

OLD COUNTRY NOTES.

(By our own correspondent.)

EDINBURGH, 11th May, 1886.

The news has just come to hand that W. G. George had to acknowledge the superiority of L. E. Myers at a 1000 yards and quarter mile, and the wonder is George should have made such very good time, when it is remembered that he has been trained for long distances. The question is, was the game worth the candle, and will it pay Myers to abandon amateurism for the sake of demonstrating what had already been taken for granted. Everybody knew here that George was not the same man that defeated Myers in the States two or three years ago. His sprinting powers are not now what they were then, while Myers seems to be moving as freely as ever. George is a stayer of the first water, and we are now anxiously awaiting his return to see him match again against his old opponent Cummings.

Professional pedestrianism is a repudiated sport in England, and when I say England, I mean Scotland as well. The "peds" killed the sport themselves through the knavery they practiced. Few races were genuine, and the public have long ago ceased to take any interest in professional handicaps. The famous Sheffield handicaps are but a shadow of what they once were. Thousands used to change hands in the old days over these events, where now only hundreds are invested, and that in half crowns by the rag tag and bob tail of the curlery town and neighbouring district. I have myself gone 200 miles to see the final heat of a Sheffield handicap, while now I would not go a cross the street to one, simply because I know the thing to be a swindle.

In Scotland the Highland games in the autumn keep alive pedestrianism, such as it is. These people making not the slightest attempt to conceal the fact that they divide the money. I have known a man receive his share to remain in the tent. They always run the distance and make a point to have as good a finish as possible. There are few professional pedestrians now, who can show our best amateurs a clean pair of heels. At weight putting, tossing the caber, hammer throwing, and other Highland games of this class, George Davidson, Kenneth Macrae, and Owen Duffy still hold pride of place. Davidson is not what he was, and with the hammer and ball Macrae is the better man. Davidson however retains his supremacy at caber tossing.

The event of the week is the suspension permanently of W. Snook, of the Birchfield Harriers. There is now no hope for him as an amateur, and he will of course join the professional ranks. I refer to the matter again merely to mention that his best appearance as an amateur was at the Nott's Forest sports on May 1st, when he won the half mile handicap from scratch in the splendid time of 2 mins. 25 secs, and got third in mile, which was won in fast time. This reminds me that the record established four years ago by P. Moffat, of Montreal, namely, 2 mins. 45 secs, still stands as record for Scotland, and is likely to remain so for some time to come. There are very few men just now in either England or Scotland that could get inside of Moffat's time.

The Scottish cup was presented on Friday evening, May 7th, to the winners of the Queen's Park Football Club, who now hold the trophy for the eighth time. There was a good attendance of the friends of ... Club. The presentation was made by the M. Jas. Crean (3rd Lanark Football Club) who occupied the chair. The winning team are to receive gold badges in commemoration of their victory.

Another football player has left Glasgow for Canada this week. This time it is a disciple of the Rugby game, namely Mr. A. Black, captain of the West of Scotland Second Fifteen. Mr. Black is an enthusiastic footballer and under him the "Second West" have had a most successful

season. He has gone out to join some friends in the Dominion, and intends to make Canada his permanent home. Some of his old companions made Mr. Black a handsome presentation prior to his departure.

That professional football organization, Preston North End, are truly a wonderful set of players. They are the one only successful professional club in England,—the only country that allows professionalism in football.

It is said the managers of the club promised the team £25 per man should they come through the season without a defeat. This they newly succeeded in doing, and when the cash seemed a dead certainty, in an evil day, a match was arranged with Accrington, and this strong professional lot succeeded in breaking the North End's string of victories, and that too at Preston, by three goals to two. The Preston North End did not enter for the English cup. Had they done so they would have won it, inasmuch as they have lately beaten the clubs left in the final round, namely Beckburn Rovers, (the holders), and West Bromwick Albion, the winners up. They ought surely to be awarded championship of England.

Pugilism is not usually associated with the gentle game of billiards, nor do billiard players, as a rule, indulge much in muscular exercise. But every rule has an exception. An instance of this occurred in London last week, in which our champion John Roberts, jr., took a prominent part. At the finish of his match with Taylor, which the champion won, a regular "mill" took place, of which Roberts, a big burly fellow compared to the diminutive Taylor had very much the better. The police interfered and Roberts was marched off to the Marlborough Police Court, there to reflect on the folly of allowing one's temper to have the better of one's reason.

One of the greatest football organizations in the Kingdom is the Bradford Club, the annual report of which is before me. The membership numbers about three thousand, and the revenue for the year is nearly £4,000. After a rather lavish expenditure, the club can show a balance for the year of two thousand pounds. It is a gigantic concern altogether and is conducted on the strictest business principles. The leading gentlemen on the committee are large Yorkshire manufacturers. Professionalism it is said is likely to break out in the Rugby game as well as in the Association. To-day, a conference of gentlemen interested in the purity of the game are meeting in Leeds with the view of taking preventive measures to keep the evil of paid players from lowering the tone of the Rugby football in the North of England.

The champion Rugby Club of Scotland is the West of Scotland Football Club. Its returns for the season, though not quite so good as last, year are nevertheless creditable to the club. They have lost only three matches out of fifteen played, as follows: twice to Bradford and one to the Edinburgh Academicals. In all, they scored 23 goals and 19 ties, and lost 6 goals and 3 ties, which leaves a large majority in their favour.

TUNES — AND TUNES !

The *Musical Herald* has a very reasonable article on tunes, which we give our readers in full:—

"It is sometimes amusing to hear the opinions of people concerning tunes that they think are or are not suited to church use. An eminent Christian man was once conversing with the writer hereof upon this subject, and expressed his conviction — a very positive one, too — that "no tune could possibly be useful in the service of the Church, unless written expressly for such purpose." Upon being asked to name ten that he thought had been most useful among

his people, he quickly pencilled them down, and was more than surprised to find that six of the ten given were taken from operas or other purely secular sources! He had never heard that "blessed 'old Greenville,'" as he called it, was the old English ballad, "Days of Absence," or that his favorite setting of "Guide me, O thou great Jehovah," was taken bodily from Flotow's opera of *Martha*.

"We have often met with people having the same idea, who yet knew that a building originally erected for a skating-rink had been found a most admirable Sunday-school room. Music is not intrinsically sacred or secular of itself; but, so far as that is concerned, it depends upon the train of thought or emotions excited by it. And these are often controlled by association of ideas. No tune can aid the devotions of one who has been accustomed to hear it wedded to light and frivolous words. The beautiful prayer from *Der Freischutz* may be tenderly uplifting to the pastor; while, to the deacon in the pew, it may bring vividly to mind the previous evening at the theatre, with all its fascinating but undevotional associations, and he may enjoy it, immensely as entertainment, without being especially conscious of any increase of devout feeling.

"In Music for divine worship, the hymn, or other selection of words, may be likened to a statue, of which the music is but the drapery which shall make it more lifelike. There must therefore be an intelligent interpretation of the thought contained in the words by music well adapted, or the hymn might better be only impressively read. If the music be such as to set forth devoutly the sacred words in the best manner, it becomes sacred music; but, if it is such as to conceal rather than reveal the sentiment, it is not sacred, no matter by whom or for what purpose it was written. Its character, at least for the time being, is wholly determined by its influence and effects. If its use does not inspire somewhat of devotional feeling, it is not religious music. And so the same tune may at once be "sacred" to one and "secular" to another.

"Even when the composition is exactly what it should be, a wrong style of rendering may rob it of all religious character. We well remember one occasion when the exquisite "He shall feed his flock," from the *Messiah*, was given in a manner which suggested an old-fashioned cotillon rather than worship; and, in many a "praise service," so called, where a lively racket seems to be the acme of success, the effect is anything but worshipful.

"This is a subject which ought to receive much more thoughtful attention than is usually accorded to it, not only at the hands of organists and choir-leaders, but of ministers and people as well."

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