

the average rough water which prevails on the Port River this gives a distinct advantage to the inside crew. They get a lee shore and calm water to start in, with the further gain of a course inside Nos. 3 and 2 Beacons, the two combined being, we have no hesitation in saying, equivalent to two lengths to the good, the other boats being exposed to the rough water and higher wind of unsheltered positions. On the present occasion the Starter had the launch to windward of all the boats, and they were rowed into positions well over to the Torrens Island side of the river. What wind there was blew from the north-west, and had little effect upon the surface of the water, consequently the places of the boats at the start had nothing to do with the issue of the race. How that race was rowed will be found fully reported elsewhere—as fully at least as it is possible to note the details of a race from a steamlaunch which seemed incapable of keeping up with the eights. This last is a matter which it is incumbent upon those in authority to rectify on future occasions. There are now thousands of persons in the colonies, and not a few in England, who take a lively interest in the University Boat Race, and who must rely upon the Press for those details which are of such interest to every oarsman, past and present. From the distance which separated the official launch from the boats it was next to impossible to note the form of the crews, individually or collectively, while it appeared at the end that Sydney had won a close race, which, as it turned out, the Judge awarded to Melbourne.

Referring to the incidents of the contest it will be seen that the Adelaide crew were, shortly after the start, in racing parlance, nowhere. The steering of the boat was most erratic, and it is no exaggeration to say that several times on the journey her head was anywhere and everywhere except on her true course. What syren ashore or what spirit of the deep was luring her Palinurus was a mystery to every spectator. It appears,



however, that the boat was exposed to such a wash from the Marine Board's launch that some of the strokes were lost, and one of the yokelines was actually taken clean away from the coxswain's control and got foul of the metal fin under the boat. It cannot be said, however, that it was the steering which lost the Adelaides the race. Whatever chance they had, and we think at one time it was second to none, was practically lost when their No. 7 had to leave the boat for the five days immediately preceding the race. No person who follows rowing—there is no occasion to appeal to every oarsman—needs to be told how important to the crew is the after thwart on the bow side. Second only to that of stroke, it is often more difficult to fill. While the aft-oar rows his own style, and sets his own stroke, No. 7 must be as finished an oar as No. 8, while he has to transmit the time, length, swing, and sliding of the stroke to the bow side with photographic accuracy. More than this, the absence of Mr. Rounsevell interfered materially with the work of the crew, and in fact effectually prevented the amount of practice which should have been done in the last week. A substitute in the boat, however good and game an oarsman he may be, cannot in the nature of things row the long courses at the hard all imperative for the final polish. Hence, when the home crew should have been rowing a trifle over the distance of the race they had to be restricted to comparatively short courses. Mr. Cox may take heart of grace. The fates were against him, and a University man must have learned from his classical reading how relentless a part they have played in the past. As Mr. Blackmore said at the banquet, George Morrison under the circumstances could not have done better.



We may heartily compliment Mr. Cox on one thing, and that is that he has maintained the style of rowing which Mr. Halcomb has been so careful to inculcate. That length of stroke and body-swing, which, whether on fixed seats or sliders, has been, and is, insisted upon by recognised authorities, and which the leading lights of the London Rowing Club assert is of more importance than getting the hands quick away, or even that "catch at the beginning," about which, by-the-way, the late George Morrison used to say, "so much arrant rubbish has been written," were conspicuous in the home crew all through their practice, while their time was good and their rowing clean. That they were perfect cannot be asserted, although this is not the time to refer to defects in detail. It can only be remarked that the introduction of the sliding seats has added tenfold to the difficulty, great enough on fixed seats, of turning out an eight without a fault. The coach and crew who are entitled to even more sympathy than Mr. Cox and the Adelaides are undoubtedly Mr. MacDermott and the Sydney Eight. No impartial spectator who witnessed the tremendous pace at which the men went away, and which they showed themselves capable of keeping up, and the admirable manner in which they spurted at the finish, can hesitate to deny their coach the credit of bringing to the post the best physically trained crew of the three. Though they were beaten, by how little our report relates, as Mr. Upward chivalrously remarked at the banquet, honours may be considered as divided between Melbourne and Sydney. Whether the coxswain steered them as well as he might may be matter of opinion, but about one thing there can be no question, and that is that the Marine Board steam-launch effectually settled whatever chance the Sydney crew had. That they finished where they did is a proof of their condition and indomitable gameness, and though they did not win they deserved to.

When the Melbourne Eight arrived they impressed their antagonists with their fine physique, and whether in the boat or out of it they were looked upon as far and away the heaviest crew. But the weights, which we published on Saturday, showed that the local team were 1 lb. heavier than Melbourne, the latter scaling 11 lb. more than Sydney. Both the older Universities have a far wider field for selection than Adelaide, and Melbourne was in a position to put on trial eights as a preliminary to picking the crew for the race.