

OLD COUNTRY NOTES.

(By our own correspondent.)

It is with no little astonishment I learned that an athletic nation like Canada had no paper of its own devoted to outdoor games, and that the existed no medium in the Dominion to record doings of a sport loving community whose hardy sons had obtained a fame and a pre-eminence in outdoor exercises which has extended to the old country. It is with feelings of pleasure that I find myself associated with the initiation of the first athletic journal ever published in Canada.

I feel sure it is only necessary to float such a venture to command success. There are many English, Scotch and Irish who have sought and found fortune in the more extended field offered in the great Dominion, and to them as well as to that large majority of its inhabitants who I know take a deep interest in sports, I shall in this column address myself from week to week.

Old country sport is closely watched by those whom destiny has forced to leave their native land. It will be my aim to keep the readers of the News well posted up in what transpires at home, and in doing so I hope to make this corner of the paper both interesting and instructive. The field I have to traverse is a very wide one. Each sport will be dealt with in its season as fully as the limited space at my disposal will allow.

We are just now between seasons. Football, the one great national winter game is going out and cricket, lawn tennis, and athletics and other summer pastimes coming in. The past football season has been a most successful one. In the early months of it there seemed every probability that a rupture was imminent between the rival associations of Scotland and England over the professional question, but by mutual forbearance on both sides, perhaps more so on the side of Scotland than of England the breach was healed at the last moment. Scotland agreed to play against professionals by the advance of the Welsh and Irish Associations.

The Rugby Unions too of the two countries had been at loggerheads for two years over a disputed try gained by England in the International Match of 1881. Through the intervention of the Irish Union the matter was soldered up, Scotland conceding the try and England agreeing to the formation of an International Board at which all the unions would have equal authority and to whom disputes could be referred. When I say that the English Union before this was considered the sole authority on the Rugby game, much was gained by the establishment of such a Board. Where discord reigned harmony now prevails, and no cloud disturbs the serenity of the home football firmament.

I have alluded to the professional question in its bearing to football; an explanation as to the status of paid players may perhaps not be without interest. Professional football players cannot compete at any other sport as amateurs. That has been laid down by the A. A. A. of England, but amateurs may play with or against them without infringing the rules of the A. A. A. On the other hand, professionals at other games, such as cricket, or professional "peders," may play football and do play football, but not Rugby football, without payment, but that does not entitle them to compete at athletic sports or at amateur games as amateurs. A professional at any one game can never compete as an amateur in any other game except association football.

W. Gunn, the great Nott's County Cricketer before the legalisation of professional, played with the Nott's Football Club. So did Sherwin, another Nott's County cricket professional. Gunn in 1884 formed one of the English team in the Inter-

national Football Match against Scotland. He was not then a paid football player but he is now. Ferguson, who in the early and more palmy days of the famous Vale of Leven Club, one of its best players was a professional runner. Instances might be multiplied. Professionals may play with amateurs at football without payment, but that will not constitute them amateurs.

The Athletic season was opened in Scotland on April 17th, with the sports and promenade of the West of Scotland C. C. This is usually one of the best as it is certainly one of the most fashionable meetings in Scotland, and is second only to that of Edinburgh University. Several old Edinburgh school-boys competed. A. S. Blair, the Oxford University sprinter who was brought up at Loretto, won the quarter in 52.2-5 secs. on grass and the hundred in 10.2-5 secs. A. G. G. Asher, another Oxford and Loretto, light, took the pole jump and cricket ball; J. W. Parsons, Edinburgh Wanderers and Fettes, carried off the high jump at 5ft. 8in. and the hurdles. Parsons is the only man in Scotland who ever cleared over 6ft. This he has done several times. The various Edinburgh schools have all held their annual sports, including Loretto, Fettes, Merchiston and Watson's College. Fettes has produced a flyer in the person of D. Landale, who ran second to Blair in the quarter, beating several well-known first class men. J. J. Smeaton, of Loretto, brother of the well-known Academical footballer and cricketer, Pat Smeaton and F. A. M. Mills, of Fettes, made creditable appearances as distance runners. C. Reid, the Academical International football player, put the weight 401. 3 inches.

The coming cricket season in England promises to be a very busy one. An Australian team visits us, and by the time this appears in Canada's first national athletic journal the members of it will have arrived. The opening game is to be played as in 1884, at Sheffield Park, against Lord Sheffield's team. His lordship is an enthusiastic cricketer, and when I say he paid out of his own pocket £300 to Alf. Slaw, of Notts, to coach his county for a season and also for a handsome cup to be held each year by the best cricketer in the Sussex County Eleven; it will be seen his enthusiasm takes a substantial shape. None but first class matches are to be played by the Australians during this tour. It is probable they may play one game in Scotland, but no fixture has yet been made. A Parsee team of cricketers from India, tour in England this summer, but their visit does not excite much interest. They come to Scotland in July.

Rowing is just now in a moribund state. When Edward Hanlan, and Trickett and Laycock the Australian were here the sport was in its hey day. At that time the Britishers were all soundly beaten, and rowing has practically been a dead letter ever since and all attempts to galvanize it have failed. What the visit of Beach the conqueror of the all conquering Hanlan may do towards resuscitating the art remains to be seen. Should Beach and Hanlan meet on the Thames, which seems probable, the third race between these men will cause public interest to be again directed to rowing. At present we have no British rower that could extend either the Australian or Canadian. I shall have more to say on this matter in another letter.

I suppose the fame of W. Anderson, or as his friends delight to call him, "Billy" Anderson of the famous Queen's Park Club, one of the best dribblers that ever toed a football, has extended even to Canada. He is best known as the "Demon Dodger." His command over the ball was really wonderful, and his tricky dodging always created intense amusement and made him a great favorite with the populace. His partner on the right wing was Eddie Fraser now poor fellow no more, and it is admitted by everybody, and that they stood alone as a combination.

Anderson has obtained a lucrative situation in Montreal, and leaves for his new home in a week or two. He will, I am sure find many friends there to welcome him. He did not play football last season and is in consequence increased in bulk. He occasionally plays with the junior teams of the Q. P. just to keep his hand in.

ECHOES OF THE MIKADO.

Week 18th Jan. and 15th Feb.

BY AN ECSTATIC ECHOIST.

Yum Yum has Come! If the first visit was delightful, the second was doubly so, and fairly turned the heads of all the men. (As we are going to press the company is paying Montreal a third one.) Staid married men, whose conduct until that day had been more than perfect, were caught humming softly to themselves "he's going to marry Yum Yum." It was horrific to hear such sentiments from such lips. One began to despair of the city. Duels all round were thick as sleighs in St. James street. One challenge that we were honored with, broke down because we claimed the choice of weapons and named "a cheap and chippy chopper." New scenery, dresses, music, everything, from Ko Ko's sword (we beg his pardon, "Snicker snee") to Yum-Yum's fan, the three little maids who all unwary, came from a ladie's Se-mi-na-ry," as full of mischief as a basket full of kittens, "How do you do little girls?" How do you do little girls?" All was such a change, such a blessed relief to the eye and ear; the oftener you went the happier you were. Of the charms of the music, and the unusual all round excellence of the performance, it is now superfluous to speak, so much has already been said in their praise, and both are so well known to those who crowded "in millions" to the Academy (admission by ladder to the roof, "evening dress not compulsory.") The gloriously joyous burst at the end of the first act. "We do not heed their dis-mal sound, for joy reigns ev-rywhere around," was enough to make a man forget the most terrific domestic cyclone, and send him home singing "Oh so happy! Laughing, hit, ha!" How charming was "Sing a merry Madrigal," you were off beneath the greenwood tree in a moment.

At first we implicitly believed Ko Ko's assertion that he knew that "tit willow, tit willow tom tit" intimately, but on thinking the matter seriously over we are haunted with a horrid dread he might break down under severe cross examination. The Mikado may have had good grounds for asserting that his daughter-in-law elect was "as tough as a bone, with a will of her own." We dare not doubt it, for to doubt the word of Mikado is, we presume, death. But after her more than delicious singing of "Hearts do not break," you just frankly and freely forgive her everything, and loved her for ever more. Oh, Titipu, thou charmed city, why art thou so far distant, and what, we wonder, is the fare? Space compels us most reluctantly to drop the curtain on the many delightful memories of this talented company's visits, and "With joyous shout, and ringing cheer" to say farewell.

Montreal Veterinary College.

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