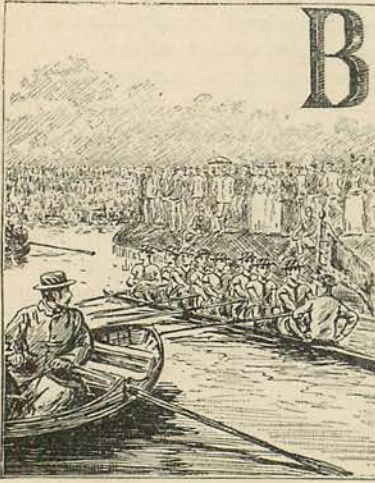


## BOATING AT CAMBRIDGE.

BY A CANTAB.



RETURNING WITH THE FLAG.

dark and light blues on the Thames. Most have read about, if they have not seen such races. I shall therefore confine my remarks to a description of boating on the Cam.

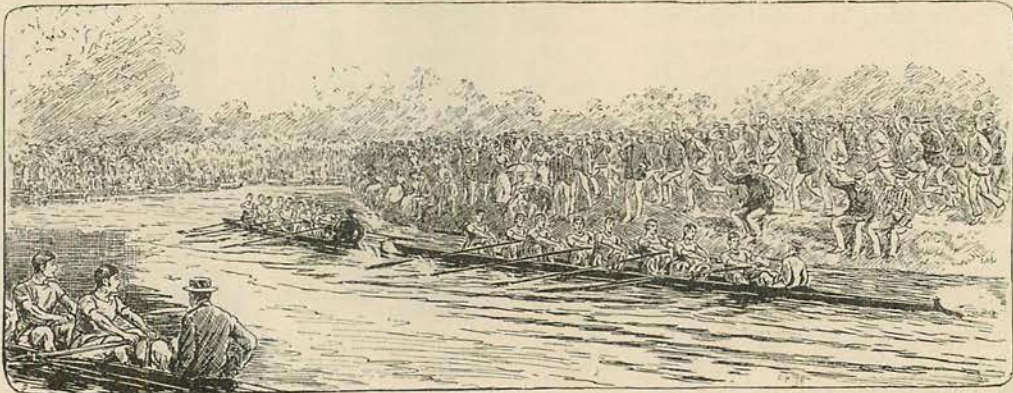
The Cam is a narrow, winding river, just wide enough at some places to allow an eight-oared boat to turn; as these usually measure sixty feet in length, one can imagine the difficulties oarsmen have to contend with on such a stream, and the necessity that there is for the strict observance of the regulations which have been passed for its navigation.

Those undergraduates who wish to spend an idle afternoon generally find their way to what is known as the "freshmen's river," which is the higher part of the stream above the town. Here, on a hot summer afternoon, you will see the river-side studded with small boats of every description, from the "Noah's Ark" to the canoe. But the stranger who takes the opposite direction below the Jesus locks will find a

very different scene; for in the morning, before the "tubbing" of the college eights, the only crafts usually visible are what are known as "funnies," that is to say, single-oared racing outriggers, and here and there a sailing boat preparing for an expedition down the river to Ely; whilst the men at the college boat-houses are busily engaged in preparing for the afternoon's work. In a few hours' time, however, a very lively spectacle presents itself. The crews of the different colleges come down in twos and threes, dressed in their various college colours, and as the majority of the boat-houses are not on the same side of the river as the colleges, in order to get to them they have to pass over the "grinds." Nearly every college has its own "grind," which is a ferry worked by chains and a windlass from the boat-house side.

The first business of the afternoon consists in what is known as "tubbing." The captains of each crew take out two of their men at a time for half an hour's practice in "tubs" or ordinary rowing boats. By the time that this is over the crews are collected, the boats are run down, and all is ready for hard work. The usual routine is a row to "Baitsbite" lock and back, easying or rowing, as the captain, who coaches on horseback from the towing-path, directs. This practice goes on for four or five weeks before the Lent and May races. Of course by this time all the men are in strict training. A few words as to this:—

Training is considered a point of honour; and its rules are, with few exceptions, strictly observed. Each crew is under the superintendence of its particular captain, who looks after his men, and keeps them up to the mark. He breakfasts with them at eight o'clock, and dines with them, taking care that they have only the regulation amount of food and drink. Tobacco, of course, is one of the prohibited items. After dinner, they adjourn to each other's rooms alternately, and the host on each occasion provides dessert. The captain also tries to per-



MAKING A BUMP AT DITTON.





AMONG THE DRAGS AT DITTON CORNER.

suade his crew to be in bed by ten o'clock—a rather difficult task, by-the-by.

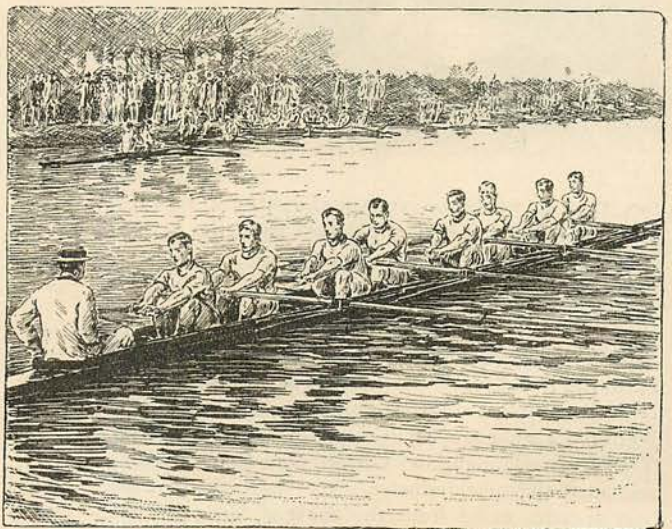
As I have mentioned before, there are two races in the year, those in Lent and those in May, the latter being *the* races of the year, when the first and second divisions alone compete. Each division contains about fifteen boats. Just before the race the boats row down in the order in which they were left after the preceding races, the last boat going down the first. The spot from which each boat is to start is marked by a stake driven into the ground, to which is attached a long chain, used by the "cox" to keep his boat in position.

There are three lengths between each boat, and the object of the crews is to catch up their antagonists and "bump" them. This is accomplished when the bow of the boat behind touches any part of the boat or crew in front of it. If this is done, both boats "easy," and pull as soon as possible to the nearest bank, in order to get out of the way of those behind. It was whilst doing this that the deplorable accident occurred by which Mr. Campbell met his death at the last Lent races.

On the following day the successful boat takes the place of the one which it has bumped. Great excitement is caused when a "bump" is made: the flag, which has been carried along the bank by a partisan of the winning crew, is hoisted in the boat, which, after the race, rows up to its boat-house amid the applause of friends and spectators.

In the May races the lawn at Ditton Corner, a favourite place for "bumps" on account of the sharp turn in the river, is crowded with drags and carriages, full of ladies and spectators, who, on a bright summer afternoon, form a very pretty scene. Great fun is caused by those who have come down by water to see the races, in their attempts to get home quickly. A general *mêlée* ensues, in which some are unfortunate enough to get a ducking.

It is pleasant to fight over again our 'Varsity battles, and one often sees the face of a veteran oarsman light up as he recounts his victories on the Cam.



READY TO START.