

THREE MILES.

A. G. Donald (Palmerston North) .. 1
 R. J. Jones (Palmerston North) ... 2
 A. E. Parkes (Taranaki) 3
 Also started: H. Thomas (Wellington),
 A. C. Walker (Wellington), P. Gillespie
 (Temuka), A. R. Jacobsen (Nelson), P.
 Hill (Christchurch). Time, 8m. 38 4-5s.

FIVE MILES.

A. E. Parkes (Taranaki) 1
 A. G. Donald (Palmerston North) .. 2
 R. J. Jones (Palmerston North) ... *
 P. Hill (Christchurch) *
 Also started: H. Thomas (Wellington),
 P. Gillespie (Temuka), A. R. Jacobsen
 (Nelson). Time, 13m. 3s.

OTHER EVENTS.

Half-mile Handicap (amateurs).—J. L. Foubster (Auckland), 5yds, 1; B. Gosling (Wellington), 50yds, 2; H. Edwards (Wellington), scratch, 3. Also started: J. Sutherland (Wellington), 10yds; F. S. Hetherington (Wellington), 20yds; J. Lyons, 50yds; W. Turner, 60yds; F. C. Ambridge, 80yds. Time, 2m. 33s.
 Youths' Race (three laps).—Kelly, 1; Walker, 2. There were about half-a-dozen competitors, but only three finished.
 Half-mile Walk (boys).—Sullivan, 1; Hickling, 2.
 Musical Chairs on Bicycles.—Edwards, 1.
 Spectators' Race, one mile.—Clarke, 1.

BILLIARDS.

Mr. George Usher, the energetic and popular proprietor of the King's Court Private Hotel, who is always on the alert for novel ideas and methods that will tend to the comfort and amusement of his large number of guests, recently installed one of Alcock and Co's. latest improved full-size billiard tables, which is proving very popular with his guests. On Tuesday night the official opening of the billiard table took place, and in honor of the event an exhibition match was played by the well-known professional billiardist, Mr. Thomas C. Bragge. The game was 1000 points, and Mr. Bragge's opponents were Mr. Geo. Usher and Mr. Hughes. Play started at a quarter to eight o'clock, Mr. Bragge conceding 550 points to Mr. Usher and Mr. Hughes. Mr. Usher played till 9 p.m., when the scores stood Mr. Bragge 552, and Mr. Usher (including the 550 start) 704. After a short interval for coffee and cakes and sandwiches, play was again resumed, when Mr. Hughes took Mr. Usher's place. Mr. Bragge, however, managed to reach his 1000 points ahead of his opponents, and when "game" was called, the scores stood:—Mr. Bragge 1000. Messrs. Usher and Hughes 884. There were no very large breaks during the progress of the game, Mr. Bragge's best being a 69, with 62, 61, 58, 52, and several under 50. Mr. Usher's best was a 28, and Mr. Hughes 22.
 At the conclusion of the game Mr. Bragge gave his usual exhibition of fancy and trick shots, which greatly amused the large audience, and also his hand-billiards which was greatly appreciated.

Some regret is being expressed in England at the decline of the nursery cannon sequences, which, it is asserted, has been brought about by the rule limiting ball to ball cannons to 25 before playing on to a cushion. One writer goes so far as to assert that nursery runs have almost been eliminated from this year's billiards. And in the course of some trenchant criticism says:—In the old days there was nothing prettier than to see Cook, Reece, or Lovejoy making cannons on the top or side rails; but now if any of these experts make fifty it is a great performance. That compulsory stroke off a cushion before either the first or second object ball is struck usually breaks up the position; whilst even if the player succeeded in retaining it he generally loses it next shot. Here we have an instance of the harsh working of a rule that has been incorporated for the good of the game. It was accepted by the Billiard Association, and copied by the Billiards Control Club to do away with the notorious anchor cannon. Nothing more was intended by this legislative move, but it has also affected the cannon game, and although it has not materially interfered with Reece, has caused both Cook and Lovejoy's game to deteriorate. What is wanted is the restoration of the nursery cannon game. With so much thought bestowed on billiards by its modern professors and authorities, surely one can devise a plan by which that can be done without giving the "anchor" a chance of getting in.

Walter Lovejoy, the famous ex-champion amateur, and probably the most original billiardist of the day,

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has not readily acceded to the criticism levelled at his "sitting-down billiards." He still believes that his stool exposition was in the best interests of the game, and that he has thereby called attention to the heavy handicap imposed upon the taller men who play billiards.

Moreover, Lovejoy is still willing to play all comers upon a table that has a surface level 3ft. 11in. from the floor. His displays have, according to report, caused the champion an inexpressible sadness, which has found vent in a reproachful commentary.

Melbourne Inman, who recently defeated Harverson by 374 after conceding 500 points, has played three games and won them all, and Stevenson is his sole remaining opponent. The latter has been out of form this season, and is badly handicapped, so that Inman should go through the series undefeated.

It is reported that the veteran cueist, John Roberts will shortly be in Australia. "Snooker" thinks that George Gray will probably be his opponent; but if Roberts insists on playing with ivory balls only the young Australian record maker will be in for a bad time, seeing that all his experience has been gained with the composition ball. The question as to who will give way—the old or the young champion—is quite interesting. Roberts has never been very liberal in conceding concessions—outside points—to opponents in the past, and, should he give way on the question of the material of the spheres, he may put up a record.

The vexed question of the Australian professional championship should be the most important fixture of the year (says Snooker in the "Referee"). Lindrum cannot well side-step Weiss's

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B. FORD, Waitemata Billiard Club Custom-street, Auckland.—Diamond Pool sets can be obtained from me, the game of the future for Billiard Rooms better than Devil's Pool, being played now in my Saloon.

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challenge much longer, and their meeting will be a great draw. Then, perhaps, George Gray might have a cut in for the title, or maybe A. E. Williams, if he intends putting in some time here, as I understand it is his intention to do, will also throw down the gauntlet. If so, the championship will indeed receive an important lift-up.

BOXING.

BURNS AND LANG.

As announced last week the boxing contest between Tommy Burns and Bill Lang for the heavyweight championship of Australia was postponed on account of Burns' illness, but no day was definitely settled upon, there being a disagreement between the two parties. Lang refused to go beyond April 13, while Mr. McIntosh decided upon April 20. Since then, however, Burns has made a quick recovery from his indisposition, and as April 13, is the day of the Federal elections, the fight will be decided on Monday April 11, two days earlier. The contest is creating almost as much interest in Australia as the Burns-Johnson match, the confidence of both parties pointing to a really exciting and hard battle.

SAM LANGFORD WHIPPED.

FIREMAN DEFEATS NEGRO.

Last week a cable announced that Tommy Burns, ex-champion heavyweight, has accepted a challenge to fight Sam Langford, the negro boxer, at Richmond, near Oakland, California, on September 25 for a purse of 25,000 dollars (£5,000). Sam Langford has always been looked upon as invincible, and many boxing authorities hold the opinion that if given a fair chance Langford would undoubtedly win the world's championship. Many of the best heavyweights of the present day are said to have side-stepped the stalwart negro who first came into prominence by beating Ian Hague, the English boxer in such quick time. The battle between Langford and Johnson in April 1906, which is described in these columns this week, was one of the fiercest ever fought, and as that took place four years ago, since when Langford has improved greatly as a fighter, it is easily seen that Hague's conqueror is a power to be settled with in the ring. Langford, who is short in stature compared to Johnson is a finely proportioned pugilist, and Burns will certainly find him a very tough customer. However, it has always been said that the floor or the prize-ring is paved with surprises. The truth of this was brought home to us when the wires flashed the news that Sam Langford had been hammered to a standstill by Fireman Jim Flynn at Los Angeles on the night of February 9. It was a ten round affair, and, according to the ringside reports, Langford was off balance the whole time. One correspondent says: "Flynn fought the master battle of his life, whipped Sam Langford, the black wonder, decisively, and turned the boxing world topsy-turvy."

Another said that Flynn's plan of battle was to press in close, with his face covered, until he had drawn Langford's fire. Then he fell upon Sam, carrying him to the ropes, and raining blows on both head and body.

They say that at the finish of two rounds Langford was pinned in his own angle of the ring, while Flynn hammered him mercilessly. In some of the rallies the black ceased fighting and held Flynn around the neck, his knees bending the while. It was ten rounds of heart-breaking work, but at that Flynn failed to score a knock-down.

FIGHT VIEWED WITH SUSPICION.

In San Francisco, the affair was viewed with suspicion. It was recalled when Flynn and Langford met once before in this city Langford disposed of Flynn with a couple of well-placed punches. Flynn on the occasion referred to entered the ring looking every inch a loser, and there was a strong suspicion that he threw himself upon the spears at the first chance that presented itself. For Flynn to turn around and make a punching-bag of Langford seemed, to San Francisco, a startling reversal of form.

The Los Angeles critics and Flynn's friends generally in Los Angeles were very sore at the stand San Francisco took in the matter. The Southerners claim that Flynn licked Langford