

People Talked About

Twenty-seven Years Fire Fighting.

Mr Wait, of Devonport, whose portrait we give this week, has a fire-fighting record of which he may well be proud. It was in the year 1876 that he first joined the Auckland Fire Brigade, in the capacity of a volunteer. In 1878 an important event—the formation of the United Fire Brigade Association—took place, and from that body he two years later received his first certificate of service. A five years' service silver



MR. WAIT,
A Veteran Firebrigadesman.

medal was the next honour to be awarded to Mr Wait, and every second year thereafter he received a silver bar. Eight silver bars fell to his lot, and on the receipt of the last one he was also presented by Superintendent John Hughes with a twenty-one years' service certificate. At that period Mr Wait filled the responsible position of second foreman in the City Brigade, but, owing to a change of residence, was forced to resign his post, to the great loss of the Auckland division. Devonport, his new place of abode, gained what the city lost, as Mr Wait immediately joined the brigade in that suburb. Shortly after becoming a member of the Shore Brigade he received his silver bar for the completion of twenty-three years' service. Finally, in recognition of his excellent qualifications as a fire-fighter, the brigade promoted him to the well-earned and proud position of senior foreman of the Devonport section, and this post of responsibility he still holds.

On the 4th September of this year the Devonport Fire Brigade held their ninth annual concert, at which Mr Wait was presented with a twenty-five years' gold medal from the United Fire Brigade Association. This medal should have been handed over to him in the year 1901, as in that year Mr Wait completed his quarter century as a fireman. Mr Handley, the Deputy Mayor, who made the presentation, spoke in highly eulogistic terms of Mr Wait's strict attention to his duties and the high courage he displayed in scenes of disaster.

Mr Wait can now fairly claim to be considered the longest service fireman in the Auckland district. Twenty-seven years' untiring and assiduous fulfilment of his duties stand to his record, and still the veteran is to be found at his post when duty calls. To men like Mr Wait Auckland should be duly grateful, showing by every means that appreciation of their conduct which is their just due.

Billiard Skill on the Links.

Wilson P. Foss is the American amateur champion billiard player. He has attained a degree of skill in the game rarely attained by amateurs and, needless to say, is extremely fond of it. But much as he likes billiards he likes golf better, and therein he resembles more than one good amateur billiard player who has found the allurements of the links more seductive than the soft chimes of the ivories. To the fact that there are points of similarity in golf and billiards—noticeable to those who take to the former after becoming proficient at the latter—points in which the two pastimes are akin, Mr Foss says his billiard training helped him not a little when it came to golf. But golf, he says, is of no help in playing billiards. So golf is indebted to billiards.

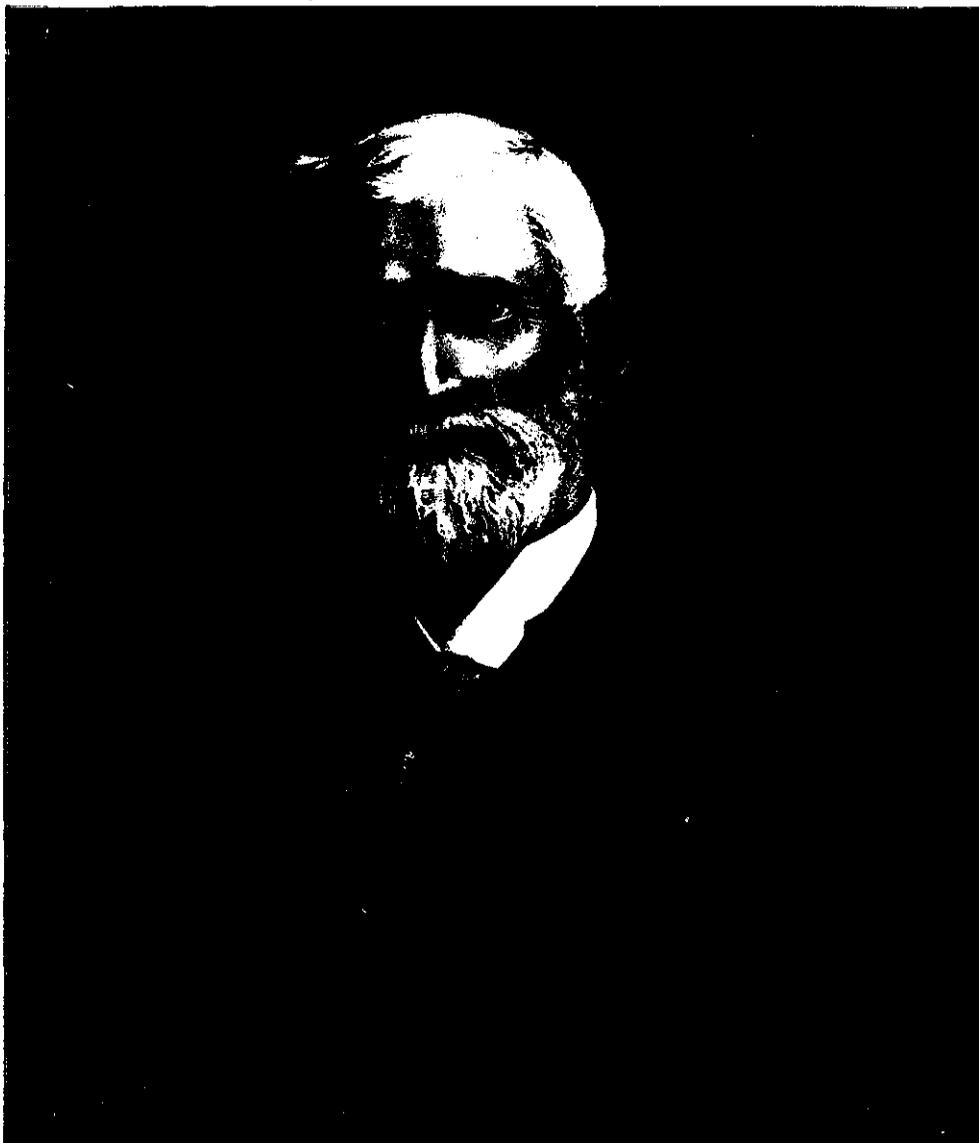
"The phase of golf in which it is like billiards," said the amateur cue champion the other day, "is the putting. I discovered that the practised eye and wrist which were acquired at the billiard table helped me out a good deal on the

putting green. In putting you need, most of all, judgment of force and speed, and this same quality is indispensable in playing billiards well. The control over the wrist and other parts of the arm, which comes from long experience in gathering in the caroms, comes in very handy in gauging the force and speed necessary to drive a golf ball into the hole. I think every billiard player who has taken to golf has found this to be the case.

"Judgment and speed count more in billiards than good eyesight, and the same is true in putting. You'd be astonished at what a little part, comparatively, eyesight cuts in billiards. Of course, one has to have fair eyesight, but then the ability to put on just the right amount of force is more important. The billiard player glances at the cue ball, then glances up to the object ball just as he is to shoot, and then relies on his judgment in making the shot and getting the position. One of our best amateur billiard players is Joe Knapp. Mr Knapp is a strong golf player, and, moreover, an extra good putter.

"In comparing the two games there is one thing to be said in favour of billiards, and that is that it is by far the more scientific game of the two. It is a much harder game to master than golf. I venture to say that in golf there are two or three hundred players good enough to play in a tournament for first honours and fifty or sixty good enough to have a reasonable chance to win; yet how many are there who are good enough to have an equal chance in billiards? Of all the billiard players in the world to-day there are only six or seven who are in the first class. The amateur golf championship last year was won by a young man who finished last in the qualifying round. There is no such element of chance in one's winning a billiard tournament. In billiards, the chances would be much more in favour of the best player winning from the outset, so that I should say ability tells more in billiards than in golf.

"A noted golfer once said, and his way to win was to capture the first hole, and then never let his opponent catch up with him. In citing the case of the player



THE LATE MR RAYNER, FATHER OF DR. RAYNER, AUCKLAND.

From a Painting by Miss Ellen von Meyern