

are occasions when our own House, owing to the action of one or two members, resembles a bear-garden rather than a deliberative assembly, but for genuine tumult it pales its ineffectual fires before the French Chamber. To the bishop succeeded M. Lockroy, under whose biting sarcasm and fine irony the unfortunate prelate fairly writhed. M. Lockroy's trump card was the Concordat—an arrangement made between the first Napoleon and the Pope, and subscribed to by all the subsequent Popes and rulers of France, whereby the Government agreed to support the priesthood on the express condition of their abstaining from politics in the Church.

With this Concordat M. Lockroy fairly belaboured the bishop, who sought in vain by a second speech to modify the intemperate warmth of the first, which had been distinguished by zeal rather than discretion. After the debate had been carried on under great excitement on all sides, with frequent and continuous ringing of the President's bell, scarcely heard amid the tumult, there were loud calls for the "clôture," and

the majority of the House being satisfied with the length of the debate, it was closed without a division, and the question of the illegality of the election was then put to the vote. The messengers of the Chamber, in most gorgeous livery, were despatched along the gangways with the ballot boxes, like huge pepper-casters with a slit in the top, into which the deputies dropped their white or coloured card. These were emptied on the President's table, counted, and the numbers called out, which gave an overwhelming majority against the election, which was then formally declared invalid. After this the Chamber emptied rapidly, the remaining business was quickly disposed of, and at five o'clock the House adjourned.

The trees were shivering under a sharp breeze as we went out, the lamps were flashing on the Seine, though the sun's last beams yet glowed in the west. A busy roar of the gay city's life met us as we turned into the Place de la Concorde, with its dancing waters, and saw the long lines of glittering lights in the Champs Elysées shining before us.

HOW TO FORM A CRICKET OR TENNIS CLUB.

BY A CLUB SECRETARY.



WHEN the short days of winter are over, and signs and sounds of spring greet us everywhere, out-door amusements and out-door exercises become once more a general topic of conversation. For the general mass of young people, winter offers but one out-door game—football—and from its very nature this can only be indulged in by the male sex, and indeed by

only a small section of *them*, namely, those who are sufficiently youthful, active, and strong to bear with its falls and knocks and bruises, and to undergo its severe strain upon the system. But summer brings with it cricket and lawn-tennis, rowing and swimming, archery and croquet, golf and bowls, bicycling and tricycling, and a dozen other sports and games; and many of these are open not only to young people of both sexes, but to men and women of mature age. It is probable, therefore, that at this time of the year a few suggestions for the formation of a cricket or lawn-tennis club, and a few hints for its after-management will be of general interest; more especially when it is borne in mind that most of the suggestions and directions here given apply equally well in the case of any other club—archery, bicycle, or what not.

First, then, let us consider the case of a cricket club as typical of those clubs in which men and boys only

take part, although ladies may be, and often are, most interested onlookers.

Should there be an evident need of a cricket club in any village or district, the initiative must be taken by one or two energetic residents, who will not hesitate to devote considerable time and trouble to the preliminary ventilation of the subject. These promoters should collect the names of all those who are likely to be active playing members; they should endeavour to enlist the sympathies of older and more influential residents, with a view to enrolling them as patrons and honorary members, and obtaining their pecuniary support; they should make all inquiries as to available playing-grounds; and they should be prepared with all necessary information as to probable income and expenditure.

Thus fortified, a preliminary meeting of those who are likely to be strong supporters of the club should be called; and at this meeting a draft code of rules should be drawn up, two or three alternative names for the club should be selected, the question of ground should be fully considered, and the amount of entrance-fee and annual subscription determined upon.

Then all is ready for the first general meeting, to which all who are likely to take an interest in the club should be invited. The notice sent out for this general meeting should state clearly the object of the promoters and it should furthermore mention that the proposed code of rules will be discussed, and that the officers and committee will be elected.

At the general meeting the first business, after the election of a chairman for the evening, should be to

call upon one of the promoters to state the objects for which those present have been called together, and this speaker should conclude by introducing the question of the most suitable ground.

This is a very important matter, as upon its cost will depend largely the amount of the annual subscription for each individual member, and the prospects of the successful launching of the club. It may sometimes happen that a piece of waste or common land is available for the purpose, or that a landowner in the district is willing to lend a portion of a field free of charge; under such circumstances the only expenses in connection with the ground will be those incurred in levelling, rolling, and cutting the grass; and a very moderate subscription will be sufficient. But if it be necessary to hire a field, an entrance-fee of a guinea, and a yearly subscription of the same amount, will certainly be required, even if the number of members be large.

In order to settle the amount of the entrance-fee, it should be remembered that members' subscriptions should be retained to meet current expenses only, and that all first expenses—the preparation of the ground, the purchase of tents, nets, bats, stumps, &c.—should be paid out of the entrance-fees and any special donations received for the purpose.

Having fixed upon a suitable ground, and having settled the financial business, the next step should be to determine upon the name of the club, and with regard to this one hint only can be given. If another club of the name be not already in the field, it is wisest to select the name of the village or town in which the majority of the members reside; thus, if the meeting be called at Little Pedlington, let the club be known as "The Little Pedlington Cricket Club." But if for any reason a local name is not available, then choose some very simple distinguishing word, avoiding anything of a comic or eccentric character; and at the same time be careful to discover whether your name has been previously appropriated or not.

The question of name suggests that of colours, which should next be determined upon. Cricket differs from football in this, that almost all players wear *white* flannels, and eschew colours; still, it is as well that something distinctive should be worn, whether it be a cap, or sash, or coat. Moreover, the flags should bear the club colours. In making the choice, however, it is well to err on the side of simplicity, and to avoid colours which have already been selected by neighbouring or well-known clubs.

And now some very important business should follow—the election of officers. First of all, it will be well to elect a president and vice-president; these should be gentlemen of some position, who are likely to take a deep interest in the welfare of the club and to introduce new members. These two officers will, of course, be *ex-officio* members of the committee, but their duties will consist merely in presiding at meetings, dinners, &c.

The captain should stand first on the list of the working officers, and he should be chosen mainly on account of his skill at and thorough knowledge of the

game. But beyond this he should possess a large amount of tact and self-control; he should know something of his fellow-members, and of their capabilities; and he should be respected by those whom he is called upon to lead.

Next should come the secretary, upon whom it will chiefly depend whether the club shall result in success or failure. It does not matter about his being a good cricketer, but he must be an enthusiast at the game, and must love his work, for assuredly he will have plenty to do. Upon him will devolve all the little details of the club management, the arrangement of matches, the selection of the elevens (in concert with the captain), the care of the ground, the calling of meetings, &c. Of all the officers, then, it is most important that the secretary should be the right man in the right place.

The treasurer should next be elected, but his duties are light, and it should not be difficult to find a trustworthy member for this post. To him it will fall to collect donations, entrance-fees, and subscriptions, and to pay all accounts, which should first be passed by the secretary or the committee. He should also watch closely the current income and expenditure, with a view to guarding against the possibility of a deficit.

The committee should be from five to ten in number, and in them together with the officers should vest the election of new members, and the settlement of all important business. When once the committee and the officers are elected, the general body of members should cease to have any voice in the management.

After the first general meeting of the club, and when the members have enrolled themselves, the committee will be able to decide what expenses they may fairly incur in the preparation and care of the ground. If the club be a large one, and can afford it, a ground man should be engaged for the season, both to look after the ground—the rolling, &c.—and to act as professional bowler at practice, and as umpire in matches. Too many liabilities, however, should not be incurred at first, as nothing is so damaging to a club as to be in debt.

The club rules should include some dealing with defaulters—both those who neglect to pay their subscriptions, and those who absent themselves from matches after promising to play. Some penalty should be found for such default; and if a member refrain from paying his subscriptions for any length of time, or continually neglect to attend when required for a match, his name should be removed from the club list.

And now it is time to say a few words about lawn-tennis clubs. Very often these can be formed in connection with a cricket club, part of the cricket-field being marked out for tennis-courts. In this case there should be two classes of subscribers—members of the cricket club, and non-members; and the subscription of this last class should be double that of the former; or one subscription might cover both cricket and lawn-tennis, and the wives and daughters of members might be admitted to play tennis free of charge.

Such an arrangement, however, must always be rather exceptional, and, in the majority of instances, a lawn-tennis club will be obliged to provide a ground of its own. It may sometimes happen that one of the members will put his lawn at the disposal of the club on certain days of the week; or that meetings may be held in turn in various private grounds. Fortunate is the club that is so situated, for its expenses then will be very slight, and an almost nominal subscription will answer every purpose. But if a ground is to be specially provided, part of a field should be hired and fenced round; and during the winter months the ground should be levelled and the turf should be re-laid. Then, in the spring, all will be in readiness for the marking-out of the courts, which, if possible, should be at least two in number.

Unlike many other clubs, those devoted to lawn-tennis should have a limited number of members only, and for the very obvious reason that more than four people cannot play on a court at the same time. Moreover, as tennis clubs include both ladies and gentlemen, they should be to some extent *select*: that is to say, all the members should either be friends already or be willing to become so. If a tennis club contains a number of little *cliques*, who keep to themselves, and refuse to have anything to do with one another, the sooner it is broken up the better.

The only officials needed in a tennis club are a secretary and a treasurer; and in the case of a small club, the two offices might well be combined. In either event the duties can only be light.

Should the club possess two courts, one of these should be reserved on certain days of the week for

ladies only, and on other days for gentlemen only. This arrangement allows some of the best players among the gentlemen the opportunity of a fast game on certain occasions, while it also provides a court on fixed days for ladies who are novices at the game.

The rules of the club should contain one relative to single-handed sets, should members require a court for the purpose; and one fixing the number of sets any quartette may play when other members are waiting for a game.

The nets and marking apparatus alone should be furnished by the club; the racquets, and—if it can so be arranged—the balls, should be supplied by the members themselves. Of course when four members play together a difficulty may at times arise as to who shall bring the balls, but this is after all only a matter of arrangement, and when the club declines to provide balls, it gains one great advantage: *it cannot lose any*. Any one who knows how easy it is to lose a dozen balls in one afternoon at tennis, will recognise the desirability of, at any rate, making each set of players responsible for the balls they use.

From the fact that the game may be played by only two, three, or four players, a lawn-tennis club is one of the easiest to start, and may comprise a very limited number of players. Moreover, when once the ground is obtained, the expenses are very small, and the pleasure derived is far in excess of the outlay. Seeing then what a very healthful exercise lawn-tennis is for young people of both sexes, it is to be hoped that hundreds and thousands of lawn-tennis clubs may spring up and prosper all over the country during the coming summer.

A SONG OF THE SPRING.

OLD Winter is gone, and the young Spring is coming,

Nature resurgent awakes from her sleep,
Forth from the hive the glad bee goes a-humming,
And the flushings of sap-life o'er mead and wood
creep.

Now flashes the sunshine, now patters the shower—
The smiles and the tears of the mutable Spring—
Bursting of leaf-bud and opening of flower,
Murmur of streamlet and flutter of wing.

Cowslip and primrose, and violet and daisy,
Gold, silver, and sapphire enamel the lawn,
While the far-away mountain-tops, azure and hazy,
Are capped with light cloudlets at breaking of dawn.

The sky is be-dappled with clouds lightly flying,
And pleasant and fresh is the health-bearing breeze
That floats like the music of air-harps, whose sighing
Goes echoing down through the green aisle of trees.

The heavens and earth are all flooded with voices
Of mavis and merle, of finch and of lark;

In its new-wakened life the glad world rejoices
From the dawning of day to the coming of dark.

I linger entranced till the twilight from heaven
Falls over the scene, and the clear, mellow notes
Of the cuckoo are breaking the silence of even,
And over my soul solemn melody floats.

To a hymn the sublimest and holiest I listen,
The song of the heavens, the earth, and the sea,
Of sun, moon, and stars, as they glow or they glisten,
Of winds and of waters—a grand psalmody.

A hymn like the song the "three children" were
singing,
When the flame of the furnace raged round them
in vain:

A chant of laudation that rolled away ringing,
"Benedicite Dominum"—such was the strain.

"Benedicite Dominum" rises the pæan
From all of God's works in one glorious accord,
Still swelling, it reaches the high empyrean:
"Praise ye and bless ye for ever the Lord!"

JOHN FRANCIS WALLER.