



ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING.

RETURNING to the subject of athletic risks in general and football accidents in particular, we proceed to fulfil our promise to prove that the proposition "Football prevents more accidents than it causes" is no mere paradox, but a sound fact. Those who take part in the game, as well as competent spectators, are quite aware that the more skilful the players the fewer are the accidents. Why is this? Because the eye and body become so educated by practice as to render the right movement at the right moment automatic and mechanical. A man in a difficult position, being rushed by several opponents, contrives by a combination of spring, pause, and wriggle—almost miraculously—to evade a dangerous collision, and though perhaps arrested in his career, escapes damage. Now this faculty once cultivated remains with the footballer for the rest of his life. Some years ago we read of a sad accident in Dunedin by which a member of the historic Wakefield family lost his life. He was crossing a street in front of an approaching tram. Other vehicles jammed and puzzled him. He became dazed, hesitated, and allowed the tram to run over him. A footballer would unconsciously have done the right thing and saved his life. Scarcely any man goes through his allotted span without at some time running a similar risk. Presence of mind is all very well, but automatic absence of body is far better in such cases, and the footballer's body will invariably shun a collision without any conscious effort on his part. We have chosen the case of crossing a crowded street merely as an example, but many other illustrations might be given in support of our theory. Many a soldier owes his life to the dodging powers acquired by football training, and the game is always encouraged by military authorities. It is quite possible that when Wellington declared that the battle of Waterloo was won in the playing fields at Eton, he meant something more than the lessons in strategy, which all games afford in a greater or lesser degree.

It does not always pay to rely upon the supposed imbecility of age or decrepitude. In the "Ticket of Leave Man" the great Hawkshaw scores his triumph by simulating helpless intoxication. Not long since the story of a dishonoured cheque was related at a dinner table. The conduct of the gentleman who allowed some poor bank clerks to suffer severely for a trivial mistake which could damage him but slightly, was commented on in scathing terms. Grandpapa sat in an apparently somnolent condition, and as he was supposed to be in his dotage nobody dreamed that he was taking part in the conversation. Next day, however, the wife of the gentleman whose cheque had been dishonoured was announced as a visitor. Grandpapa was dozing in senile complacency by the fire, but on hearing the name turned fiercely on the unfortunate lady, and to the consternation of everybody demanded, "Are you the wife of that scoundrel who robbed the poor bank clerks?" Result—a tableau of which no one present can give an adequate description. Our readers can imagine the picture. But what could anyone do or say in such a fix? A story—somewhat of a chestnut, perhaps—is told of a gentleman who fled to his study to escape

the infliction of a lady caller whom he detested. Hearing some one go out he returned to the drawing-room, in which the lady was but half concealed in a recess, examining some photos. Not perceiving her he exclaimed to his wife, "So that wretched old bore has gone at last!" The next moment he saw that she had not. With infinite tact his wife replied, "Oh, yes; Mrs. Dash [another person altogether] left an hour ago; but here is Mrs. Blank whom you are always so delighted to see!" What a wonderful gift is tact! Like football it averts the consequences of many a dangerous collision.

FOOTBALL.

GORDON II V. PONSONBY II.

SPECTATORS who love the comfort of the grand-stand and therefore scarcely ever see a junior match had an opportunity of watching our younger players on Saturday last. The seniors being engaged in practice matches under the auspices of the new district clubs were relegated to the more distant grounds, and the above contest was fought out on the arena usually set apart for senior games. An extremely fast and interesting game was the result, of which Gordon had a good deal the best during the second half of the first spell, and the greater part of the second. Rees, for Gordon, played a splendid game at three-quarter, running, kicking, collaring, and dribbling in first-rate style. He also placed the only goal scored in the match. Airey was the pick of the forwards on both sides, grafting hard, and being rewarded for his persistent following up by securing two out of the four Gordon tries. Mr. T. Henderson as referee, and Messrs. E. O'Hare and T. Murray as umpires gave every satisfaction. Not having space to give full details we must restrict ourselves to a general description of the play. Ponsonby winning the toss wisely took advantage of a strong breeze, and kicked towards the Manukau Road during the first spell. Their backs kept the ball high, and any temporary gain by Gordon was thus speedily counted. About 6 minutes after play commenced a good Ponsonby rush took the ball over the line, where Chappel scored. MacConnell took the place, but made a poor attempt. Gordon were forced shortly after the kick-out. After some give-and-take work Gordon got into the enemy's 25, and Rees potted at goal, only just missing. Good general football work with varying fortunes at last brought the ball adjacent once more to Gordon's 25, when another fine rush enabled Evans to touch down for Ponsonby at 3.45—a quarter of an hour from the kick-off. MacConnell again essayed the place, making an excellent shot, which all but scored the major point. The score was now Ponsonby 2, Gordon 0. From this moment Gordon asserted a decided superiority, the game being chiefly in Ponsonby 25, or on Ponsonby's side of centre. But the defence was good, and no score registered until 3.58 p.m., when Hawkins, getting possession ran in and scored cleverly. Airey took the place at a difficult angle, and no goal resulted—score, Ponsonby 2, Gordon 1. Gordon continued to press Ponsonby, and Rees nearly potted a goal, but no further score was made during the spell, Gordon being near their adversary's goal when the whistle blew.

SECOND SPELL.

Gordon, having the wind in their favour, started the second spell at 4.10. Some hard work, chiefly on Ponsonby's side of centre, ended in a fast Gordon rush resulting in a try. Rees took the place at a good angle, and put the ball safely in the right place. Score, Gordon 4, Ponsonby 2, at 4.20. Ponsonby rallied a bit, and got on a dangerous rush, which Dickey averted by a discreet kick into touch. Some hard and fast play about centre followed—Beamish and Masefield distinguishing themselves for Ponsonby, and Hector Simpson picking up well and travelling at a great pace now and then. But Gordon collaring was too good. Ponsonby had to put up with several forces. Hammond was frequently prominent among the Gordon forwards. Although Gordon had considerably the best of the game only one more score was registered, Hawkins getting a try after a fine run and some good dodging. Rees took the place, but made a poor shot—the score Gordon 5, Ponsonby 2, being unaltered when the whistle blew; the ball after a good run by Dickey being in Ponsonby's 25. Thus ended a match which is encouraging to all who rejoice in seeing so many clever young players ready to fill up gaps in senior and representative teams.

MUSIC, DRAMA, ETC.

Spectatum admissi risum teneatis amici?

LOCAL TALENT.—ALADDIN.

THAT is a good old conundrum which asks, "Why is a Zulu belle like a prophet?"—the answer being, "Because she has very little honour in her own country." The proverb, which is akin to the Latin one, "*Omne ignotum pro magnifico*," is, to our shame be it spoken, too frequently a true bill. While ready to applaud everything of foreign origin, we are as a rule slow to perceive any merit in local productions. But Miss Amy Vaughan's talent and enterprise bid fair to overcome popular prejudices of the sort indicated above, and the capital house which greeted the performance of Aladdin at the City Hall on Saturday night indisputably proved that in Auckland at least prophets may find a fair field and win approval. The "Celestial Burlesque" does not claim to be a novelty, save in so far as numerous clever local hits and allusions serve to enliven and refresh the familiar stock puns and humorous lines. But that the piece should be staged, dressed, acted and managed so admirably by local talent alone is a tall and bright feather in the cap of Miss Vaughan and each and every one of her capable coadjutors. The scenery is extremely good, the dresses are pretty and harmonious and the situations and groupings well and effectively planned. Only one short stage-wait occurred throughout the piece, and this I mention merely to show how quickly the young idea shoots in our prolific soil, for some small boys at once grasped the situation and cried vociferously, "Stage to let." But the slight hitch was speedily overcome, and the piece from that point ran smoothly to the end. As the larrikin of Pekin Miss Vaughan was scampish and comical—her dancing, singing, and *persiflage* being charming throughout. Miss Annie Wyniard looked and acted the imposing Emperor to perfection, and sang effectively