

Athletic Sports.

GOLF NOTES.

(By "Stymie.")

AUCKLAND GOLF CLUB.

The opening of the Auckland Golf Club's new club house at the Cornwall Park Links was a great success. Prior to the ceremony Dr. Lewis, captain of the club, in a happy little speech, presented to Mr. Timmins, who has attended so well to the creature comforts of golfers at Greenlane, a handsome marble clock. Dr. Campbell then declared the club house open. A large number of golfers and their friends assembled to witness the function, and afterwards wended their way to the home green, where Dr. Campbell addressed a few words to them, and then declared the links open for play, and played the first official putt on the links, holing out in response to repeated calls in three. It was a pleasant sight to see the venerable gentleman climbing the slopes of picturesque Maungakiekie, which stands guard over his noble gift of Cornwall Park, in his desire to secure a good position from which to watch the exhibition game of golf. At the conclusion of the ceremony three hearty cheers were given for Dr. Campbell.

The exhibition game between Messrs C. E. S. Gillies and Wilder, and A. Duncan and Scott did not produce any phenomenal golf. Gillies' first tee shot was a fine drive, but Duncan fozzled his. The first taste which Duncan gave the gallery was at the ninth hole, where, with a splendid drive, he lay on the edge of the green. At the Pah he was driving into the teeth of half a gale, yet with a grand drive of almost perfect direction he landed on the far side of the green. His approach shots were not too good, but somehow in a match of this description one does not expect too much. Some of his putts were very fine and I look forward with a deal of pleasure to seeing him when it is business.

Mr James Kirker very generously provided afternoon tea on the occasion of the opening of the new club house. The clock which he presented to the Auckland Golf Club some time ago has been placed in the northern end of the club house, and will prove a great convenience to players. Sport generally in Auckland would be all the better if we had a few more Kirkers.

Mr C. Arnold was the recipient of many congratulations on Saturday afternoon. Our Southern visitors were loud in their praises of the Auckland Golf Club's fine club house. The house is built in the Swiss style, and forms quite a landmark for miles around, standing as it does in a most commanding position. The internal arrangements are quite in keeping with outward appearances, and no pains have been spared to make everything pleasant for visitors and members.

The committee of the Auckland Golf Club deserve every credit for the condition in which the course is. There are, of course, many improvements which will come in time, but considering the backward state of the course some few weeks ago it is very pleasing to see that they are so well prepared to carry out the important meeting which takes place this week. I have no doubt our visitors will carry away with them pleasant recollections of their week spent on the grassy slopes of Maungakiekie.

It is almost a certainty that Duncan and C. E. S. Gillies will fight out the final for the championship, and if this is so it should be a match worth a longer journey than to Cornwall Park to witness.

Peel has been playing very well lately. He had a bye in the first round, but it was bad luck for him drawing C. E. S. Gillies in the second.

The driving competition takes place down the amphitheatre. I should not be surprised if Duncan finds the plantation if the day is calm or the wind favourable.

In the Men's Tournament, New Plymouth, Wright (scr.) played Morrison (21), just winning by 1 up. Johnson (21) played Paton (21), winning by 2 up. Wright (scr.) therefore will play Johnson (21), and the match should be very interesting, as both men are very good players.

In the semi-final round of the Ladies' Tournament Miss G. Stanford (scr.) played Miss McKellar (12), winning by 4 up and 2 to play. Miss Skeet (5) beat Miss Standish (9) by 2 up. Miss G. Stanford (scr.) plays Miss Skeet (5).

A nine hole course has been temporarily laid out on Mr Standish's property, and is now open to the members.

THE CHAMPIONSHIP MEETING.

The championship meeting was opened on Monday in fine weather, although the players would have been satisfied with less wind. There were twenty-three contestants at the outset, and that number stood reduced to eight on Tuesday morning. On this (Wednesday) afternoon the semi-finals are being played, and the final, which consists of 36 holes, comes off on Friday. To-day (Wednesday) there is an approaching and putting competition, and a driving competition, on Thursday bogey foursomes handicap and a bogey handicap match, and on Saturday the meeting concludes with a medal play handicap, and the contest for the inter-club challenge bowl between the Auckland and Wellington Clubs. Proceedings commenced with the first round of the men's championship. Sykes scratched to Colbeck, and Saunders to Kurupo Tareha. Howden also won by default. The play cannot be described as first-class. Duncan is by no means at the top of his game, but I hope to see a big difference in his form before the end of the week. C. E. S. Gillies was not in exceptionally good buckle, as he took 83 to complete the 16 holes he played against Peel. Peel was not driving well. Had he been he would have made the finish even closer than it was. He deserves every credit for his plucky play. Gillies was driving and approaching very fairly, some of his tee shots being admirable pieces. A. B. Laurence, who always plays a consistent game, defeated H. Piercy (Wellington) by 3 up and one to play. A. Duncan, the present champion, beat J. B. Kidd by 9 up and 8 to play. Kidd has had practically no play for a very long time, but notwithstanding this his long game was very good, but he was weak in approaching and putting. Pare Keiha (Poverty Bay) beat Hodson (Wellington) after a very close game at the 19th hole, which took the native 10 to hole out in. Higginson beat K. Duncan by 3 up and 2 to play. Duncan was one up at the 19th hole, but as the 18th hole had been played by Higginson under a protest which was afterwards sustained, the hole was re-played, Higginson winning. As he was 2 up at the 15th hole he thus won as above. K. Duncan plays a nice game, and bids fair to follow in the footsteps of his brother.

The second round was started in the afternoon, with the following results:

Wilder beat Stronach 5 up and 4 to play.
Bull beat Burness 4 up and 2 to play.
Keiha beat Higginson 6 up and 4 to play.
A. Duncan beat Laurence 5 up and 4 to play.
Colbeck beat Howden 7 up and 6 to play.
Tareha beat Pearce 8 up and 6 to play.
C. E. S. Gillies beat Peel 3 up and 2 to play.
H. T. Gillies beat O'Rorke 8 up and 7 to play.

The best golf of the day was shown by Kurupo Tareha. In his match against Pearce he put up the following good score for 13 holes: 6, 4, 4, 5, 4, 5, 4, 4, 4, 4, 5. If he can keep this going he will give some of our players an interesting time of it. His match with Colbeck will prove an interesting game, I think. The meeting between Messrs H. T. and C. E. S. Gillies should also be an interesting picture. I am informed that the latter's wrist is still troubling him a little. I earnestly hope that it will not seriously interfere with his play.

The new club-house stands 400 feet above the sea level, and commands a most magnificent view over the country. It is two stories high. On the main floor there is a clubroom, 30ft by 18ft, with two 12ft bay-windows. There are men's dressing-rooms, 25ft by 16ft and 15ft by 12ft, and ladies' clubroom 16ft by 15ft, and dressing-room 16ft by 10ft. There is also accommodation for the caretaker, and a roomy verandah runs round three sides of the building. The upper story contains clubrooms and dormitories, in which members or strangers can stay over-night. The house is erected on freehold land, the club having purchased some three acres for clubhouse and lawns.

OUR ILLUSTRATIONS.

ASHBURTON—A CITY OF THE CANTERBURY PLAINS.

Many old residents of the county remember the time when the site of Ashburton was completely covered with the waving tussock. As the place grew East-street became the chief business centre of the town, with its long line of good business houses on one side, and the green shady plantation stretching along the opposite side. A commencement has now been made to replace the early public buildings with more pretentious structures. The old post and telegraph office, situated in East-street, has now been replaced by a fine new building. Probably no other institution can show so strikingly the progress of a district as its post office. In August, 1868, the first post office at Ashburton was established, and the postmaster received £20 a year. In 1871 a telegraph office was added, and in 1873 a money order office followed. The staff of the post and telegraph office has grown from the solitary postmaster of the original post office to the staff of seventeen as shown in our illustration. Mr Renner joined the department in 1870, and rising through various grades was placed in charge as assistant officer in charge of the telegraph office, Wellington. He has also served in Blenheim, and was the officer in charge of the telegraph office, Wakapuaka (Cable Bay), from which station he was promoted to the charge of the Ashburton post and telegraph office. Previous to the incorporation of the borough a domain had been set aside for the use of the town; and as this reserve is within the boundaries of the borough, the Council took over the charge of the domain from the former Domain Board. An old winding gully run through the reserve, and along the course of this old water course beautiful lakes have been formed. In the centre of one of these an island of some size exists. Trees of various kinds have been planted in the domain, especially around the various sheets of water, into all of which the weeping willow dips. A very fine swimming pond surrounded by a belt of trees has been formed. From lake to lake the water flows along water races, and is finally conducted through concrete side channels along the various streets for flushing and for fire prevention purposes. The domain has a very good racing track.

Mr Bullock presided at the first meeting of the burghers, and was chosen the first Mayor. Both in the County Council, of which he was an active member, and as Mayor of the new borough, Mr Bullock was active in every movement likely to be of advantage to the place. One of the earliest settlers, he has seen the county grow from its original sea of tussock to the present very important position it holds as a leading con-

tributor to the wealth of the colony. Mr Wm. Henry Collins, the Mayor of Ashburton, was born in Cornwall, England, where he spent his early youth in farming pursuits. Over thirty years ago he left for New Zealand, and landed at Lyttelton. He then went to the West Coast gold diggings, where he remained for four years. During that time he helped to build the first water wheel at Donohue's, near Roastown. He also helped to lay the first flat rods from one gold mine to another for pumping purposes. He afterwards settled at Timaru, and was engaged in the sawmilling and timber trade. Later he came to Ashburton, where he has been engaged in an extensive business for over twenty years. Two years ago he paid a joint business and pleasure visit to England, America, and South Africa. He was in America during the time of the American war with Spain. He was in South Africa when the ultimatum was sent by late Transvaal and Orange Free State to Britain. He arrived in South Africa in the same steamer with General Sir George White and his staff. On his arrival at Capetown everything was in the excited condition common to the breaking out of war. During his stay there the first shot of the war was fired on the 11th October, 1899. Mr Collins has been in the Council for six years, in addition to the time he has now served as Mayor. As Mayor he has received various returning contingents of soldiers, entertaining them in Baring Square. When he entertained the returning Fourth Contingent in the Domain, 7000 people were present. He had the honour to welcome their Royal Highnesses the Duke and the Duchess of Cornwall and York. Twenty-five years ago Mr Collins married Miss Rowbotham, of Nottingham, England. As mayor and mayores Mr and Mrs Collins have been very hospitable and very successful.

Mr Alcorn was born in County Tyrone, Ireland. He first emigrated to Victoria, and then came to New Zealand in the first steamer after gold had been discovered at Gabriel's Gully in 1861. He opened the first store on the famous Blue Spur; and when the West Coast rush set in he chartered a vessel and nearly arrived at his destination, had the misfortune to be the first wreck on the Hokitika bar. At low water packers were able to reach the stranded vessel, and Mr Alcorn sold the oats in the cargo at £4 a bag. Mr Alcorn afterwards erected stores at Hokitika and Grey-mouth. Two of his vessels were lost while trading on the West Coast. In 1876 Mr Alcorn went Home through America, and was present at the Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia. He came to Ashburton in 1881, was appointed a J.P. in 1887, and has also served in the Borough Council.

Councillor H. M. Jones came to the colony in 1858, and to Ashburton in 1877. During his residence he has taken an active interest in municipal, educational, and school matters. He was elected a councillor in 1891, and is now the senior councillor. He is also a Freemason.

Councillor Davison came to New Zealand in 1876 and settled in Ashburton. He has been clerk of the Ashburton Road Board for thirteen years, and official assignee at Ashburton for over seven years. He was elected a member of the Council about four years ago, and in every public position he holds has shown himself to be capable and obliging, earning thereby the usual public favour and goodwill.

Councillor Willis has been a journalist for nearly twenty years. He was formerly editor of the Christchurch "Telegraph," and is now editor of the Ashburton "Guardian" and of the Ashburton "Mail." He was elected to the Borough Council about eighteen months ago.

Councillor Timmins came to New Zealand in 1863, and to Ashburton in 1890. At a bye-election for the last Council he was selected for the vacant seat from among six candidates. He is chairman of the Sanitary and Library Committees of the Council, and has been very attentive to his municipal duties.