

and all of them, the devil's own patent. Indeed, she thinks bicycling was ever the most tedious topic of conversation. It was also the most tedious form of exercise, save walking, known to the human race. It was but a strange, ingenious compound of dullness and danger. I wish that Fashion's neglect could doom the bicycle. Of course, it cannot. The bicycle, long before it became fashion's fable, had all the makings of a national institution, and Fashion's patronage has but speeded its triumphal progress through England. Some things were created by Fashion herself, and perished so soon as she was weary of them. Others, merely adopted by her, are more abiding. Golf, for example, as the most perfect expression of national stupidity, has an assured, unchecked future, and croquet, as the one out-door game at which people can cheat, will never be in prolonged abeyance, and bicycling, as a symptom of that locomotomania produced by the usages of steam, will endure 'till we go back to the old coaches.' The bicycle is complementary to the steam engine, doing for the horseless individual what the steam engine does for the community. It was as inevitable as it is unlovely, and I must put up with it. But, though the bicycle is a serious fact, and though Demos, with humped back and all the muscles of his face beetled down to one expression of grotesque and ghastly resolve, will continue to scorch through those clouds of dust which mercifully obscure his outlines or those baths of mud which he would have me share with him, yet I may bid a glad farewell to the bicycle as Fashion's fable. To Fashion the bicycle was but a new toy, not a necessity. The dame is rich, and can afford horses, and her horses will be a proud symbol of her superiority, hereafter as in the past. Next century, she will tour equestrian in the bikish chaos, and the horses of her barouche will shy among the serried motor-cars of the middle class.

Little Goldie Straight, whose father, A. W. Straight, lives at Rosworth Avenue, Chicago, is one of the youngest cyclists on record. She is three years old, and was two years and nine months old when she learned to ride. She is 36 inches tall, and with her pretty baby face framed in golden curls, dressed in a little cycling suit, and mounted on the most diminutive of cycles, she is generally surrounded by an admiring throng whenever she rides in Chicago's parks and boulevards. Her little bike was made for her by her father. That is he made the frame, as he could not get one small enough for her. The frame is 11 inches high, and the wheels 14 inches in diameter. It is a 32 gear, and weighs 12 pounds. It is painted white trimmed with gold, and on the front is the name "Little Colour Bearer," with a picture of the American flag.

Cyclists will find better treatment at the hands of the Irish railway companies than of the English. Sixpence will carry a bicycle in Ireland the same distance as 2/ in England. For 1/ you can practically take your bike by rail any distance.

In France cyclists are permitted to ride on footpaths and ways assigned to pedestrians except in cities and towns where the road is badly paved and impassable. They must go at a moderate pace, however, and dismount if necessary, to allow a pedestrian to pass.

It is one of my rules, says a lady cyclist, who is a good long distance rider, never to "coast." I would rather climb a hill than ride down one. I seldom, if ever, dismount in climbing a hill, but when I once reach the top I always get off and lead my wheel down. It depends somewhat, to be sure on the grade of the hill, but if the wheel goes at all fast I dismount. My friends say that they can always lose me in going down a hill, but that I can catch any of them in going up the next one. The fact is I have a horror of my wheel getting beyond my control. Many very serious accidents are constantly occurring in this way. The secret of long distance riding, I should say, is not to ride too fast. A great many riders who start out on long runs fall out because they fail to maintain an even speed, and wear themselves out early in the run.

SPORTS AND PASTIMES.

BOWLING.

OPENING OF MR J. KIRKER'S PRIVATE GREEN, PONSONBY.

On Saturday last Mr J. Kirker (who had courteously postponed the opening of his private green until the district clubs had opened for the season) had a reunion of his bowling friends with their wives and daughters. The invitations were made as representative of the various clubs as possible, among those present being Mr Wm. Aitken, a veteran bowler of the Auckland (Grafton) Bowling Club in its earliest days, and one of its founders. There were about one hundred ladies and gentlemen present. Afternoon tea was dispensed, and a very enjoyable and pleasant afternoon was spent. The green was in the best of condition and elicited the admiration of the bowlers. Mr Kirker has adopted the style of the Glasgow clubs in having the 'ditches' covered with open wooden gratings, which keep the bowls clear and enable the bowler, if the grass is damp, to stand while waiting his turn on a dry footing. Forty men were engaged in the matches, playing ten men a rink. The following were the results:—

No. 1 Rink.—A. Brookes, Currick, Rhodes, Hooper, Gorrie (skip), 18 v. Meyers. Court, Peacock, Dingwall, Winks (skip), 14.

No. 2 Rink.—Foster, Patterson, Upton, J. Court, Lambert (skip), 13 v. Furby, Blomfield, Beatty, Holden, Kingswell (skip), 33.

No. 3 Rink.—Ross, Edmiston, Coleman, Haslett, H. W. Brookes (skip), 22 v. Ching, Woodast, Heton, Hardie, Stewart (skip), 11.

No. 4 Rink.—Hudson, Steele, Mackechnie, Russell, Thomson (skip), 14 v. Hosking, Campbell, Lawson, Hart, F. Court (skip), 21.

ORDINARY CLUB MATCHES.

AUCKLAND (GRAFTON) CLUB.

Games were played on the Auckland Bowling Club's Green Saturday afternoon. The president, vice-president, and a considerable number of members were absent, having been invited to the opening of Mr Kirker's private green in Ponsonby.

NEWMARKET CLUB.

Very enjoyable games were played on Saturday afternoon the green being in splendid order.

MOUNT EDEN CLUB.

A pleasant afternoon was spent at the Mount Eden Bowling Club Green, five rinks being occupied.

PONSONBY CLUB.

Five rinks were in full swing, some close finishes and good play being displayed.

REMUERA CLUB.

The attendance was small owing to other attractions, a number of the members being present at Mr Kirker's green.

DEVONPORT.

Despite the boisterous weather prevailing on Saturday several interesting and enjoyable games were played on the above club's green, which was in splendid condition. At a meeting of the club twenty-one new members were elected, and it is expected that some very strong rinks will be played during the season.

The description of the opening of the Nelson Bowling Season was conveyed, by mistake, to the North Shore, and did not reach this paper until too late for insertion last week. The green was opened last Wednesday afternoon, but, alas, under rather unfavourable circumstances as regards the weather. A heavy northerly gale was blowing, which rendered play difficult, and those looking on found it rather cold at first; but when the delicious hot tea, with a variety of cakes were served by Mrs and Miss Baigent the guests somehow forgot to feel cold, but once more felt good tempered and ready to thoroughly enjoy the afternoon's amusement. Mr H. Baigent, the president of the club, formally declared the season open, and a match was then played by teams selected by the president and the vice-president, the former winning by two points.

TENNIS.

The members of the Hawke's Bay Lawn Tennis Club are at present practising nearly every day, as the tournament, ladies, and men's handicap doubles, prizes for which will be given by the president (Mr A. J. Cotterill), is to begin some time next week. Afternoon tea was given last Saturday by Mrs Cartile, when there were a great many present, among the number being Mesdames Hartley, Logan, Morris, the Misses Begg, Sutton, Cotterill, Donnelly, Wood, Watt, Nairn, and Messrs Barron, Watkiss, Macfarlane, Brabazon, Dakin, Burke, etc. On Tuesday, the 9th of November, a match which should prove to be a most interesting one will be played between representatives of the Napier and Palmerston Tennis Clubs on the Napier courts.

Last Saturday, the Wairau Tennis Courts were opened for the season and the President (Mr McCallum) made a somewhat lengthy inaugural speech, which, however, as the wind was very high, was inaudible to many. There was ample compensation immediately after, however, in the delicious cakes, sweetmeats and tea provided by Mrs McCallum, and dispensed by a band of beautiful maidens and their attendant swains. A large number of the Marlborough Tennis Club were present, who greatly enjoyed the afternoon, as shelter from the disagreeable wind was afforded by trees on the windward side of the courts. Fortunately for those who had arranged to be present at both functions, the ground where the opening of the cricket took place was not far distant. There Mrs Orr and a number of others provided afternoon tea for the players and their friends, which, according to all accounts was the most delicious ever brewed.

The well-kept lawns (six) of the Eden and Epsom Lawn Tennis Club were opened for the season last Saturday. An extra court has been made since last year, and two croquet lawns. This gives ample space for the Championship Tournament, which is to be played here at Christmas. The new secretary, Mr J. W. Hall, won much kudos by his great attention to visitors and players. Messrs Marshall and Brabant are the Tournament secretaries.

POLO.

The Hawke's Bay Polo Club, assisted by the members of Whareraangi Club, held their opening meeting on Saturday, October 30th, at the Stortford Lodge Ground, when there were a large amount of spectators. Some very good play was shown, but as the ponies are not yet in very good training, it was not of a fast order. The ground was in splendid condition, and the club intend making various improvements this year, so that it may be still better for the tournament which is to be held in March. Messrs J. B. Chambers, G. Cooper and E. Peacock acted as referees.

APRONS AGAIN IN FAVOUR.

Aprons, for so many years regarded as the distinguishing mark of serving woman, promise to be the rage in the smart set in London. The apron of the future, however, will differ from that of the past which our grandmothers used to wear. In the days gone by it was a sombre affair of black silk or alpaca, sometimes set off by a few dainty tucks or rows of herring-bone stitching and a little very fine lace. Now the very cheapest aprons are made of the finest white linsens and muslins and batistes, and are puffed and frilled with lace and trimmed with ribbons until the old ladies of a hundred years ago would never dream that they were aprons. The finest aprons are made of real lace, and are well worth passing down from generation to generation.

An English woman recently ordered an apron that cost £100. It is made of Brussels rose point in an exquisite floral scroll design, and has a border of roses. She didn't get it to wear when doing up the kitchen work, but she does it when serving afternoon tea or doing a dainty piece of fancy work. Some of the lace aprons have pastoral pictures in which figures are introduced, and are very quaint-looking with their floral borders. Still others are embellished with butterflies, birds and blossoms.

Men like aprons, so it is pretty safe to say that the fashion of wearing them will soon take hold here. Some of the shops are already importing them, and the managers say they will go like hot cakes when chafing dish time comes round again. Nothing domesticates a woman in appearance like an apron, and a very frivolous girl can sometimes decoy a clever bachelor with one if she only knows how to wear it, or at least that is what some of the clever bachelors say themselves. There is a great deal in knowing how to wear an apron. The most costly apron ever made was worn by the Duchess of Queensberry in the last century. It was made entirely of point lace, and was valued at £600.

TESTIMONIAL.

Dennistown, Oct. 18th, 1897.

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