I KNOW of no sport which has made such rapid strides of recent date as Weight lifting. We have had more matches than ever and in making this statement I am not only thinking of the important Championship matches which have taken place quite recently, but have also the many minor matches which have taken place almost daily all over the country, and which certainly help to arouse and maintain public interest.

Then we have had the establishment of the Professional Weight-lifting Association for Great Britain, and the Amateur Association for Britain, both of which have done good work in governing and promoting the sport and pastime of lifting. The Amateur Association have already promoted one important tournament. They are now promoting another, and the Professional Association are about to follow suit.

The London Weight-lifting Club, operations, and has filled a long felt want. Records have been made by all the professionals, and the possession of each individual lift is rapidly going up, so that one really wonders to what limit a man of given weight may yet go on any particular lift.

Recognising the importance of the movement and the interest shown in it by all Physical Culturists, the Editor has asked me to write a series of articles in which I shall (1) show how to train for weight-lifting, and (2) how to perform the best known lifts.

I will content myself in this article by generalising, and then in ensuing articles I will see to it that the standard amateur and professional lifts adopted by our British Associations be carefully dealt with, so that Physical Culturists in the provinces who have not the opportunity of seeing our leading lifters at work may gain a clear idea as to the execution of the lifts they will one day be called upon to perform if they aspire to Championship honours.

The old idea seems to be that all one had to do was to develop as much muscle as possible, and then it would naturally follow that heavy weights might be lifted with ease.

To-day it is becoming known, even among obscure Physical Culturists, that one must to a certain extent specialise, and that one cannot rely upon muscle gained by means of the wall exerciser, light dumbbells, or free movements to assist one greatly in raising weights, unless weights themselves have been assiduously practised with.

One could not imagine a Physical Culturist developing muscle by home exercises, and then beginning at once to thrive at any sport such as, say, wrestling or boxing. He would recognise that there is great science in boxing and wrestling, which must be learnt by persistent endeavour, and a little thought might also show him that the quality of the muscle developed might not be quite right for the work to be done. Let me assure you that weight-lifting is every bit as scientific as either boxing or wrestling, and it is important that the muscles be attuned to the work. In a word, one cannot excel at weight-lifting without lifting weights. I defy anyone to dispute this. More ridiculous statements have never been made that a man can reach perfect development by means of free exercises, i.e. exercises without apparatus, and that with the muscle thus acquired he will be able to lift heavy weights.

The exponents of the free exercise theory forget the enormous amount of practice they put in at weights to perfect their positions before they reduce their weight-lifting practices to a minimum. I will now give one or two illustrations.

WEIGHT-LIFTING UP-TO-DATE.

No. 5

By T. INCH, Physical Culture Expert.

There is one important lift which I have not yet dealt with, and that is the one known as the "Snatch." This lift is a stylish one and one always interesting to watch. The illustration herewith shows myself in the attitude of "ready." By practice ascertain the distance apart which your heels should be. It varies in individual cases, from here's almost touching to about twenty inches apart. Much depends upon the style in which you snatch. There are several positions possible, and perhaps the best and simplest method for the beginner will be to try them all, using a light weight and adopting the one which appears to suit him best.

We will first take the Snatch position known as the "Best Press Snatch." Having caught hold of the centre of the barbell, and by the combined effort of leg, arm and shoulder muscles (aided by pressure of the left hand on the left knee), brought the weight as high as your shoulder, you quickly slip down into what is known as the press position, i.e., left shoulder on or near to left knee, etc. This does not mean that you snatch the weight to your shoulder and then slowly press it overhead. There must be no pause in the snatch lift—it must be done in one clear movement. But there is nothing to prevent your falling quickly into a best-press