hair;  
‘Let us send him to Sydney and sell him,  
‘There’s plenty of Jugginses there.

‘We’ll call him a maiden, and treat ‘em  
‘To trials will open their eyes,  
‘We’ll run their best horses and beat ‘em,  
‘And then won’t they think him a prize.  
‘I pity the fellow that buys him,  
‘He’ll find in a very short space,  
‘No matter how highly he tries him,

‘The beggar won’t race in a race.’

Next week, under ‘Seller and Buyer’,

Appeared in the Daily Gazette:

‘A racehorse for sale, and a flyer;

‘Has never been started as yet;

‘A trial will show what his pace is;

‘The buyer can get him in light,

‘And win all the handicap races.

‘Apply here before Wednesday night.’

He sold for a hundred and thirty,

Because of a gallop he had

One morning with Bluefish and Bertie,

And donkey-licked both of ’em bad.

And when the old horse had departed,

The life on the station grew tame;

The race-track was dull and deserted,

The boys had gone back on the game.

The winter rolled by, and the station  
Was green with the garland of spring  
A spirit of glad exultation  
Awoke in each animate thing.  
And all the old love, the old longing,  
Broke out in the breasts of the boys,  
The visions of racing came thronging  
With all its delirious joys.

The rushing of floods in their courses,  
The rattle of rain on the roofs  
Recalled the fierce rush of the horses,  
The thunder of galloping hoofs.  
And soon one broke out: 'I can suffer  
'No longer the life of a slug,  
'The man that don't race is a duffer,  
'Let's have one more run for the mug.'

'Why, everything races, no matter  
Whatever its method may be:

The waterfowl hold a regatta;  
The 'possums run heats up a tree;  
The emus are constantly sprinting  
A handicap out on the plain;  
It seems like all nature was hinting,  
'Tis time to be at it again.

'The cockatoo parrots are talking  
Of races to far away lands;  
The native companions are walking  
A go-as-you-please on the sands;  
The little foals gallop for pastime;  
The wallabies race down the gap;  
Let's try it once more for the last time,  
Bring out the old jacket and cap.

'And now for a horse; we might try one  
Of those that are bred on the place,  
But I think it better to buy one,  
A horse that has proved he can race.  
Let us send down to Sydney to Skinner,

A thorough good judge who can ride,  
And ask him to buy us a spinner  
To clean out the whole countryside.'

They wrote him a letter as follows:

'We want you to buy us a horse;  
'He must have the speed to catch swallows,  
'And stamina with it of course.  
'The price ain't a thing that'll grieve us,  
'It's getting a bad 'un annoys  
'The undersigned blokes, and believe us,  
'We're yours to a cinder, 'the boys'.'

He answered: 'I've bought you a hummer,  
'A horse that has never been raced;  
'I saw him run over the Drummer,  
'He held him outclassed and outpaced.  
'His breeding's not known, but they state he  
'Is born of a thoroughbred strain,  
'I paid them a hundred and eighty,  
'And started the horse in the train.'

They met him — alas, that these verses  
Aren't up to the subject's demands—  
Can't set forth their eloquent curses,  
For Partner was back on their hands.  
They went in to meet him in gladness,  
They opened his box with delight—  
A silent procession of sadness  
They crept to the station at night.

And life has grown dull on the station,  
The boys are all silent and slow;  
Their work is a daily vexation,  
And sport is unknown to them now.  
Whenever they think how they stranded,  
They squeal just like guinea-pigs squeal;  
They bit their own hook, and were landed  
With fifty pounds loss on the deal.

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