

ATHLETIC SPORTS AT OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITIES.

I.

OXFORD.

By MONTAGUE SHEARMAN

[President of the Oxford University Athletic Club, 1878-9, Amateur Champion, 100 Yards (1876), Amateur Champion, Quarter Mile (1880)].



OXFORD is the *alma mater* of Athletic Sport; to Oxford the amateur athlete owes that national institution the Athletic Meeting. It was in the fields of Binsey that, more than forty years ago, the first cross-country foot-race was run; on the turf of Port Meadow was the first amateur flat-race won. It is to Oxford again that the amateur athlete owes the orderly government and regulation of his favourite pursuit, for it was beneath the roof of Hertford College that the Amateur Athletic Association was devised, and

in the banqueting room of the Randolph that it was founded. It will be at Oxford doubtless that the New Zealander will in the fulness of time dig out the colossal bronze figure, the type of mingled strength and grace, which some succeeding generation will rear upon the Iffley Road to commemorate the blessings which the Oxford Athletic Movement has conferred upon the British nation.

This preliminary flourish is not the idle blowing of a trumpet; it is a chronicle of sober fact, mixed (so far as the colossal statue is concerned) with the most approved form of historical prophecy. Forty years and more ago began the athletic movement, but movements and developments, except in the opinion of evolutionist writers, do not start themselves, and it is to the credit of Oxford that it was to Messrs. Wyatt, Bowles, Southwell and others, undergraduates of Exeter College, Oxford, that it first occurred to hold an athletic meeting. The Inter-'Varsity Sports are now as much of a national institution as the Boat Race or the Derby, but it is only twenty-eight years



VUCCINO AND CO., PHOTO.
THE EARL OF JERSEY. MILE RACE, 1865. PRESIDENT
AMATEUR ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION, 1880-1890. GOVERNOR
OF NEW SOUTH WALES.

ago that the Oxford athletes of 1864 invited their Cambridge brothers to meet them in friendly rivalry at the Christchurch Cricket Ground. No doubt also when amateur athletics began after the rapid growth of a quarter of a century to run to seed, a "Jockey Club" of athletic sport became a necessity, but none the less it was to Oxford energy and Oxford prestige that the governing body of athletics owed its early success. To the historian of the future the athletic movement must be described as another of the many "Oxford Movements."



J. F. BENSON, PHOTO.

D. BURRIN, GROUND MAN O.U.A.C. RUNNING GROUND.

cause they liked it, and chose athletics out was their favourite sport and not a *pis aller*. Otherwise they would hardly have earned their "blue."

The freshman who goes up to Oxford in October finds himself embarrassed with a large choice of forms of exercise. If he is a likely-looking athlete, with a good pair of legs and broad shoulders, the Captain of his College Boat Club will very soon ask him to breakfast and coax him down to the river to be "tubbed," *i.e.* taught to row by a coach in scientific style in a "tub four." Nor will the freshman have been in college a week before he will have been searchingly questioned as to whether he can play football, where and when he has played it, and whether his game is "Rugger" or "Socker," by which barbaric terms he has by this time learnt that the games of Rugby Union and Association football are intended. Now with only the short winter afternoons available for out-door sport it is hard to combine football and training for races, but boating and running for a freshman at Oxford are incompatible. The boating "fresher" is but a devoted galley-slave. He spends his first term being coached, and if he is good for anything his second term is passed in training for his college

Torpid. If however our freshman can once escape the fascinations of rowing solemnly up and down between the Barges and Iffley in a tub four every afternoon until he acquire the art of "getting his hands out" and "grinding his belly down" (mysterious forms of torture only known upon the Cam or Isis), if, I say, he can escape

But it is not with past history that we have to deal now, but with Oxford athletics as they are at present. Tradition has it that the pioneers of Exeter College took to foot-races in 1850, because they could not find a horse with four sound legs in any Oxford stable, and therefore considered steeple-chasing impracticable, or at any rate unsatisfactory. But knowing what we do of the keenness of the Oxonian in matters athletic we are inclined to think that this story would more fitly be mentioned in an account of Oxford horses than in an account of Oxford athletics. This much we can safely assert of the present, that the Oxford "blues" who will compete at the Queen's Club this month, took to running and jumping before many available recreations because it



JUL GUGGENHEIM, PHOTO.

ABNER SAVAGE, GATEKEEPER AND CLUB AGENT. THIRTY YEARS IN THE SERVICE OF THE O.U.A.C.

these delights there is a chance of his becoming a runner. And indeed now that every public school has its annual athletic meeting, most freshmen have learnt before they come to Oxford whether they are good at any form of athletic competition. This knowledge more than anything else brings the athletic novice up to the Iffley Ground, for college *esprit de corps* is very strong, and while there is a strong incentive for the novice to try to represent his college on the river, or at cricket or football, there are (more's the pity) no inter-college athletic contests, and no glory is gained by the athlete for his college unless he can manage to earn his "blue." In spite however of the absence of incentive in the way of college *esprit de corps* there is no lack of candidates for honour on the running path. In no college will the freshman fail to find an old *habitué* of the cinder-track who will march off his new ally to buy his O.U.A.C. ticket, the sole necessary formality for membership of the Varsity Athletic Club, which is open to every matriculated member of the University. Thence the old hand and the novice will make their way over Magdalen Bridge and along the Iffley Road, past the Christchurch Cricket Ground until they reach the gate of the O.U.A.C. Ground which is on the right of the Iffley Road and overlooks from the side of the hill the low-lying meadows where the Cherwell and the Isis mingle their streams.



H. J. WHITLOCK, PHOTO.
T. M. COLMORE. 100 YARDS, 1866, 1867. STIPENDIARY
MAGISTRATE OF THE CITY OF BIRMINGHAM.

Here our young friend will find a cinder-track a third of a mile in circumference, which for all-round excellence is beaten by few in the kingdom. The track itself is in

admirable condition with plenty of good sharp cinders on the top rolled well in, so that it is binding without being sodden. The grass straight upon which the flights of hurdles are placed, is perhaps a little sodden, but it is hard to keep any grass good in rainy Oxford in the winter, and everything that can be done to keep it drained and rolled has been done. Then there is a capital stretch of cinder leading up to the "take off" for the Long Jump, and a prepared mixture of clay, cinder, and earth for the jumpers to alight upon, which is neither too hard nor too soft. All these matters are well looked after by Burrin the ground-man, and his assistants, and indeed if they were not well looked after, Mr. Jackson would have something to say about the matter. The track itself is straight at the sides, but at each end is a long gradual curve extending over nearly one hundred and fifty yards, so that only about one half of the whole circumference actually consists of straight, the rest being a gentle curve. This is



HILLS AND SAUNDERS, PHOTO.
C. N. JACKSON. HURDLE RACE, 1867 (16 SECONDS).
HON. TREAS. O.U.A.C.; HON. TREAS. A.A.A.

the shape of ground preferred by many long distance runners, but for shorter distances it is scarcely so speedy as Fenner's at Cambridge. Whether or no these long curves are better than straights with sharper "banked up" corners is a matter of opinion which we need not inquire into now. The sprinters certainly have nothing to complain of at Oxford in their sprinting straight. There is over 150 yards of the

best broad straight in the whole kingdom, but a three hundred yards race can hardly be run with success at the Iffley Road Ground, for the first hundred yards and more are all on the curve.

When our freshman has inspected the track and its appurtenances he will make his way into the pavilion. Stepping from the verandah into the front room he will find on each side a dressing-room with lockers communicating with a lavatory. Above he knows is the reading-room, in which he will find the portraits of all the heroes of the past. But where are the stairs? Evidently the architect forgot them when he designed the pavilion, for there is nothing to be seen in the way of a staircase but a small companion ladder. Up mounts our friend, but when he is halfway up he finds there is somebody coming down, so he bashfully retires again as there is no room to pass upon the stairs. His next effort is more successful! He arrives at the top after a steep and perilous journey, and finds himself alone with the sporting newspapers and the vignette portraits of all the athletes who have represented Oxford against Cambridge. Here we can leave our ambitious freshman gazing with mingled awe and admiration at the worthies of the past, at Colmore, and Vidal, who dead-heated for the Hundred six-and-twenty years ago; at Laing, who dead-heated Long the Cantab in the same year over Two Miles; at C. N. Jackson and J. H. Morgan; at Wilson, Somers-Smith, Christie; at "Minnie" Brooks, who was the first man who cleared over six feet in a High Jump; and at scores of others whom we fear to mention lest the printers should make "pie" of their names. Our freshman regards them with fervent admiration, which would doubtless be tinged with regret did he know how many of them are not so graceful and elegant as they were, and how many of them have been robbed by time of the luxuriant locks which their portraits display.

Soon our novice starts to work to practice on the path, and day after day will he be seen scampering over the cinders or essaying to "fly" the hurdles, or practising the high or long jump, or perhaps trying to throw the hammer, and finding, alas! that the hammer has thrown him, for has he not fallen to earth as soon as the hammer left his hands? He does not find himself solitary in his sport, for there will always be plenty of others willing to run a burst or go a lap or more with him in his practice. He soon finds himself improving, and it will not be long before he will get a chance to exhibit his capabilities. About mid-way through the term come the Freshmen's Sports, open to all who are in their first year at Oxford. In this there are level races at 100 yards, a quarter of a mile, a mile, 120 yards over hurdles, and a high jump and a long jump, and from the winning of these events it can readily be seen what new men are likely to be good enough to earn their "blue" next spring and to fill up the vacancies left by some of the old cracks who have gone down from the University.

As soon as the Freshmen's Sports are over the college meetings follow in quick succession. The separate college athletic clubs are loosely knit organizations. The secretary, or one of the committee of the preceding year, summons a meeting by affixing a notice on the notice board in the porter's lodge; a meeting is held and a secretary, treasurer, and small committee are elected, who decide whether to hold the sports in the autumn or spring terms, for there are no athletics at Oxford after Easter, the summer term being devoted to rowing and cricket. A list of the events to be decided is then settled, and entries are made in the easiest way imaginable. A large sheet of paper containing blank columns for the names of the entrants is fixed up in the lodge: all who wish to enter simply write their names down as they pass by, and thus the secretary is saved the world of trouble which falls upon the shoulders of secretaries at athletic meetings held outside the University. So much for the college races, which usually include level races at the recognized distances with a penalty for previous winners. Then there are several handicaps, the handicappers being the college committee, and often there is a race for members of the College Eight and Torpid.

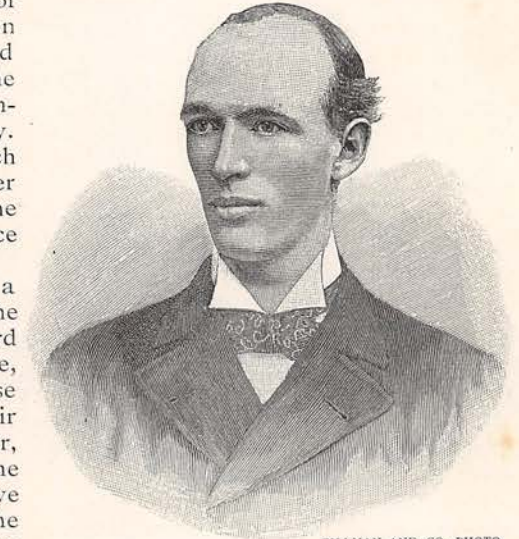
Each college meeting has a strangers' race, by which is meant a race open to members of all other colleges as well as to genuine strangers from Cambridge or from other parts of the kingdom; but as in the winter when athletics are in full swing at the 'Varsities they are suspended in the rest of the kingdom (except so far as paperchasing is concerned), there are few entries in college strangers' races except from members of other Oxford colleges. It is in these strangers' races that the freshman who is in regular training will soon find means of determining what is his best distance, how

much he is improving, and what his chances are likely to be of beating any of the old "cracks," or of taking the place of those who have gone down.

The different college meetings fill up the remainder of the autumn term, and begin again two or three weeks after the Christmas vacation is over, after which there will be one or two every week till the end of term. Last, or almost last, in the season comes the great event of all, the Oxford University Sports. These are, as all the world knows, a series of level races and contests open to all members of the University. For each event there are two prizes, which consist of exactly the same trophy, the silver O.U.A.C. medal. This, and this alone, the winners and seconds receive for their place in the Oxford Sports.

After the University Sports are over a committee meeting is held to select the twenty men who are to represent Oxford against Cambridge in London. These are, as a rule, it need scarcely be said, those who have won and been second in their respective events at the sports just over, but occasionally it is necessary to allow some one who has been ill or unlucky to have another chance of getting a place in the events in London, for it is the aim always to get the best men to meet and beat (if the fates permit) the men of Cambridge.

A word should here be said about the officers and committee of the O.U.A.C. Soon after the men reassemble at Oxford in October a general meeting of the O.U.A.C. is held, which is attended by delegates from each college. This meeting



GILLMAN AND CO. PHOTO.
W. POLLOCK HILL. ONE MILE, 1890; THREE MILES,
1888, 1889, 1890.

elects out of those who are still undergraduates a president, secretary, and committee for the ensuing year. The same meeting also elects a treasurer for the year. For more than twenty years in succession the annual meeting has continued to re-elect as treasurer Mr. C. N. Jackson of Hertford College. It would ill become a colleague and friend of Mr. Jackson to say anything more of him than that he deserves to and will, we hope, be re-elected for twenty years more.

When the representatives to compete against Cambridge are elected athletics are over for the season as far as Oxford is concerned, though for those who are fortunate in being so chosen their career of glory (and anxiety) is only just beginning. Some remain at Oxford to train, although they do not of course omit to have a few preliminary canters at the Queen's Club just to learn what the new course is like. Others come up to London to train, sometimes taking rooms together in a party, and get their practice at Stamford Bridge, which



H. VAN DER WEYDE, PHOTO.
M. J. BROOKS. HIGH JUMP, 1874 AND 1876. SIX FEET
TWO INCHES AND A HALF.

is always placed at their disposal by the London Athletic Club. Over all of them Mr. Jackson keeps an eye to see that they come fit to the post on the eventful day.

Such is the system of athletics at Oxford University, and many a good athlete has it turned out. The official record hath it that up to the present $124\frac{1}{2}$ Oxford men have scored wins at the Oxford and Cambridge Sports. All of these have received

the silver medal stamped with the arms of Oxford and Cambridge, and we believe that the "half-man" represents an odd number of dead-heaters who were by no means a *semivir comitatus*, but fully as good as the other winners, and each of whom justly received a whole and not a half medal.



W. FORSHAW, PHOTO.

F. J. K. CROSS. ONE MILE, 1886, 1887, 1888, 1889.

The names of all these heroes appear on the back of the official programme of the Inter-Varsity Sports, which our readers are desired to consider as an appendix to this article. Even those who have not been so lucky as to win an Inter-Varsity event do not go away empty of honour. The "seconds" have of late years been rewarded with a bronze medal, but by far a greater reward is the right to wear the "blue," which belongs to those who have competed against Cambridge in London. The nine "first strings" have the "full blue," a blue coat and cap as well as the blue ribbon on their jerseys and knickerbockers. The second strings until recently only had the right of wearing the ribbon, but simultaneously with the innovation of the bronze medals as second prizes for the Inter-University Sports came in the "half blue" cap and coat, an ingenious combination of dark blue and white colours, with which the second strings

are now permitted to adorn themselves.

Willingly would we enter into the task of describing at length the history of athletics at Oxford, but space forbids more than a few details of gossip. It was in 1850 that Exeter College held its first foot-race, a "foot steeple-chase" as they called it, which was won by Mr. (now Colonel) Wyatt, the second place being taken by Mr. James Aitken, better known as a cricketer and an oarsman, and now the Vicar of Chorleywood. This foot-race was soon followed by a college athletic meeting, a copy of the programme of which is printed in the Badminton Library book on athletics. Between 1850 and 1860 college meetings had become tolerably frequent, but it was not until the autumn term of 1860 that the first University Sports were held. It was not until March 5th, 1864, that the first Inter-University Sports were held on a grass course at the Christchurch Cricket Ground at Oxford. This it was that first turned Oxford athletics from a casual pastime into a regular institution. Since that date almost every college has had its athletic club, and has continuously held an annual athletic meeting.



GILLMAN AND CO. PHOTO.

B. C. ALLEN, PRESIDENT O.U.A.C. 1892. ONE MILE, 1891.

It was not until 1867 that the Oxford athletes had a cinder path, not at their present ground, but at the old ground in the meadows at Marston. There can be little doubt that the site was badly chosen. The Marston meadows lay so low, and so near the Cherwell, that in the winter the path was often almost flooded, and the grass track was often sodden for weeks together. Besides, it was a long walk over Magdalen Bridge and past the "Boiled Rabbit" (which we should like to inform strangers is not the name of a hostelry, but of a church which is supposed to resemble the shape of the above-named delicacy). True there was an alternative route through Mesopotamia

and over the ferry, and along the gravel path and through the "Slough of Despond" into the back gate, and indeed, we can almost forgive the old Marston ground for its wetness from the memory of the many pleasant walks we have had through Mesopotamia and the meadows, to reach the track upon which our first aspiring efforts were made. And by the by, Oxford men still go over the ferry and along the gravel walk, and may like to hear that it was from this gravel path that H. K. Upcher cleared the fence in one bound without taking off his ulster. True he had to jump into the swamp; but what is that in the happy days of youth?

At the end of 1876 the O.U.A.C. moved into their present home on the Ifley Road. It is an excellent ground, and the Oxford athletes will never want to make another move (unless they move into a bigger pavilion, in which case, let us hope the staircase will be wider).

It was in 1880 that the Oxford athletes helped the settlement of a number of athletic disputes by convening a meeting which led to the foundation of the Amateur Athletic Association. In 1879 there had been two Amateur Championship Meetings, one held at Lillie Bridge under the auspices of the moribund Amateur A.C., the other held at Stamford Bridge in the summer. A conference was summoned to Oxford of representatives of all the chief athletic clubs of the kingdom, Mr. B. R. Wise, the president of the O.U.A.C., presiding. The meeting then and there founded the new body with the objects of holding an Annual Championship Meeting, of promoting uniformity of rules and of repressing abuses of athletic sport. For the first three years all the officers of the A.A.A. were past or present officers of the O.U.A.C. They were as follows:—The Earl of Jersey, president; B. R. Wise, vice president, hon. treasurer, C. N. Jackson, hon. sec. M. Shearman.

Since the institution of the A.A.A. the Amateur Championship Meeting has always been held in the summer. This is no doubt hard on the University men, who are then not only out of training, but frequently prevented from going into training again by examinations; but there can be equally little doubt that the old date for the meeting, which was the Monday after the Inter-Varsity Sports, gave an immense advantage to the University athletes over every one else, and before the summer date the Irish, Scotch, and provincial athletes were rarely seen at the Championship Meeting; nor but for the alteration of date would the American athletes have been seen taking part in the Championship of the old country. Even since 1880 there have been several Oxford men who have earned the Championship title. In 1880, the first year of the summer fixture, George Lawrence won the Hurdle Race, Walter Lawrence the Hammer-throwing, and another Oxonian the Quarter of a Mile; and in subsequent years George Lawrence again won the Hurdles (1881), B. R. Wise the Mile (1881), and that giant of all English athletes F. J. K. Cross the Half-Mile and Mile on the same day in 1887, and Lemaitre the Half-Mile in 1888; and but for family affairs Pollock Hill, who in 1890 won the Mile at the Queen's Club in the fastest time ever done at an Oxford and Cambridge gathering, would certainly have been in evidence at the Championship Meeting. Up and be doing you Oxford men of the present day, and show your faces to the spectators and your backs to your opponents at the Championship Meeting of 1892.

The recent institution of an inter-club match between Oxford University and the London Athletic Club shows the right spirit. The Universities afford the national home and true centre of genuine amateurism, and the University men will do no good to amateur sport by lifting up their hands and bewailing the decadence of athletics. The true duty of the Oxford men is to join hands in friendship with those who are trying in other parts of the kingdom to keep athletic sports pure and free from abuses, and the Oxford men of the present day are showing that they know that their true place is in the front of the Athletic Movement.

II.

CAMBRIDGE.

By R. W. TURNER

[Late Hon. Secretary of the Cambridge University Athletic Club].

IT was only about fifty years ago that Athletics began to be looked upon by the youth of this country as an exercise worthy of serious attention; and it was at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge that regular sports were first held. The records of these early sports abound in the phraseology of the turf. There were quarter mile sweepstakes and consolation stakes. The betting was quoted in the papers of the day as freely as it is now in the reports of a professional handicap at Sheffield, the prizes were given in money, the runners were handicapped by carrying shot in their belts and sack and three-legged races were common. These performances have gone to the wall, the system of handicapping is changed, money prizes are not known and with the suppression of open betting the terminology of the turf has to a great extent disappeared.

St. John's and Emmanuel were the first colleges to hold sports, but it was not until 1857, when the Cambridge University athletic club was founded, that athletics took root at the University. After that date Jesus, Trinity Hall, and Trinity began to hold annual sports. Jesus' gave a meeting in the college close and Trinity divided itself for running as for rowing, into first, second and third, the athletic clubs being intimately connected with the boat clubs. Indeed until recently the first Trinity first boat

captain was *ex-officio* president of the Trinity Athletic Club. Second or "Reading" Trinity was, as the name indicates, composed of scholars and the like but it has long disappeared both from the river and running path, presumably crushed by the over pressure of the modern system of examinations. Third Trinity is made up of old Eton and Westminster men and for the present holds its sports in conjunction with King's College. Third, supplies the muscle and King's the money. Third is Tory and King's has a radical element and a rupture between the two clubs was recently imminent. The breach has fortunately been healed and the existence of the prettiest athletic blazer at Cambridge has been preserved. It was not however until 1864 when the Inter-University sports were started that athletics took any great part in university life. The impetus they then received was enormous, and from that time they became as regular a part of the university curriculum as the Tripos or the "Little-go."



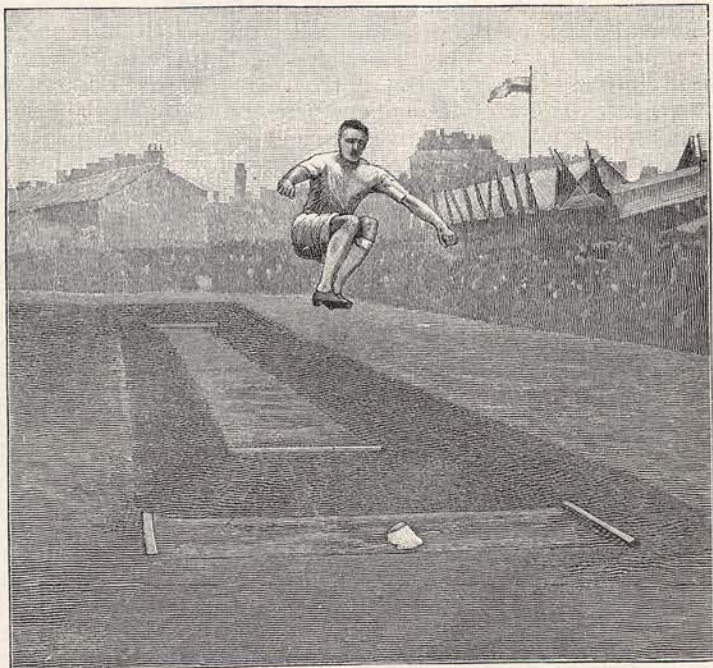
RUSSELL AND SONS, PHOTO.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER, ATTORNEY-GENERAL. PRESIDENT,
C.U.A.C., 1865. ONE MILE AND TWO MILES, 1865.

The club ground has always been known as Fenner's cricket-ground and the sports were held for some years on a grass track, but now there is a cinder path which is one of the fastest in the kingdom. Three laps complete the mile and a stranger to the Fen Country would consider the course perfectly level but at the north-east corner of the ground there is a slight rise which is said to be the only hill in that part of Cambridge lying south of Magdalene Bridge. The races are run to the right so that the hill is against the runners and there is no compensating decline. Both the top and bottom stretches are nicely rounded and the final straight is about one hundred and fifty yards long. On the north side of the ground is the back of Ayerst Hostel, looking

like a row of semi-detached suburban villas, and close by the wall is the place for putting the weight with the long jump on the other side of the path. The Perse school cricket-ground bounds the south side and on the east is a wooden pavilion and the orchard where the high jump takes place. At the extreme end of the ground is the place for practising with the sixteen-pound hammer, which in the hands of inexperienced throwers finds its way at times into the back yards of some newly erected cottages. The pavilion, which stands on the west side of the ground, is a well-built brick structure and is used both by cricketers and running men. On the ground floor there are two rooms, the back one being partitioned off for dressing in, and the end

partition is always reserved for "the Blues," or those who have run against Oxford, and is nearly always the place selected by the freshman to dress in until he is asked to go up stairs, where there is another room partitioned off in the same way and with shower-bath accommodation. Over the fire-place in the dressing-room on the ground-floor there is a list of all the athletic teams that have run against Oxford—every name is gilded on a light blue background, and the team for each year is in a separate panel. Amongst the names so recorded is that of the Attorney-General, Sir Richard Webster, who



J. L. GREIG. LONG JUMP (22 FT. 4 IN.). FROM AN INSTANTANEOUS PHOTOGRAPH.

won the mile and two miles against Oxford in 1865. He was then President and showed an early love for legislation by framing the rules for the Inter-University sports. He still takes a keen interest in university athletics. The annual dinner after the sports with Oxford never goes better than when he is in the chair; and when he distributed the prizes at the championships in 1889, for the quarter and the half mile, to Mr. Tindall, and the high jump to Mr. Jennings, both Cambridge men, his delight at their success was apparent to all. Mr. Lees Knowles, an ex-President, and now M.P. for Salford, still shows his interest in the club by acting as steward at the Inter-University sports. Mr. T. Milvain, M.P. won the hurdles against Oxford in 1865, Professor Maitland, one of the most popular of Cambridge Professors, is an old three-miler. Mr. Leslie Stephen was a long-distance runner and one of the founders of the University Club. These are some amongst others who have made the running to some purpose since their undergraduate days.

The ground is looked after by Watts, his many sons, and a staff of ground men. "Old Watts" was born in 1827, the year of the first Inter-University cricket-match, a coincidence which is, in his eyes, quite sufficient to account for the fact that he now looks after "Fenner's." He is a short man with a slight stoop and a dictatorial manner, and is very uncommunicative, except to the club authorities, and in truth is held in something like awe by the majority of undergraduates, which is a great advantage, or it would be impossible to keep the place in order and reel off the different college sports in good time. He thinks he knows more about cinder paths and grass than any other man in England, and he certainly keeps both in excellent condition. The racing takes place during the winter months. The snow is often on the ground in the morning, a thaw sets in, and there is running in the afternoon, and no better testimony

can be given of the care "Old Watts" exercises than the quickness with which the ground recovers from the changes in the weather.

The management of the club is in the hands of the president, secretary, and committee, who are all blues and change every year.

The Rev. E. H. Morgan, Dean and Tutor of Jesus', is treasurer of the club. He is always threatening to resign and as often consents to act again. It is to be hoped he will continue to act, for after some years of labour he has managed to place the club on a sound financial basis. The task has been a difficult one. About fifteen years ago there was plenty of money which was invested in challenge cups and in a wooden pavilion—which was built on wheels and found lying one morning after a strong gale in several pieces on the ground. Since then affairs have not been so flourishing and the prosperity of the club is now dependent on there being a large attendance at the Inter-University sports. But if the treasurer has a lot of work, the president has even more. He has to attend and arrange nearly all the college sports, do the handicapping, look after and pay the ground-staff, carry on negotiations with Oxford, and above all present his accounts in a proper manner to the treasurer. In this last particular no president has succeeded as yet though each one imagines that after a year of Mr. Morgan's tuition he is a competent accountant and financier. In fact any one who has not taken an active part in the management of a university club can scarcely realize the amount of work there is to be done and how much is due to those dons who permanently undertake the office of treasurer and so keep the various clubs in working order.

The work of the Cambridge University Athletic Club begins with a general meeting in the October Term—at which all the college club secretaries have to be present under a penalty of a fine of a guinea, and another general meeting is held at the beginning of the Lent term. At these meetings the dates of college sports are arranged, and care has to be taken to keep open such dates as the University fours, the Colquhoun sculls, the Lent races, and important football matches. Any changes in the rules are then made and the strangers' races are arranged. Each college at its annual meeting gives a prize of not more than £5 value and the University Club adds a second prize of £1 for a handicap which is open to any Oxford or Cambridge men, who are not members of the college giving the prize, and any gentleman amateur, who is introduced by two members of committee. It has often been said that prizes are given too generously in the strangers' races, and it would certainly be as well to limit the amount for the first prize to £3 3s. which is the sum given in the University Handicaps. But taking all things into consideration there is very little pot-hunting at the University. In the university sports and freshmen's meetings silver and bronze medals are given, and in the closed college events the value of the first prize is never more than £2, while the third man never gets anything. The prizes are given by means of vouchers which are accepted by tradesmen in the town, and in the strangers' races the articles have to be inspected by the president and stamped with the University arms before they are delivered to the winners. The comparatively small values of the first and second prizes compare favourably with the limit of ten guineas which is set by the Amateur Athletic Association and with the number of prizes which are allowed to be given for each event while it tends to give a healthy tone to University athletics.

The freshmen's sports are first on the list of fixtures for the year, and so men who are likely to be any good during their time at the university are brought to the fore and the handicapper is enabled to allot them proper starts when they enter for the strangers' races. The sports are not as a rule very interesting. Every year there is somebody whom rumour represents as being able to do very nearly record time for the hundred yards and something marvellous for the quarter or the mile and as regularly he fails to do so. School stop-watches must be very slow and the courses very short, for if they were accurate the older men could never have a chance, and the maxim at Fenner's that "the Blue always wins" would be false. Occasionally a first-rate freshman turns up but he is generally as old as most men are when they leave the University. For instance, Mr. Monypenny, of Jesus', who ran in the hundred yards against Oxford in 1890, and in the quarter-mile as well in the following year. But as a rule the public school champion of the year before makes a poor show. At school he was a moderate runner at several distances, and so with the aid of the school track and stop-watch he gets a huge reputation which he fails to maintain when he is pitted against those who are good at only one distance.

After the "freshers' " sports come the various college meetings, and one is very like another. If the performances are not brilliant the finishes are very often exciting, and it is not an uncommon thing to see the two last men running themselves out in order to beat each other. Rarely, if ever, is such a sportsmanlike spirit seen beyond the university, for if a man always ran in this manner, he would lose a chance of getting a good start, an object the provincial runner generally has in view. The presence of a "blue" increases the interest in the sports though the event is generally a gift to him, nevertheless the men like to feel that a member of their college has done a first-class performance. At three o'clock the college sports are always suspended and the competitors come out for the strangers' race. All are, or should be, dressed in white except those who have run against Oxford, and their garments are trimmed with light blue. The names with the entrance-fee of one shilling, have been given in at the pavilion the day before and have been sent on to the president who has made the handicap from the club record-books, which contain a list of all the runners and their performances. These races are very enjoyable, each one knows his neighbour and feels he will have to run to



PREST (CAMB.).

THOMAS (OXF.).

MONYPENNY (CAMB.).

RAMSBOTHAM (OXF.).

A "FINISH" 100 YARDS, 1890. FROM AN INSTANTANEOUS PHOTOGRAPH.

win, and if he is not quite fit he knows he can give up when he likes without any doubt being cast on the straightforwardness of his running.

But college sports and strangers' races are merely a prelude to the university sports which are held at the end of the Lent Term. The meeting extends over two days with a day of rest in between, and from the results of the different events the team is chosen to compete against Oxford. Old blues come up to start and judge and get quite melancholy and imagine they are growing old when they borrow some clothes to go out for a spin after the racing is over. But the feeling soon passes away under the influence of tea and muffins, with which the president has, by custom, to provide both them and the committee in his rooms after the sports, as being the most indigestible stuff any one can eat who has been training for three weeks. At this meeting the team for the Inter-University contest is selected, and then a small dinner follows, after which bulldogs and proctors have been known to sprint faster than the university representatives.

On the following morning the team is photographed at Fenner's; no one is eligible for a place in it who is of more than four years' standing, and two men are chosen for each of the following events—the hundredweight, hammer, quarter, and the long and high jumps, and three men for the mile and three miles. The first man in each event is called the first "string" and gets a full blue, that is to say, a light blue blazer and cap with a laurel wreath and the initials C.U.A.C. worked in white. The second and third strings get only a half blue, that is to say, the jacket and cap is of white with the

wreath and inscription in light blue and they also wear a red and yellow band respectively on the left arm of their vests to distinguish them when running from the first strings. The committee are not bound to select those who are victorious in the University sports, and it is sometimes necessary to take advantage of the rule. Of course there are always heartburnings when the names are published ; but this is also the case with the rowing, football, or cricket, some one is always said to be left out who ought to have been put in.

It is indeed almost impossible for a stranger to university life to realize how keen the competition is to gain the coveted light blue and what a peculiar distinction



T. JENNINGS. HIGH JUMP (5 FT. 9 IN.). FROM AN INSTANTANEOUS PHOTOGRAPH.

attaches to those who are successful. The child of light sneers and condemns while the Philistine is envious and applauds. The rowing, cricket, athletic, and the two football teams are the only clubs that have the full blue. The tennis and one or two other clubs have to be content with half blues ; while such clubs as the chess and hockey have no blue at all and therefore clamour for one. They have succeeded in making such a noise that a committee, which is composed of the presidents of the first five mentioned clubs, has been formed to guard the sacred blue. Until the committee was constituted the president of the boat club heard all ap-

plications in this matter, but as the university has become radical in everything but politics, a change was called for and the power is now vested in a body which it is to be hoped will be thoroughly conservative.

It may be noticed in passing that an Oxford man while in residence wears his blue anywhere and everywhere, but a Cambridge man can only wear it when engaged in the sport for which it was awarded. On leaving the university the old blazer always forms a cloak of friendship, one old blue will always welcome another and the purity of university athletics is assured so long as the aim of every man is not to win a prize but to be a blue.

About a fortnight after the university sports Cambridge meets Oxford in the nine events for which the team has been selected. These sports have been held for twenty-six years and for the first of them Cambridge went over to Oxford ; in the following year Oxford came to Cambridge and the visit was returned : after that, the university authorities refused to allow the sports to be at Cambridge, and the *Times* newspaper contained a short paragraph in which it wondered that the young men were thus wantonly exposed to the temptations of a visit to London. A long and amusing

correspondence ensued between the secretaries of the two Universities in the course of which the Oxonian made the announcement that "your beastly Dons" were at the bottom of the trouble. There must have been some misunderstanding as to this, for on the occasion of sports being held at Cambridge a large contingent of Oxford supporters came over. In the evening there was a disturbance in the market-place, and butchers' and greengrocers' carts and all available vehicles were seized and the visitors driven to the station. The following year at Oxford matters were fairly quiet in the town, but owing to there being insufficient accommodation in the trains on the return journey, the Cambridge men wrecked every station they could, while advertisements were torn down and lamps and windows smashed. Perhaps then the Dons were right in considering that the London police could easily manage all undergraduates, and were wise to confess that the proctors had quite enough to do without looking after Oxford men.

After the momentous decision of the "beastly Dons" it became necessary to choose a ground. Lords was suggested, a good grass track could be secured and there was a chance of the Marylebone Cricket Club and Ground laying a cinder path, which would however

have had to go behind the pavilion, and so Beaufort House was settled on until the neighbouring ground of Lillie Bridge was used and it remained the seat of war until the Queen's Club, West Kensington, was opened in 1888. The sports are always held the day before the boat-race, and wires are sent after nearly every event to the crews who



R. W. TURNER. A. W. CHARLES.
A QUARTER-MILE FINISH. FROM AN INSTANTANEOUS PHOTOGRAPH.

are training at Putney. In the evening the two teams and a large contingent of old blues dine together, and the medals, silver and bronze, are handed to the winners, and the custody of the Chambers' Challenge Shield is given to the president of the victorious university. The shield is made of silver and is of great intrinsic value. It was presented in 1889 in memory of the late Mr. J. G. Chambers, who rowed in the University Eight and had a place in the athletic team.

It is certainly unfortunate that an athletic meeting which is so popular as that of the sister universities should be held in the early spring; but it is impossible to make any other arrangement. The Cambridge University Cricket and Athletic Clubs are joint lessees of Fenner's, and so it would not be possible to hold sports in the May Term, and it is ridiculous to talk of the Athletic Club buying out the Cricket Club. If any dispute arose the cricketers having more money would win easily; but a disturbance is improbable and both clubs are saving money to purchase the freehold of the ground. But if the arrangement is inconvenient to the public it is far more disagreeable to the performers. For it is hard to conceive anything more irksome and distasteful than training for the university sports. To turn into bed soon after ten o'clock, to get up at seven, and to give up smoking and all dainties when eating and drinking, sounds simple enough but it soon grows tiring. The boating man has to do the same but then he has companions in misfortune. He is compelled to go down to row in all kinds of weather, and is inspired by the prospect of a bump or the belief that his Eight has done a bridge to ditch in a second faster than the boat in front. The case is different with

the athlete, he trains by himself and the frost and snow often prevent him running for two or three days at a stretch, and then it requires some courage to go for a spin with the east wind blowing across Fenner's. He never feels he is doing fast times and gets over-anxious and consequently unfit. The freshmen and the second year, too often, train as hard as the older men, and the result is that each year some promising athlete is over-trained. The amount of exercise to be taken should vary according to the stamina of each individual, and there would be many less failures if men would only rest when advised by their seniors. Another point to be remembered is that the races with Oxford and not the university sports are the end in view. This is so often lost sight of that during the fortnight in between the two events the men go quite off colour and are useless when the day of the Inter-University sports arrives. It is to be hoped arrangements will soon be made to enable the team that has been selected to run against Oxford to live together as the university crew does and, if possible, spend a week at Brighton or some other seaside place.

But in spite of the difficulties presented by the weather to those who are training, Cambridge has turned out some first-class athletes. Curiously enough they have nearly all been sprinters and hurdlers. Joyce, Palmer, and Le Fleming have all won the hurdles



STEARNS, PHOTO.

H. W. LE FLEMING, PRESIDENT 1892 C.U.A.C.

championship, and Shaw who did some wonderful performances in New Zealand, has added the quarter-mile hurdle record to his distinctions, besides winning the championship. Le Fleming, a younger brother of the old champion, is now president. He keeps up the family reputation over the hurdles, and is very neat at the high jump. Roberts, of Selwyn, won the champion long jump in 1887. Greig, the president in 1889-90, was one of the finest hurdlers and long jumpers there have ever been at Cambridge. In the long jump against Oxford in 1890 he thrice cleared twenty-two feet six inches, and only just failed to beat E. J. Davies's record jump of twenty-two feet ten inches and a half. He won the hurdles in excellent style, and had he not been training with the Militia he would undoubtedly have won both the events in the championships in 1890.

Among some of the best short distance runners may be mentioned Macaulay, who holds the record in the quarter against Oxford, and used to come down to Fenner's

smoking just before the race. Philpot, of Trinity, Storey, and H. M. Fletcher, who never ran much until his third year, when he won the quarter and tied with Fardell of Trinity, the second string, in the hundred against Oxford. He did some fine performances at Cambridge, but was never at his best in the Inter-University sports, and in his last year his medical studies and a football accident upset his running. But the finest runner the university has ever seen is H. C. L. Tindall, of Christ's College. He kept his body low and ran with a long sweeping stride. A spin or two with him did the young runner more good than reading any number of books. He holds the amateur record for the quarter-mile, which he ran in forty-eight seconds and half, and then won the half-mile in one minute and fifty-six seconds on the same day. He has also cut the record for the six-hundred yards, which he ran in one minute twelve seconds. To the general public these figures carry little meaning, but on calculation it will be seen that when running the quarter Tindall was going at a pace of nearly twenty miles an hour, or at the speed of a continental express, slow perhaps for a train, but extraordinarily fast for a man. Jennings, the ex-president, is a fine high jumper, but a very uncertain performer. He was in his time the best all-round athlete in residence, and will probably become a fine hammer thrower, though of course he will not be in the same class with "Hammer" Hales, who did the record throw of one hundred and thirty-eight feet. The Rev. G. Hales

was president in 1877, and by his skill and enthusiasm in hammer throwing revived the sport. Several proposals have been made to eliminate the event from the Inter-University programme, but without success. It has been proposed to substitute a half mile. If a change were made, the weight should be the first to be done away with. It is so much easier than the hammer. There is no reason why a half-mile should not be added. It is said that the chance of a draw will be increased. There is surely no objection to a draw in the sports if the two Universities are equal. Whatever Cambridge men may say, the absence of the half-mile is not creditable to University athletics. But it is objected that the half is a distance at which either the quarter or the mile runner is best, and is not a distance suited to only one class of runners. The objection is fallacious. There is a class of men who are good at the half and useless at the quarter or mile, and if it is said there would be too many blues, matters might be compromised by letting only two men run in the mile instead of three as at present. Another hammer thrower and hurdler as well was J. R. Orford, of King's, who in 1887, the year after he was president of the athletic club, rowed number four in the University Eight.

In the three miles Cambridge has been very unfortunate. Ekin, Eliot, and Hough are the only runners who have beaten Oxford, and the last-named holds the record for the event. Hough started the University Hare and Hounds Club to improve long distance running, but without success; for men go plodding for miles over fen country and then imagine they are fit to run on a cinder track. The consequence is they trot round slowly on their heels for eight and half laps when the orthodox Hare and Hound sprint is put on and all the world wonders. But there is nothing to wonder at; the sprint is a farce; it is only the pace a good three-miler would make all through the race, and anybody can do it if he goes slowly enough at first, which the cross-country runner takes care to do. Doubtless the Hare and Hounds is useful in that it gives staying power, but it will never give pace, and what the Cambridge long-distance runners have to learn is that a long swinging stride at a good pace is necessary for success at the distance. At present anybody who can go along at the double quick time of a regimental private imagines he is a born three-miler. For three years Pollock Hill, of Oxford, gave Cambridge men lessons, but to no purpose. They had plenty of opportunity of studying his style. The runners were always far enough off and went sufficiently slowly to study him at their leisure, and the public never had an opportunity of mistaking him for anybody else, as he generally led all the way. It was not until last year that Ekin, a freshman, won the race for Cambridge after a splendid race with Pease, of Oxford. The times for the three miles has never been brilliant, and it is very questionable whether a return to the old two miles would not be advantageous. For some reason or other, probably want of stamina, the present distance is too long for undergraduates. The mile, like the three miles, has been an unlucky race for light blue runners. Waters, of Jesus', did some good times at Cambridge, but fell ill just before the Inter-University sports.

It is very unfortunate that so many of those who do well at running at the University should retire from the path when their undergraduate days are over. While men are in residence it is natural that they should not care to run all the year round, but when they go down they might be induced to run if the conditions of amateur athletic sports were somewhat different from what they are at present. The *Field* in a vigorous article which appeared in that journal early in September, 1890, gave a sad picture of the roping and betting which form part of the everyday life of the so-called amateur, so that, under the circumstances it is not to be wondered that the university athlete finds more congenial forms of exercise than his old pursuit of running. At the same time the London Athletic Club has made a step in the right direction by restricting the class of men who can enter for the open races at its meetings, and by having sports with Oxford and Cambridge which are carried out on the same lines as the Inter-University meeting, and it is to be hoped that university men will join that club and aid it in its attempts to purify athletics.

The instantaneous photographs from which the engravings in this article are made were taken by Messrs. Stearn, of Cambridge.