



**ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING.**

"MERCUTIO'S" eel story is a chestnut of most venerable age. Surely, even if he has not dipped into Maine's Ancient Lore, he must have heard of the Ingoldsby Legends, written by one Thomas Barham, divine and humourist. We have been patiently waiting and watching for some of the Herald's correspondents who are steeped to the lips in English literature, e.g. the versatile Mr. John Abbott or the many-sided Mrs. Mary Steadman Aldis, to enlighten our darkness. In despair we are compelled to roast the chestnut ourselves. One of Tom Barham's best efforts, entitled "The Knight and the Lady," opens thus:—

"The Lady Jane was tall and slim,  
The Lady Jane was fair—  
And Sir Thomas, her lord, was stout of limb."

The knight was an enthusiastic naturalist and entomologist, and, like our T.S.F., wore spectacles. The Lady Jane, a notable housewife, consoled herself for Sir Thomas' neglect by indulging in pure Platonics with her cousin, Captain Dugald MacBride. One day the knight fails to return from a prolonged beetle-hunt, his mysterious disappearance being thus accounted for by Captain MacBride—

"Poor old buffer! he's certainly dead."

MacBride thereupon proposes to the widow, but is interrupted by the gardener, who arrives post haste, exclaiming, "We've found master," followed presently by two retainers bearing the remains of the defunct Sir Thomas, who it seems had tumbled into the fish-pond while chasing some scientific quarry. He was half eaten by eels.

"And out of each shoe an eel they drew,  
And from each of his pockets they pulled out two."

MacBride and the widow, while sorrowing over the untimely fate of poor Sir Thomas, have the eels cooked and banquet thereon. The Lady Jane subsequently remarks to Thompson, the valet—

"Eels a-many I've ate, but any  
So good ne'er tasted before.  
They're fish, too, of which I'm remarkably fond,  
Go pop Sir Thomas again in the pond;  
Poor dear! he'll catch us some more!"

The above then is the original of "Mercutio's" eel story, so far as we know. Very likely George Augustus Sala, if appealed to, could trace the legend to some source even more remote. But to reach that rare and ancient English classic, of which probably not more than a million or two of copies remain in the collections of Bibliophiles, is enough. Poor Tom Barham is quoted by so many and read by so few! "Mercutio" is a terrible wag, and dangerously pawky!

ARRANGEMENTS for the tandem procession have now been completed, and about a dozen teams will parade on Saturday next at 2 p.m. in lower Princes-street, between the Museum and the Northern Club. The start should be a sight well worth witnessing.

THE cricket cup-matches are likely to end more speedily than was anticipated. If Parnell, as seems likely, defeat United, and Gordon, as seems certain, conquer St. Mary's, there will be no need to further protract the season, since Gordon must win the Senior Cup. The Junior Cup, however, will yet require to be decided—Ponsonby and Gordon II. should arrange a special match to settle the matter. On Satur-

day last H. B. Lusk compiled his second century this season, showing some fine hitting, but being greatly favoured by Dame Fortune during the latter half of his 116 not out, as he was let off at least eight times. Ike Mills, for Parnell against United, put together 92 in capital form—a much better performance than Lusk's, though it must not be forgotten that the latter had to contend against odds in the shape of four extra men in the field. United bowlers seemed to be entirely off the spot.

MR. H. SCHWARTZKOFF has written a long letter anent the recent Championship meeting to the N.Z. Referee. He attacks the report in that journal and handles it roughly, propounding some tough queries. In an editorial note the sophisticated method is adopted of smashing an adversary's weak points and utterly ignoring his strong ones. One sentence breathes gentle self-conceit so irresistibly naïve that we must quote it. The editor says: "The statement has been volunteered to us over and over again by many who witnessed the meeting, and who are good judges, that our correspondent's report was the best published!" Again, in respect to the official time for the 100 yards, the editorial note says: "We are informed by one of the time-keepers that 10sec. was taken as the time for the 100 by all the reporters in mistake. Certainly all the papers we saw gave it as 10secs., but in our issue of February 26 we stated that 9 4-5ths was the official time." In future the Referee will do well to follow the SPORTING REVIEW, which in its issue of February 14 correctly gave the time as 9 4-5ths. We have from the first upheld Macpherson's performances, giving reasons which so far have not been challenged—in fact the Canterbury Press receded from the position assumed at the outset. In regard to Burton's walking and Bailey's disqualification we quite agree with the Referee, and on these questions think Mr. Schwartzkoff in error.

Now that football is beginning, and practice matches are fixed for Saturday next, it is reasonable to remind players that training wins many a match. To encourage suitable preparation, it would be a good plan to promote occasional long-distance races and cross-country steeplechases. Such contests should not be confined to members of individual clubs, but should be open to footballers generally. They would not only be interesting in themselves, but would serve the purpose referred to above.

TO-MORROW (Saturday), on the Parnell Tennis Ground, a match will be played which should prove close and exciting. Miss Mowbray, the Auckland Lady Champion, meets Miss Hilda Hitchings, Lady Champion of Hawke's Bay. Opinions as to the result are equally divided, and doubtless a large gathering of admirers of good tennis will flock to the arena should the day prove favourable for play. Last Saturday the Parnell and University Clubs played six matches—three on each home lawn. In the end honours were divided, each club winning three contests. It would be better in such matches to arrange for an odd number of events—say seven—so that the *præmium virtutis* might be awarded and the unsatisfactory "tie" averted. On the same day the Parnell Club gave a very enjoyable garden party, the large assembly being photographed by Mr. Hanna.

Now that rinking seems to have gone out of fashion, some winter amusement for ladies is a desideratum. The game of ring-goal, which the Rev. Mr. Hawtreay has endeavoured to introduce, might serve the purpose. There is more in the exercise than many people imagine, and in a future issue we shall give some account of the game and explain its leading features.

THE Auckland Rowing Association's Regatta was at last got off on Saturday after two provoking postponements owing to boisterous weather. A light southerly breeze and smooth water rendered the conditions favourable for good rowing. In the Maiden Whaleboats Waitemata won all the way. Good race between North Shore and City for second place until about 300 yards from winning post, when City No. 2 cried *peccavi* and the crew ceased rowing. Champion Gigs was a mere procession, Waitemata winning comfortably, Ponsonby second, with North Shore close up. Maiden Gigs proved a surprise. Ponsonby reversed Waitemata's former win at Takapuna. A hard race. Junior Senior Whaleboats City led, with North Shore a quarter of a length behind, until 50 yards from home, when North Shore spurted and won by nearly a length. The winner's steer-oar backed up splendidly at the finish. Junior Gigs: The St. George's Bay crew showed splendid form, rowing with a good catch and even swing, and have manifestly profited by the good coaching bestowed upon them by Mr. Thomas. They were never asked to row, and won as they pleased. Pity they did not start for the champion event. Senior Whaleboats brought about another comfortable win for Waitemata. Maiden Gigs and Junior Gigs under 10st. (a good race, just won at the finish) both fell to Ponsonby. Senior *bona fide* Gigs: The same St. George's Bay crew gave another fine display of scientific rowing, winning by something like 100 yards. Altogether the Regatta was a success, despite some shortcomings in regard to delay and poor starting, but so many postponements are calculated to discourage crews, and we trust that some more sheltered course will be discovered for future meetings, at which we think the Senior Whaleboat race should be struck out and a second class Senior Gig event substituted. We append results:—

- Maiden Whaleboats, one mile.—Waitemata Boating Club—C. Johnson, G. Buck, J. McCloud, C. McDonald, A. McDonald—1; North Shore, 2; City, 3.
- Champion Gigs, two miles.—Waitemata Boating Club—Mat. Keefe, G. Moore, R. Moore, T. O'Connor—1; Ponsonby, 2; North Shore, 3.
- Maiden Gigs (under 10st.), one mile.—Ponsonby Rowing Club—J. Farquhar, S. Farquhar, A. Duthie, J. Graham—1; Waitemata, 2.
- Junior-Senior Whaleboats, one mile and a half.—North Shore Rowing Club—B. Lambert, H. Dacre, J. Conley, G. Chester, J. McDonald—1; City, 2; Waitemata, 3.
- Junior Gigs, one mile and a half.—St. George's Rowing Club—A. Busby, F. Hull, C. Harington, F. Jervis, 1.
- Senior Whaleboats, two miles.—Waitemata Boating Club—Mat. Keefe, H. Cordes, Heffernan, R. Moore, T. O'Connor—1.
- Maiden Gigs, one mile.—Ponsonby Rowing Club—S. Farquhar, J. Farquhar, A. Duthie, J. Graham—1; City, 2; West End, 3.
- Junior Gigs (under 10st.), one mile and a half.—Ponsonby Rowing Club—A. Finlayson, W. Cossar, A. McIndoe, H. Cooke—1; Waitemata, 2.
- Senior *bona fide* Gigs, two miles.—St. George's Rowing Club—A. Busby, F. Hull, C. Harington, F. Jervis—1; West End, 2.