

SPORTS, GAMES AND PASTIMES.



F. ASHBOLT.

The subject of our sketch is one of the comparatively few locally-produced cricketers who have come prominently to the front in recent years. At the age of fourteen he became a member of the Wellington Cricket Club, and in his first season rose to senior rank, and was moreover selected to proceed to Auckland as a "rep.," but was ultimately unable to get away. His most noteworthy feats with the ball have been—4 wickets for 11 runs against Rival 1st; 8 wickets for 14, Wellington 2nd against St. Patrick's College; 4 wickets in succession, Wellington 2nd against Phoenix 2nd; and also 4 wickets in succession, Wellington Cricket Club v. Otaki. His first appearance in the arena of Interprovincial matches was during the present season, when, against Auckland, he made a promising debut, capturing 4 wickets for 48 and 2 for 34. His splendid performance against the New South Wales team is fresh in the memory of our readers, and well merited the laudatory remarks made by such a keen judge as their skipper, Mr. Davis. Mr. Ashbolt bowls with a high action, and has a capital leg break. Like all such leg break bowlers his pitch is at times erratic, and tends to a costly superabundance of full pitches. His success is mainly owing to his judicious variation of pace, in which respect he could with advantage be imitated. As a batsman he has so far had the minimum of opportunity, but has unmistakeably shown the possession of great patience and defence. In the last match with the Rivals he made 17 and 18, not out. We wish this young player every success, and are inclined to believe that our wish will be gratified.

CRICKET.

Saturday's play effectually extinguished the Phoenix and gave additional lustre to the Rivals. We understand that another round has been decided on with the proviso that on non-completion the present position of affairs will not be affected. As the chances, weather and otherwise, disfavor completion it appears as though the Midlands are to be the recipients of congratulations. The Star of Benbow shone out brightly through the general gloom that enshrouded the Phoenix. His performance was indeed exceptional. To bowl eighteen maidens in thirty-four overs is in itself a feat, and when to this is joined 8 wickets for thirty-four runs, it is plainly understood that to criticise the performance is to encroach considerably upon one's vocabulary of praise. About this time also Upham and Fitz. must not be forgotten. It is devoutly to be hoped that the former will continue to display a dash of batting vigor, as at present our bowlers are "specialists."

Haldane distinctly justified promotion into the senior ranks.

We are constrained to remind the crack Rival batsman that it would conduce to greater harmony amongst his confreres if he indulged in less cavilling at the decisions of the umpires. It is not a very edifying spectacle to see a fieldsman attempting to coerce or dictate to a gentleman assuming the position of umpire. We trust these remarks will be received in the spirit they're given, and that they will have the effect the gravity of the matter demands.

We note with pleasure the growing popularity of the Sunday walks to Cracker

Bay. Wellington is fortunate in having such an easily accessible retreat for athletic strollers. The members of the parties do not as a rule perhaps number many of those whose names are familiar as "household words" or Temperance lecturers, but appear to be composed of the ardent spirits who follow the game to extract as much enjoyment out of it as possible. On such weekly occasions Midlanders, Rivals, and nondescripts fraternise, swallow tea and ozone and bathe in the briny; and on special occasions, for instance, admire, in addition to the scenery and sandflies, the unique texture or want of texture of the genial Mac's pants, or "any other little thing like that." Finally we commend this locality to entertainment committees who are at a loss to know what to do with visiting teams.

The New South Welshmen found the Otagoans stronger than they expected. Their display does not augur well for anything approaching a close contest against the New Zealand team. Otago has been harshly treated by Mr. Olliver. There was surely no reason for his precipitancy in selecting a man to take the place of Downes before the Otago game was determined. Moreover the man he did select, Palmer, is relatively of small moment when such men as Cross and Kallender are amongst the eligibles. Of course we agree with Mr. Olliver that under no consideration could he include Clarke, the quondam Sydney player, if the New Zealand character of the team is to be preserved, "not even," in his own words, "if he were a Grace." It is to be regretted that so much sarcastic and acrimonious correspondence has been caused through Mr. Olliver's selection. We sincerely trust that the result of the game will be the medium of burying its sting.

Of the batsmen met in New Zealand, the Sydney men are most impressed with the form in the rough shown by Kallender. "Why," says Mr. Davis, "if Kallender were on the other side and received judicious coaching I believe he would turn out to be one of the very best batsmen that ever stepped on a cricket field."

The cricket match between the New South Wales team and one chosen from the North Island will be played on the Basin Reserve on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday next. The visiting team will arrive by the Penguin from the South on Sunday. No doubt the match will prove a very interesting one.

ATHLETIC.

The following are the entries received for the Championship Meeting to be held at Dunedin on Saturday, 17th instant, viz:—

100yds Flat.—H. M. Reeves, L. Broad, E. A. Robinson, Canterbury; J. H. Hempton, P. J. Nathan, Wellington; S. Crawshaw, Dunedin; and G. Strachan, South Canterbury.

250yds Flat.—F. E. N. Gaudin, Auckland; J. H. Hempton, P. J. Nathan,