

SPORTING NOTES.

FOOTBALL.

On Tuesday night, the Victoria Rugby Football Club held a special general meeting at the James Ray Athletic Association rooms to consider whether it would be to its advantage to guarantee its support to the Victoria Athletic Association grounds in accordance with the terms as submitted to the meeting by the said Victoria Athletic Association. The attendance was not large. Capt. H. M. Jones occupied the chair. After the matter was fully discussed—nearly every one present speaking three or four times on the subject—a resolution was adopted pledging support to the scheme.

The Irishmen of this city have organized a Rugby team to play "the world" at Caledonian grounds on St. Patrick's Day. More power, Ireland.

The Westminster match has been postponed, as it was expected the grounds would not be in fit condition to play.

BEFORE THE CHRISTIAN ERA.

Shorthand Practiced by the Romans About 2,000 Years Ago.

Cicero is said to have been the inventor of shorthand writing, and the Freedman, Marcus Tullius Tiro, his friend, the first stenographer, and he undoubtedly did use a method of shorthand writing as early as 60 B.C. The first English treatise was by Timothe Bright, entitled, "An Arte of Shorte Swifte and Secrete Writing by Character," invented by Timothe Bright, Doctor of Physike, Imprinted at London by I. Windet, the assignee of Tim Bright, 1588. Cum privilegio Regiae Maiestatis. Forbidding all others to print the same." Dr. Bright in this work says: "Cicero did account it worthie his labour, and no less profitable to the Roman common weale (Most Gracious Soueraigne) to inuent a speedie kinde of wryting by character, as Plutarch reporteth in the life of Cato the younger. This invention was increased afterward by Seneca that the number of characters grew to 7,000. Whether through inure of time, or that the men gaue it over for tediousness of learning, nothing remaineth extant of Cicero's inuention at this day."

The stenographer who recalls the efforts required to properly master the few characters used in the art to-day will wonder that of Cicero's system, with its 7,000 characters, nothing remains at this day. It was not until 1642, according to the New York World, that the art became of any practical use, and it was first used in the house of lords in 1699 in taking testimony in a divorce suit. Stenographers were not regularly employed in parliament, however, until 1802.

In many of the public schools of the country stenography is a part of the training. An evidence of its recent remarkable growth is shown by a circular issued by the bureau of education at Washington. Here it is shown that from July 1, 1889, to June 30, 1890, 57,375 persons received instruction in the art of shorthand in schools and colleges in the United States. Five thousand five hundred and fifty of these were in New York and Brooklyn. A like circular was issued by the bureau in 1884, in which it was shown that during the year 1882 the number of pupils receiving such instruction was 12,470. It is therefore quite safe to say that the number for 1893 exceeded 75,000. But this number does not take into consideration an army probably equally large who receive instruction from some other source or from professional stenographers. Out of this vast army, however, but a very small minority are either physically or mentally qualified to become court reporters or even office amanuenses.

SAVED BY A BIG GRAY RAT.

Professor Churchill's Thrilling Experience in a Caving Arizona Mine.

"You were asking about that stuffed rat in my room," said Professor Churchill, the mining expert, to a New York Sun man. "The story concerns an experience that made my hair curl. I was once retained to report upon the workings of a mine called the Little Whoop Up, in southern Arizona. On an adjoining claim was another mine called the Atlas. A dispute arose. The Atlas people claimed that the lower tunnel of the Whoop Up had been bored into the ground and a half million in ore taken out. The first thing to do was to make a survey of the Whoop Up, and of course the Whoop Up people objected. Finally an order for the survey was secured by the court and Dr. John R. Parks and I were sent to make the survey. There are tricks in all trades, and the Whoop Up superintendent knew a few. When we reached the mine he said that the tunnel we wished to explore was in a dangerous condition. There had been a cave, the timbers were rotten, and so on. It meant a 10 to one chance that we would be crushed if we tried it. Of course, we classed him as a liar, though he turned out to be right.

"We worked our way in the tunnel until we ran against a jam of fallen timbers which were sound and were plainly arranged to stop our progress. Parks went back for an ax, while I worked at the roof with a pick to dislodge the center pieces. I succeeded and had climbed half way over into the other side of the tunnel when there came a terrific crash of loose ore from the roof. It fell on both sides of the timbers, pinning me in a hole which would have been a grave right there but for a few sticks which held the mass of ore above. The place was barely large enough to move in, and I knew it was certain death in a few hours unless Parks could dig me out. Even then I believed I was gone, for I did not know how much ore had fallen. In a few minutes the air got heavy, and my eyes began to feel drowsy, and it seemed like the roof and sides of the hole were closing in on me. This oppression and drowsiness increased until I was forced to hammer the sides of the place with my fists and head to keep awake. Still not a sound could I hear from the outside, and only the slow crumbling of ore from above. The foul air was getting into my brain, and I think I was actually insane with the fearful dread of being buried alive. Anyhow, I remember dropping to the floor of the hole, and giving a few faint shouts which echoed back into my ears. I had given up all hope, and was almost swooning when I heard a strange scraping sound above me. I yelled, but received no answer, and then threw my body against the wall and tried to pick out the ore from between the lodged timbers. Still came the queer, scraping noise which seemed to come nearer and nearer and sounded not unlike the steady grinding of a saw. It seemed to last for hours, though it could hardly have been a minute after when a bit of earth dropped to my feet from the upper end of the wall, and along with it came a big gray mine rat, who saved my life, for he left a clear hole for his trail, and through it came a breath of fresh air that gave life to me. The fellow had bored his way from the shaft side of the cave. I stayed there two hours after that until Parks found the cave, got help, and got me out without breaking the air hole. I caught the gray rat, too, and kept him well fed until he died, and wouldn't take a lot of money for his skin now."

Removing the Hat in Public Places.

While there is altogether too much laxity in the social code, and too little attention is given to enforcing the rules that govern good society, common sense and regard for health should, to a certain extent, regulate all of our doings.

While it is a very pleasing and courteous thing for a man to raise his hat when meeting a lady on the street, or in public buildings and elevators, there are many times and places when this is a decided imprudence as far as health goes.

Coming out of a warm room or, when heated with rapid walking, the forehead and hair may become damp with perspiration, a moment's raising of the hat, or removing it altogether while going up in an elevator, exposes the head to a strong current of air, and, in persons of susceptible temperatures, it may be productive of violent attacks of neuralgia.

Any form of politeness that is based on a disregard for the health and life of others is scarcely to be commended in any particular, and, therefore, society should adopt some salute or mark of courtesy expressly for out-of-door meetings. Whatever this may be, it should be strictly observed and not made a matter of convenience or mood, as is sometimes the case.

"American's Abroad."

"Americans Abroad" is a comedy of excellent dramatic construction, its worst defects being due to M. Sardou's evident lack of knowledge of American characteristics. His Americans may be Parisian Americans, but they are not genuine, as they are supposed to be. There are errors of detail which are counterbalanced by a neatly told story, of which love is the theme and in which human interest is artistically blended. Its only real "villain" happily does not appear on the stage at all and its most despicable characters are a fortune-hunting Frenchman and a baroness who is unpleasantly persistent in her efforts to force an American heiress into a marriage with a bankrupt Parisian social parasite, nolens volens. There is enough of characteristic Sardou comedy—never a caricature and never boisterous—inserted into the lines to make them breezy out of the commonplace, and the play is never dull.

No Object In Life.

A person who has no object in life is apt to run a vagrant and useless career. A man who aims at nothing, cannot reasonably expect to hit anything. In military operations, there is always what is called the objective point. The objective point is the point to be made, the thing to be done. All the forces of the army are concentrated on the making of that point; and when that point is made, success follows.

In one sense, life is a warfare; it is a succession of campaigns. And every one should have his objective point—a clearly defined purpose—and work up to it with undeviating persistency. This is the only way he can succeed.

Even-Handed Justice.

Dr. Francis Parkman, the late historian, had a strict idea of justice. A friend met him one day walking along the street leading a street boy with either hand. "What in the world are you doing, Parkman?" asked the friend. "I found that Johnnie here had eaten all of the apple instead of dividing with his little brother. I am going to buy another for the younger boy, and make Johnnie watch him while he eats it."

When friends or acquaintances come to Victoria be sure and recommend the Dominion Hotel as a most desirable moderate-priced Hotel. Remember you take no chances in sending your friends to the Dominion Hotel.