

BRITISH
SPORTS AND PASTIMES
EDITED BY
ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

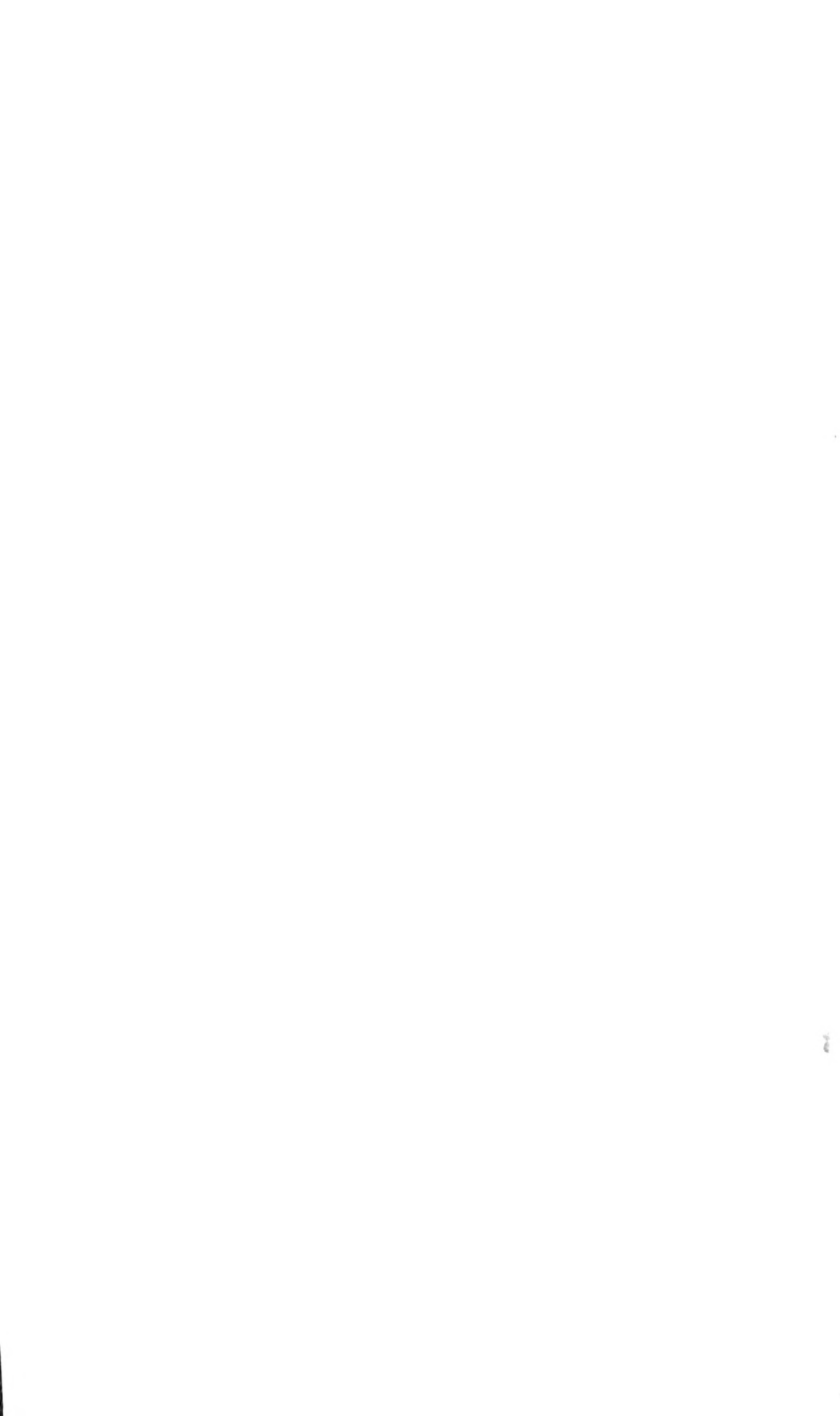


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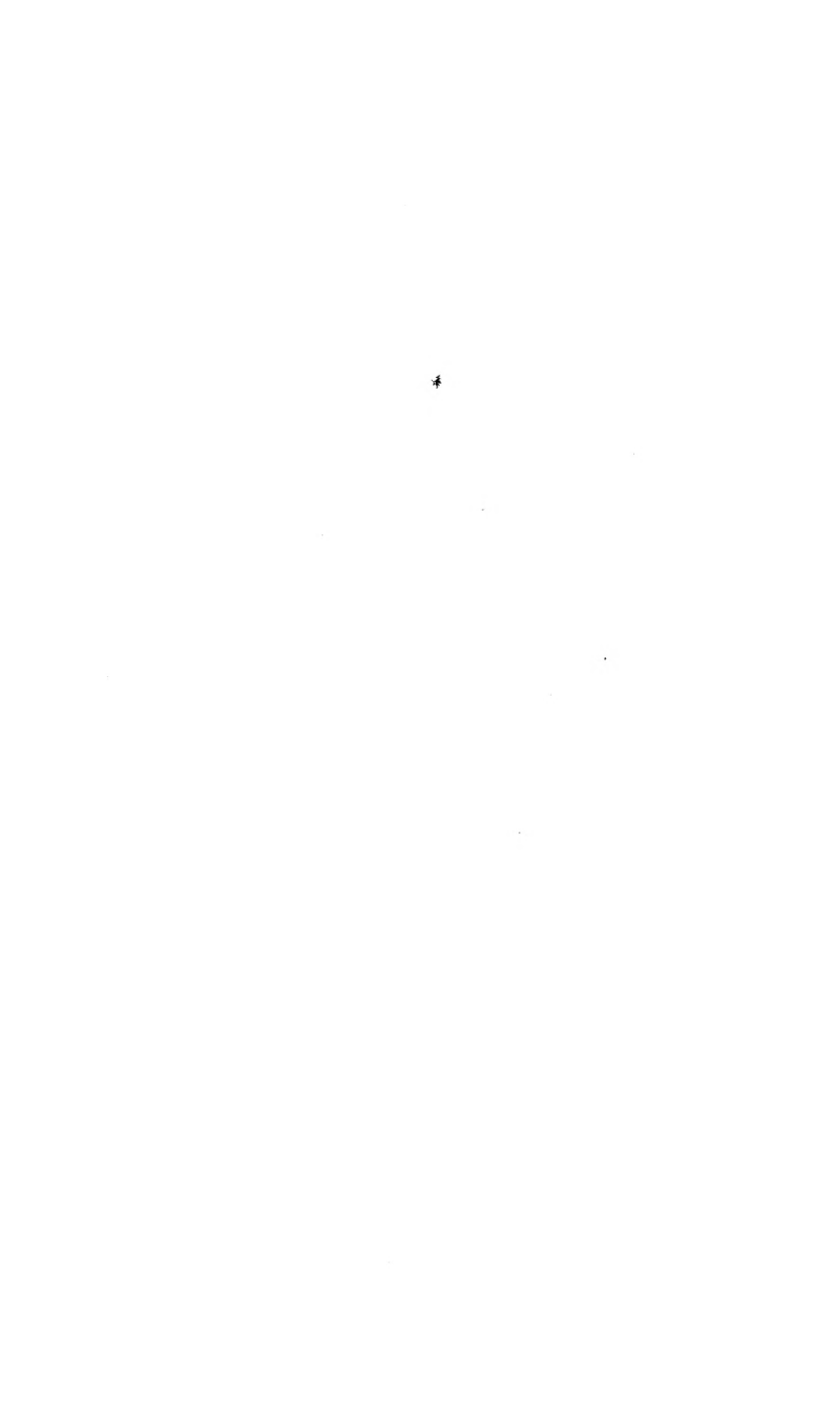
SAINT PAULS MAGAZINE,

EDITED BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

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PREFACE.

IN thus offering to the public the following essays on the British out-of-door Sports and Pastimes of the present day, reprinted from the pages of the SAINT PAULS MAGAZINE, it has been the object of the writers to explain, with as much accuracy as the narrow limits of such work would allow them, the present condition of those sports which are essentially dear to the English nature, and which are at the present day so strongly in vogue in England as to have a manifest effect on the lives and characters of Englishmen. There have been other sports which were formerly essentially English ; but they have either passed away so entirely as to be now not known among us, or they are so far gone in the yellow leaf as not to be worthy of being now classed with those to which the following pages are devoted. Cock-fighting and Badger-baiting are to be counted among the former. They are now at an end

practically, and no one cares to see a badger drawn, or ever talks of a main of cocks. Of all these Falconry was probably the finest;—but to write of Falconry as a living sport would be an absurdity. Of the latter number, Prize-fighting is probably the one which will most readily occur to the minds of sportsmen. Prize-fighting, which certainly would have been included in any list of out-of-door British Sports, fifty years ago, still lives;—but it lives after such a fashion, and is so fallen in general interest, that we do not doubt but that we shall be thought to have shown a proper discretion in excluding it from our little volume. And there are other sports which are not dead or dying, which are fine and noble in their way, and as to which we feel that we shall be open to reproach from their lovers in that we have omitted them; but, good as they are, we have not thought them to be of sufficient general interest to warrant us in classing them with the great British Games. Of these Football may perhaps stand first. Football in latter days has been making a name for itself, and has been becoming famous by the strength of its own irregularity and lawlessness. Because it is without an acknowledged code, the disciples of this and that school of players have been enthusiastic and eloquent. We by no means grudge to Football the name it has won for itself;—but

it has hardly as yet worked its way up to a dignity equal with that of Hunting and Shooting, or even with that of Cricket and Boat-racing. Coursing we might have included, but we confess to a prejudice against a greyhound; and think again that the interest taken in Coursing is hardly wide enough to have brought the amusement within our plan. That we owe an apology in the matter of Golf to our friends at Edinburgh and St. Andrew's,—an apology that will not be accepted,—we are quite aware. No owner of a favourite for the Derby, no master of a stud of hunters in the shires, no breech-loading slaughterer of his hecatombs is more assured of the rank, and dignity, and undoubted pre-eminence of his sport than is the regular attendant at the Links. And as the man who spends his life in going about from race-meeting to race-meeting is sure that he has adopted the one serious work that is worth the attention of an enlightened human being, so does the golf-player feel confident that within his grasp has fortunately come the one amusement that is equal to the true spirit of semi-divine manhood. Against this view of life in general, we say nothing, but simply plead that the good things of Golf have been confined to so few that we do not dare to claim it as an ordinary British Sport. Croquet too may fairly make a claim; but of Croquet we have

considered that it is too delicate, too pretty, too refined to be dealt with by men who profess that, in speaking of British Sports, they have intended to speak of things rough and violent. Tennis is not now widely known, but that, and Rackets,—which we regard as perhaps the most perfect game that was ever invented,—are Games rather than Sports, and can hardly be brought within our limits. There remains that wide word Athletics. Racing, Jumping, Ball-throwing and Hammer-throwing, and the like, have undoubtedly pushed themselves into such prominent notice in late years as to give them almost a claim to be reckoned among British Sports; but we have felt that they have fallen somewhat short of the necessary dignity, and have excluded them,—not altogether with a clear conscience.

It has been our desire to describe the present general condition of these out-of-door Sports, which we have included in our list; not to do so with reference to individual details, such as would have been handled had we said that riding in this county was better than riding in that, or that grouse on these moors were more plentiful than on those,—but to explain what is at present the nature of these Sports, how they may be enjoyed, what are their drawbacks, and in what spirit they should be followed. It is undoubtedly a fact that they have a most serious influence on the lives of a

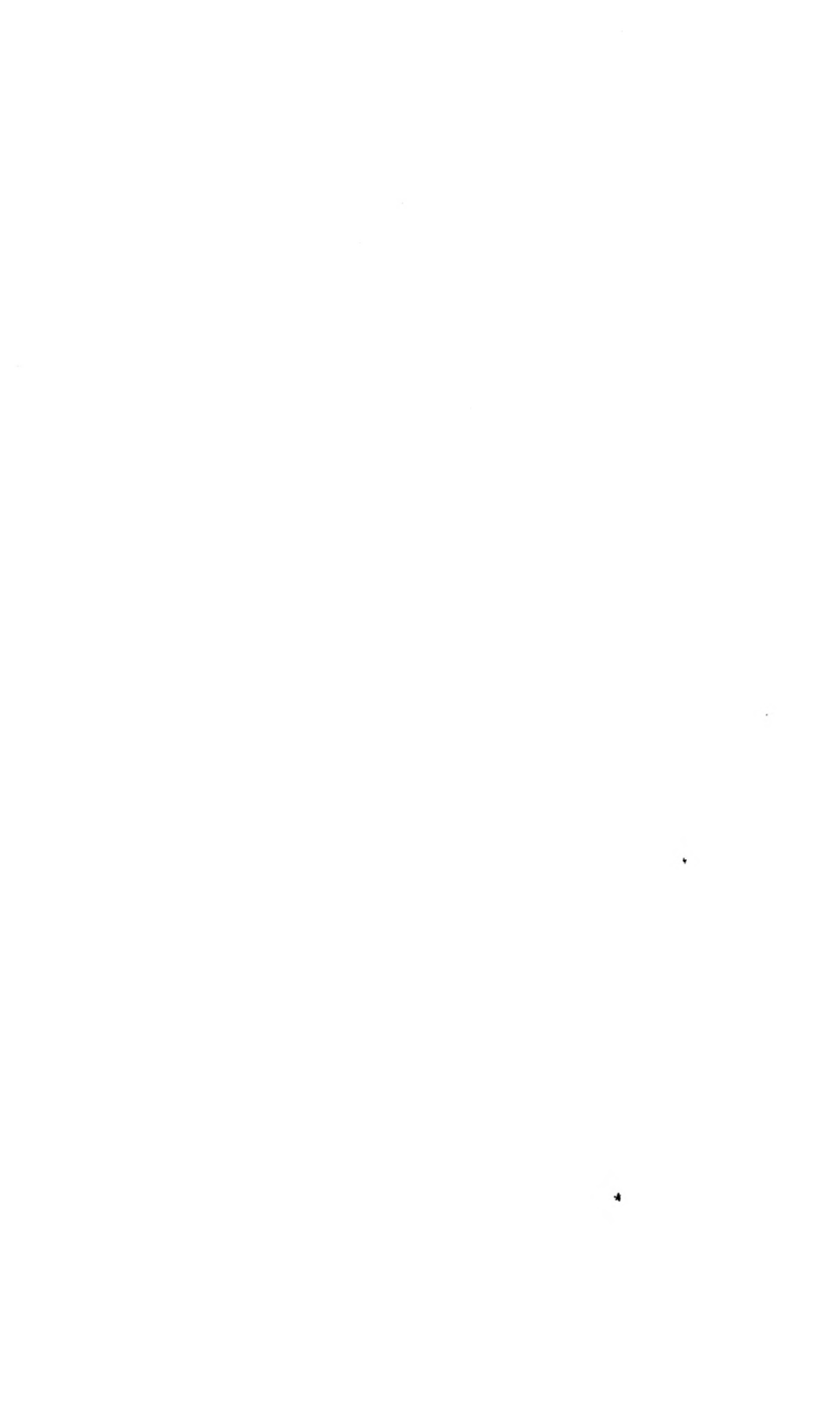
vast proportion of Englishmen of the upper and middle classes. It is almost rare to find a man under forty who is not a votary of one of them;—and among most men over forty the passion for them does not easily die out. An enormous amount of money is expended on them, and more thought is applied to them than is given to the government of the whole empire. Of course there arises a very serious question whether the money is expended beneficially, and the thoughts used wisely;—whether it may not be the case that we are overdoing our Sports, and making it too grand in its outlines, and too important in its details.

There is an old saying,—that whatever you do, you should do well,—which like many other old sayings is very untrue, and very dangerous in its lack of truth. But nowhere is this more untrue than in reference to our amusements. To play Billiards is the amusement of a gentleman;—to play Billiards pre-eminently well is the life's work of a man who, in learning to do so, can hardly have continued to be a gentleman in the best sense of the word. Chess, perhaps, is of all recreations the one most adapted for intellectual persons, but to be pre-eminent at Chess is generally to be that and nothing else. The same thing may be said with more or less of justice in regard to all games of skill. In reference to field sports it must be acknowledged that a mistake is

in course of progress, similar in its nature, though produced in a different way. They are being made too much of, and men who follow them have allowed themselves to be taught that ordinary success in them is not worth having. To shoot game as it can be found on simply preserved ground is too slow for the sportsmen of to-day. They must have it herded for them in immense masses. We hear of hot corners, and are given to understand that nothing is too much to pay for the privilege of occupying them. To fish an ordinary stream is below the notice of a fisherman. Men grumble so loudly in the hunting-field if they are not always galloping, that the huntsmen of the day are learning the trick of carrying their hounds from covert to covert as fast as they can ride with them, following a pseudo-fox. We all know to what an extent betting on the turf has been brought, till the actual horse-race has become a matter of quite minor interest to those who call themselves sportsmen because they are connected with the Turf. An alpine climber must have risked his neck on the Matterhorn before he can satisfy himself or his friends; and men must row until there comes upon us a fear whether they are not killing themselves,—or they are nothing. Even Cricket has become such a business, that there arises a doubt in the minds of amateur players whether

they can continue the sport, loaded as it is with the arrogance and extravagance of the professionals. All this comes from excess of enthusiasm on the matter ;— from a desire to follow too well a pursuit which, to be pleasurable, should be a pleasure and not a business.

That English Sports may remain as long as England remains, and that they may remain among the descendants of Englishmen to days in which perhaps England herself may exist no longer, is our wish as sportsmen ; but it seems to us that the danger which we have indicated is the rock against which our Sports may possibly be made shipwreck. Should it ever become unreasonable in its expenditure, arrogant in its demands, immoral and selfish in its tendencies, or, worse of all, unclean and dishonest in its traffic, there will arise against it a public opinion against which it will be unable to hold its own. With reference to one of our great national pastimes, and that perhaps the one which is most popular with the multitude, it is impossible not to see that there is a beginning of such an evil. If care be not taken to prevent it, an English horse-race will become as little desirable an amusement as an English prize-fight.



BRITISH SPORTS AND PASTIMES.

ON HORSE-RACING.

CHAPTER I.

It is a truth older than Aristotle,—although he is the first known to have enunciated it,—that if you seek to estimate the propagandist influence and assimilative force of an imperial nation, you must trace them in the imitation, not of laws, institutions, and polity, but of social tastes, fashions, and public amusements which that nation is able to induce. As regards dress, furniture, repasts, tastes, architecture, literature, theatrical diversions, and public pastimes, Spain unquestionably set the fashion among civilised nations during the seventeenth, and France during the eighteenth century. If, as many think, England is now at the zenith of her power and greatness, where will the traces of her paramount influence upon the nineteenth century be sought by the Buckles of two centuries hence? Not so much in the imitation by other nations of our representative institutions, of

trial by jury, of freedom of the press, or even in the wide diffusion of English books, as in the reproduction all over the world of some of our lighter social peculiarities, such as the chimney-pot hat, the late dinner hour, the conventional laws of English etiquette, and, most of all, in the contagious passion for our national pastimes, such as fox-hunting, cricket, and horse-racing. In regard to fox-hunting, the sport is of such a nature as to forbid its deterioration in or out of England by the fraud or dishonesty of its votaries. Fox-hunting, like Italy, *farà da se*,—will protect itself from harm. Much the same may be said of cricket, although occasionally whispers are heard, and especially in the county of Kent, that there is less of honest and manly love of the game for its own sake than of yore, and that “gate-money” possesses powerful and increasing attractions. But in regard to horse-racing, which in perhaps a more special manner than either of the others may be called our national pastime, there is a constant, and, as England becomes richer, an increasing danger that fraud and avarice will degrade a noble sport until it becomes unworthy the pursuit of an honest man. Between 1810 and 1830 the passion for pugilism was not less general or less ardent than the passion for the Turf is among us to-day. And yet, when the impression became general that no man could bet upon a prize-fight without the risk of subsequently finding that the fight had been sold by one of the combatants, public favour drifted away from “the ring,”

and the countenance of all people who retained any self-respect was withdrawn from its support. Never, perhaps, has the Turf been more heartily patronised in England by rich, powerful, and enthusiastic supporters than at this moment. The favour of the heir to the Crown is abundantly lavished upon the sport. For something like nine months of every year there is hardly a week in which Dukes, Marquises, Earls, Viscounts, Barons, Baronets, and Squires may not be found assembled upon racecourses throughout the length and breadth of the island. There are many weeks in course of which six or seven race-meetings are simultaneously celebrated. In 1866 and 1867 her Majesty's and Mr. Blenkiron's yearlings,—at the two most important sales of young thorough-bred stock in England,—realised prices unexampled in the annals of Hampton Court and Eltham. The Duke of Hamilton's bid of 2,500 guineas for the Lady Elcho colt in 1866 is unparalleled in the long list of sales over which Mr. Tattersall and his father have for half a century presided. There are 700 horses in training at Newmarket, and John Day had under his charge at Danebury, in 1867, such "a lot," both as regards number and quality, as has never been excelled in the past history of any English trainer. Mr. Chaplin won upon the Derby of 1867 such a sum of money as leaves Mr. Merry, Sir Joseph Hawley, and all his other triumphant predecessors, far in the lurch. The number of thoroughbred foals born in these islands

is steadily and constantly on the increase. To take the last three recorded years, 1,481 foals were born in 1862, 1,540 in 1863, and 1,567 in 1864. These, and many other signs of the times, may lead breeders of racing stock, and betting men in general, to conclude that the Turf never was so prosperous,—that, as an institution, it was never more firmly rooted in the hearts of Englishmen. It is from no antipathy to the sport, from no other sentiment than a desire to minister to its perpetuity, that we whisper in the ear of the professional frequenters of Epsom, Ascot, and Newmarket, that a worm is at the root of their favourite pursuit, and that, unless the men of influence among them shall exert themselves, the admitted abatement and increasing laxity of Turf morality will culminate in the withdrawal from a racecourse of all men to whom honour or honesty are something more than a name.

It is our fixed and firm belief that the Turf, as it existed from 1800 to 1850, was the noblest pastime in which any nation, ancient or modern, has ever indulged. In the eyes of the statesman or the philosopher it is an essential condition of public games or sports that the minds of the spectators should be as little as possible brutalised or vitiated by contemplating scenes of cruelty. If any man, intoxicated by the gorgeous strains of Pindar, imagines that the public sports of Greece were something much grander, more lofty, and more heroic than our Derby or St. Leger, let him be

reminded that at the Olympian games,—celebrated at Olympia, in Elis, upon a plain girt upon the east and north by insurmountable mountains, and upon the south and west by the rivers Alpheus and Cladeus,—it was death by law to any woman who crossed either of the rivers to witness these contests. No one who will take the trouble of studying the best modern* treatise upon the public games of Greece that has as yet been written, will have any reason to doubt that they were stained by acts of such cruelty and such indecency as to make the exclusion of women necessary and intelligible. The Romans in their *Ludi Circenses* went as far beyond their predecessors, the Greeks, in cruelty, as they fell short of them in refinement. In the Flavian Amphitheatre or Coliseum, the still existing ruins of which do more to attest the magnificence of the Rome of Titus and Domitian than any other building which time has spared, it was not unusual for hundreds and thousands of wild beasts to be massacred in a single day. Upon the consecration of this mighty amphitheatre by Titus, Suetonius tells us that five thousand wild beasts and four thousand tame animals were immolated; and in the games celebrated by Trajan,—one of the most humane of Rome's emperors,—after his victories over the Dacians, Dion Cassius narrates that not less than eleven thousand animals were slaughtered. Coarse and unrefined as were the

* "Die Gymnastik und Agonistik der Hellenen." Krause, Leipzig. 1841.

Romans, no woman was allowed to take her seat in the Coliseum and look on at the games of the Circus from any other spot than the open gallery which ran round next to the sky, and which was removed hundreds of feet from the arena or stage upon which gladiators fought and lions were tortured. If Martial is to be credited, such scenes were witnessed in the Coliseum, in the days of Rome's degradation, as must have been revolting, not alone to modest women, but also to all men in whom any sense of decency survived. To come to more modern times, bear-baiting was unquestionably the most fashionable pastime of our ancestors during the reigns of the Tudor and Stuart monarchs. In his *History of England*, Lord Macaulay quotes passages from the diary of a Puritan, written in 1643, in which complaint is made that Henrietta Maria, queen to Charles I., had returned to England from Holland, "bringing with her, besides a company of savage-like ruffians, a company of savage bears, to what purpose you may judge by the sequel. Those bears were left about Newark, and were brought into country towns constantly on the Lord's day to be baited;—such is the religion those here related would settle amongst us; and if any went about to hinder or but speak against their damnable profanations, they were presently noted as Roundheads or Puritans, and sure to be plundered for it." In tracing the causes which led to the restoration of the monarchy, and to the recall of Charles II., Lord Macaulay records that nothing weighed so much

with our ancestors as the unpopularity of the Puritans, occasioned by their austere repression of all public pastimes. "Against the lighter vices," to quote Macaulay's own words, "the ruling faction waged war with a zeal little tempered by humanity or by common-sense. Sharp laws were passed against betting. Public amusements, from the masques which were exhibited at the mansions of the great down to the wrestling matches and grinning matches on village greens, were vigorously attacked. One ordinance directed that all the maypoles in England should forthwith be hewn down. Another proscribed all theatrical diversions. Rope-dancing, puppet-shows, bowls, horse-racing, were regarded with no friendly eye. But bear-baiting, then a favourite diversion of high and low, was the abomination which most strongly stirred the wrath of the austere sectaries." If such were the pastimes of Englishmen during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it cannot be pretended that Spain, then the mistress of the world, was more scrupulous or more merciful than England. For in the sixteenth, no less than in the nineteenth century, the bull-fight was the national fiesta of Spain; nor can it be doubted that the deterioration of the Spanish people is in no slight degree attributable to their passion for a spectacle which, itself the index and the stimulant of brutality, is more degrading to those who witness, than to those who take active part in it. "So long," said Richard Cobden, "as this continues to be the popular sport of high and low, so

long will Spaniards be indifferent to human life, and have their civil contests marked with displays of cruelty which make men shudder.”

We have glanced at the public sports of other nations, and of England in other times, with a view to establishing the assertion that horse-racing, as it existed in this island during the first half of the present century, was a noble and unexceptionable national pastime. There are few subjects upon which a painstaking man of letters might better expend his energy than upon the compilation of a narrative which should trace the rise, improvement, and perfection of the British racehorse, from the days when, about one hundred and seventy years ago, the ancestors of Childers and Eclipse were imported into England from the sands of Arabia, until the present time. It is less than two hundred years since the Duke of Newcastle and Sir John Fenwick,*—no mean authorities on such subjects in their own day,—pronounced that the meanest jade ever imported from Tangier would yield a finer progeny than could be expected from the best of our native breed. Accustomed as we now are to see emperors and kings, and foreign noblemen, and merchant princes from New York or Melbourne, flocking to London with a view to securing, at enormous prices, the best thoroughbred stock of England, it is hard for us to believe that, in the almanacks of 1684 and 1685, the native horses of

* *Vide* “The Duke of Newcastle on Horsemanship,” and “Gentleman’s Recreation. 1686.”

these islands were valued, one with another, at not more than fifty shillings each. But interesting as would be an exhaustive treatise upon the racehorse from a competent hand, we would recommend no writer ever to attempt to moralise upon what may be called the *histoire inédite* of the Turf. In the first place, the elevation of a community's purity was never yet effected either by Act of Parliament or by the pen of journalist or moralist. Secondly, it is idle for any writer to deal with such a subject as the gradual deterioration of turf integrity without a life-long familiarity with prominent actors in the scenes which he describes. In order to give vitality and truthfulness to his descriptions, it is necessary for him to mention names and dates, to cry aloud and spare not, to be precise in his particularisation of races, of horses, of jockeys, of trainers, and of owners. Much may be done by the vigilance of daily and weekly sporting papers to scotch malpractices; but no man who knows the Turf can pretend to believe that any writer, whatever his authority, can be potential in killing them. Let any author, who is ambitious of lashing evil-doers upon a racecourse, be at the pains to read the "Essays on the Turf," published thirty years ago by Nimrod,—the best sporting writer that England has yet produced,—and let him thus learn, vicariously, his own impotence. But the great and essential difference between Turf malpractices of to-day and those which Nimrod denounced is, that formerly noblemen and gentlemen, with few and rare exceptions,

stood in little need of the lash of the censor. "Having seen the English Turf reach its acme," wrote Nimrod in 1837, "I should be very sorry to witness its decline; but fall it must, if a tighter hand be not held over the whole system appertaining to it. Men of fortune and integrity must rouse themselves from an apathy to which they appear lately to have been lulled, and must separate themselves from unprincipled miscreants, who would elbow them off the ground which should be exclusively their own." Very different should be the language of the Turf reformer of to-day. For, bewail it as we may, it is no longer possible to deny that the majority of noblemen and gentlemen who follow the Turf as a profession lend themselves now-a-days to transactions such as most of their forefathers would have scorned. The Turf is fashionable, richly patronised, and forms an apt and convenient *délassement* for the largest and wealthiest leisure class that any country, ancient or modern, ever boasted. Against such a pursuit, thus supported, it is idle for purists and scholars like Mr. Hughes and Professor Goldwin Smith to lift up their parable. "The devil," said Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden to his chaplain, who found him one day reading the Bible, "is very near at hand to those who are accountable to none but God for their actions." Many of the richest and most powerful patrons of the Turf are secured, by the possession of great wealth and high social standing, from earthly accountability in no less degree than Gustavus Adolphus himself. Of what

avail are the admonitions or suggestions of "Cato" or "Mentor" addressed to men of whom not more than five per cent. ever take in hand any other volume than the Racing Calendar or the Stud Book?

These remarks, therefore, are not written in the Quixotic expectation that they will be read by, or will influence that singularly heedless and irresponsible section of the community which is generally known under the title of "the sporting fraternity." It is with a view of arresting the attention of thoughtful men in every class of life, who may themselves never have owned a racehorse, or been present at a race-meeting, that we desire to point out that the threatened decline and fall of the Turf may be a real misfortune to England. It is an undoubted necessity that Englishmen should have a national pastime, capable of affording amusement to all classes, enacted in the open air, devoid of all taint of cruelty, and conducted, as far as possible, in accordance with the rules of fair play. Man is unquestionably a gambling animal, and the very energy which makes us strive to rise in life is twin-born brother to the spirit which makes men gamblers. We have done much in England to suppress such dens of iniquity as still flourish at Baden Baden and Homburg, and the only open gaming which exists among us is that which is enacted on racecourses. Nor is betting upon races an unmitigated evil,—least of all in the eyes of those who have seen *trente et quarante* played in Germany, *baccarat* in Paris, *monte* in Mexico,

and faro in New York or Washington. Betting about the speed and endurance of a racehorse is unquestionably the noblest gambling in existence. Without betting there would be much fewer owners of racehorses in England; for it has been abundantly demonstrated, and by no one more clearly than by the late Lord George Bentinck, that it is impossible to make racehorses profitable, if taken one with another, unless their owner employs his knowledge of their capabilities, before they have appeared in public, by judicious backing. For these reasons let it not be supposed that it is our desire to write a diatribe against betting. That which we do desire to protest against is, that racing should be conducted,—as it is now,—not with betting as its accessoire, but with betting as its sole and only object and aim. It is against this that every true lover of the turf will join us in lifting up his voice, for it is incontestable that the “heavy plunging” of the present day will be fatal, not only to its perpetrators, but to the noble pastime which it degrades. With a view to a temperate statement of the inevitable tendencies of the heavy betting and short races now in vogue, and in the hope of awakening if possible the interest of thinking men who recognise the inherent merits and advantages of the Turf, and who do not wish to see it relegated to the limbo whither steeple-chasing and the prize-ring have preceded it, these few remarks are offered for the consideration of those whom they may concern.

The dangers which threaten the Turf appear to be

two in number : I. The deterioration of the breed of racehorses : II. The deterioration of the owners of racehorses. Let us deal with them in the order of enumeration.

I. The thoroughbred English horse of the last half-century is as much the forced product of our high and artificial civilisation as is the choicest textile fabric that Manchester or Belfast ever produced. The well-known "flyers," whose "portraits,"—to borrow the phraseology of the Newmarket artists of the last century,—adorn many a wall, and whose pedigrees and exploits are better known throughout the length and breadth of these islands than the names and deeds of our most eminent statesman, Lord Chancellor, or prelate, grew by slow and gradual improvement to the admitted perfection which they have long since attained. Like the wheat-plant which we imported from the East to enhance its productiveness one hundred-fold, like the Persian apple which Western Europe has converted into the peach, Voltigeur, West Australian, Stockwell, and their progenitors and descendants, are, in the main, exotic as to their origin, and have been raised to perfection by English culture. The oldest of our thoroughbred pedigrees that can be traced with accuracy ends in Cromwell's celebrated imported stallion named Place's White Turk. Charles II., himself a great patron of the race-course, imported mares in abundance from Barbary, which figure as Royal Mares in our old stud-books

until this day. Prince George of Denmark, the husband of Queen Anne, seems to have had no passion so well developed as his passion for the Turf, with which he strongly inoculated his royal wife. The Curwen Bay Barb, the Byerley Turk, and the Darley Arabian made their appearance in this reign, and were followed, in the reign of George II., by the sire to whom we are indebted for England's best racing blood,—the celebrated Godolphin Arabian. Let any man study the pedigrees of eminent racehorses during the first half of the eighteenth century, and he will find that their sires or grandsires, their dams or grand-dams, were, without exception, of Eastern blood. Take at hazard the quaint "description" which is appended to the "portraits" of horses for which we are under obligations to John Cheny, the Fores of the middle of the last century. Here, for instance, is the text attached to—

"The portraiture of Childers, y^e fleetest horse that ever run at Newmarket, or (as generally believed) was ever bred in the world. From an original painting in the Duke of Devonshire's house at Newmarket.

"This surprising horse was bred by Leonard Childers, Esq., of Yorkshire, by whom when young he was disposed of to his Grace y^e late Duke of Devonshire. He was got by y^e Darley Arabian. His dam was called Betty Leeds. She was got by y^e late Marquess of Wharton's Careless, which was got by Spanker, a son of the Darcy Yellow Turk.

Childers' grand-dam was got by the Leeds Arabian. His great-grand-dam was got by Spanker. His great-great-grand-dam was a natural Barb mare.

“Childers never run at any place but at New Market. He there, in April, 1721, beat the Duke of Bolton's Speedwell, 8 stone 5 pounds, 4 miles, 500 guineas. In the succeeding October, he received forfeit, 500 guineas, of Speedwell. He beat y^e Earl of Drogheda's Chanter, 10 stone, 6 miles, 1,000 guineas. In y^e following November he received 100 guineas forfeit of y^e Earl of Godolphin's Bobsey; upon which he was taken out of keeping and has ever since been a stallion in possession of their Graces the late and present Dukes of Devonshire.

“Published this 21 day of June, 1740, by John Cheny.”

In the above “description” there are three points to which we desire particularly to call notice. In the first place it will be remarked that upon both sides Childers's blood was Arabian or Turkish. Secondly, it will be remarked that, inasmuch as he was foaled in 1715, and ran for the first time at Newmarket in 1721, he was six years old when he made his first appearance. It is on record that before he figured as a racehorse he was long ridden by the Duke of Devonshire's groom in the hunting-field. Thirdly, let it be remarked that the two races upon which the tradition of his extraordinary fleetness is based, were, in one case, over four miles, in the other, over six

miles of ground. We will reserve our application of these three points until hereafter.

We have not space to copy in full more than one other "description," which will disclose that the high stakes of the present day were not wholly unknown 150 years ago. "The portraiture of Fox, late the property of the Earl of Portmore," informs us that—

"This eminent horse was the property of Thos. Lister, Esq., of Yorkshire. He was got by Clumsey, which was got by Old Hautboy, bred by the Darcy family out of a Royal Mare, and got by the Darcy White Turk. Fox's dam was Bay Peg. Her grand-dam, Young Bald Peg, both bred by Mr. Leeds, and got by his Arabian. His great-grand-dam was called the old Morocco Mare. She was bred by the old Lord General Fairfax out of a foreign mare, and got by a Barb of his lordship's, called the Morocco Barb.

"Fox in 1719, then 5 years old, won the Lady's Plate at York, in the hands of Mr. Lister, who sold him to his Grace the late Duke of Rutland; in whose possession he beat the Duke of Wharton's Stripling at Newmarket. Upon the Duke's demise he was disposed of to William Cotton, Esq., of Sussex, in whose hands he won a 300 guineas prize at Quainton Meadow. Beat Lord Hillsborough's Witty Gelding in a match run (as reported) for near or full 20,000 pounds. Beat Lord Drogheda's Snip 3 matches for great sums; and was never beat until attended with disorders. He was the sire of many horses of high

form, and died in 1738 at 23 years old ; the property of the said Earl of Portmore.”

It will be noticed, in addition to the magnitude of the sums for which matches were made early in the last century, that Fox's blood was on both sides Oriental, that he made his first appearance at five years old, and that all his victories were achieved over a distance of ground. From these two racehorses, Childers and Fox, which may be regarded as representatives of their class between the years 1709, when the first races of which any record exists took place at Newmarket, and 1750, three general inferences may be drawn. First, that all our eminent racehorses in 1867, being the lineal descendants of Childers, Fox, Starling, Old Cartouch, and their contemporaries, owe their origin to Oriental dams and sires. Secondly, that during the last century, and especially during the first half of it, it was unusual for a racehorse to make his appearance in public at an earlier age than five years old. Thirdly, that it was an unheard-of thing for races to be run over a less distance than four miles of ground. In the eyes of our ancestors it seemed of little moment that a horse or mare should possess speed unless they also possessed what, in these quaint “descriptions,” of which we have given two specimens, was called “goodness,” or ability to stay. It is no unimportant matter to recall this fact at a moment when there is not one five-year-old in England who can compete with three-year-olds, at weight for age,

over a cup course, and when there is not a single six-year-old or aged horse in training who can hold his own in good company over the Beacon Course at Newmarket.

We have shown that the English thoroughbred of to-day is an exotic, and that he traces his pedigree up to Arabian, Turkish, or African dams and sires. Now nothing is more well established than that the characteristic excellence of Oriental horses was that, in addition to their speed, they possessed extraordinary powers of endurance. Few readers of Sir Walter Scott's "Talisman" will have forgotten the ride through the desert of Sir Kenneth of Scotland and the disguised Arabian physician, who was none other than Saladin the Soldan himself. The small party of Saracens by whom Sir Kenneth, half prisoner, half guest, was escorted, discerned, it will be remembered, at the distance of a mile or more, a dark object moving rapidly on the bosom of the desert, and which was recognised as a party of cavalry, much superior to the Saracens in numbers, and who proved to be Europeans in their full panoply. Flight was obviously a necessity for the Arabians, and in what manner it was put in practice had best be told in Sir Walter's words:—

"So saying, the Arabian physician threw his arm aloft, and uttered a loud and shrill cry, as a signal to those of his retinue, who instantly dispersed themselves over the face of the desert, in as many different

directions as a chaplet of beads when the string is broken. Sir Kenneth had no time to note what ensued, for at the same time the Hakim seized the rein of his steed, and putting his own to its mettle, both sprung forward at once with the suddenness of light, and at a pitch of velocity which almost deprived the Scottish knight of the power of respiration, and left him absolutely incapable had he been desirous to have checked the career of his guide. Practised as Sir Kenneth was in horsemanship from his earliest youth, the speediest horse he had ever mounted was a tortoise in comparison to those of the Arabian sage. They spurned the sand from behind them, they seemed to devour the desert before them, miles flew away with minutes, and yet their strength seemed unabated and their respiration as free as when they first started upon the wonderful race. The motion, too, as easy as it was swift, seemed more like flying through the air than riding on the earth. It was not until after an hour of this portentous motion, and when all human pursuit was far, far behind, that the Hakim at length relaxed his speed. 'These horses,' he said, 'are of the breed called the Winged, equal in speed to aught except the Borak of the Prophet. They are fed on the golden barley of Yemen, mixed with spices. Thou, Nazarene, art the first, save a true believer, that ever had beneath his loins one of this noble race, a gift of the Prophet himself to the blessed Ali, well called the Lion of God. Time lays his touches so lightly on

these generous steeds that the mare on which thou sittest has seen five times five years pass over her, yet retains her pristine speed and vigour.'”

These words have been selected for quotation because, although extracted from a work of imagination, they are, like everything that Sir Walter Scott wrote, based upon truth. Nor would it be easy, within a shorter compass, to find a passage so indicative of the power of endurance, or, in other words, the ability to stay, possessed by the highest strain of Arabian horses. We shall perhaps be told, on the strength of certain trials of speed and endurance, enacted many years ago between English and Egyptian horses upon Egyptian soil, that the Arabian horse of to-day is immeasurably surpassed by the English racehorse. It might be answered that the last twenty years have greatly diminished the staying powers of the English thoroughbred, and that if we were now called upon to send twenty racehorses to the East, to gallop for ten miles across the desert against twenty Arabs, it would perplex us not a little, in spite of the five hundred horses in training at Newmarket, to get together a lot of twenty that would do credit to England. But the truer answer would be that, setting aside the superior advantages of training always possessed by the English horse, we have never yet come into competition with the finest blood of Arabia. It is only within the last few years, and especially since Burton and Palgrave have partially lifted the curtain which concealed Arabia

from our view, that we have been admitted to any knowledge of that vast and mysterious province of the sun. We learn from Palgrave that the finest and purest Arabian horses are to be found, not in Egypt, or Persia, or Turkey, or Morocco, or Muscat, or Mesopotamia,—from all of which countries many so-called Arabian horses were imported into England during the last century,—but in the uplands of Nedjed, or Central Arabia. “Nedjed,” says Palgrave, “is the true birth-place of the Arab steed, the primal type, the authentic model. Although their stature is somewhat low, they are so exquisitely shaped that want of greater size seems hardly a defect. Remarkably full in the haunches, with a shoulder of a slope so elegant as to make one, in the words of an Arab poet, ‘go raving mad about it;’ just a little saddle-backed, a head broad above and tapering down to a nose fine enough to drink from a pint pot; a most intelligent and yet singularly gentle look; full eye; sharp, thorn-like ear; legs that seem as if made of hammered iron, so clean and yet so well twisted with sinew; a neat, round hoof; coat smooth, shining, and light; the mane long, but not overgrown or heavy. Nedjed horses are especially esteemed for great speed and endurance of fatigue; indeed, in this latter quality, none come up to them. To pass twenty-four hours on the road without drink and without flagging is certainly something; but to keep up the same abstinence and labour conjoined, under the burning Arabian sky, for forty-

eight hours at a stretch, is, I believe, peculiar to the animals of this breed. Other Arab horses, with all their excellencies, are less elegant, nor do I remember having ever seen one among them free from some weak point. The genuine breed is to be met with only in Nedjed itself."

It is very possible that, by reason of the failure of the late Colonel Angerstein and others in their attempts to improve the English racehorse by going back again to Arabian sires, little heed will be given to these words of Palgrave. But it is an undoubted fact that the few Oriental sires imported into this country during the present century have had nothing to do with the purest strain of Arabian blood. The stallions given to William IV., and which stood during the fourth decade of this century at Hampton Court paddocks, were presents from Indians Imaums. The Viceroys of Egypt, the Sultans of Turkey,* and the Emperors of Morocco, have, during the last half-century, not unfrequently presented horses to the Sovereigns of Western Europe; but they were not veritable Arabian, but African, or Turcoman horses. Colonel Angerstein was a private individual, and,

* "Eight magnificent thorough-bred Arabian horses have just arrived as a present from the Sultan of Turkey to the Emperor of Austria."—*Extract from Vienna Correspondent of Times Letter, in Times of Aug. 31, 1867.*

"The seven splendid Arab horses, sent as a present to her Majesty, have just arrived, in charge of Mouraffen Bey, at the Royal Stables, Buckingham Palace. Accompanying these were two others for the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Beaufort."—*Observer, Sept. 8, 1867.*

although unwearied in his efforts to possess himself of the best blood of the East, was unable to command such pecuniary resources as would have sufficed substantially to alter the strain of our English thoroughbred stock by infiltration of Arabian or Persian blood. A writer of much experience, speaking last year upon this subject, says:—"There is certainly considerable alteration in the structure of our English racehorse from his Arabian ancestor. I should say he was really more like the Toorkoman or Persian horse. His shoulders are not so well thrown back as the pure Arab's, his quarters more inclined to droop. My belief is that there has been some change in the last twenty years. This alteration of form gives a longer back, a longer barrel, and perhaps greater appearance of length, but it is not so really. The structure is altered for the worse, the various parts are not so collocated as to act with advantage, and it is contrary to the form of his Arabian ancestor. It is no unfrequent thing to see short jumped-up, long-legged horses stripped on the course. I have recently seen with regret many more of that sort than I like. Many are coarse, weedy, and positively ugly."

If we assume as a fact incapable of denial, that within the last twenty years the stamina and staying powers of English racehorses have been manifestly on the decline, it seems not unprofitable at this moment to record, first, that we owe the excellence of our English breed to the Darley Arabian and the

Godolphin Arabian in a higher degree than to any other sires of the last century. Secondly, that all authorities agree in praising the endurance of the best Arabian horses even more than their speed. Thirdly, that within these last two years we have been taught by a traveller of unquestioned authority in what part of Arabia the purest and noblest strain of Arabs is to be found. There is,—we write it with regret,—but little probability that any English breeder of racehorses will have energy or enterprise sufficient to import a few sires and dams from Nedjed. The Royal Stud has for years been administered more with a view to obtaining a good average for the yearlings sold at Hampton Court than to repairing the faults in the blood, structure, and the endurance of the animal himself. Mr. Blenkiron breeds for fashion; and the importation of Arabian sires would be an experiment little likely to be productive of profit for six or eight years to come. There is nowhere in England what may be called a philosophical breeder of racehorses. If rumour be correct in stating that Lord Grosvenor is not indisposed to revive hereafter the traditional glories of the Eaton stud, it is possible that, in the event of his enterprise being equal to his wealth, he may think it not unworthy of him to endeavour to arrest the decadence of the English racehorse. But there is more probability that in North America and Australia,—those two young and exuberant nations of the future which we have inoculated with the virus

of our English passion for horse-racing,—attention will within the next twenty years be given to this subject, and that the pur sang steed of Nedjed will sooner or later find his way to the burning prairies of the Mississippi valley, or be welcomed to Australian plains, scorched by a sun scarcely less fervid than the sol criador of his native Arabia.

The question whether our English strain of blood has deteriorated, and requires reinvigorating from the East, is, after all, a speculative question. We have stated at some length the reasons which induce us to think that during the last thirty years there has been too much in-and-in breeding amongst us, and that it could not but be advantageous to turn once more to the home of the Darley and Godolphin Arabians. But the deterioration in the stamina of the racehorse, which has resulted from the short courses and two-year-old racing now so much in vogue, is not a matter of speculation, but will be admitted by all who take any interest in the noble animal himself. Perhaps the best way of enforcing the lesson that colts and fillies, brought out to run ten, fifteen, or twenty times as two-year-olds, are very rarely to be found in training at four and five years-old, and are still more rarely stayers, will be by briefly reviewing the careers of a few modern horses, which stood training for several years, and were eminent for their staying powers. It will be seen that some of them made their first appearance as three-year-olds,—others very late in the year

as two-year-olds,—but that in no instance did they run often during their first year. We submit it to the Jockey Club or to those who desire to win Ascot Vases and Goodwood Cups with horses four and five years old, that the inference to be drawn from the record of the past is irresistible and pregnant, with warning. We shall limit our search to the last thirty-five years.

In the long annals of the Turf no animal has ever appeared so often in public as Mr. Barrow's b. m. Catherina, by Whisker, out of Alecto. Her first appearance was, as a three-year-old, in the Oaks of 1833, won by Sir M. Wood's Vespa; in which Catherina failed to obtain a place. Her last race was at Hednesford, in 1841, and she was beaten. But between 1833 and 1841 she started no less than one hundred and seventy-one times. Without being a first-class animal, she was good enough to win seventy-five times, almost all her races being over a distance of ground, and many of them in heats. We come next to more celebrated, but not to stouter or sounder mares,—Beeswing and Alice Hawthorn. Beeswing came out as a two-year-old at Newcastle, in June, 1835, and was not placed in the Tyro Stakes. Her second appearance in the same year was at Doncaster where she won the Champagne Stakes; and her third and last appearance as a two-year-old was at Richmond, where she won. From 1835 until 1842 inclusive, she started seventy-three times; her last appear-

ance being at Doncaster, where, aged nine years, she won the cup by five lengths, beating Charles the Twelfth, aged six years, winner of the St. Leger and of two Goodwood Cups; and Attila, three years, winner of the Derby. It is not necessary to record her many other triumphs. Alice Hawthorn never ran at two years old. As a three-year-old, she ran three times, at insignificant meetings, winning twice. In 1842, as a four-year-old, she won the Chester Cup; and ran nine times. In 1843, aged five, she ran twenty-six times; and in 1844, aged six, she ran twenty-four times, winning, in both years, many great races, and among them the Ascot Vase and Goodwood Cup. In 1845, aged seven years, she ran nine times. Altogether she ran seventy-one times.

We have not space to dwell in detail upon other horses, famous for stoutness and soundness. Suffice it to say, that Sir R. Bulkeley's Isaac came out as a five-year-old in 1836, and ran till 1842, starting eighty-eight times; that Sir W. M. Stanley's Zohrab came out at three years old in 1833, and ran till 1841, starting eighty-six times; that Barney Bodkin ran once as a two-year-old in 1832, and continued running till 1839, starting sixty-six times; that Lord Exeter's Bodice came out at three years old in 1834, and ran till October, 1839, starting sixty-three times; that Mr. Ferguson's Harkaway came out as a three-year old in 1837, and ran till the end of 1841, starting thirty-nine times; that Major Yarburgh's Charles the Twelfth first ap-

peared as a three-year-old in 1839, and ran till 1842, starting thirty times; than Lanercost first appeared as a three-year-old in 1838, and ran till 1842, starting forty times. The list might be indefinitely extended. We have selected at hazard a few horses famous for stoutness, between the years 1830 and 1840. But although the number of stout four, five, and six-year-olds decreases rapidly in the racing calendars between 1850 and 1866, there is one uniform feature noticeable throughout the series. It applies to Rataplan, Fisherman, and Moulsey,—the three horses which have started most frequently within the last dozen years,—and is, indeed, of universal applicability. *Not one horse in a thousand that runs eight or more races as a two-year-old will be in training at four years old, or, if in training, will be able to stay as a four-year-old over a cup course.*

Few are the students of racing-calendar literature who are aware how many of our historical race-horses, such as Bay Middleton, Amato, Glencoe, Plenipotentiary, Mundig, Mameluke, Bloomsbury, The Baron, Pyrrhus the First, Sir Tatton Sykes, Blair Athol, and countless others, made their *début* in public after they had attained three years of age. To these names might be added a long list of famous horses, such as Touchstone, the Queen of Trumps, Voltigeur, Cossack, Wild Dayrell, and others, that ran but once as two-year-olds. The career of Crucifix, whose first appearance was for the July Stakes in 1839, and her last for the Oaks, at Epsom, in 1840, and who started twelve

times in eleven months without ever being beaten, is always sorrowfully pointed at by opponents of two-year-old racing. "Surely," says Mr. George Tattersall, "that system of Turf management and training cannot be good which forces a superior animal so much beyond her strength and sends her a cripple to the stud at three years old, sacrificed before she has reached the zenith of her age, by premature abuse of her great powers." What are we to say about the modern Crucifix, Achievement, who ran eleven times at two years old, and has to thank the exhaustion consequent upon powers overstrained at this early age for her defeat in the rich Middle Park Stakes, at Newmarket, in 1866, in the Oaks, at Epsom, in 1867, and for her comparative worthlessness as a four-year-old in 1868?

It may well be doubted whether our English racecourse will ever again see such mares as Beeswing and Alice Hawthorn, such horses as Lanercost or Harkaway. There is not a six-year-old now in training in England to whom any of these four could not at the same age have given a stone and a beating over the Beacon Course. But we have said enough to satisfy even the most thoughtless that the English racehorse of to-day cannot stay and stand training like the horses of the past. The last Derby winner that was in training at five years old was Teddington, and he won the Derby in 1851. Is it not high time for the Jockey Club to take these patent facts into consideration, and to debate whether the mischief is irremediable? We have not

space here to offer suggestions or discuss remedies. Enough if we can get these facts generally recognised; for, in that case, profitable as it may be for gamblers to ruin colts and fillies by setting them to compete for a dozen or more two-year-old races, we are not without hopes that, when some of the "heavy plungers" of the hour shall have passed away, a remedy will be found.

II. It is not our intention to touch otherwise than lightly and briefly upon the other and more formidable danger which bodes little good to the longevity of the Turf,—that is to say, the serious deterioration in morale of the owners of racehorses. No one will suspect us of including in this sweeping censure all owners of racing studs. Happily for England, there are still upon the Turf men,—not alone noblemen, baronets, and squires, but also some professional betting-men,—in regard to whom, as in regard to the late Lord Exeter, it is felt by the public that any horse that carries their colours upon a racecourse will run no less truly upon its merits than the needle points to the pole. Of them, as of the greatest jockey that England ever produced, it might be said that "it would be as easy to turn the sun from his course as Frank Buckle from the path of honour and duty." Far be it from us to mention their honourable names, or to reveal how short is the list. We have already offered to sporting writers our advice to confine their comments upon any Turf malpractices which they may notice to the columns of the daily or weekly press. Essays upon Turf morality, whether imbedded in the pages of a magazine or published independently, have never yet

done any good. He who undertakes to write them should himself be "as holy as severe;" and cannot but be aware that *incedit per ignes suppositos cineri doloso*. The ground upon which a Turf censor treads is too delicate to be lightly trodden. Nevertheless we are not without hope that some of the younger patrons of the Turf will look around them, and ask themselves whether the atmosphere which they now breathe upon a racecourse is the same that Lord Glasgow, Lord Zetland, and General Peel, the late Dukes of Richmond and Bedford, the late Lord Eglinton, and Admiral Harcourt, exhaled and respired five-and-twenty years ago. Is an atmosphere of elevation and purity compatible with a system of betting which lowers the dignity of those who pursue it into the dirt, and makes their transactions, their gains and losses, their pecuniary engagements, and all that honourable men love to regard as sacred, the theme of every idle and malicious tongue, the subject of comment for every sporting-article monger? "There are men of education and high birth who are as much in the power of the betting fraternity and of the money-lender, as the unfortunate debtor was in the power of his aristocratic creditor at Rome." These are grave words. Would that we could indignantly deny their truth! The same contemporary writer proceeds to say, "A robbery on the Turf is a very bad thing when it is designed by one man; but to find that it may be whispered in the ear of an English nobleman or gentleman, without repulsion and disgust, not unfrequently with partisanship

and co-operation, is much worse." It has often been remarked that no nation, or no section of a nation, is ever cognisant of a decline in its own morality. The Romans under Julius Didianus thought themselves, says Gibbon, the equals of the Romans under Augustus. We are sometimes told that if horses are "pulled" now with the cognisance of men of birth and high position, there were Lord Darlington and others half a century ago who stuck at nothing,—that if racing accounts are badly settled now, it took a noble lord in the palmy days of 1826 many months to pay the huge sum of money which he lost on the Doncaster St. Leger. It is hardly necessary for us to answer that the men of rank and fortune who stooped to malpractices of yore, were as much an exception to the mass of their order as are the honest owners of horses the exception upon a racecourse of to-day,—that the delayed settlement in 1826, to which we have alluded, was the solitary default in a prolonged Turf career. But there are other evidences of the diminished self-respect of many noble and gentle patrons of the Turf, which cannot be noticed without regret and humiliation by thoughtful and reflective moralists. The racehorse, it would seem, is a more democratic leveller than Mr. Beales or Mr. Odgers; a greater disintegrator of aristocratic society than the railroad, or the penny press, or the electric cable, or the Reform Bill itself, big with mysterious and inscrutable possibilities. That a young, raw, uneducated Yorkshire or Newmarket lad, who can ride seven stone,

but who cannot pen a letter of which a milkmaid would not be ashamed, should be welcomed to the homes of dukes and marquises,—that he should be encouraged to smoke cigars, play billiards, and volunteer opinions without restraint in the presence of his betters of either sex,—is one of the saddest anomalies of our modern civilisation. The days are at hand when the people of England will pay little respect to men and women with handles to their names who do not respect themselves. Fashion, said Henry Fielding more than a century ago, can alone make and keep gambling sweet and wholesome. When it shall cease to be fashionable for men born in the purple to chat and smoke with jockeys and trainers, and to bet thousands and tens of thousands upon the speed and bottom of a racehorse, without any other means of paying, if the race goes against them, than the indulgence a money-lender shall afford,—then, and not till then, shall we expect to see the rehabilitation of the Turf. Meantime, in the hope of awakening in some of the younger and more reckless members of the racing community, a recognition of the fact that the fascinating pastime to which they give their lives and powers cannot be allowed to fall lower without imperilling its very existence, we shall devote a few pages to showing how old and far descended is the practice of horse-racing in these happy islands which it is our good fortune to inhabit, and shall conclude by earnestly admonishing our racing readers to stay while it is yet day, to set their house in order.

CHAPTER II.

FEW men of reflection or observation can fail to perceive that the seventh decade of the nineteenth century is likely to exercise no less potential an influence upon the destinies of the Turf than the Gulf Stream produces upon our national climate. The ten years intervening between 1860 and 1870 have already been illustrated by their production of many two-year-olds and three-year-olds, which, in all that constitutes a racehorse, have never been surpassed in the long and splendid annals of the Racing Calendar. It has been given to few lovers of horseflesh, though their connection with the Turf may have extended over four, five, or even six decades of years, to gaze upon two such magnificent sires as Gladiateur and Blair Athol, both of them winners of the Derby, both of them winners of the St. Leger. To institute a comparison between two such horses, with a view to arriving at a verdict pronouncing one to be superior to the other, was obviously an absurdity; but the emulation awakened between Count Lagrange and Mr. Jackson procured for all persons assembled at Doncaster, in September, 1867, the opportunity of scanning two such animals as had not appeared in juxtaposition upon the same ground since the memor-

able Tuesday* when Touchstone defeated the poisoned Plenipotentiary in the St. Leger of 1834. In spite, however, of the performances, breeding, size, power, and comeliness of these two monarchs of the Turf, there would be little difficulty in finding racing men to maintain that each of them has been equalled, if not surpassed, by other racehorses which the last decade has produced. St. Albans and Tim Whiffler, Lord Lyon and Achievement, Friponnier and Lady Elizabeth, The Earl and Blue Gown, would not be left without eager assertors of their claims to be considered at least the equals of Gladiateur and Blair Athol. Be this as it may, it cannot be pretended at the first blush that the decadence of the Turf, of which we hear so much, is very far advanced, when the last eight years have, in addition to many other excellent horses, been signalised by the production of ten such animals as St. Albans, Tim Whiffler, Blair Athol, Gladiateur, Lord Lyon, Achievement, Friponnier, Lady Elizabeth, The Earl, and Blue Gown.

Be it, however, remarked that the fame of these flyers,—at least of such of them as have already completed their racing careers,—is based upon their two-year-old and three-year-old performances. Let us go through the list seriatim. St. Albans never appeared

* The Doncaster St. Leger, established in 1778, was always run on a Tuesday until 1807, in which year the day was altered to Monday, and so it remained until 1826, when it was again altered to Tuesday. Another alteration was made in 1845, when the day was changed to Wednesday, and it has continued to be run on that day ever since.

in public after the year 1860, which conferred upon him immortality at three years old as the winner of the Chester Cup and St. Leger. Tim Whiffler having, as a three-year-old, won the Chester, Goodwood, and Doncaster Cups in 1862, not to mention many other lesser races, was unable, when as a four-year-old he opposed Buckstone for the Ascot Cup in 1863, to make a better fight of it than is implied by running a dead heat. In the deciding heat he was beaten easily by his three-year-old opponent. Blair Athol ran only in his third year. Gladiateur ran but twice at four years old. Lord Lyon's renown was gained by his victories as a three-year-old, was not improved by his performances as a four-year-old, and was gravely compromised by his inferiority as a five-year-old. Achievement, Friponnier, and the Hermit, the three best three-year-olds of 1867, were very far from being the three best four-year-olds of 1868. Poor Lady Elizabeth, in spite of the brilliancy of her two-year-old performances, has, as a three-year-old, become a reproach and a by-word. It is an undeniable fact that the seventh decade of this century has hitherto produced no such cup horses as have been famous in story during the six decades which preceded it. In the sixth decade, for instance, Fisherman, Rataplan, and Teddington achieved victories which cannot be matched during the last eight years. Fisherman started 119 times, and won 69 times. Rataplan appeared as a starter 71 times, and as a winner

42 times; and Teddington secured for himself the same reputation that Van Tromp had previously gained,—the reputation of being, in his day, the best two-year-old, the best three-year-old, the best four-year-old, and the best five-year-old, in England. In the fifth decade of the century, the names of mature horses whose achievements eclipse those of Fisherman, Rataplan, or Teddington, are abundantly found. It is but necessary to mention Charles XII., Beeswing, Alice Hawthorn, the Hero, Chanticleer, Van Tromp, the Flying Dutchman, Canezou, Hyllus, inter alios, to prove that the fifth decade has little reason to dread comparison with the sixth or seventh. The fourth decade,—that is to say the years from 1830 to 1840,—is fertile in great names. Among them we find Fleur-de-lis, Priam, Glencoe, Rockingham, Lanercost, Hornsea, Harkaway, Touchstone, Tomboy, Don John, Plenipotentiary, and many more. Going backwards from 1830 to 1800, the Turf antiquarian will have no difficulty in proving that stoutness in horses and the growth of the century are in the inverse ratio to each other. Whereas the number of speedy and short-running horses and mares has been constantly growing from 1830 downwards, the number of stayers and stout-runners rapidly increases as we recede from 1830 upwards. In fact,—to sum up the whole truth in a few words,—in proportion as two-year-old races and T.Y.C. handicaps have increased, the animals that can raise a gallop over the Beacon Course at four, five,

and six years old have sensibly diminished, until the breed threatens to become extinct altogether. As for aged racehorses that can win cups at seven, eight, or nine years old,* they seem to have passed away from these islands, and to belong to a species as irrecoverable at the great bustard or the hollow-sounding bittern,—as incompatible with our climate as the tropical birds and fishes, of which the fossil remains found in Great Britain and Ireland are still the great perplexity of the Royal Society.

But, painful as it may be to a true lover of the Turf to note the signs of the times, it is impossible to deny that, be the decline in the stamina and endurance of the modern thoroughbred what it may, the deterioration in the owners of the racehorse is still more marked and deplorable. During the whole of the eighteenth, and during the first four decades of the nineteenth century, nothing was more common than for prime ministers, ministers of state, and royal dukes to be the owners of racehorses. But since the death of Lord Palmerston, and the secession of Lord Derby and General Peel from active participation in Turf pursuits, we seem to have fallen upon times which forbid any politician who writes Right Honourable before his name to own a Derby favourite. The

* Beeswing won the Doncaster Cup four times: as a four-year-old in 1837, as a seven-year-old in 1840, as an eight-year-old in 1841, and as a nine-year-old in 1842. Between 1837 and 1842 she also won the Newcastle Cup six times.

impure atmosphere which has long pervaded the Turf, and which led the Queen, influenced by her husband, to withdraw her countenance and interest from her people's favourite national pastime, warns all aspiring men in public life that the ownership of racehorses is now-a-days a *diminutio capitis*. The late Lords Eglinton and Herbert, the late Duke of Richmond and Lord George Bentinck, forswore the Turf, and suspended active connection with it, when they took to politics. Mr. Disraeli, describing Lord George Bentinck, in the Library of the House of Commons, receiving the intelligence that Surplice had won the Derby, records that the success of a colt which he had himself bred, and which was the son of his favourite and invincible Crucifix, wrung from the proud and unyielding patrician "a superb groan." Alone among our great statesmen, Lord Palmerston, who, whatever else he may have been, was all over an Englishman, maintained the same connection with the Turf in his eightieth which he had commenced before his fortieth year. But the withdrawal of Lord Derby's black jacket and of General Peel's purple and orange from many a racecourse upon which, twelve or fifteen years ago, few colours more frequently caught the judge's eye, is interpreted by the unthinking public as an admission on the part of these two veteran statesmen that to be the proprietor of an Orlando or a Canezou is incompatible with the dignity expected from a grave councillor of state. Even the secession of the Duke of

Beaufort, who, although never a cabinet minister, kept up, as being simultaneously Master of the Horse and owner of Vauban and Gomera, some connection between the Turf and official life, is regarded, in these days of depression among racing men, as a serious blow and sore discouragement. In fact, for the first time during the nineteenth century, we seem to be on the brink of an epoch when the death or retirement of some half-dozen owners will leave Epsom, Newmarket, and Goodwood to be frequented solely by nameless professional racing men. The last few years have deprived us of the Duke of Bedford, the Marquis of Exeter, the Earl of Eglinton, the Earl of Chesterfield, Mr. Greville, Sir Charles Monck, Viscount Clifden, Lord Palmerston, Mr. Gully, and many more. When to this list shall be added the names of the Earl of Glasgow, the Earl of Zetland, Admiral Rous, Mr. Payne, Sir Joseph Hawley, the Earl of Wilton, and the Duke of Newcastle, who will there be left to maintain the lustre of the British Turf, and to be the owner of the Flying Dutchmen, Voltigeurs, and Blue Gowns of the future?

Without indulgence in unseemly or extravagant croaking, these and other similar thoughts may well fill the genuine lover of this noble pastime with foreboding and dismay. There is little enough to be said or written which will avail to arrest the decay, both in men and horses, to which no sensible man can pretend to be blind. Like all other doctors, we have our

own nostrum for abating the decline in the racehorse's stamina and endurance,—a nostrum which we shall presently do our best to enforce. As for alluring young noblemen and gentlemen of character, wealth, and position back to a pursuit which, if deprived of their continued countenance, will inevitably languish until it takes rank by the side of steeple-chasing,—this is too grave a task to be undertaken in such a fugitive essay as this. But before advancing remedies and discussing nostrums, let us first consider whether the Turf is really worthy of the pre-eminence which it has so long enjoyed above all other pastimes, and which seems justly to entitle it to be called the national sport of England.

There is no difficulty in proving that horse-racing is the oldest of our popular pastimes. The only other British sports which can claim to be regarded as in some degree its co-equal seem to us to be fox-hunting, shooting, and cricket. The history of none of these three can be traced so far back as that of horse-racing. The fox only began to be the quarry pursued by country squires, and by their square solid hounds and heavy Flemish horses, towards the commencement of the last century. Queen Elizabeth, a great patroness of the chase, confined herself to hawking, and hunting the stag. No reader of the "Fortunes of Nigel" can have forgotten the incomparable passage in which King James I. is described urging forward his favourite hounds, Bash and Battie, in pursuit of "a hart of

aught tines, the first of the season," and finding himself alone, and suddenly confronted with young Lord Glenvarlock, whom his fears converted into a threatening assassin. In the middle of the seventeenth century the fox was regarded as vermin. Oliver St. John, when speaking to the Long Parliament, compared Strafford to a fox, which, unlike the stag or hare, deserved no law or pity. "This illustration," observes Lord Macaulay, "would be by no means a happy one if addressed to country gentlemen of our time; but in St. John's days there were not seldom great massacres of foxes, to which the peasantry thronged with all the dogs that could be mustered; traps were set, nets were spread, no quarter was given, and to shoot a female with cub was considered as a feat which merited the gratitude of the neighbourhood." Fox-hunting came into fashion with the first years of the eighteenth century, and increased rapidly in favour until the Squire Westerns and country gentlemen of George II.'s reign came to regard it as their natural diversion.

Very learned treatises have been written by antiquarians on the origin of fire-arms. The hand-gun, which seems somewhat to have resembled a modern walking-stick, was improved, in the reign of Henry VI., by the adoption of a priming-pan. Next in order followed the stocked gun, which was succeeded in time by the match-lock and wheel-lock. The first was fired with a lighted match brought into contact with the priming by a spring-trigger. The wheel-lock was fired

by a wheel which passed rapidly over the edge of a bit of flint, and was considered in the reign of Queen Elizabeth to be an invention of no slight value. It proved to be worthless as a sporting weapon. The first fowling-piece which seems at all to have been worthy of the name, was the flint-lock, introduced about the year 1692, in the reign of William III. In one of Addison's most delightful papers in the "Spectator," Will Wimble is spoken of as a marvel, because he could shoot a bird on the wing. For about a century and a quarter, the flint-lock fowling-gun and musket held their own against all rivals. All the great battles of the last century, as well as all those which gained immortality for the Duke of Wellington and Napoleon I., were fought with the flint-lock musket. Shooting game, as a science, had no existence before the introduction of the flint-lock, and cannot be said to have been perfected until the third decade of the present century, when the percussion-gun came into general use. It cannot, therefore, be pretended that the antiquity of shooting is very great. Chroniclers of cricket and its doings have not been wanting who have endeavoured to establish its identity with club-ball, a game played in the fourteenth century. But they would have difficulty, we imagine, in satisfying readers like the late Sir George Cornewall Lewis that cricket, as now played, can be shown to have existed before the middle of the last century.

The antiquity of horse-racing, in substantially the

same shape which it now wears, is far greater than even racing men of reading and education have been in the habit of supposing. Without following the authors of some treatises upon the Turf into their elaborate disquisitions as to the evidences that the Romans, after their subjugation of Britain, brought over their own breed of running horses to these islands, we are justified in believing that horse-racing was in vogue among the Saxons, from the fact that Hugh the Great, father of Hugh Capet of France, sent a present to King Athelstan of several German racehorses. There is also further evidence that horses famous for their speed were transmitted to this monarch from many parts of the Continent; and we read that in the year 930 a law was promulgated by him, enacting that no horses should be exported from Great Britain except as royal presents. But the earliest authentic evidence of horse-races having been celebrated in this country is furnished by the old chronicler, Fitz-Stephen, who wrote in the reign of Henry II.,—1154 to 1189,—and who describes what would in these days be designated as the Smithfield meeting in 1168. As we read the translation of the old annalist's words describing a trial of speed between horses which took place seven centuries ago, it is with difficulty that we can persuade ourselves that we have not "Bell's Life" or the "Sporting Magazine" before us, and that we are not perusing the performances of animals got by Stockwell or Trumpeter. "The horses," he tells us, "are not

without emulation; they tremble and are impatient, and are continually in motion. At last, the signal once given, they start, devour the course, and hurry along with unremitting swiftness. The jockeys, inspired with the thought of applause and the hope of victory, clap spurs to their willing horses, brandish their whips, and cheer them with their cries." Similarly we learn, upon the authority of Thomson's "Illustrated History of Great Britain," that the sports of the common people at this time were bull-baiting, cock-fighting, and horse-racing, "which were particularly practised in London in the twelfth century." With more or less distinctness the thread of Turf history is traced down to the reign of Henry VIII., who is reported to have been a great admirer of horses, and to have imported sires from Turkey, Naples, Spain, and Flanders, with a view to increasing the speed of our English breed. Many laws were enacted in this reign for improving the size and strength of the horse. In emulation of her father, Queen Elizabeth was much given to equestrian display, and her reign introduces us to the first English veterinary treatise upon the management of horses which the shelves of the British Museum can boast.* But it was not until James VI. of Scotland and I. of England succeeded Elizabeth upon

* "How to Chuse, Ride, Trayne, &c., Horses, by Jervaise Markham: with a Chapter added on the Secrets of Training and Dieting the Horse for a Course, which we commonly call Running Horses." Published in 1599.

the throne that the Turf was recognised as a national institution. In his reign laws were for the first time passed with a view to the regulation of horse-races; and such was the partiality for the sport displayed by King James's Scotch subjects,—the “forbears” of the late Earl of Eglinton, the present Earl of Glasgow, and Mr. Merry,—that a statute was enacted, at the King's instance, ordaining that if any Scotchman won more than one hundred marks within twenty-four hours, the excess should be declared the property of the poor.

We have thus traced in outline the narrative of Turf history from the days of King Athelstan, the Saxon, who might presumably be called the author or father of English racing, down to the times of King James I., who, by his legislation, first placed horse-racing upon a permanent basis. This latter sovereign is commonly but erroneously spoken of in popular histories of the Turf as the first English monarch who openly patronised and encouraged a sport which, from his day downwards, has continually grown in public favour. The support accorded to horse-racing by James I. was continued by his grandson, Charles II., who repaired and enlarged his grandfather's residence, commonly called the Palace at Newmarket, and added to the Stud Book many mares imported from the Levant, which figure in old pedigrees as “royal mares” down to the present day. Little as it might be expected during an age steeped in vice and profligacy, a grave attempt was made in this reign to impose legislative restraint upon

“deceitful, disorderly, and excessive gaming.” Once already during the present century has this Act of Charles II. been invoked in the celebrated *Qui Tam* actions of 1843-44, which afforded Lord George Bentinck so rare an opportunity for displaying his tenacity of purpose and ingenuity in unravelling a tangled skein of mystery and intrigue. Nor, when the language of this Act of 1664 is studied by Turf reformers in 1868, will there be many sober persons found to deny that the salutary warnings of the seventeenth might well be repeated and proclaimed aloud in the nineteenth century. Its preamble sets forth that all games and exercises should only be used as innocent and moderate recreations ;—that, if used in any other fashion, they promote idleness and encourage dissolute living, “to the circumventing, deceiving, cousening, and debauching of many of the younger sort, to the loss of their precious time, and to the utter ruin of their estates and fortunes, and withdrawing them from noble and laudable employment and exercises.” It concludes, after other provisions, with the following notable words :—“ And for the better avoiding and preventing of all excessive and immoderate playing and gaming for the time to come, be it further enacted that if any person shall, after the date aforesaid, play at any of the said games or pastimes whatsoever, other than with or for ready money, or shall bet on the side or hands of such as do play thereat, and shall lose any sum or sums, or thing or things, so played for, exceed-

ing the sum of one hundred pounds, at any one time or meeting, upon tick or credit or otherwise, and shall not pay down the same at the time when he or they shall lose the same, the party or parties who lose the said monies or things above the sum of one hundred pounds shall not in that case be bound to pay the same, but the contracts, judgments, statutes, recognizances, mortgages, bonds, bills, promises, covenants, and other acts, deeds, and securities whatsoever, given for satisfaction of the same, shall be utterly void and of none effect; and that the person or persons so winning the said monies shall forfeit and lose treble the value of all such sums of money so won, the one moiety of said forfeit to go to our said sovereign, and the other moiety to such persons as shall prosecute or sue for the same within one year next after the time of such offence being committed."

One other conspicuous "Act to restrain and prevent the excessive increase of Horse Races" was passed in the thirteenth year of George II., and seems not unworthy of notice here. Its preamble states that "horse-racing for small prizes or sums of money hath contributed very much to the encouragement of idleness, to the impoverishment of many of the meaner sort of the subjects of this kingdom; and the breed of strong and useful horses hath been much prejudiced thereby." The Act provides that from and after the 24th of June, 1740, no person should enter or start any horse for any prize money, except such horse was bonâ

vide his own property, and that no person should enter or run more than one horse for a race. Also, that no prize or sum of money shall be run for of less value than £50, except at Newmarket, and Black Hambleton in Yorkshire. It was also enacted that no horses should run for any prize unless they carried the following weights:—Five-year-olds, 10 stone; six-year-olds, 11 stone; and seven-year-olds, 12 stone. Now, it will doubtless be remembered by some who may chance to read these words, that upon the 16th of February, 1860, Lord Redesdale introduced to the House of Lords a measure entitled the “Light Weight Racing Bill.” He proposed that after January 1, 1861, no horse should run for any racing prize carrying less than 7 stone weight, under a penalty of forfeiture of the horse so running, and of £200. The measure came on to be read a second time on June the 12th, and Lord Redesdale found himself confronted by a petition from the Jockey Club, presented and supported by the Earl of Derby. The petitioners submitted that “all regulations respecting horse-racing are better intrusted to the authority which has hitherto made rules for the encouragement of this great national amusement, and that the proposed Bill, should it become law, would have a prejudicial effect.”

It is far from our desire to maintain that either of the Houses of Parliament is better qualified to frame laws for the regulation of horse-racing than that mysterious and inscrutable Vehmgericht, the Jockey Club.

Ever since the birth of this corporate racing senate, during the reign of George II., the whole responsibility of the legislation with respect to horse-racing, and to the government of the sporting community, has devolved upon this elected and conventional body. For a century and a quarter the enactments of our Turf legislators have been cheerfully obeyed by their promiscuous subjects. But it has been well observed by a recent thoughtful writer, that "it may be taken for granted that if ever a future historian shall write the decline and fall of the English Turf, one of the reasons assigned for its decay will be, that it was behind the rest of the age in liberal progress, and was badly governed by its chief representatives." Nothing is more unreservedly admitted by every member of the Jockey Club who is capable of one moment's serious thought than that active and coercive enactments are now needed to rehabilitate the Turf, and to revive the declining powers of endurance in the English race-horse. Lord Derby, with his wonted fluency of expression and felicity of language, gave utterance in 1860 to the sentiments which animated his Jockey Club colleagues. But although the deterioration, both in racing men and horses, is far more marked and incontrovertible a fact in 1868 than it was in 1860, no attempt has yet been made by the Jockey Club to devise any of those remedies which they cannot but feel to be necessary, and of which, as we have shown, they declined acceptance eight years ago at the hands of

Lord Redesdale, or of any other extra-Jockey Club authority.

We have quoted, at greater length than the space at our command justifies, two Acts of Parliament, passed with a view to improving the breed of horses and the morals of racing men at a period anterior to the existence of the Jockey Club. No member of that club, however arrogant and exclusive, will pretend to deny that in both these legislative Acts the sound sense and judgment of their framers are abundantly apparent. It is the fashion of Jockey Club authorities to allege that they take no cognizance of betting transactions, and that any attempt to purify the atmosphere of the Turf, so far as regards the enforcement of punctuality in settling, and other cognate subjects, would for them be *ultra vires*, and beyond their jurisdiction. If this be so, we cannot but remark that in Charles II.'s and George II.'s reigns the House of Commons showed itself superior to the mock delicacy which now sways the Jockey Club, and was then capable of passing laws which, if enforced to-day, would be of no slight advantage to the Turf and its best interests. But even if the Jockey Club shall continue to ignore betting, and refuse to take cognizance of its many disputes, sophistries, and abuses, or if they prefer to delegate such considerations to a committee selected from their own ranks,—as is said to be now the desire of Admiral Rous,—we submit that the abated endurance of the thoroughbred and the entire disappearance of aged horses from the race-

courses of Great Britain are facts that they cannot ignore. In our concluding remarks we propose to return to this subject. In the meantime, having traced the thread of Turf history from Athelstan the Saxon down to the establishment of the Jockey Club in George II.'s reign, we have a few words to say as to the traditions of some few of our historical race meetings, and as to the courses which have in some instances been trodden for more than three hundred years by an almost unbroken succession of high-mettled racers.

Foremost in point of antiquity among the races of Great Britain stands the Tradesman's Cup at Chester. It is a well-established fact that a horse-race for the prize of a silver bell was instituted at Chester in 1511, and was decided upon that same "Rood-eye," or Island of the Cross, which was once the Campus Martius of the Chester youth, who here displayed their activity and strength in mock fights and other military spectacles, and which is the present race-course. The amusements soon assumed another form, and the mimic war was succeeded by horse-racing, which has continued to be the occasional diversion of the citizens to the present period.* In 1609 the bell was converted into three silver cups, and in 1623 the three cups were combined in "One faire Silver Cupp, of about the value of eight pounds." We are not in a position to assert that every year between 1511 and

* From "Topographical Beauties of England and Wales," vol. ii. p. 233.

1868 has witnessed a race over the Roodee for the said Tradesman's Cup; but that the Chester Cup of to-day is identical with the race established in Henry VIII.'s time admits of no dispute. It may not unreasonably be doubted whether many of the owners of Chester Cup winners within the last twenty-five years were aware that St. Lawrence, or Nancy, or Malton, or Mounseer had been successful in a race four times as old as the Epsom Derby or the Doncaster St. Leger. But the declining interest in the Chester Cup which the last twelve years have witnessed may be rekindled, if the antiquity of the race shall awaken some pride in sporting men, and shall arouse Mr. Topham, the well-known clerk of the course at Chester, to renewed exertions.

It must be confessed that with the exception of the Tradesman's Cup and the Dee Stakes, the Chester race-meetings of to-day possess few attractions. The proximity of the Dee Stakes to the Derby, which it usually precedes by less than a month, lends an artificial interest to the race; but upon more than one occasion the horse that subsequently won the Derby has suffered defeat round the punch-bowl course of Chester. For two-year-old races, Chester, as becomes its hoary antiquity, has never been famous. And we much fear that, in spite of the historical interest of the scene, with its circular little racecourse overlooked on the one side by the grave old walls of the Roman town, and on the other by the staring railway viaduct, the

representative of modern civilisation, Chester races are doomed to experience a progressive decline, and to pale their ineffectual fires before the attractions of other meetings blessed with finer natural courses.

Next in antiquity to Chester comes the capital of that sporting county, in regard to which it is said that "every Yorkshireman takes as naturally to the pig-skin as the Kentish lad to the cricket-ball, or the duckling to water." In his "Post and Paddock," the Druid tells us of a Devonshire man who used not long ago to make a St. Leger pilgrimage every year, travelling both ways on foot, and "who accounted for this strange whim on the grounds that 'his grandmother was Yorkshire-born.'" Horse-racing, as it appears from Camden's "Britannia," published in 1590, was practised about that date in the forest of Galtres, to the east of the city of York. In the great frost of 1607 a horse-race was run upon the frozen river Ouse. In more recent times the races were held upon Clifton and Rawcliffe Ings; but the river having been much swollen, and the course overflowed in 1730, it was agreed thenceforth that the races should be run upon the new course laid out upon Knavesmire by Alderman Telford;—nor is it necessary to announce to racing men that here they have been celebrated ever since. As a mark of the interest which ministers of the Crown once took in horse-racing, it may not be uninteresting to repeat that when the great patronage accorded to races on Knavesmire necessitated the

erection of a grand-stand, the Marquis of Rockingham, better known in political history as "Burke's Prime Minister," headed the subscription list. It is singular that, great as is the antiquity of the York meeting, no record can be found of races having been run over Doncaster Town Moor at an earlier date than 1703. York and Doncaster, and especially the latter, have, as it seems to us, been more famous for their long than for their short races, and for the extraordinary interest in the noble animals displayed by every Yorkshire artisan and peasant, whom the prowess of a Beeswing, a Surplice, a Flying Dutchman, or a West Australian has attracted to the side of the white rails which have witnessed so many momentous finishes.

In the value of the prizes contended for, and the assemblage of great masses of spectators, Newmarket compares ill with most of our other principal race-courses. At the same time, no true lover of this magnificent sport would for a moment hesitate to declare that Newmarket is the head-quarters of the racing community. With its traditions reaching back to the reign of James I., but not earlier,—consecrated by the memories of a thousand historical matches, such as those between Hambletonian and Diamond, Filho da puta and Sir Joshua, Beehunter and Clincher, Teddington and Mountain Deer, Cineas and Barbatus, Julius and Lady Elizabeth, Friponnier and Xi, and many more,—identified with the achievements in the saddle against time of such once famous, but

now almost forgotten, equestrians as Miss Pond, Mr. Jennison Shafto, Mr. Woodcock, and Mr. Osbaldestone,—Newmarket, with its multitudinous racing associations, is the shrine at which every true lover of the Turf pays his vows with no less devotion than the Mahommedan displays as he turns his waking eyes in the direction of the minarets of Mecca. It would be presumptuous to assign to Newmarket Heath greater praise in respect of its modern two-year-old struggles, or of its ancient four-mile heats over the Beacon. Each of these two styles or phases of racing has its own peculiar merits, and if we are constrained to pronounce that the excess of two-year-old racing now-a-days has rung the knell of the stout and lusty runner of the last century, it must be confessed that, as year succeeds year, fresh two-year-olds are continually coming out which seem to eclipse the fleetness of their historical predecessors. Old frequenters of the Heath are not wanting who will tell you that there is not in our days the same electric thrill of interest about a really great horse when he makes his first appearance in public, as that which exercised its magnetic influence over the spectators a generation ago. Let us turn for a moment to the record of two of the most magnificent specimens of the British racehorse that ever looked through a bridle,—Plenipotentiary, winner of the Derby in 1834; and Bay Middleton, winner of the same race in 1836. Each of them made his first appearance in the Craven Meeting at New-

market, and each of them at the age of three years. It was the fate of Plenipo in his first race to have for his only antagonist Lord Jersey's Glencoe, supposed, before he met his conqueror, to be one of the speediest milers ever stripped on Newmarket Heath. When Lord Jersey reconnoitred Plenipo before the race, he pronounced him to be a great bullock, more fit for Smithfield Market than for competition with Glencoe. Under this impression, his orders to Jem Robinson were to go off at score, and cut his opponent down by pace. What happened in the race cannot be better narrated than in Jem Robinson's words:—"I came the first half-mile, according to orders, as hard as I could lick, but when I looked round there was the great bullock cantering close by my side." Bay Middleton, in his first race for the Riddlesworth Stakes, in the Newmarket Craven of 1836, was opposed by five antagonists, to whom he had no difficulty in showing his heels. His next appearance was for the 2,000 Guineas, which he won, and in the Derby at Epsom he cantered in first, followed by three horses, Gladiator, Venison, and Slane, who, though outstripped by him in fleetness, have proved themselves, as the sires of Sweetmeat, Alarm, and Sting, no unworthy rivals at the stud to the progenitor of the Flying Dutchman.

Our diminishing space warns us to linger no longer among the memories of Newmarket, or to narrate how the July and Chesterfield Stakes,—which have introduced to the public so many flyers destined, like

Crucifix, the Flying Dutchman, and Teddington, subsequently to achieve immortality,—were the first two-year-old races in England established by the authority of the Jockey Club. It remains for us to notice that long before the great celebrity now attaching to Epsom Races was conferred upon them by the institution of “the Derby,” this healthy little village in Surrey had achieved fame by reason of its fine bracing air and excellent medicinal waters. Epsom Races, like those at Newmarket, owe their origin to James I., who was not unfrequently a visitor to the place, occupying upon these occasions the palace, as it is called, of Nonsuch. It is not unworthy of record that the language used by Lord Palmerston, when moving the usual Derby adjournment of the House of Commons in 1860, would not have been as acceptable to the contemporaries of Pepys as to our modern representatives of the people. In his “Diary” of July 25, 1663, Pepys remarks that, “having intended to go this day to Banstead Downs to see a famous race, I sent Will to get himself ready to go with me; but I hear it is put off, because the Lords do sit in Parliament to-day.” Contrasting Pepys’ entry with Lord Palmerston’s words, “To adjourn over the Derby Day is part of the unwritten law of Parliament, and I am sure that Her Majesty’s Government do not wish to ask the House to depart from so wholesome a custom,”—it would appear that in rigid attention to their parliamentary duties the Lords of 1663 compare favourably

with the Commons of 1860. But it must be confessed that the legislative bodies of two centuries ago were exposed to no such temptation as the Derby race offers in the seventh decade of the nineteenth century. It will be sufficient to substantiate the interest of each recurrence of London's great festival by saying that, in every part of the world, the Derby Day at Epsom is spoken of by Englishmen as the one great and characteristic sight which every foreigner who visits England should not fail to see. Other meetings there are, such as those at Ascot and Goodwood, which may surpass Epsom and Newmarket in fashionable estimation. But it would be as impossible to estrange from Newmarket the affections of genuine lovers of horse-racing as it is to persuade the London citizen out for a holiday that any other racecourse in England can possess such attractions for him as his own beloved downs at Epsom upon a fine Derby Day.

Such then, and thus far descended, is that noble national sport which, however liable to abuse, has grown with England's growth during its acknowledged term of existence, extending back over more than nine hundred years. To urge that, because vices and impurities have attached to it, the whole institution of horse-racing ought to be swept away, is equivalent to arguing that a ship ought to be scuttled in mid-ocean because barnacles have clung to her bottom. Many of the Turf's worst deformities,—such, for instance, as “heavy plunging,”—have a perpetual

tendency to correct themselves. We are emphatically of opinion that there are no evils connected with horse-racing which the Jockey Club are not strong enough to grapple with, if they gird them honestly to the task, and are no respecters of persons. The first improvement which it seems desirable that they should endeavour to inaugurate is a reduction in the multitude of race-gatherings. From the beginning of February until the end of November, scarcely a week passes without its one or more race-meetings. At many of them,—as, for instance, at Derby in 1868,—the horses stripped are so few and so bad as to provoke the contempt of all genuine lovers of a race. Every one must have remarked how large a proportion of the multitudinous races thus contended for consists of handicap races for distances ranging between a quarter of a mile and a mile. Scarcely less numerous are the two-year-old spins. It seems to us undeniable that we owe the disappearance from our racecourses of the Beeswings, Alice Hawthorns, and Fishermen of the past solely to that system of Turf management which prematurely taxes the strength of our thoroughbreds, by forcing them all to stand severe training at two years old. Here is a vicious practice with which the Jockey Club is fully competent to deal. What is there to prevent their enacting that no two-year-old shall appear in public earlier in the year than the July meeting at Newmarket? “The July” was the first two-year-old race ever established in Great Britain by

the Jockey Club. Why should they not decree that it shall be the first race in each successive year in which two-year-olds shall be stripped for public competition? We are well aware of the jealousies which such a decision will awaken in the breasts of the managers of all race-meetings anterior in the year to July. But we submit that the vitality, if not the very existence, of the Turf depends upon some coercive or restrictive legislation of this nature. Nothing is so easy as for the Jockey Club to present petitions to Parliament deprecating interference with the laws of horse-racing on the part of members of either of our legislative Houses. But such petitions necessarily imply that the Jockey Club is both able and willing itself to legislate with a view to securing and promoting the true interests of the Turf. Let them, in conclusion, take home to their hearts the following weighty words of a modern writer:—"There is no fear of the interests of the Turf ever being seriously affected as long as those who hold the position of its chief guardians make judicious use of their own powers, keep themselves beyond reproach by their own line of conduct, and act in a strict spirit of equity in regard to others."

ON HUNTING.

CHAPTER I.

OUR friend in the preceding papers has declared, in speaking of the Turf, that horse-racing might be regarded as the great national pastime of England,—more especially even than fox-hunting or cricket. Now that we are going to say a few words about hunting, we are almost disposed to protest that, on this point, our friend is wrong. We doubt whether, of all our national amusements, hunting is not the most thoroughly English, and the least susceptible of being taken out of England. Of course we here include Scotland and the sister isle. As regards Ireland, we may go further, and almost express a doubt whether hunting is not more Irish than English, so thoroughly has life in that country, both rural life and town life, become imbued with a love of the sport. Horse-racing has indeed become so large a business, that it must be acknowledged to involve greater interests in a pecuniary point of view, and to be on that account the more important occupation of the two. It is, moreover, open

to all the public. Our great racecourses are as common to rich and poor as are the Queen's highways. But nevertheless we think that hunting has more national efficacy than any other of our pastimes;—that it does more to make Englishmen what they are, and to keep them as they are, extending its influences to very many of both sexes who do not hunt themselves; and we are quite sure that there is no other national amusement among ourselves, no national amusement belonging to any other people, so incapable of exportation, so alien to foreign habits, so completely the growth of the peculiarities of the people with whom it has originated, as is the sport of hunting.

Even among the nations who are nearest to us and dearest to us,—those people who have sprung from ourselves,—the amusement is not only unpractised, but is regarded with mixed horror and wonder by those who hear of it. Of course it will be understood that we are speaking now of hunting such as it is in England; of such hunting as that we are about to describe,—and not of the pursuit of game. The pursuit of game has been the necessary occupation of all young nations, and has been continued as a recreation among most nations that have come to maturity. But that hunting of which we speak has never been able to find a settled home in the United States, in British America, or in Australia. Attempts have been made in various of our colonies,—in Jamaica for instance, and in Canada. A pack of fox-hounds was for a time esta-

blished in Maryland, which, of all the United States, is perhaps more than any other like to England in its mode of life. But it has been found impracticable to establish the sport successfully in other lands, even among men who are thoroughly English in their ways and thoughts,—even among Englishmen themselves. Here, among ourselves, it is understood that a man is to enjoy the liberty of trespassing, as opposed to the law of the land, when he is following a recognised pack of hounds. That is a conviction which has been able to get itself acknowledged by no other people in the world. Perhaps the nearest approach to English hunting out of England, is that to be found in the Campagna round Rome, where a pack of English fox-hounds is hunted after the English fashion by an English huntsman; or it may be that the hunting at Pau, in the south of France, will rival that in the Campagna. The attempt in such a locality is hardly more than a proof of the intense love which Englishmen have for the sport. There are foxes in the Campagna, and there is an open space in which liberty to ride is granted; and there are English residents. Such being the case, fox-hunting has been established there; and having once been put down by the Pope, is now again alive. And there is hunting of course in France,—besides that English hunting at Pau. We have all heard how the Emperor hunts the deer at Fontainebleau, and some of us have witnessed the stately ceremony. But there is in it not the slightest

resemblance to English hunting. There is no competition; no liberty; no danger;—and no equality.

The reason why this should be so,—why hunting should not exist elsewhere as it does here in England,—is easy to find; much easier than any reason why any custom so strange, so opposed to all common rules as to property, should have domesticated itself among ourselves. We are to the manner born; and till we think of it and dwell upon it, the thing does not seem strange to us; but foreigners cannot be made to understand that all the world, any one who chooses to put himself on horseback, let him be a lord or a tinker, should have permission to ride where he will, over enclosed fields, across growing crops, crushing down cherished fences, and treating the land as though it were his own,—as long as hounds are running; that this should be done without any payment made to the landowner, without any payment of any kind exacted from the enjoyer of the sport, that the poorest man may join in it without question asked, and that it should be carried on indifferently over land owned by men who are friends to the practice, and over that owned by its bitterest enemies;—that, in fact, the habit is so strong that the owner of the land, with all the law to back him, with his right to the soil as perfect and as exclusive as that of a lady to her drawing-room, cannot in effect save himself from an invasion of a hundred or a hundred and fifty horsemen, let him struggle to save himself as he may. Before he can be secure he must

surround his territory by fences that shall be impregnable;—and should he attempt this, he will find that he has made himself so odious in the county, that life will be a burden to him. It may be said that in a real hunting county active antagonism to hunting is out of the question. A man who cannot endure to see a crowd of horsemen on his land, must give up his land and go elsewhere to live. It is this national peculiarity which confines the practice of hunting to England, and makes it almost impossible for an Englishman to give to a foreigner an adequate idea of the practice. Americans when they are told of it do not altogether believe what they hear. We have known them to declare that if it be as is described, law in England is inoperative, and property not secure. When they are assured that in spite of such anarchy, in the teeth of that insecurity, land in a hunting county in England is not deteriorated in value,—that it will bring perhaps a higher price per acre than any other soil in the world that is to be used only for rural purposes,—they express themselves unable to understand how this should be the case among a people alive to the ordinary commercial relations of *meum and tuum*. For this reason hunting, which in England has grown up to be an English habit, remains English, and cannot travel abroad; while horse-racing, which was practised in other countries before it came to England, is now thoroughly domesticated in France, and, in an altered shape, has become a passion in America.

The chief national effect produced by hunting on the manners and habits of our rural people is a certain

open-air freedom of speech which we think has sprung from the sport, though it has spread itself into districts in which hounds are not kept. Men,—especially young men,—who feel themselves altogether cowed by the chairs and tables of those above them in worldly position, who acknowledge by their very gait and demeanour the superiority of rank and wealth when they meet rank and wealth in the streets of a town, keep up their heads and hold their own among the lanes and fields, because they have unconsciously learned that a certain country pursuit, open to all classes, has the effect of making all classes for a time equal in the country. We do not mean to imply that this operates on rustic labourers, or on any body of men who are paid by wages;—but it does operate very widely on all above that standing. The non-hunting world is apt to think that hunting is confined to country gentlemen, farmers, and rich strangers; but any one who will make himself acquainted with the business and position in life of the men whom he sees around him in an average hunting-field, will find that there are in the crowd attorneys, country bankers, doctors, apothecaries,—the profession of medicine has a special aptitude for fox-hunting,—maltsters, millers, butchers, bakers, innkeepers, auctioneers, graziers, builders, retired officers, judges home from India, barristers who take weekly holidays, stock-brokers, newspaper editors, artists, and sailors. In the neighbourhood of certain large towns in which hunting has come to be the fashion, the majority of the large fields which are found there will be made up of men

who come out of the town and who belong to it. A very few days passed in watching the work of a hunting-day, in observing and feeling the ways of the men around, in hearing what is said, in seeing what is done, and in breathing the atmosphere of the field, will produce that freemasonry of which we are speaking, and teach the tyro,—not that he is to speak to whom he likes, and as he likes; in the hunting-field as elsewhere the young and the unknown must wait to be addressed by their elders, and by those who are at home on the spot, or they will hardly avoid shipwreck,—but will teach him the tone of equality which prevails, and will imbue him unconsciously with a conviction that out among the fields aristocracy is not exclusive and overbearing as he will probably have been taught to believe that it is, when met in the streets. The Master of the hunt is indeed an aristocrat,—or rather an emperor on whose shoulders you can always see that the burden of government is weighing heavily; but beneath him there is freedom and equality for all, with special honour only for the man who is known to be specially good at some portion of the day's work which is then in hand. And this feeling of out-of-door equality has, we think, spread from the hunting-field through all the relations of country life, creating a freedom of manner and an openness of countenance, if we may so call it, which do not exist in the intercourse between man and man in cities. We are aware that we are here claiming for hunting a wider influence than our readers generally

will allow to it. The very men who have been made what they are in England by the extension of this influence do not know why it is that they are what they are. Nay ;—they do not even know that they are what they are. But they who have lived long enough to observe effects, who have lived in town and in country, and who have lived with their ears and their eyes open, will, we think, agree with us, that that riding together on terms of equality of the lord and his tenant and his tradesmen has produced in English counties a community of interests and a freedom of feeling which exist nowhere else. The butcher may still touch his hat to the lord if he be addressed, or the farmer may feel that his landlord is almost a god whom he is bound to worship ; but each will know that he is sitting on his own horse, that for the moment he is absolutely independent, that he and that other, lord though that other be, have come there on the same occupation, and that when hounds are running, he need stop for no man,—unless it be for the Master or his huntsman. Let the lord take the lead of him if the lord can ! There is no privilege here for rank to pass out first. Something may be allowed to a woman. Something may be allowed to age. But rank has no privilege ; and wealth can afford no protection. Therefore we think that of all our national pastimes, hunting is the most essentially English.

When railroads were first becoming general in the country there was much fear among many sporting men that they would destroy hunting. It was clear

that they would cut up and subdivide the country ; that they would carry noise and turmoil into remote spots, thereby banishing foxes ; that they would bring town near to town, thereby tending to make all the island one city ; and that they would be so fenced as to form insurmountable obstacles to straight riding. All these arguments have been found to be more or less true ; and yet railroads have done so much towards hunting, that they may almost be said to have created the sport anew on a wider and much more thoroughly organised footing than it ever held before. They have brought men, and with the men their money, from the towns into the country ; and the men and the money together have overcome all those difficulties which the railroads themselves have produced. Homes are now made for foxes, specially constructed for their convenience and welfare, in spots in which a minimum of disturbance may be expected ; special rides across and under railroads are provided ; hunting trains are arranged to take hunting men in and out of the large cities ; horses by the dozens may be seen walking in and out of their boxes with as much accustomed composure as the holder of a season ticket. Before railways were made hunting was confined to the dwellers in the country, or to the few rich and idle men who could give up their whole time to the pursuit. Now a man who cares for his health, and can be happy on horseback, may work at his desk four days in the week, and hunt the other two, sixty or a hundred miles from

his home, and get back to dinner with his family. Successful men of business have availed themselves so largely of this facility for getting air and exercise that hunting has been more than doubled, instead of being crippled by the railroads. Hunting as it is now practised could not exist without railroads, the use of which has been introduced into all hunting programmes, as it has into the programme of every other amusement and business of life.

We have not space here to give a history of hunting, nor would such a history have much charm for the general reader. It may be interesting to point out that hunting as now conducted is by no means an old established pastime. Fielding wrote his "Tom Jones" in the middle of the last century, about a hundred and twenty years ago, and we learn what hunting in England was then from the life of Squire Western. It was in its early infancy, and had hardly advanced beyond the practice of the country gentleman to ride about his own land with a few beagles in pursuit of a hare. Squire Western did not like to be alone, and he would take his young friend Tom with him; but we hear nothing of any field being congregated, or of any others participating in the sport except a gamekeeper. Fielding, who himself had been a Somersetshire squire before he wrote "Tom Jones," knew well the kind of life which he was describing. A squire in those days went out hunting as squires some thirty years ago went out shooting,—as some squires, we hope, still continue

to do,—without much special preparation, and simply in search of an ordinary day's amusement. Then, as many squires were often doing the same thing, it was found convenient that three or four should put their small packs together, and that one man should be the Master and the director of the hounds. Thus a wider scope was given; for we may imagine that even a Squire Western would become tired of riding about always on his own land. And soon the biggest hunting squire in those parts would become the Master, as being the richest man,—for the practice of hunting by subscription packs seems to have been of later date. And so the thing grew, and the Master of hounds in a hunting county became a man of importance and of much weight among his fellow squires.

It may be doubted whether men who now think that the cream of hunting is to be found only in a fast run of forty-five minutes, almost without a check, and with a kill in the open, would enjoy the sport as it existed even at the end of the last century. Hounds had not been trained to run with the speed which is now attained, nor had the profession of hunting produced men skilled in casting when the hounds themselves were at fault, as is done now. There was no great crowd, and the fox had a better chance when there were few or none to halloo to him. The hounds were obliged then to puzzle out their own quarry, or to give it up. Men were more patient than they now are, and the hounds were allowed to puzzle out their game. We hear more

of the length of the days spent than we do of the rapidity of the pace, and we know that neither hounds nor horses can have gone very fast during those runs of many hours of which the accounts have reached us. Tillage was less abundant than at present, and the ground less perfectly drained. The enclosures, also, were smaller, and the fences, though perhaps easier of management, were more frequent. A continued scent to which hounds could work, was therefore probably more common,—for the draining of our lands has undoubtedly injured scent, and, as a matter of course, scent will lie on grass when there can be none on ploughed lands;—but all those adjuncts to the dogs' instincts which we possess, were wanting; and we may be assured that but little was known of that sort of pace which hunting men now consider to be indispensable to their enjoyment. Few men, probably, who are in the habit of hunting,—perhaps but few even of those who ride well to hounds,—are aware how much of science and how much of other outward circumstances is added to the instinct of the dog in the ordinary hunting of the present day. No doubt the best of it, those moments of ecstatic delight in which the man on his horse is able to forget all the cares of the world, and to believe that no paradise can add anything to the joy of that half hour, those well-remembered gems in life, so few and far between, have all been owing to a hot scent carried breast-high by fleet hounds. In those moments no fictitious aid is re-

quired, and the huntsman himself may be absent and for a while not missed;—but before we have reached that acme of bliss much has been done to help the track; the fox has been stopped out of his home by human intellect; his whereabouts has been discovered probably by human knowledge; he has been watched out of the covert by human eyes; his track, in default of the hounds, has been detected by human ingenuity; and a hundred voices have been raised to assist the pack when at fault. And on ordinary days,—on days in which those creamy moments of ecstasies are only hoped for, are hardly anticipated, and do not come,—it will often be the case that the huntsman will have much more to do with hunting the fox than have the hounds. Were it not so, the fox, understanding by his instinct the imperfection of the scent, would refuse to be driven away, would hang about his wood all day, probably dying there at last,—or would else turn, and traverse, and twist about, running like a hare, and refusing to go far from his home. But the manner of his turning is within the compass of the professional skill of the instructed huntsman, and the fox owes a bitterer grudge to the guile of his human enemy than he does to the instinct of his canine foe. Before men had learned this skill, before money was forthcoming to make such skill profitable, when hunting was not a science as it is now, in those days of Squire Western of which we are speaking, the hounds had the hunting much more to themselves. We often hear sportsmen

load in their reprobation of the interference with which hounds are treated, reviling the men who holloa, and complaining of huntsmen for over-diligence in casting. "You should leave hounds alone and let them hunt," men will say. If hounds were left alone and let to hunt, such men, trained as they now have been trained to hard riding, would not often find that which they have come out to seek. We are sometimes disposed to think that the time will arrive when hunting will be practised altogether without a fox,—without any game to run,—and that the sport will be managed with a bit of rag dipped every five minutes in *asafœtida*. The growing impatience of the age will hardly endure much longer the deficient scent or the slack running of the imperfect fox.

The big squire among the little squires, who became so naturally the Master of hounds in his neighbourhood, has gradually been converted to,—or is gradually giving way to,—the manager of a subscription pack. Between the one and the other there was a very grand and a very English phase of hunting, of which, indeed, some instances, though now but few, still remain. This is the phase in which the great lord undertook the enormous expense of hunting the county in a lordly style, for the amusement and recreation of all those who lived within reach of his magnificence, and defraying the whole expense of the establishment out of his own pocket. The Duke of Beaufort's hunt, and the Berkeley hunt, are still, we believe, maintained

after this princely fashion. And there is something alluring in the idea of the great seigneur of the county thus providing for the amusement, not only of his tenants and dependants, but also for that of the whole country-side. It is a remnant of that powerful splendour which enabled the old feudal lords to carry into battle their own followers, and to keep a troop of armed cavaliers, always ready for work, under their own roofs. But life is now so changed in all its ways, that this lordly magnificence is not in accordance with the tastes of the day. Men now prefer to hunt with subscription packs, in doing which they can pay their own proportion of the expenditure, and feel that they follow their amusement without other debt to the Master of their hunt than that which is always due to zeal and success in high position. It is very well that the Queen's hounds should be maintained without payment from those who follow them. They are paid for by the country, and the non-hunting population has not as yet deputed any Joseph Hume of the day to demur to the expenditure. But in regard to hunting generally, it is found that packs maintained by subscription are those which best meet the wishes of hunting men. We remember to have ridden with a noble earl, whose hounds always went into covert punctually at eleven if he were not coming, but never stirred from the meet till twelve if he were expected. We always felt while waiting through that hour that we were too dependent on the noble earl, and that he could hardly have

enforced such a rule had he taken a subscription for maintaining the pack of hounds of which he was the Master.

Sportsmen like to feel that they are paying for their own amusement ; but yet,—and we feel ourselves constrained to make this charge as a serious accusation against a large number of hunting men,—there is very much of niggardliness in this matter. Gentlemen are invited to undertake the management of fox-hounds with a subscription,—the understanding being that the man so invited shall give his time and experience, and that the necessary expenditure shall be defrayed by the hunt in general ;—and yet it is too often the case that the amount subscribed is altogether inadequate for the purpose. There is a feeling that as the position of a Master of hounds is a place of honour, and much coveted, therefore the holder of it should be content to pay out of his own pocket a portion of the public expenditure. We have always felt that the argument was one which should never be allowed to have any weight. If gentlemen are content to hunt as dependants of a seignorial Master of hounds, in the manner which we have just described, let them find their grand seigneur, and accept the gift of his magnificence. There are men of wealth who will be willing to spend it in that fashion. But if there is to be the feeling in the hunting-field that the expense is borne by the gentlemen of the hunt generally, there should, we think, be no compromise in the matter. Let us, who hunt, be

dependent or independent ;—but let us not indulge our feeling of independence with a false boast, or comfort ourselves with an assurance that though we are contented to take our coats and waistcoats from the generous hand of a rich neighbour, we pay for our boots and breeches ourselves.

It is somewhat difficult to state with accuracy the cost of maintaining a pack of fox-hounds, because circumstances differ greatly in different counties. The distances to be travelled with one pack are much greater than those which are to be encountered in another ; the nature of the ground and of the fences require faster and stronger horses here than they do there ; and circumstances varied in other respects enable horses, hounds, and men, to be in the field more frequently in one part of England, than they can in another. The following list, however, may be taken as giving, we believe, a by no means extravagant statement of the ordinary annual expenditure of a Master of hounds, in reference to his stable and kennel. We presume that the pack is hunted four days a week, and that second horses are supplied for the huntsman always, and as occasion may require for the first whip. It will, of course, be understood that the expense of the Master's own stud and private servants are not here included, and that the items named are simply such as would be necessary if the pack were hunted by a committee of gentlemen managing a fund raised by subscription.

Wages of one huntsman and of two whips	£250
Ditto of feeder	55
Ditto of grooms, second horsemen, stable assistants, &c.	300
Servants' clothing	180
Cost of horses:—eighteen horses purchased at £60 each, kept at work for three years, and sold for £15 each. £15 each horse per annum	270
Feeding for eighteen horses	455
Saddler's bill	150
Blacksmith	60
Veterinary expenses (including medicine)	45
Horseflesh and meal for hounds (fifty-five couple)	510
Rent of stables and kennels, including rates and interest of money spent in building and fitting	80
Assessed taxes on servants, horses, and hounds	65
Coals and candles	50
Travelling expenses	80
Incidental expenses	150
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We are aware that if this statement should meet the eyes of any Master of hounds, or of gentlemen cognizant with the management of stables and kennels, exception may be taken to many of the details. Many Masters give higher prices for their horses; some will say that they do not realise such sum as that named for those that are cast; others will feel sure that their horses last them more than the three years specified; but we think that, taking one county with another, the average would be found to be nearly correct. Wages again, and all incidental expenses, will vary very much. Travelling expenses will, in some hunting counties, be much higher than we have put them. In others, the feeding of hounds will be less, because it will be

generally unnecessary to buy horse flesh. But we feel assured that we have not given an extravagant statement;—that a Master of hounds who goes out four days a week, and does so with that attendance of servants which the nature of the sport now demands, will not be able to place the sum-total of his expenses at a lower figure than that we have named. And yet it must be acknowledged that in many counties in which four days are expected from the Master, it is found quite impossible to raise such a sum by subscription as that above stated.

There are, of course, very many items in the expenditure of hunting a county which it is impossible to insert in such a list, because those in one county will bear no proportion at all to those in another;—and also because in some counties they fall almost exclusively on the Master, in others they do so to a great degree, in others to a less degree, and again in others perhaps not at all. Nothing has been set down for gamekeepers, nothing for earth-stopping, nothing for rent and planting and protection of coverts, and nothing for that terrible matter of poultry. Fees for gamekeepers are almost always paid by the Master. The stopping of earths, which is a matter much more important in some counties than in others, may, to a great degree, be left to the gentry and farmers when the gentry and farmers are zealous, and know what they are about. It is not generally expected that a Master should pay rent for coverts, but for his own credit's sake he will

often do so. He will hire shooting here and there, —not wanting the shooting, but knowing that with a minimum of shooting there will be a maximum of foxes. He ought to have nothing to do with compensation for poultry;—but old women with the sad remains of ducks' heads and turkeys' throats will naturally go to him, and he will often find himself compelled to satisfy them. We have presumed that his hounds came to him from heaven, and we have charged nothing for their cost. It is the Master's practice, no doubt, to breed them;—but some must have been bought originally, and there will be the expense of travelling for sires and bitches. In addition to all this, he will want a private secretary, and in the matter of postage he is a staunch supporter of the Queen's revenue. It has been truly said of a Master of hounds that he must always have his hand in his pocket, and always have a guinea in it.

It may be as well that we should here state also what is the ordinary personal cost of hunting to the sportsman, and we shall then see at a glance how small a proportion of that expenditure is the subscription required from him for maintaining the pack, even if he be willing to pay his fair share of the cost. And here again we must observe that the cost of a hunting establishment must vary greatly according to the circumstances in life of its owner. The country gentleman, who lives in the middle of a hunt, has few or no travelling expenses, has his own paddocks for his

horses, pays no appreciable rent for his stables, has servants in his yard at low wages, and can, from his position in the county, generally carry on the work with a lesser stud than will suit the sportsman from a distance. In the following statement we have endeavoured to give the ordinary expenditure of a man who has to supply himself with all that he requires for hunting after having taken up his residence in some hunting country. It will often be the case, perhaps more often than not, that such a man will not burden himself with a stable, but will pay so much per horse to some keeper of stables. He will find much comfort in doing so, but we do not think that in point of expense there will be much difference. Hunting is a pursuit in which the close-fisted man will carry on the war at a very much cheaper rate than he who is thoughtless in such matters. There is money to be lavished and money to be saved on every item,—from the cost of your horse to the charge for removing a shoe. But this spirit of economy, or of extravagance, will prevail with the same effect whether you keep stables of your own, or have your dealings with a stable-keeper. If you will consent to ride hired horses on all occasions, you may no doubt go over the ground at a cheaper rate than you can with your own cattle. But you must be indifferent to the feeling of ownership, which is one of the great delights of hunting; you must be prepared to ride a roarer, which is the purgatory of hunting; the horses given to you will

generally gallop and jump, but they will always be stale;—and you must be superbly indifferent to the safety of your own neck. Submitting to these drawbacks, you can, we believe, ride hired horses at least 25 per cent. cheaper than you can keep them for yourself. And the man who does this will have the advantage of hunting, and of quitting the expense of hunting, just when it suits him to do either the one or the other.

We have presumed, in preparing the following details, that the owner of the stud desires to hunt four days a week, and that he requires two horses out on each day. Not a large proportion of men who hunt wants by any means so extensive an establishment. Stables of four and three horses are, we believe, much more common than stables of seven. Comparatively few men do hunt four days a week, and of those who do, many are young enough and light enough to go through the day upon one horse. But we have found it easier to take the account of a full stable, and will simply say that the items may be divided so as to show the ordinary expenditure necessary for one, three, four, or any other number of horses. The result will be about this;—that he who rides with one horse will pay £5 a day for his sport, and that he who rides with two horses will pay £10. I have presumed that seven horses are necessary,—in order that eight may leave the stable every week. A lesser number will not suffice. Out of seven there will generally be at least

one that requires temporary retirement, and six ready for the field are needed for such work.

Servants' wages (three)	£130
Servants' clothing	50
Hunting clothes for self	15
Cost of horses :—seven in use purchased at £120 each, sold at £45, and kept at work for three years each—annual cost of £25	175
Feeding seven horses, £30 per horse*	210
Saddler's bill	30
Blacksmith's ditto	20
Veterinary expenses (including medicine)	25
Rent of stables	25
Taxes	10
Travelling expenses	100
Incidental expenses,—coals, gas, candles, brooms, brushes, buckets, &c., &c.	50
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This expenditure will thus give a man four days' hunting a week for twenty-one weeks in the year, at £10 a day. When any sportsman shall find that he has achieved this, and has ridden his eighty-four days between the beginning of November and the middle of April, we will congratulate him on the state of his own health, on that of his stud, on the ease with which he manages the ordinary business of his life,—and especially in regard to the weather.

It will be observed by those who themselves defray

* It will be observed that the feed of horses is placed at a lower figure in regard to the Master's stables than it is here fixed. The Master will have advantages,—especially as to summering horses,—which a private sportsman cannot generally obtain; and will in most cases have his own hay, vetches, &c.

the expense of a hunting establishment that nothing has been here put down as the cost of subscribing to the pack;—and yet it is admitted by nearly all that some such subscription must be paid. The amount, however, is not unfrequently so small as to add but a very slight percentage to the other expenses of the amusement. Men almost think that in hunting they should have for nothing the servants, the horses, the hounds, and the game,—as they do have for nothing the woods which they see drawn and the land over which they ride. If we may be allowed to make a suggestion in a matter so extremely delicate, we would say that hunting men should ordinarily fix their subscriptions at about 10s. for each horse they have out during the season. The man who hunts once a week with one horse would thus pay his £10 or £15,—which should be held to be sufficient;—whereas the sportsman who is enabled by his leisure and his pocket to hunt four days a week, with two horses for each day, should not subscribe less than £70 or £80 per annum.

It will be thought by some who have seen the large crowds of horsemen at many of our meets, but who have not analysed those crowds, that if the above advice of ours were taken, much more money would be subscribed than is needed to make up the sum named as the proper amount of a Master's expenses; but when the crowd has been analysed, such will not be found to be the case. Farmers should never be

allowed to pay. They give their land, and preserve the foxes, and have to sustain loss to their crops and poultry without a complaint,—as best they may. Clergymen rarely pay. It would not be fitting that bishops should know that their names are on the lists,—and then they act as chaplains to the hunt. Doctors do not pay, setting our bones for us when they are broken,—sometimes gratuitously. The small tradesmen never pay anything. The ruck of horsekeepers, innkeepers, and of horsey men generally, who ride in black coats, hunting caps, and old brown breeches, and which is to be seen with every hunt, which comes from heaven knows where, and lives heaven knows how, never pays anything. When you are buried beneath your horse in a ditch, two or three of such will generally be there to take you out,—and will understand well how to do it. Ladies pay nothing for amusing themselves,—either when hunting or elsewhere,—and we hope it may be long before any one will wish that they should do so. Boys who come home at Christmas to their ponies and mince-pies pay nothing. Old gentlemen who toddle out on their cobs if the weather be fine to see what is going on, do not often add to the fund; and then strangers to the hunt of course do not pay. It must be a small field that will give a larger percentage of paying men than one in four.

The upshot of all that we have said tends to show that hunting is a costly amusement. There can be

but a few men, we may suppose, who can afford, and will be willing to pay £800 or £900 a year for a single diversion. But it must be remembered that men may hunt,—as we have said before,—without hunting four days a week, and may hunt also without the luxury of a second horse. We have heard men say that they would rather not hunt at all than go out no oftener than twice a week,—and that to hunt as the owner of a single horse is simple misery, and the name of hunting only. We altogether disagree with these statements, and think them to be bombastic and pretentious. If we could venture to offer advice on such a matter to young beginners, we should counsel them rather to confine themselves to two days a week, believing that hunting, like any other amusement, will pall by great frequency. We will not here take advantage of our situation and preach a sermon to show that no man with a purport in his life should devote more than two days in a week to any amusement; but we will confine ourselves simply to the fact that the man who hunts twice a week,—or more thoroughly still, he who hunts but once a week,—is the sportsman who is ever the keenest. It is he who feels that the day is never long enough, and that the Master is a recreant to think of returning to the kennel before black night has thoroughly established herself. It is he who is satisfied with the run when he gets it, thinking it to be all delightful, not criticising the pace too minutely, not quarrelling with the nature of the

ground, not caring much whether the fox has gone straight or has turned, putting up with little when but little is to be had, and being a glutton for much when much comes in his way. Nothing strikes us more in the hunting-field than the fastidious indolence of men who are every day in the saddle. They will hardly take the trouble to be on the look-out for sport unless they be at some pet covert, or riding a favourite horse. If the wind blow, or the sun shine, if the land clog a little or be too dry, if it be the dog pack instead of the bitches, or the bitch pack instead of the dogs, if the wood be large, or foxes reported to be scarce, or if, by any not uncommon chance, these gentlemen shall have got out of bed on the wrong side in the morning, all hope of hunting is over for that day. A man who has only one day in the week to give to his amusement is more chary with his hopes before he relinquishes them.

And as for the man with the one horse——! But here, gentle reader, if you will permit the solecism, we will leave for a few minutes the authoritative grandiosity of the plural number, and approach you with a closer personification. He who now writes these words, possibly for your advantage, ostensibly for your delectation, was a man with one horse for some eight years of his hunting life, and he flatters himself that he saw what hunting was. He knows, at any rate, that he enjoyed hunting then as he has not enjoyed it since, and may never hope to do again. And he

feels, also, that when he sees a young man with only one day at his command, and only one horse belonging to him,—and with the proper sort of spirit within that young man's hunting gear,—he envies that young man as he never has envied any other human being on the earth.

We will now return to the plural number, and to propriety of expression. We have stated above what will be the average expenditure of a large stable. The man who wishes to begin with one horse, may divide the sum we have named by seven, and will find that he will have the amount for which he ought to carry on his amusement. He will, of course, keep his horse at a livery stable, and it will cost him about £120 per annum, including the fees to the groom, some little expenses for travelling, and the price of his boots and breeches. There will also come out of that sum, if he is careful, the necessary percentage on the original cost of his horse. For that expenditure he may have from twenty to twenty-four days' hunting in the year. If I say that he may, without additional cost, ensure good health and good society, learn good manners, and see Englishmen at their best, we who are interested in this book of British Sports and Pastimes may perhaps be thought to entertain exaggerated ideas of the benefit of hunting.

CHAPTER II.

IN our previous observations about hunting, we did not get beyond a simple explanation of the nationality of the sport and a statement of the cost of following it. We now propose to describe, if it may be within our power to do so, what it is that the hunting man enjoys, and how that enjoyment may be best secured. And we will endeavour to give to the tyro in hunting a few ideas as to what he should do, how he should conduct himself, and in what way he should endeavour to make himself happy in the hunting-field. We will add to this some few observations as to the difficulties which are ordinarily encountered in the management of a country, as we are taught by experience to think that those difficulties are very much underrated by many gentlemen who, when they are at a meet, think it to be all in the course of nature that a country well provided with foxes and fit to be ridden over should be open to them and to their horses.

That there is much to be enjoyed in hunting can hardly be doubted by any of our readers. Who knows the man or woman who has hunted and who does not wish to continue it?—or any young man who does not hunt, and does not wish that he did? And yet it would be difficult enough, even for the sportsman who has been at it for half a century, who has thought of

it, dreamed of it, and talked of it, who has longed for it in summer, and steadily practised it in winter,—it would be difficult enough even for such a one to realise to himself what it is that he enjoys. In most of the amusements to which men are prone, there is a certain standard of success by which superiority in achievement can be measured;—in so many head of game brought down by him who shoots; in so many fish, or so many pounds of fish, captured by the man who fishes; in the score at billiards or at cricket; in the points won at whist; and above all, in the events on the Turf. In each of these a man can reckon up his doings, can count his triumphs, and can tell himself, by the result of his calculations, whether to him the game is worth the candle. There can be no such reckoning up in hunting. The old-fashioned taking of the brush, which was once regarded as the winning of the Derby of the day, is altogether exploded. The huntsman takes the brush, and when a gentleman brings it home in his pocket, it is because he has, with the Master's permission, obtained it, not without a consideration, from that popular functionary. It will be known of any man who is seen frequently with the same pack, whether he rides well or ill to hounds,—and no doubt the public voice will give a pre-eminence to this man or to that of which the hero will be fully aware. But there is no scoring of runs in hunting, no counting up of achievements;—and it is not the foremost rider who is the best sportsman, except on those rare occasions on

which to ride foremost requires endurance of man and beast, as well as skill, patience, courage, and good fortune. It unfortunately happens that he who rides foremost in most runs is generally where he ought not to be. It is hardly too much to say that the Master of hounds is usually anathematising in spirit the foremost rider, and that he not unfrequently feels himself called upon to translate his spirit into words. In fact, the customary foremost rider, the man who flashes on the moment the hounds re-settle to their scent, is a pest. Though there be triumphs in hunting, those triumphs can hardly be weighed and measured, and should ever be treasured deep in the silent bosom,—without a word, without a sign, on the part of him who has earned them, to show that he knows that they are his. The successful cricketer may boast of his score. The fisherman may say how many pounds he has caught. But the hunting man should never talk of his own prowess. He may ride as jealous as he pleases; but his speech of himself should be yea, yea, and nay, nay. It is not in recounted triumphs that the pleasure of hunting consists.

But before we attempt to say what this pleasure is, we will venture to express an opinion as to what it is not. And this we will do, because we think that there is still abroad among some folk,—mothers whose sons may perhaps come to hunt, and fathers who have marriageable daughters,—an erroneous idea that hunting is fast, in the slang sense of the word, and that it co-

exists naturally with drinking, swearing, gambling, bad society, naughty women, and roaring lions. Among this class of persons, it would naturally be supposed that the man who hunted on Saturday and Monday would certainly not be seen in church on the Sunday. This, we venture to assert, is a mistake in the minds of those who, from the circumstances of their life, know nothing of the hunting-field; and it has been in a great measure produced by the false and flashy descriptions given of hunting by those who have taken upon themselves to portray our country sports. We took up the other day a volume of a modern sporting magazine, and found, bound up with it as a frontispiece, a picture of sundry men in top-boots, sitting or lying round a dinner-table,—and all of them apparently drunk. This picture of a drunken revel was intended to be characteristic of a hunting man's delights. The books, too, that we have had about hunting have too frequently described to us a set of loud ignorant men, who are always hallooing "Yoicks," and who are generally exercising the keenest of their intellects in cheating each other out of a ten-pound note in some matter of horseflesh. We remonstrate most loudly against this representation of the hunting-field, and declare that we know no place of common resort for amusement, in which a father may go in company with his son, with a fuller assurance that there will be nothing which he and his son may not see and hear and do together. There is a strong feel-

ing against a clergyman who hunts, which we think is grounded on the same mistaken idea. That neither a clergyman should hunt, nor any other man who cannot do so without appropriating time or money which should be given to other things, is clear enough. But, putting that aside, we cannot see how any amusement can be more congenial to, or better adapted for, a gentleman, the nature of whose occupation requires that he shall live in a rural district. There are those who think that a clergyman should never amuse himself in any way, and they are of course only consistent in debarring a vicar from hunting. They would debar him also from reading a novel, or from playing croquet. Our experience, having taught us to believe that clergymen require distraction as much as other men, has induced us also to think that no recreation can be better suited to them than that of the hunting-field. The difficulty consists in this,—that till the prejudice has been conquered, the prejudice itself does the injury which the hunting will not do. The same remarks, *mutatis mutandis*, apply to the hunting of ladies. The company both of the clergyman and of the lady improves the hunting field, and we cannot perceive that either ladies or clergymen are injured by what they find there. Our present object, however, is to protest that the roaring-lion element of the hunting-field does not ordinarily belong to it. It did so once, no doubt. But the roaring-lion elements of society were more common then than they are now in

many phases of life. They who commence hunting in anticipation of the joys to be found in the roaring-lion elements will find that they are mistaken.

The young man who proposes to himself to take to hunting as one of the amusements of his life, should be on his guard not to expect too much from it. He will get air and exercise, and a daily modicum of excitement. He will find society, and will generally be able to choose for himself good society, if he prefer it. He will see the country in many of its most charming aspects, and will gradually, but unconsciously, discover the secrets and the manners of rural life in England. He will learn how farmers look, and what they do, and will become acquainted with the speech, and gait, and customs of the men. For, as it should always be remembered, the best half of hunting is in the social intercourse which it gives. Though the young sportsman be a liver in cities, he will find that he is a liver also in the country,—that that great page of life is open to him, and that he will come to a knowledge of rural things and men, which he could learn in no other fashion. But he will not ordinarily be riding at the rate of twenty miles an hour,—nor yet at the rate of ten. He will not be doing those wonderful things which men are made to do in hunting plates. He will find himself neither encountering certain death by being chucked over his horse's head down a precipice half as high as the Monument; nor will he make himself immortal by jumping rivers nearly as broad

as Oxford Street. Let the tyro at once understand that the modicum of excitement is considerably less than that which the sporting pictures may have led him to expect.

And here perhaps it may be as well to say a word or two about the dangers of hunting. That men do get falls is certain. Occasionally,—though very rarely, as will be apparent to any one making a calculation as to the percentage of such accidents on the number of men who hunt,—but occasionally a man breaks a collar-bone, or a rib or two, or even an arm or a leg. Now and again we hear of some fatal accident from which a man has died. We doubt whether there is any active amusement to which English men and women are attached, of which the same thing may not be said;—unless, perhaps, it be croquet,—as to which we have never yet seen a statement of the percentage of broken ankles; but the accidents of the hunting-field, as they occur among a multitude, and with results which are manifest and immediate, become at once known, whereas others of a different nature pass without our notice. If a comparative statement could be furnished, showing the number of girls who perish in a year from the ill effects of over-exercise in a ball-room, and also of the men who are killed in the hunting-field, we do not doubt on which side would be the greater mortality. Every summer men and boys are drowned when bathing. Every winter that brings us ice brings us also similar accidents from skating. Men suffer fatally

from rowing,—as Mr. Skey has been at such pains to tell us. They blow themselves to pieces when shooting. They perish among the Alps. They are wrecked when yachting. They shoot one another at rifle practice. They become apoplectic over a whist table. And why not? It seems to us that at present there is a spirit abroad which is desirous of maintaining the manly excitement of enterprise in which some peril is to be encountered, but which demands at the same time that this should be done without any risk of injurious consequences. Let us have the excitement and pleasure of danger, but, for God's sake, no danger itself! This, at any rate, is unreasonable. A man's life is dear to himself, and dearer to his friends; but it is not so dear but that it may be advantageously risked for the sake of certain results. The amount of the risk must of course be made matter of inquiry by those who are too thoughtful to follow this or that pursuit because others follow it. We believe that in England, Ireland, and Scotland we possess above two hundred established packs of hounds;—that each pack hunts on an average three days a week, and continues to do so through twenty-five weeks of the year; and that an average of eighty horsemen are out with each pack on each occasion. We think that this will show that one million two hundred thousand is the number of times that a man and horse in the course of the year go out together on this perilous adventure. If we say that a bone is broken annually in each hunt, and a man killed

once in two years in all the hunts together, we think that we exceed the average. Our friends from this may find the amount of the risk they will run. For ourselves, we must confess that the incidents of a sedentary life strike us as being more dangerous.

* We have ventured to tell our young friend not to expect too much. The runs of which he has read, and which took the gallant men who rode them twenty miles from point to point in something under two hours, will not come in his way. Eight miles an hour is a good average hunting pace. In a prolonged run, four miles in twenty minutes, without a check, is a fast burst, and will require a good man and a good horse to keep with hounds in a country that is fenced. A run continued through two hours with no more of a check than may come from casting right and left and then on, will tire any horse that is fairly weighted, if as much as sixteen miles of ground, or if, as is much more likely, fourteen or a dozen miles, have been covered from point to point. But no hunting man should count his pleasure by distance. Time and pace should be his standards. The time he can measure for himself. Pace he cannot measure accurately without measuring distance also ;—but he will soon learn to know whether his horse is or is not required to move quickly. The cream of fox-hunting certainly consists in a quick run from a small covert. It should be straight, over a grass country strongly fenced, with a scent that shall enable the hounds to work on without

assistance from the huntsman, in which the fox shall seek protection in no large wood, and which shall be brought to a finish by "a kill" in the open before the horses are tired, and with no necessity for cold-hunting at the close. From forty-five minutes to an hour is quite as much as is needed in time for the best run that can be ridden; and the forty-five minutes is generally much better than the hour.

We will now endeavour to explain the points of merit which we have named. The small covert is best,—as regards the individual run,—because the fox must break from it without being half-beaten by the hounds before he consents to leave its protection. And it is best again because the man who really means to ride will rarely fail of being able to get away from it with the hounds. From a large wood no horseman can be sure of a good start unless he rides through and through with the hounds as they hunt their fox within it. When he has done this it will not only be the fox that is half-beaten before the game begins. And the run should be straight. We fear we must acknowledge that this love for a straight line, which is the passion implanted more strongly than any other in the bosom of the hard-riding fox-hunter, does not find its spring in neighbourly love or in general philanthropy. Looking on the sport as an outsider, one might be inclined to say that a fox running in a circle would be of all foxes the most convenient. The riders would then generally be brought nearer to their homes, the difficulties would

be lessened by the curves, and they who did not begin with a good prospect would find things mending with them at every turn. But then, O my friend, things would mend not only with you, but with others also. And it may be that with you things will require no mending. You are away, at the side of the pack, with all done for you that Fortune and a quick look-out could do. Let the hounds go as straight as they will, they cannot rob you of your place. But a check, a curve to the right or to the left, any recreant touch of fear in the quarry's bosom tempting him to seek his old haunts, will in two brace of minutes bring down upon you the ruck of your dear friends which you have already had the extreme pleasure of leaving behind your back. To shake your friends off and get away from them, will soon come to be your keenest delight in hunting. To be there, in the proper place alongside of the hounds, is very sweet; but to know that others are not there is sweeter. To find that the beloved one of your heart has gradually fallen away from you and dropped behind, impeded probably by the depth of the ploughed land, or in difficulties with a distorted ditch, or still measuring with his eyes some brook which you have cleared, perhaps because you could not hold your own horse;—this is delightful. To feel this is to feel the true joy of riding to hounds. But all this is lost if that recreant vermin should lose his heart and resolve to return to his own country. If any hard riding man were to tell us that he disregarded the

straight running of a fox, we should think him the most philanthropical of men,—if we believed him.

And the run should be over a grass country, strongly fenced. As to the advantages of grass it will be unnecessary to say much. For all hunting purposes it is naturally better than ploughed land. Scent will lie on grass easily, when the upturned soil cannot hold it for a moment. And horses can live on grass and go gaily, who would die away from fatigue if called on to gallop over a ploughed field. Why the strong fences should also be desirable, it may be more difficult to explain. Every hunting man who knows what he is about, will avoid a jump whenever he can. A man who goes over a gate which can be opened does not know what he is about. But yet hunting without leaping would be very dull work;—and although each fence as it comes in the way is recognised as an enemy, as a thing which for the moment is detestable, yet, when it has been passed successfully, it becomes “a thing of beauty and a joy for ever.” And then again, that leaving behind of your friends, which soon becomes the strong passion of the hunting man’s heart, is much assisted by strong impediments,—provided always that the impediments be not too strong for yourself also.

We have asked, too, for a strong scent,—a scent so strong that the huntsman should not be called upon to help his hounds. Our reader will understand that we are now speaking of the delights of riding to hounds

rather than of those of seeing hounds hunt. It is our opinion that in a fast run, such as that of which we are speaking, few men observe the hunting of the hounds, let the hounds be ever so near to them. The rider is conscious of the contiguity which is so desirable in his eyes, and finds that he has enough to do to keep his place. And the hounds stream on, as though they were running to a view. There is no effort at hunting on their part, and the real work of maintaining the exact track of the fox is probably done by two or three of the leading dogs. A colder scent and slower work will no doubt display more of the hunting capacity of the pack;—and to an experienced sportsman the ingenuity of a huntsman's casting as he helps his pack will be an additional pleasure. In Squire Western's time this probably was the great delight of hunting. But now the sporting world has reached something, if not better in hunting, at any rate very different; and we have ventured to write these remarks with the understanding that of all virtues on the hunting-field the virtue of pace is to be first considered, and to be regarded as the most desirable.

We have asked that there shall come no large wood in the way of our beloved victim. A fox that has already shown us his mettle by running straight and freely, will often pass through even a large covert without hanging in it. Even if he tries an earth and finds it stopped, he goes on again for some still distant bourne with which he is acquainted. But neverthe-

less, the wood is a great impediment to the rider, and creates doubts in his mind which for the moment turn all his pleasure to a pain. He has many things to resolve in his mind. Which way does the wind blow?—for the fox will probably turn from the covert down the wind. And shall he ride the wood?—or shall he leave it to his right?—or shall he leave it to his left? He should know its size, its shape, and all its bearings, before he can answer these questions with any certainty of judgment. Once more, he must call on Fortune to assist him; and if the jade be false to him he may find even now, when he has done so much, that he has done nothing.

And then we have demanded “a kill” in the open, before the horses are tired, and with no necessity for cold-hunting at the close. The reader must understand that to kill his fox is the grand object of the Master; it is the grand object also of the huntsman, of his assistants, and of the hounds. Unless this be done with fair average frequency, the hounds will become useless, the farmers discontented, the old women furious, and hunting would, in fact, be impracticable. The hunted fox should, if possible, be killed. No scarcity of game should stand in the way of this law; and there should be no protection other than that conferred on all females who, when condemned to death, can show that their position is one of peculiar interest. The vixen heavy with cub should be spared,—and none others. But the “kill in the open,” for

those who have lived and kept their place through the heat and turmoil of the chase, is a worthy reward of all their efforts. They see it, and none others do see it. They are saved from that poignant sense of deep injustice which fills the mind of the riding man with indignation when the tail of the hunt comes up to some covert in which the poor animal is being slowly pressed to his death, and every man there is equal with his fellow! He who has been in the lanes for the last half-hour is to be seen bustling round the covert, full of animation, as if he knew all about it! And he will come and discourse with you on the run, treating you perhaps as an equal, or, by the mass, perhaps as his inferior! He will tell you of what he has seen, give you his remarks on the "goodness of the thing," and nearly choke you with your own suppressed wrath;—for you will not choose to remind him that the run was really over six minutes before he came upon the scene. A "kill in the open" generally saves the successful men of the day from this misery. We have known a man,—nay, we do know a man,—great enough to be able to swear that he was there,—one out of five or six of whom each one knows all the others well,—while at the moment he was two miles off, trotting along with the old gentlemen and the young ladies; who will do so from day to day, till he really produces a semblance of belief in the minds of the uninitiated! But such a hero as that is not to be found in every hunt.

Such is the cream of hunting; but he who desires to know what pleasure hunting will really give him, should not expect delights such as these very frequently. There may be three or four such runs in a season; the man who hunts twice a week may have the chance of seeing two of them; and he will be a lucky man if, out of those two, he can live through one to the end. It is a joy that he will remember through all his days,—to which his memory will cling with a constancy which it will evince for but few other events of his life. But it is not to be thought, because such runs as these are few and far between, that therefore hunting in general is vapid and unsatisfactory. Men will grumble and growl; and they who come out oftenest will grumble and growl the most. We ventured in our former remarks to say of such men that they have an aptitude for getting out of bed on the wrong side. But there they are in spite of their grumbling,—and it is to be presumed that they would not come unless they were pleased. It is very joyous to gallop about a wood;—more joyous when the gallop is out of the wood. As we have said before, the society is much. And though that jealousy of riding of which we have spoken, and which, whether it be bad or good, is ineradicable from the hunting-field,—though that feeling does exist and have strong sway, one does not always wish to be cutting down one's neighbour, and leaving one's friend in a ditch. There is, moreover, the real working of

the hounds to be observed, which, as we have attempted to explain above, the sportsman can hardly watch, can hardly indeed see, when a whole pack is streaming along, in one continuous line, racing with each other as he is racing with that man on the other side of him.

That there are some miseries in hunting, is true enough. A blank day,—that is, a day without any fox at all,—is an unpleasant incident. It does not often happen in a well-managed country, but such things are known. One is apt to think, when so great a catastrophe has occurred, with something of regret of the five pound which is being expended so ignominiously, and of all that might have been done with it. There is a shame attached to the utter failure as one drags oneself miserably from covert to covert in the gloom of the coming evening, which is distressing enough. And men become sombre, silent, and cross. They snarl and snap, and don't offer each other cigars. And the Master himself becomes a picture of misery that would melt a heart of stone. We know no more degrading position than that of a Master of hounds when he is driven to own that the day is blank. We believe that there have been Masters who, in thinly populated countries, have gone about provided with an animal in a bag, so that at last this absolute ignominy may seem to be avoided. And we have known of certain drains and holes, not many miles from the kennel, from which foxes would be bolted at three

o'clock with a precision which certainly looked like foreknowledge. But, in truth, a blank is so terrible a misfortune that almost anything done to avoid it may be pardoned. We ourselves have often thought that a good drag home in the evening would on such occasions be very exhilarating to the spirits. And the weather is a frequent source of trouble. A hard lasting frost may be endured with equanimity. It is one of those misfortunes to which humanity is subject, but which, though very onerous, are of such certain occurrence, that humanity learns to endure them with patience. And then there is no tormenting doubt with a hard frost. The hunting man runs up to town, or puts his things in order about his house and farm, and consoles himself with thinking that his horses wanted rest. But those mornings which we may best describe as being on the balance, touch-and-go mornings, in which the sportsman does not know whether he will be wiser to go to the meet, or wiser to stay at home, are very bad. If he be energetic he goes, and meets five other energetic men, equally wretched with himself, and a servant from the Master, who tells him that the ground about the kennel is so hard that three men with a pickaxe can't touch it. If he be slack in his tendencies he lays in bed, and hears, the next time he is out, that at one o'clock the hounds went beautifully, and that they had on that day "the run of the season." And there are other sorrows of a heavy kind coming from the weather. A high wind is very

injurious to hunting, and makes riding to hounds almost impossible. A storm at night will cause the foxes to be stopped in their holes,—for a fox is much opposed to going abroad in bad weather. And bright sunshine is bad for scent. And hard rain is very uncomfortable. And muggy warm weather is not serviceable. The old song which proclaims the glories of a southerly wind and a cloudy sky was composed by some one who knew but little of hunting. It must be confessed that in hunting the weather is apt to be troublesome.

And there is the misery, fast increasing in these days, which comes from the too great number of men who hunt. With a field exceedingly numerous it is difficult to get a fox to break. It is the nature of the animal to be more afraid of men than he is even of hounds, and he will prefer to return to the covert, which is full of his canine enemies, to threading his way among horsemen. It becomes, therefore, incumbent on the field to leave as much space as possible clear round the covert, so that the fox may have room to start. The men should cluster together in one spot, and with a small number such clustering is to be managed. But when there are out from 200 to 300 horsemen, it is almost impossible to save a covert from being surrounded. Then there is apt to be an unhappy spirit abroad, and ill-natured things are spoken. The Master threatens to take the hounds home, energetic young men ride about beseeching and

praying ;—and at last the fox is ignominiously hunted to death within his own domain.

There are miseries in hunting, we admit,—attributable no doubt originally to Adam's fall and the imperfect nature of men.

We have undertaken to give some hints to the tyro in hunting, and in the efforts which we are about to make towards doing so we trust that our experienced readers will understand that we are not venturing to offer counsel to them. There is no matter in which men are more prone to think that their experience is better than that of others than they are in the matter of hunting. But the young man who only intends to hunt, will forgive us if we offer to him a few hints as the results of a long apprenticeship. Perhaps the first question to be touched is that of the distance to be overcome in getting to the meet. And here of course considerations of expense will present themselves. We do not ourselves love the rail either for our horses or for our own persons; but when the distance is very long it must be used. The objection in our mind is not in the morning,—but in the evening. It is a great nuisance to have to catch a train;—and almost a greater nuisance to wait for one. We do not think that horses in general suffer from such travelling, if they be properly clothed. Horse-sheets should always be brought as a matter of strictest necessity. It will occasionally become expedient to send horses back by train when the need to do so has not been expected,

and no provision has been made. In such an emergency clothing should be bought, begged, or borrowed. There is another mode of obtaining it, open to some objection; but there are those who think even that preferable to sending a horse naked into a horse-box after a day's work. For shorter distances young men ride to meet, and older men go on wheels. We are now among the older men; but we used to delight in a fast hack,—thinking the sharp morning trot to be one of the delights of the day. Our rule in life has been to send horses on over night when the distance to the meet exceeds fifteen miles, and to let them go on the same morning for any lesser amount of travelling. Horses should travel to meet at about five miles an hour; and a hunting man can generally take his own horse as well as a groom can do so, if he have patience for the slow pace. He must also have the greater patience necessary for bringing him home;—but, in truth, the bringing of your horse home must usually be your own work. You may keep your hack out every day you hunt, and yet miss to use him two times out of three. If your distance home be usually very great it will be comparatively easy for you to find your supplementary conveyance;—as experience and a map will prove. In returning home it should be remembered that the horse loses as well as gains by a very slow pace. It is a great object to you that he should be in his stable and get his food as early as possible. You have probably brought your sandwiches

and sherry with you. He has not. And yet, from his nature, he requires more frequent feeding than you do. Always get gruel for your horse on the first opportunity after the hunting is done. And if your horse have to stand in a stable waiting for a train, throw him a handful of corn,—a handful, and then another. He will eat that when he will not touch a full feed.

Always go to the meet ;—to the meet and not to the covert, to be first drawn. It may be known to you that you may save a mile or two, and perhaps half an hour in the morning, by sloping away to some wood-side. But the meet is announced for the convenience of the hunt in general, and you cannot go to the covert without doing an injury. Such tricks cause men to be hated,—justly ; and you should remember that a Master has it always in his power to set your knowledge at defiance. He may change his mind as to the priority of that covert,—and will be very apt to do so if he finds that men act selfishly towards him.

There is great doubt in the minds of hunting men as to what is best to be done when an ordinary covert is being drawn. When the hounds are put into a small gorse of seven or eight acres, or into twenty acres of wood, there need be no doubt ;—you should stand where others stand, and if you keep your eyes open and your ears, there is little doubt but that you will get away quite as near to the hounds as is desirable. The difficulty applies to large coverts,—to woods, as

to which it is open to you either to ride to the hounds as they are looking for their game and hunting it when found, or otherwise to remain stationary, saving your horse till you have learned that the fox is away. If you be a heavy man, with one horse, the waiting will certainly be your wisest decision. The question, however, will probably be decided by your temperament. It is not every man who can wait. And there is infinite difficulty as to the spot at which you should station yourself. There is a theory that foxes break down wind,—so as to run the way the wind is blowing. They thus decrease the power of the hound to catch the rising scent; and their instinct probably tells them that this is so. But the theory, we think, is not to be trusted. We have found that foxes break with equal good-will either up or down wind. After awhile, the instinct of which we have spoken is brought to bear, and the fox running up wind will turn and run down wind. He will find that his pursuers have an advantage from the wind, and will change his point. At one period of the year,—in the first weeks of February,—a dog-fox, found away from his own ground, will run home, let the wind blow which way it will. If, at last, you elect to be stationary, you can only stand where others stand who know what they are about better than you do. Move as they move, and learn to hunt with your ears. It is a great thing to know which way the hounds are moving in covert from the notes of the huntsman's horn and the tones of

his voice,—a great thing to know which way hounds are running from the tones of their voices. But this has to come of experience. For awhile the novice must go as others lead him, and must put his trust in others who have that knowledge which he lacks. Let him be careful not to trust in those who lack it themselves. There are men who have been hunting all their lives, and yet cannot get out of a field without some one to show them the way.

It is quite true that very much depends on getting away well with hounds,—that, indeed, as regards the best runs which are seen, all depends upon it. It occurs not unfrequently,—more often perhaps than not,—that hounds will check and throw up their noses and be at fault within the first half-mile out of covert, and that time will thus be given to those who have been unfortunate at first. But this arises from indifferent scent, and it will follow as a natural though not inevitable consequence, that the pace will be moderate throughout, and that no violence of performance will be needed on the part of the horsemen. The sport may be very good, but you, my tyro, whom I am specially addressing, will have no opportunity of distinguishing yourself. But we will suppose a morning on which the scent lies, the fox breaks gallantly and strongly, and the hounds come out after him with a burst, giving him almost no start of them at all. A fox hardly wants a start, for he can always beat the hounds for awhile. A fresh fox will get away from a

pack of hounds though he be in the very midst of them. On such an occasion as this it is everything to get well away; and that can only be secured by great watchfulness of eye and ear, and by constant attention to the thing that you are doing. It will seem to you to be the merest chance in the world; and yet, if you will observe a set of men hunting together for a season, you will find some six or seven who almost invariably are successful in getting away. These are the men who really think of the business in hand, and who in truth like to ride to hounds.

On this occasion you shall be among those who are fortunate. You shall have seen the fox break. Remember always that in this interesting moment it is your first duty to restrain yourself. Hold your tongue—and your horse. Some hallooing will be necessary, but there will be those there who know when and how to halloo. A cheer uttered too soon will bring the quarry back again. You will esteem us vain and futile if we tell you, now, in cold blood, not to ride on hard before the hounds; but when the time comes you will find yourself so tempted to do so that there are ten chances to one that you will be a sinner. You will forget the hounds in your excitement; and there will be veteran sinners,—cunning men, anxious to steal a march, who will lead you astray. You will sin certainly; but, when you have sinned, repent, and try to sin no more. But in the second field, having received some slightly sarcastic word of rebuke from the

huntsman which you will take in good part, you will find yourself in your proper place behind the hounds, —and it will be well that you should be half a field on one side of them. Strive that they shall never be out of one field before you are into it. Do that, and you will be near enough. Fail to do so, and you cannot see them hunt. No man can do this always. The irregularity of the land, the difficulty of fences, and the uncertain running of the fox prevent it; but it should be your object in your riding to go as near to this as may be possible. In the doing it or the not doing it lies all the difference between riding to hounds and riding to men. Riding to men is a very pretty amusement, and many who hunt all their lives never get beyond it. You will soon perceive that not one man in ten of those who are out ever see the work of the hounds when they are running fast. But you will perceive also from the conversation of men that it is considered desirable to see the hounds hunt. My heroic friend of whom I have spoken will know every corner of a field in which the hounds “threw up,”—or, at least, he will know that there are but few able to contradict his assertion.

But you will soon find,—you, a neophyte,—that in the bustle and the hurry of the run, you have no time or mind left for anything but to sit on your horse, look after your fences, and take what care you can that that special man with a red coat and black boots and little bay horse does not get more ahead of you than

you can help. You will soon find arising in your heart a most unchristian hatred for that man;—and yet he will be of the greatest service to you. You will follow him over one fence after another; and should he fall, or the little bay horse be beaten in a heavy plough, or should he cease to be before your eyes from any cause that you will not understand, you will perceive that you have lost your guide. But you will still go on. You will have forgotten in your excitement all the lessons taught to you, as to seeing your way over the second fence from each field in which you are riding, as to watching the foremost hounds, as to going slow at timber and fast at water, as to a judicious trot on the plough, and the rest of it. For pace you will trust to your spurs; for management of the fences you will trust to your horse; for the course to be taken you will still follow some other guide whom you will unconsciously have chosen. And you will find yourself wishing that the gallant fox was not quite so gallant, and that he would succumb to the ardour of the hounds. It is not till the run is done and over that you will know how sweet and how glorious it was.

We are told that the great happiness of life is to have lived well and to have done with it. There is in the idea of this theory the necessity of a standing ground outside the world which looms to us cold and uncertain. But there is no doubt about the joy of having ridden well to hounds. To have done the

thing well and then to say never a word about it, requires a certain conjunction of physical and mental attributes which almost ennoble a man. In speaking of the run which you have ridden well, the first personal pronoun should never be brought into use. No temptation should elicit from you an assertion that you have been nearer to hounds than others. Jealousy in riding is unavoidable. We will not even say that it is not commendable. But a triumphant rider is an odious man. And there is this also to be said of such a one;—that he who sins in boasting, will be presumed also to sin in lying.

Many other hints as to riding might be given to the beginner, were it not that we should become tedious by the overlength of our lesson. He will hear much of going straight; and we ourselves have said something of the charm of a straight-running fox. But that term of riding straight must be taken with many grains of salt. No man can ride really straight, or should attempt it. Open gates are preferable to high fences, even though some slight loss of ground should occur. Gaps are better than posts and rails. In some countries it is essential to know something of the nature of the landing on to which you are to jump. Roads should be used where the hunting of the hounds can be seen from them;—and are used very frequently when the hunting of the hounds cannot be seen at all. Crushing and rushing, bustling and hustling, cannot be avoided by energetic men whose bosoms are filled

by an uncontrollable anxiety to be among the first; but they should be avoided as much as possible as acknowledged sins. Such a mode of riding is in bad taste; and the sinner who sins and knows that he will sin again, should at least be aware that he is a sinner, and not glory in his defects. To abuse no one, and to take abuse easily,—if it be not of a nature beyond bearing,—should be the resolve of every young hunting man; and we may almost say of every elder also. What though a man should cross you at a fence?—what though he knock you over into a ditch?—what though he ride over you; which certainly is disagreeable? It is of the nature of the sport that it should be rough; and in all collisions each man thinks that the other is in fault. And faults of this nature in the hunting-field are so unavoidable, so unintentional, so certainly the result either of accident or of ignorance, that there is rarely room for anger. But there are many who cannot restrain themselves from sharp words. Such sharp words mean nothing, and are not worthy of a retort. This, however, may be a place proper for warning all young riders not to take their fences too near to those whom they are following. Of all dangers in the hunting-field the worst is that which comes from this offence. No man should allow his horse to follow another at a fence, till his leader is altogether clear from the impediment.

And now in our last lines we will say a word or two about the difficulties of the hunting-field, in order that

they who have gone along with us so far may know that difficulties do exist, and that some allowance should be made for them. We shall not here speak of questions of expense, having attended to that subject in our former chapter. Although hunting is as free to men nearly as the air that they breathe, they will find in most countries a class of farmers and landowners who object to have horses on their land. They will soon hear it asserted that these objectors are detestable fellows,—and that their objections are frivolous, if not wicked. A friend told us the other day that a man who was determined not to have foxes about his place must be a low Radical. There are men even in England, who do not care for hunting; and it will seem as reasonable to them to declare that a man who wishes to keep his drawing-room to himself must be a stupid Tory. Foxes about hen-roosts are not advantageous; nor do they assist in the preservation of pheasants. A couple of hundred of horsemen about a park, or even about a farm, do not make things look prettier than they were. Certain crops, such as beans and clover, are certainly injured by hunting; and no one can suppose that fences or gates are preserved by the manner in which the sport is conducted. A hunting man has no more legal right to trespass than another, though practice enables him to do so without risk of penalty to himself. All this should be remembered by those who are anxious for the preservation of foxes, and especially by those who do not

themselves furnish land to be ridden over, or coverts to be drawn. Some indulgence should be shown to the feelings of non-hunting men. If this be not done, it may be possible that the objections of the non-hunting men may become stronger than the custom in favour of hunting which still prevails.

And we think that many sportsmen are strongly disposed to expect that more shall be done for them by the Master, and his servants, and by the hunting capacities of the country, than is in truth practicable. We believe that good runs, and certainly that fast runs, are more frequent now than ever they have been since hunting became a sport in England. There is no means of testing accurately the truth of this opinion, and it is one very opposite to the complaints which generally meet our ears in the hunting-field. Men will be frequently heard to declare that hunting now is not what it used to be,—that foxes are scarce,—that they won't run,—that they never go straight,—and that the sport has become so bad, that it is hardly worth a man's while to go out to seek it. This, perhaps, is simply human nature, and is no worse than is said of all amusements and all occupations. Farmers are always being ruined. Trade is always dull. Nobody is ever thriving according to his own account. Nothing is so bad as the theatres. Dinner parties are so dull that it is a folly to go to them. Young men are detestable; and young ladies are so fast, furious, and forward, that they have to be avoided like fire-

brands. As everything at the present day is bad, why should not hunting be bad also? But not the less do men come out hunting. Arguing in this way, we might pass over the complaints made, were it not that they are effective in driving Masters and huntsmen to attempting more than can actually be done. A huntsman will often find himself driven to lift his hounds almost for miles, to guess the run of a fox, and even to make runs when he has no fox before him,—because so much is demanded from him. If runs manufactured after that fashion will suffice, so be it. We can manufacture them with a drag, so long as the farmers will allow us to ride over their lands on those terms. But if we do this, we shall lose the sport of fox-hunting. Our advice, therefore, to all sportsmen is this;—that they should not expect too much for their day,—and that they should not get out of bed on the wrong side.

ON SHOOTING.

THE day which introduces these pages to the reader's eye will also drop the curtain upon the English shooting season of 1867—68. From the second day of February until the twelfth day of the following August, the feathered game of these islands will regain and enjoy unconscious immunity from those deadly missiles, which the breech-loaders of Purday and his multitudinous professional brethren drive with such accuracy and force through the spangled plumage of grouse, pheasant, and partridge. It seems, therefore, no inappropriate moment to canvass the effects produced by the almost universal abandonment among British sportsmen of guns loaded at the muzzle, and the adoption in their stead of guns loaded at the breech. This substitution of weapons has been, as our sporting readers are well aware, a slow and gradual process. Great and now acknowledged as is the superiority of the breech-loader over the muzzle-loader, it was found to be no easy matter to induce middle-aged and elderly sportsmen among us to abandon in a moment the

detonating or percussion system with which the fame of Osbaldeston, Captain Ross, George Anson, Lord Huntingfield, and many other celebrated marksmen, both dead and living, is inseparably identified. No sudden disclosure of the inferiority of their weapon flashed conviction upon the minds of British sportsmen, and taught them, as the battle of Sadowa taught soldiers all over the world, that percussion-caps and muzzle-loaders were no less a thing of the past than flint and steel, or bows and arrows. But even if the merits of the breech-loader had been far more conspicuously manifest and incontrovertible than they are, nothing is more illustrative of the characteristic conservatism of our own upper classes than the tenacity with which they cling to the ancestral fashion of field-sports and country amusements which has been handed down to them from their grandsires. Nothing can now seem more improbable to us than that the percussion gun should have had any difficulty in uprooting and displacing the flint gun. And yet it would be easy to prove, from publications which appeared from forty-five to fifty years ago, that many of the best gunmakers and crack shots of that day continued for years to maintain the superiority of the flint gun over the detonator, and that Colonel Hawker, the most successful and authoritative writer upon guns and shooting that Great Britain has hitherto produced, seems to have retained a sneaking preference for flint and steel up to his dying day.

In connection with our investigation of the effects upon the diversified interests of shooting which are likely to result from the introduction of the breech-loader, we propose briefly to review the general condition and prospects of this popular English pastime. The pursuit and destruction of wild animals, whether feathered and biped, or furry and quadruped, has been in fashion among mankind from the earliest recorded times. But it has been reserved for Englishmen, since the introduction of fire-arms, to apply to a pursuit, which by every other nation, ancient and modern, has always been described under the generic name of "hunting," the narrower and more specific title of "Shooting." When Nimrod is described in the Book of Genesis as "a mighty hunter before the Lord," it is not to be presumed that he was in the habit of mounting his horse and careering across the hills and valleys of the land of Canaan in pursuit of deer, or wild boar, or any other quadruped. What may have been the game, and what the snares, or traps, or pitfalls, or projectiles by which its destruction was compassed in Asia some 2,200 years before the birth of our Lord, we must leave to Dr. William Smith, or to some scriptural "Old Shekarry," to investigate and determine. Again, when Xenophon enters into an elaborate description of hunting as it existed in his day, we must dismiss from our minds, as we read him, all recollection of the restricted signification which the word bears in these islands and among ourselves. The elevation of fox-

hunting among us into a favourite and, as some maintain, into our most characteristic national pastime, has deprived English shooters of the right to call themselves hunters. For, when an Englishman announces that he is going out hunting, the words convey no other notion than that he is about to mount his horse and to repair to a meet of some fox-hounds which is to be held in his vicinity. But let an American, in Iowa, or Wisconsin, or Minnesota, announce that he is going out hunting, and the first question addressed to him will be whether he intends to pursue bear or deer, prairie-chicken or wild-fowl.

It has always appeared to us that this divorce between hunting and shooting has been very prejudicial to the true interests of the latter pursuit. No one can deny that the pride which manly and genuine sportsmen feel in their shooting achievements is enhanced in proportion as the game pursued is assimilated in its nature to the class of animals described by lawyers as *feræ naturæ*. The unlaborious pheasants are dependent for their existence upon artificial supplies of daily food, and the more they are made to approximate to the habits and nature of barn-yard fowls, the more rapidly will all pride and satisfaction in the numbers slaughtered be felt to diminish. The pheasant is, after all, an exotic or foreigner imported from China or Asia Minor to England by a factitious outlay of money, of which still more must be expended to keep him alive. Without carrying our prejudices

against pheasant-shooting to a fanciful extent, it must, we think, be conceded that thorough sportsmen take, for the most part, greater pride and pleasure in shooting partridges or grouse than in shooting pheasants. For, although upon a well-preserved manor or moor the partridges and grouse are accustomed to have grain, or damaged raisins, or some other kind of food served out to them periodically by the keeper's hand, there is in both these birds an inherent wildness which is indestructible, and forbids their domestication or reduction to such a state of tameness as is commonly found to exist among pheasants reared at Holkham, or Bradgate, or in other well-stocked English coverts. No one who has watched an experienced gamekeeper advancing into a covert of which he has long been the custodian, and spreading the shocks of grain along the ground for his pheasants to eat, can hope to persuade himself much longer that the bright-plumed Chinese or Asiatic fowl upon which he is about to exercise his skill as a marksman differs materially in nature from the Shanghai roosters which he has left behind him in the neighbouring farmyard. But let a stranger stand near to the spot on which partridges or grouse are habitually fed, and he will have occasion to observe that the natural shyness of the bird will forbid his feeding or drawing near to the ground upon which the encroacher stands.

That which has always been regarded as the great charm of shooting in the eyes of Mr. Daniel, the author of "Rural Sports," and of other old-fashioned sports-

men of his date and class, has been its approximation to hunting in this latter word's widest sense—that is to say, to the pursuit of wild birds and quadrupeds with a view to their destruction. It is impossible to read Mr. Daniel's pleasant volumes, or Colonel Hawker's "Instructions to Young Sportsmen," without discerning the attractions which sea-coast wild-fowl shooting possessed for both above all other kinds of sport. It may be safely asserted that no boy with any taste for field-sports ever saw Colonel Hawker's well-known picture, entitled "Commencement of a Cripple-Chase, after firing Two Pounds of Shot into a Skein of Brent Goose, and Two Wild Swans," without retaining a lively recollection of it until his dying hour. So natural is the taste for wild and adventurous shooting, which is innate in every man who is worthy of the name of man, and which it takes a long course of luxury, and of battue-shooting, and of hot luncheons among the brown fern, to finally eradicate! But there is no class of sportsmen in whom contempt and distaste for English battue-shooting are more sure to be found than in those who have tasted the delights of the wild shooting which Hindostan, and Asia Minor, and North America, and many other regions of the world, furnish in abundance. It is difficult for any one who has long been dependent upon his gun or rifle in a wild country for his daily supply of food, to understand what pleasure or satisfaction there can be in entering a covert plentifully stocked with birds and animals, all of them more

or less tame, and in shooting down we know not how many hundred head of hares, pheasants, and rabbits, within three or four hours. "We have always looked upon these exhibitions with pain, and we conceive them to be totally opposed in principle to the real spirit of English sports. We never could comprehend a man's feelings in killing a quantity of game under such circumstances. Sport it certainly is not." These are the words of as genuine a sportsman as ever pulled trigger. Unfashionable as it may be to promulgate one word in deprecation of the taste for battue-shooting now growing up among young Englishmen of rank, we must confess that we never read the account of a wonderful day's shooting in Lord Stamford's, or any other nobleman's coverts, without regarding such records with pain and aversion. The creative and sustaining principle of genuine sport is to be found in the laborious uncertainty of rambling for hours over forest and moorland without knowing what wild bird or animal may rise or spring up before us. A woodcock or snipe, three or four brace of partridges or pheasants, half a dozen hares or rabbits, a couple of teal or wild-duck, picked up in a wild walk of this kind, outweigh, in our estimation, the value of a hundred pheasants or hares massacred in a battue. It is singular to observe how outrageously the French, when plagiarising, as is now their wont, our English pastimes, parody the worst features of their adopted sport. We have never read such a burlesque of an

English battue as the account of the day's shooting given in November, 1867, by the Emperor Napoleon to the Emperor of Austria in the woods of Compiègne and Pierrefond. At eleven o'clock nineteen shooters arrived at the scene of action in a series of char-à-banc. The Austrians were dressed in violet velvet, with precious stones for buttons. The nineteen shooters were divided into two parties,—the Emperor's party consisting of ten, and the other party of nine individuals. The beaters and loaders amounted in number to two hundred and fifty. The Emperor of Austria was armed with ten muzzle-loaders, which were loaded by six keepers, who came expressly from Vienna for the purpose. The Emperor Napoleon shot, as usual, with muzzle-loaders. Shooting commenced at easy eleven, and left off at sharp four. Within this time a total of 3,829 head were massacred, whereof 600 head fell before the Emperor of Austria's, and 402 head before the Emperor Napoleon's, guns. Out of the sum total killed, 1,978 were pheasants. Allowing time for lunch and other refreshments, it will be seen that in every sixty seconds rather more than fifteen head of game must have fallen. Shades of Daniel and Hawker! What would ye have said, when in the flesh, to such a day's shooting as this!

It is believed, however, by some, that inasmuch as it is absurd to call pheasants "*feræ naturæ*," and inasmuch as they have to be watched, fed, and prevented from straying at a heavy cost of money, some justifica-

tion of the maintenance of the severe Game Laws which still exist among us is herein to be found. The current of that which professes to be the most advanced and enlightened public opinion of the day sets strongly at present against the Game Laws, as being the most objectionable surviving remembrancers of feudal institutions which are still to be found in the midst of us. We shall not here attempt to argue out so vexed and wide-reaching a question as the advisability of retaining or modifying our existing Game Laws. Happily it is now generally conceded by the owners of land that rabbits are vermin, nor would there be much resistance among country gentlemen if a law similar to that which has recently been passed in France, and which declares them to be vermin, were to be promulgated in England. No one can pretend that the most scientific and expensive style of farming, such, for instance, as that which prevails in the Carse of Gowrie, is compatible with the existence of rabbits viewed as game, and subject only to be destroyed at the option or caprice of the landlord and his keepers. Nor can it be denied that if a landlord insists upon having a very large show of hares, he must consent to allow to the farmers, upon whose crops they feed, some concession or compensation in the form of reduction of rent, or of right to shoot or course. But as regards the Game Laws which protect flying game, there is not much to be said against them; nor do we think that poachers would, in the main, be gainers if Game Laws were

abolished, and if it were enacted that to steal a pheasant or partridge was precisely the same offence as to steal a chicken or turkey. A more serious objection to the strict preservation of game than any that arises from the maintenance and enforcement of the Game Laws in their present form seems to us to crop up in the frequent occurrence of severe combats or affrays between gamekeepers and poachers, attended, as they too frequently are, by fatal results. The recent murder of Lord Wharncliffe's head-keeper, and the recollection of many similar disasters which have occurred within the memory of every middle-aged man, cannot fail to produce a sobering effect upon all thoughtful and conscientious proprietors of strictly-preserved estates, and to force upon their consideration the inconvenient question whether they are justified in *foro conscientiæ* in purchasing the presence of large numbers of hares and pheasants in their woods and fields at so costly a price. There is, of course, much to be said in favour of the preservation of game on the score of the general immunity and protection from robbers and burglars which night-watchers on an estate secure for its farm-houses and tenements. Nevertheless, the responsibility of jeopardising men's lives, or of damaging their health by privation of sleep, with a view to selfish indulgence in what is, after all, but a pastime, is great enough to induce many a landowner, who is devotedly attached to field-sports and a proficient with his gun, to forego the satisfaction of having his coverts overflowing with

game, preserved at such an outlay of money, and it may be of blood.

But without further moralising upon the ethics of game preserving, let us proceed to examine what are likely to be the effects produced upon the general interests of shooting in consequence of the introduction of the breech-loader. We have little hesitation in recording our opinion that its substitution for the muzzle-loader will, in the end, produce no less radical a revolution in the history of this widely-spread pastime than was caused half a century ago by the discovery and introduction of the percussion system. Few more striking and pregnant instances of British adherence to tradition can be found than was manifested, between the years 1815 and 1830, by the reluctance of soldiers to accept any other weapon than the flint-lock musket, which had won Albuera and Salamanca, Toulouse and Waterloo. None of our historical soldiers were more ready in most cases to declare themselves swift and peremptory reformers than the family of the Napiers. And yet we find Sir Charles James Napier, the conqueror of Scinde, emphatically protesting, in or about the year 1818, against the introduction of a percussion musket, which, as he insisted, would induce soldiers armed with it to fire too rapidly, and to throw away half their shots. We fancy that we have heard some such language uttered too, with more show of reason, in regard to the recent armament of our infantry with breech-loaders.

Less indisposition, however, to accept a weapon which was evidently destined to be the fire-arm of the future, was exhibited between 1815 and 1825 by British sportsmen than by British soldiers. It will be remembered that we owe the discovery of the percussion principle of igniting gunpowder in muskets by means of detonating powder to the ingenuity of a clergyman. This is not, *par parenthèse*, the only improvement in the science of destruction for which we are indebted to gentlemen of the same coloured cloth. So long ago as 1807 the Rev. Mr. Forsyth took out the first patent for a percussion musket, nor is it possible even for the least imaginative of men to notice this date without indulging in a passing day-dream upon the possible effects which Mr. Forsyth's discovery might have produced if it had been utilised, during the eight years which followed its publication, by the army of the Duke of Wellington. Nothing, however, was more natural than that this nation, locked, as it was, in a life-and-death grapple with Napoleon, should have had little time or inclination for the investigation of inventions. It was reserved for sportsmen to introduce detonating guns, to the favourable notice of the public, and between 1820 and 1830 their use became general. It was in 1822 that Colonel Hawker, while claiming for himself credit as the adapter of the copper cap, instituted a comparison between a duck-gun with detonating lock, and another with flint-lock, and demonstrated to his own satisfaction

the superiority of the latter. Nevertheless, at that very moment, all the successful young shots of England were revelling in the rapidity of ignition, and the certainty of explosion, which were the characteristics of the detonator in contradistinction to the flint-lock small-arm. But it is amusing to observe that the slowness of motion, and the disposition to regard all improvement as innovation, which we are accustomed to consider the peculiarities of "the departments" in our own day, were no less markedly discernible in the War Office which had recently conducted England in safety through the greatest struggle she has ever known, and in the mind of the most distinguished soldier whom our country has produced. It is worthy of record that such were the suspicion and distrust with which the authorities viewed the new percussion musket, that it was issued in the first instance only to one company in every regiment. It was not until the efficiency of the weapon was fully established by the decisive victories gained with it on the Sutlej and in the Punjab, that all departmental hostility to it evaporated and passed away. Its introduction into the French army did not take place until the year 1840.

The most noticeable feature in connection with the substitution of the detonator for the flint lock appears, at first, to have been that the shooting of many men who had been all their lives very indifferent performers with the ancient weapon became sensibly improved when they used the modern. Colonel Hawker found

it necessary to alter his instructions for young sportsmen, and to advise them to shoot three, instead of six, inches ahead of a bird flying rapidly across them at 30 yards' distance. But it is curious to remark that the "bags," or returns of game killed, do not appear to have been greatly augmented by the superiority of the new weapon. There is no estate in England which, as regards the fecundity, accuracy, and antiquity of its annals and anecdotes of shooting, can compare with Holkham. It would appear that the bags secured by Mr. Coke and his friends at the end of the last century did not differ materially from those reported immediately after the introduction of the percussion gun. Thus we read that in October, 1797, Mr. Coke, shooting, of course, with a flint gun, upon his manor at Warham, and within a mile's circumference, bagged forty brace of birds in eight hours out of ninety-three shots, killing every bird singly. Again, in January, 1803, Mr. Coke, Sir John Shelley, and Mr. Thomas Sheridan went over to Houghton, and, traversing the very ground of which the shooting has lately been rented by the Prince of Wales, killed in one day 14 brace of hares, 16 couple of rabbits, 24 brace of pheasants, 13 brace of partridges, and 16 couple of woodcocks. No doubt the Prince of Wales and his associates have made larger bags than this on the same ground during the late season; but it has often been noticed, with surprise, that the percussion gun was not signalised on its introduction by the largely-

increased size of the bags which might have been expected. It is a matter for speculation whether this is to be accounted for by believing that men who had long been familiar with the flint gun did not at first understand how to make the most of their new weapon, or whether it arose from greater scarcity of game at the beginning of this century.

Explain it as we may, no more certain evidence of this fact can be adduced than is furnished by the record of the now forgotten, but at one time much-celebrated shooting-match which took place between Colonel Anson and Captain Ross in November, 1828, at the shooting-quarters which Lord de Roos then rented at Mildenhall, in Suffolk. It cannot fail to have been remarked by sporting antiquarians that the shooting-matches which were so much in vogue thirty or forty years ago, and in which the prowess of two rival marksmen was tested at the expense of partridges or pigeons, have in modern times become as obsolete and unfashionable as races over the Beacon Course at Newmarket, or as pugilistic encounters in a 24-foot ring. Be this as it may, there is, perhaps, no similar match that ever excited so much interest, or of which the fame has lived for so many years, as the great "Ross and Anson match" to which we have just alluded. We are indebted for the following account of it to a description which emanated from the pen of Captain Ross himself. He relates that in July, 1828, he was returning from the Red House at

Battersea, in company with Colonel Anson and Lord de Roos. They had been shooting at pigeons, and Lord de Roos, after remarking that no one had a chance against Captain Ross at pigeons, inquired whether he had equal confidence in his power of shooting game or partridges. Upon receiving an affirmative reply, Lord de Roos proposed that Captain Ross should present himself at Mildenhall upon the first day of the following November, prepared to shoot partridges against any man Lord de Roos produced. It was agreed that the two rivals were to start at sunrise by the watch, and to shoot until sunset without any halt; that no dogs were to be used, but that they were to walk about 40 or 50 yards apart, with two or three men between, or on one side of them; that it was not necessary that any birds should be picked up, but that if a bird was seen by the umpire to drop, it should be considered sufficient. The bet was £200 a side, but to this amount both antagonists added considerably before the event came off. The rest shall be told in Captain Ross's own words:—

“We all breakfasted at Mildenhall by candlelight, and were in line ready to start at the correct moment when by the watch the sun had risen; for we could see no sun, the country being enveloped in mist. Colonel Anson was a particularly fast and strong walker, and seemed to fancy he was able to outwalk me. I was not sorry to see him go off ‘at score,’ as I knew that I was in the highest possible training,

and that I was able to keep the pace up without halting for fifteen or sixteen hours. Everything was conducted with the greatest fairness. We changed order every hour, and as Colonel Anson was able to hold on at the same pace, we were fighting against each other as fairly as two men could.

“The Colonel had luck on his side, as the birds rose more favourably for him than for me, and in the course of the match he got eleven more shots than I did; the consequence being that at one time he was seven birds ahead of me. About two o’clock, however, I saw evident signs that he had pretty nearly pumped himself out. The old Squire rode up to me and said, ‘Ross, go along! he’ll lie down directly, and die,’ fancying that he was viewing a beaten fox. I was thus able to go right away from the Colonel; and as the birds were so wild, in consequence of the crowd and noise, that few shots were got nearer than 50 or 60 yards, I gradually made up my lee way.

“A quarter of an hour before the expiration of the time when the watch would indicate sunset, Mr. Charles Greville and Colonel Russell rode up to me, and said that Colonel Anson could walk no more; but that he was one bird ahead of me, and Lord de Roos had authorised them to propose to me to make it a drawn match. I had a great deal of money, about £1,000, depending on the result, and had not had a shot for the last ten minutes; so, after a moment’s consideration, I came to the conclusion that at that late hour,

when the birds were all out of the turnips and feeding on the stubble, it was too large a sum to risk on the chance of getting a brace of birds in a quarter of an hour. I therefore agreed to make it a drawn match. I was as fresh as when I started, and offered to start then and there, and go on foot to London against any one present, for £500. The number of birds killed by each was absurdly small—only, I think, twenty-five or twenty-six brace. We dined at Mildenhall, and were capitally entertained by Lord de Roos, who had the best of French cooks and the best of French wines.” Some time after these words were written, Captain Ross added to them thus:—“Alas! alas! when I look back to that evening! Every one then assembled in the dining-room at Mildenhall, with the exception of myself, is now in his grave; and our polished and accomplished host died a disgraced man!”

This chronicle of a memorable match, although not without interest even after the lapse of well-nigh forty years, is chiefly serviceable on the present occasion as illustrating the smallness of the bag which two of the best shots in England were able to make in 1828 with the newly-introduced percussion gun. Undoubtedly, the facility of loading was not nearly so great between 1820 and 1830 as it became subsequently, between 1840 and 1850. Another lesson which this and all similar matches serve to teach is, the impossibility of fairly testing the comparative skill with the gun of any two men by subjecting them to a single trial of

strength. Even the best shots are subject, as Hawker remarks, to great inequality in their shooting; and, in addition, the accident of good or bad luck as to the lie of the birds, will never fail to incline the scale one way or the other, if the two antagonists are as to skill nearly on a level with each other. Fashion, however much it may have deteriorated upon other points, has shown itself discriminating and sagacious in discarding such shooting-matches in the middle of the nineteenth century as were in vogue and popular at its commencement. No one was fonder of these matches in his youth than the late Mr. Osbaldeston; and, it must be added, that few men ever submitted to defeat, which, indeed, was seldom his portion, with so bad a grace. It cannot be doubted that a disposition to get up matches for money between friends, and to promote competition by stimulating men to ride or to shoot against each other, is conducive to anything rather than to good fellowship. For these reasons, we hail with satisfaction the fact that such matches as, according to the author of "Sportascrapiana," were continually being made between Colonel Anson, Lord Kennedy, Messrs. Osbaldeston, Farquharson, Cruikshank, Budd, and many more, are now scarcely ever, if ever, proposed.

It is, perhaps, as well that, in these days of breech-loaders, shooting-matches should have gone out of fashion; for few indeed are the partridge manors in England which could stand having many matches shot

over them by crack young marksmen of the present time, armed with this weapon. We heard it lately remarked that there are not many coverts in England of which Mr. Thomas De Grey, M.P. for West Norfolk, would not make a clean sweep in three hours, if he was turned loose in them, armed with his couple of breech-loaders, and with directions to slay and to spare not. It is too late in the day for us to enter now into an elaborate demonstration of the vast superiority of the breech-loading shot gun over its predecessor, for this superiority is all but universally admitted and confessed. The time has long gone by when it was necessary for a sporting writer to take the course adopted in 1857 by the "Old Shekarry," who, in October of that year, advanced thirty reasons in the *Field* newspaper for preferring breech-loaders to any other weapon. The breech-loader now occupies the field, in more senses than one, and reigns, like Alexander, without a rival. The "Old Shekarry's" thirty reasons seem to us susceptible of considerable condensation or compression. The chief advantages of the breech-loader may be summed up in a few words:—1. It may be fired five times while a muzzle-loader is fired once. 2. It is much safer, and the loader's hand is never in jeopardy. 3. There is little or no recoil. 4. It hits harder and shoots quicker than its rival. 5. It can be reloaded noiselessly, and without change of position, and without soiling the butt of the gun. 6. The charge can be drawn in an instant, and

snipe shot, or duck shot, or ball, can be inserted or removed at will.

It is impossible to overrate the value of this last-named advantage to men who, like the "Old Shekarry," are accustomed to shoot in India, or Africa, or in regions frequented by dangerous wild beasts. There are few greater disadvantages to a good hunter when on a trail, or when stalking a tickle quarry, than to have two or three persons at his heels, carrying his extra guns or rifles, and trebling or quadrupling the noise which he makes in forcing his way through brushwood. Moreover, the experienced hunter, when in pursuit of "big game," such as lions or tigers, greatly prefers to be dependent upon himself alone. Many a sportsman's life has been endangered by his gun-bearers bolting at a critical moment, and leaving him, with both barrels discharged, in the immediate proximity of a wounded and maddened animal. Lastly, it is no slight advantage to a sportsman, tired out after a hard day's fag, to have but one weapon to clean, instead of having to set to work upon four or five guns or rifles, and to perform a task which no man who has shot in Asia, Africa, or America, and who values his own life, ever intrusts to any hand save his own. Now, the possession of one good breech-loader, which is an armoury in itself, sets the sportsman free from all these disadvantages which we have enumerated. While shooting snipe in a jungle, he is not disconcerted at finding himself in the neighbourhood of

tiger, or bear, or elephant, for he can substitute a ball for snipe-shot without an instant's delay, and without taking his eye off his enemy. In fact, to sum up the whole case in favour of the breech-loader in the "Old Shekarry's" emphatic words;—"He who has once used a breech-loading gun or rifle will no more think of going back to a muzzle-loader than the crack marksman at Hythe would return to Brown Bess."

But admitting, as we do, the general superiority of the breech-loader as a weapon framed for the destruction of game, it is impossible not to entertain grave doubts as to the maintenance of the same abundance of game in Great Britain which our predecessors luxuriated in during the second quarter of the present century. The passion of the day is for heavy bags of game shot in comparatively short spaces of time,—say, in from three to four hours,—and with little heed given by the shooters to the question whether the bird which they destroy is a mangled heap of feathers when it falls, or whether it is killed at a proper distance, and in neat and sportsman-like style. By no class of men will a more pregnant sermon be preached, as to the visible effects of the breech-loader upon the birds which it destroys, than by the poulterers of London. Baily, and Fisher, and many of their professional brethren, will tell you that out of the pheasants sent to them, the proportion of birds fit to appear upon the table is continually growing smaller. It was for some time pretended by the champions of the muzzle-loader

that it delivered its shot more closely and forcibly than its rival. No one who examines the pheasants now killed in a battue will have any doubt as to the breech-loader being the harder-hitting weapon of the two. So thoroughly is this fact admitted by the London poulterers, that they have invented a method of utilising pheasants which are too hard hit to admit of being roasted, by cutting off the mangled portions of the breast, and making up the remaining portions into minced meat for pheasant or game pies. But there is another fashion, also greatly on the increase in England, which seems to us to bode little good to future abundance of game,—the fashion, we mean, of driving moors and manors, and of killing partridges and grouse from behind a hedge or peat-stack, as they are driven over your head. It is notorious that there are many estates in England, especially in the moorland districts of Derbyshire, Yorkshire, Lancashire, Cumberland, and Westmoreland, where, in former times, a moor, beaten in the ordinary way, yielded at most twelve or fifteen brace of grouse in a day, picked up by the laborious exertions of two or three good shots,—and that not for many days. But the same moor, if driven according to the modern fashion, will now yield without difficulty, to the same number of guns, 130 or 150 brace in a day. As an illustration of the truth of what we are saying, we have but to instance the Duke of Devonshire's moors in the neighbourhood of Chatsworth. We have all heard a great deal of the grouse disease in Scotland

during the past year. Undoubtedly the inscrutable epidemic which has been fatal to so many birds is, in the main, accountable for their greatly diminished numbers. But may it not fairly be asked whether ten years of driving grouse, and of killing them with breech-loaders, have not also something to do with it, and whether a continuation of the same practices for ten years more will not make itself felt in a manner which will tell very disagreeably upon the rent-roll of many Highland lairds?

The breech-loader, like all other labour-saving machines, is unquestionably a valuable boon to humanity, but it presupposes that the time which it saves in killing game is to be made use of in higher and more profitable occupations. It is a frequent remark of Americans, when commenting upon the numerical strength of the leisure classes in England, that in creating the universe, God made no provision for men and women into whose scheme of daily life no thought or necessity for labour enters as an essential ingredient. If young and luxurious gentlemen fancy that they can, by using the breech-loader, kill as much in four hours as their fathers and forefathers killed in three or four times that space, and that they can also continue to shoot as many days in the year, and as many hours in the day, as their predecessors, it needs no prophet to announce to them that they are reckoning without their host. The destruction of game, perpetually indulged in as a pastime, and with no reference to the value as articles

of food possessed by the birds or animals killed, must be pronounced by a severe moralist to be in the highest degree reprehensible. And it is worthy of remark that the increased facility for making large bags, conferred upon the sportsman by the breech-loader, has subtracted and withdrawn all general interest from the records of such shooting feats as fifteen years ago were upon every tongue. For years and years the present Lord Panmure and Mr. Campbell of Monzie were quoted as the only two men in Scotland who had ever killed a hundred brace of grouse in one day. This feat they accomplished with two or three muzzle-loading guns, one of which was put into their hands after every shot, freshly loaded. There were not wanting sportsmen, however, who thought even this feat eclipsed by the present Lord Wenlock, who, upon a moor in Perthshire, killed ninety-three brace of grouse with one muzzle-loading gun, loaded throughout the day by his own hand. But whatever interest once attached to these achievements with the muzzle-loader, has now all but faded away in connection with the breech-loader. It is felt that the breech-loader is so much more rapid and deadly a weapon, that few people now care to be told whether Mr. De Grey or any one of his contemporaries have killed 150 or 200 brace of grouse with it in a day. Let the rising generation of sportsmen take good heed, in conclusion, lest in their anxiety to astonish the world with magnificent "bags," they succeed in estranging from a noble sport that degree

of popular favour which has hitherto given immunity to the Game Laws, and a forfeiture of which could not prove otherwise than fatal in the end to its prosperity and longevity.

Happily, in these days of easy locomotion, there are abundant opportunities for wealthy and adventurous young sportsmen to amuse themselves *outré mer* with more stirring sport than the woods and fields of England, the moorlands of Scotland, or the bogs of Ireland supply. The wonders of the African continent, as a field for ambitious marksmen, have been revealed to us within the last twenty-five years by a succession of mighty hunters. India continues to offer to Englishmen the same fecundity of sport for which her Ghauts and Himalayas, her jungles and sunburnt wastes, her nullahs and forests, have been perpetually celebrated. But, should the sportsman desire to pursue every variety of game upon a noble continent, rejoicing in a summer climate which makes life in the open air one continual feast, let him repair to the broad plains and prairies or the majestic lakes and rivers of North America, and take his fill of sport, with bear, buffalo, panther, deer, and every variety of land and water-fowl for the objects of his pursuit. We have often meditated upon the exquisite delight with which Colonel Hawker would have launched his Hampshire canoe upon the broad bosom of the Potomac river, and what havoc he would have wrought among the wild swans and brent-geese, and canvas-back ducks, and blue-

wings, and all the hosts of wild-fowl with whose cries the whole surface of the stream is vocal after nightfall. What additions would he not here have made to what he calls his "wild-fowl artillery;" what novel instructions would not his ingenuity and experience have suggested for approaching the wary and well-nigh unapproachable wild swan! "Those who have walked," says Colonel Montague, "on a summer's evening, by the sedgy sides of unfrequented rivers, must remember a variety of notes from different water-fowl; the loud scream of the wild goose, the croaking of the mallard, the whining of the lapwing, the tremulous neighings of the jack-snipe, and the booming of the bittern."

If it had been the gallant colonel's fortune "to run the blockade" by crossing the Potomac frequently on dark nights during the recent American war, he would have had ample opportunities of greatly enlarging his list of river-birds and his description of their cries. But whatever may be our passing apprehensions as to the substitution in England of shooters for sportsmen, and whatever our suspicions as to the incompatibility of unrestrictedly-used breech-loaders with the maintenance of an undiminished head of game, we have no fears whatever about any diminution of the pluck, energy, and accuracy of aim which have always distinguished British sportsmen in every part of the globe. Britain will still, we doubt not, continue to produce a never-failing supply of men like Gordon Cumming and Sir Samuel Baker; and if at any time a

long course of hot luncheons under the hedge-side, or of kid-gloved manipulation of the breech-loader, may have sapped for a moment the manliness of one of our young porphyrogeniti, it will take but a brief taste of the delights of wild shooting in any land beyond sea to send his blood once more coursing hotly through his veins, and to vindicate his manhood, enterprise, and endurance against all sneers and aspersions.

ON FISHING.

A NUMBER of persons, aping Dr. Johnson, are prone to sneer at our sport upon the waters,—“a stick,” quoth they, “with a fly at one end and a fool at the other,”—and so the angler and his pastime are summarily dismissed by men who neither understand him nor his vocation. Were enemies of angling less ignorant they would be tolerant of the sport, for there is more in the art of fishing than meets the eye of a superficial observer; indeed, the mere catching of a basket of fish,—all the looker-on can see in the sport,—is perhaps the smallest part of the gratification derived from a day spent by the river-side, which an enthusiastic fisher has said is a recreation that ought only to be permitted to good men. As it is not given to every man to be an angler, neither is it given to some other men to be truthful interpreters of the pleasure and instruction that may be derived from a sport which has existed since the painted aborigines of early Britain transfix'd their fish with a bone spear.

Nothing that is very new can be said about the method of angling. It is an old-fashioned art, and is

still pursued after the mode that prevailed when Isaak Walton wandered, rod in hand, in the flowery meads that border the river Lea. Anglers, like poets, must be born to their vocation. Many excellent books have been written on the pastime,—about it, and in praise of it,—but no book that has been written, from Walton to Francis, will make an angler. Indeed the best anglers are those who have learned to fish from necessity. Vain man may encase his body in the regulation suit of Tweeds, and expend much money on the upholstery of the art, but he will never by so doing lure the speckled trout from its watery home. All the books he reads will not enable him to do that. The ragged gipsy from his hill-side encampment, with an extemporised rod, to which may be fastened a bit of common string, with perhaps a bent pin to hook the fish, will do far more execution than a regiment of the guys who pretend to be fishers, yet fail in their endeavours to deceive the fish; but then, angling to the gipsy is a necessity of life, and at an early age he learns instinctively where to find a trout, and how to get it into his possession. As in shooting there are battues, where the birds are frightened into flocks, and grounds where the pheasants are preserved into the veriest tameness, so in many places there are stretches of protected water filled with fish, in order that certain people may have an opportunity to become, for a brief time, mighty fishers. But one fish, however small, ingeniously lured from that water in which it had its natural home, is

worth a basketful taken from a preserve where the animals are only stored for capture. In France the fishermen of Brittany sow their sea fishery grounds with cod roes to attract the sardine to their nets, but in Scotland the sailors can take sprats in millions without a lure. Men sit in a punt on the Thames delighted if after an hour or two's work they obtain a few dace or gudgeon, the water having been previously strewed with some kind of ground bait. That, of course, is no more angling than a battue is sport. A salmon angler ridicules such fishers in the same way that a highland deer-stalker would ridicule "le sport" of an elaborately got up Frenchman shooting the little birds that chirrup in the Bois de Boulogne.

The true angler is a man of parts; he hath virtues which are either wanting in, or at any rate are not cultivated by, other men; he is endowed with the gifts of patience, endurance, and observation; he is slow to anger, and full of resources; he is generally a man enjoying rude health, unselfish, careless of the pleasures that delight other men, and anything but the fool depicted by Dr. Johnson and his followers. Fish are not easily caught by fools. We have a few extracts about angling in our commonplace-book, redacted from the utterances of men who have been great at luring the fish from the water. One of these is to the effect that fishing is one of the most healthy recreations that can be pursued. "The motion of the rod," says this writer, "gives to the whole body, but especially to the muscles

of the breast, much strength and power." We have a suspicion that it is chiefly unsuccessful anglers, men who have failed in the art, that abuse it, much in the same way as men who fail to become great actors abuse Macready. "To be a successful salmon-fisher," we are told by another disciple of Walton, "involves a large amount of patience, perseverance, and strict attention to minutiae. A deficiency in one point, though you may be proficient in all other details, will cause a nullity of the whole." Good anglers are keen critics of details, and take a pleasure in attending personally to all those little things that dandy fishers get done by deputy. Your real fisher, too, has a soul above hunger; a crust of bread, a mouthful of cheese, and a dram, are all he wants, and even this small refreshment is unwillingly partaken of, if the fish be in a "taking" mood. Never mind; his fast converts the simplest fare into a feast; hunger affords him a fine salad, the temporary rest given to the stomach is good for the constitution, and the decided change of scene from pent city to open country is a tonic that is worth travelling four or five hundred miles to obtain:—

"Though sluggards deem it but an idle chase,
 And marvel men should quit their easy chair
 The toilsome way and long, long league to trace,
 Oh! there is sweetness in the mountain air,
 And life that bloated ease can never hope to share."

The mighty angler,—the triton among the minnows,
 —is undoubtedly he who tackles the salmon of the

Norwegian fiords, or the man who can run down, now and again, to the salmon rivers of Wales or Scotland ; but as we cannot all be giants in the art, there must, we fancy, be human beings to represent "Patience in a punt, smiling at a perch." It is not the vocation of every man to sweep the Tay or the Severn, and now and again land a thirty-pound salmon. Great, very great indeed, is the difference between the active waters that flow amid the hills and dales of Scotland or Wales, and the sluggish and muddy streams that slowly meander through many of the flat meadows of England. They necessitate different kinds of angling, and by parity of reasoning different kinds of anglers ; the fish also being different, taking to itself the impress of its peculiar food and habitation. But it is not meet for a member of the craft to sneer at his brethren, because they have not the chance of distinguishing themselves amid the mountains of the north or west.

There are no doubt many good anglers frequenting the Thames,—men who ought not to be sneered at,—and we know that traditions are handed down among these fishers of mighty trout and other giant fishes that have been captured in that famous river ; and some day the sport may be renewed,—some day, when the waters of the mighty stream are no longer polluted by the sewage of the towns by which it flows,—some day, when the salmon courses up the silent highway, and the artificially-bred trout and ombre chevalier sport in the purified waters. Then we shall see the

old stuffed trout and perch of the "Angler's Arms" renewed, and have again, we sincerely hope, a race of Waltons wandering the flowery meadows. We have fished a bit of the Thames water, and have taken an occasional pike, not to speak of abounding roach and barbel. There are fine haunts on the Thames for "the wolf of the waters," as that river pirate and cannibal the pike may be designated,—beautiful spots of deep, clear, and pellucid water, fringed with green verdure, where lies this terrible scourge of the river waiting for prey,—places that an innocent troutling or lazy perch deem all too beautiful to be inhabited by such a devil. But the fiend is waiting there; and just when the trout is gambolling in fancied security, or the perch is lazily lunging at an opportune worm, the pirate cannibal dashes out of his lair, makes them prisoners, and eats them at his leisure! Considering that the Thames is so near St. Paul's, and so accessible to the inhabitants of a populous city, it is wonderful that there are fish left in it. Most rivers near a city are quickly emptied of their finny population. It is wonderful indeed to find how populous with fish the Thames still is, especially in members of the carp family. Indeed, the speciality of this great river, so far as anglers are concerned, is that it abounds in members of the carp family. Perch, too, are tolerably plentiful, and jack as well, not to speak of the silver eel, and that host of minor fishes which scientific anglers only value as bait for the tritons of the scene. After all, Thames anglers

are not so greedy for small fry as the pêcheurs who haunt the banks of the Seine about the Quay D'Auteil, to whom minnows or infantine fish of any kind are a godsend, to be quickly transferred to a frying-pan. Eels are angled for industriously in the Seine, or rather are groped for in the mud, and speedily,—having undergone that traditionary preparation which we have all heard about,—figure on the tables of the neighbouring cheap restaurants stewed in red wine, or otherwise prepared to tempt the appetite. We have witnessed the great rapidity with which the business of angling and cooking is carried on in the little villages on the banks of the Seine; but still, although the twin operations of capture and cooking are quick enough, they do not nearly approach the rapidity of Lord Lovat's plan. This nobleman, it is said, used at certain seasons of the year to light a fire at the brink of the salmon leap at Kilmorack, on the Beaully; and, placing upon it a kettle, quietly wait till a fish, in its laudable endeavours to reach the shallow upper streamlets, would precipitate itself into the boiling water, and in the space of twenty minutes or half an hour become done to a nicety. Thus he enjoyed his salmon, as he thought, in perfection. We never tasted a fish so cooked, but have more than once partaken of the veritable Tweed kettle, prepared, as was said, from a recipe handed down from the ancient monks of Melrose, who were, if tradition may be believed, extremely fond of good living;—

“The monks of Melrose made gude kail
 On Fridays when they fasted ;
 Nor wanted they gude beef and ale,
 As lang’s their neighbours’ lasted.”

The pretty kettle of fish just referred to is prepared by crimping the animal the moment it is captured and killed, when, after cleaning and cutting it into slices, it is boiled in a strong pickle or brine till thoroughly done ; and then eaten, sans cérémonie, without any other relish than a portion of the sauce in which it has been boiled. It is a mistake to serve any rich sauce with this fish ; the flesh is rich enough without any foreign condiment whatever. Another modern mistake is serving salmon on a napkin ; it ought to be sent to the table in a deep dish with plenty of the water in which it has been boiled. A third mistake is in eating our salmon boiling hot : let the epicure try the fish after it is cold, and whenever possible boil a whole fish. A small salmon of from six to eight pounds, boiled whole, is very fine ; before it is served, scrape off the scales,—never mind the unsightliness,—and don’t fail to eat the skin ; it is excellent. Were it our cue to write here about the cooking of fish, instead of the catching of them, we could enlarge on the subject with satisfaction to ourselves and profit to our readers ; but our present business is with their capture rather than their cookery.

Coming back, then, to our proper work, we may assume that angling, “the contemplative man’s recrea-

tion," as it has been called, no longer requires a defence on the score of cruelty. It is not now thought to be more the act of a butcher to kill a trout than to slaughter that pet poetic animal, the lamb. Even the ladies have ceased to talk sentiment on the subject. In fact, they have begun to handle the rod themselves. Every now and then we hear or read of the feats of our lady salmon-killers. A lady kills a thirty-five pound fish, and thinks nothing of the feat. Lately it took a lady, with the aid of a stalwart keeper, two hours to get a fish out of the water; and that particular salmon was thought to be such a beauty that it was sent to the House of Commons as a present to the Speaker, and after being much admired by the right honourable gentleman and his friends, was "ordered to lie on the table." That lady would never, of course, think of killing a lamb with her own fair hands, but it is quite certain she did not think it cruel to kill a salmon. It is quite clear that, if lamb and grouse were never eaten, neither the one nor the other would ever be killed for table purposes; no horrid grizzly butcher would disturb the dreams of little lambkins, nor would the crack of the death-dealing rifle bring doom to pheasants and partridges. To man has been given dominion over the fowls of the air and the denizens of the deep, from the tiny minnow which the boy hooks with a pin, to the leviathan of the frozen seas, which is shot with a harpoon fired from a mortar; and as the fish claims dominion over the flies that

sport upon the stream and the worms which frequent the water, and as it kills them as often as it can, it is not for us to draw the line or curse at some particular bait because it seems cruel to use it.

Anglers' fishes,—the salmon and trout excepted,—cannot be said to possess much, if any, economic value. No man of taste who could obtain herrings or sprats would ever purchase roach or barbel. There was a time, however, when a fish-pond was an universal appanage of every country mansion-house; and when carp, perch, or trout, or some other well-known fish, obtained from home water-preserves, or from some stream flowing through the estate, figured on the dining-table, made palatable by expensive cookery; and in the grounds of our old abbeys and monasteries there was invariably, in the olden time when such institutions flourished, a fish stew. The monks, it is proverbial, were fond of good living, and many a fine trout and fat carp, it is easy to believe, graced their fast-day refectations. Now country gentlemen do not require a fish-pond, because the express train whirls down a turbot or cod-fish that was living and in the sea a few hours before it was deposited, daintily packed in a wicker fish creel, at the porters' lodges. To some persons the sea-fish named prove a grateful change from the constant salmon, for even that fish, when too often partaken of, is not relished; *toujours perdrix* has become a proverb;—*toujours saumon* has been exclaimed against before now, not only by country gentlemen, but

by peasant boys and ploughmen, who, once upon a time, were accustomed to turn up their noses at fish food which has of late years become a dainty solely to set on rich men's tables. Long ago every hind living near a salmon water claimed the right of angling in it, and many of them were smart fishers. It is instructive to note the change of habit among the people that has made salmon fashionable and consequently dear. We hope it will not be thought dreadfully heretical if we say, like the ploughman of old, that it would be distasteful to us to be compelled to eat salmon three times a week. Strange as fashionable folks may think it, we relish a prime haddock boiled in sea water, or a fine salt herring, far more than the venison of the waters,—just as we prefer a hind leg of a well-fed black-faced sheep to a haunch of venison. All this is no doubt dreadfully unfashionable, but it is our true taste nakedly exposed to the reader.

Another heresy of ours is, that for genuine sport,—for affording an enjoyable day's angling,—the trout is a better fish than the salmon. Indeed, it is the angler's fish par excellence. We know of no better reward for an industrious fisher than a dozen or two of trout ranging in weight from a few ounces to a pound and a half. A well-proportioned trout of twelve or eighteen ounces is indeed a prize for the best angler. Salmon angling is very expensive,—so expensive that it can only be enjoyed by the wealthy. It is rather annoying to be required to pay perhaps a sovereign a

day for the right of angling on a stretch of salmon water, and have in addition to surrender your take of fish to the lessee of the stream who grants you permission to take them. Many gentlemen now go to Norway in order to enjoy the sport of salmon-fishing in perfection which, however, can still be had in Scotland, where there is also excellent trout-fishing for many months in the year. In the large lakes of Scotland there are gigantic trout; there are especially the great trout of Loch-Awe,—*salmo ferox*,—which grow to very large dimensions. We have more than once helped to kill a twenty-pounder. The *salmo ferox* is found in most of the larger Scottish lochs, and is a thoroughly game fish; it fights to the death, and, as an angling friend of ours says, scarcely knows when it is dead. It has been found more than once to free itself from the line, and then again seize the same bait with which it was taken before with greater voracity than ever. This monster of the lakes, like the bull trout of the Tweed, is a dreadful cannibal, preying extensively on smaller fish living in the same waters. We know well enough that an occasional fine trout has been taken out of the Thames and other English rivers,—as, for instance, the splendid fish taken near Kingston in Surrey by a banker, which weighed ten pounds, and was thirty inches long; but as the trout is, par excellence, the angler's fish, so is Scotland, par excellence, the land of the trout. For trout angling, in all its most enjoyable aspects, men must assuredly journey north of the Tweed. And once

in the "land of brown heath and shaggy wood,"—away far from the populous city,—there is a wealth of water rich in fish, which generally speaking is free to anglers, who may, as a rule, fish for trout in any river they like; and there are hundreds of streams which a London angler would find worthy of a visit. We do not mean on the beaten paths which are now so well known to all fishers, such as the land of Tibby Shiels, or rather the water of lone St. Mary's, and the adjoining rivers and burns. Even in Scotland, distant as some of the streams are from the busy haunts of men, they have been somewhat over-fished; and although trout are not exactly scarce on some of the rivers, still that fish is not so plentiful as it used to be when in our early youth,—say thirty-five years ago,—we saw two men in the course of a forenoon fill a good-sized washing-tub with trout lured from a Dumfriesshire burn. In Scotland efforts are being made to introduce the grayling as an angler's fish, and we have had in our possession several fine specimens of considerable size taken from the Clyde, where it is now becoming rather plentiful. It may interest English anglers to know that there are in Scotland one or two peculiar fish, which must, we think, have been introduced pisciculturally like the grayling, such as the vendace, which, however, is too shy to be called an angler's fish. Quantities of vendace are taken once or twice a year by means of a net, in order that the people round about may hold a feast, and have a little jollification. It is a fish that is

confined to one place, and that is the water of Lochmaben, in Dumfriesshire. There is also in Scotland the far-famed and “marrowless” Loch Leven trout,—another of those mysteries of the piscine world which no fellow can understand. It is very accessible, and affords tolerable sport to the angler, who requires, however, to hire a boat to fish from. In our opinion lake fishing is not nearly so exciting as river angling; the fish have not the same scope for resistance as they have in a river or brook, where they can dart from bank to brae, and easily obtain a hiding-place; but the lake fish are of course much larger than burn trout, and Loch Leven trout are as a rule as costly, if not more so, than early salmon, and a profitable trade in these trout has existed for more than half a century. The fish of this far-famed loch, in which stands the prison-castle of Mary Stuart, are both rich in colour and fine in flavour, which is of course the result of a peculiar feeding ground. The run of Loch Leven trout at present average a pound per fish. We have seen one hundred fish weigh ninety-nine pounds. The vendace cannot for a moment be compared gastronomically with Loch Leven trout, which are delightful when plain boiled in well-salted water, or when baked in a slight paste. It is thought by some connoisseurs that Loch Leven trout have deteriorated in flavour since the lake was partially drained; but we know no difference;—their flavour to us is as delightful as it was thirty years ago. It is surprising that steps have

not been taken long ago to augment the supplies of these trout. Artificial breeding has, we know, been tried, but not very successfully. The powan of Loch Lomond, like the vendace of Lochmaben, is rarely taken by the angler. It is not an angler's fish, but it is worth capturing as a curiosity. There is no lack of fishes in that Queen of Lochs; indeed, the angler may consider himself in clover when he reaches this district of Scotland, for he is near all the best kinds of fishing with which the country abounds,—from minnow to salmon.

Scotland has been metaphorically called the Land o' Cakes,—it might as well have been called the Land of Fish. It is a country abounding in lochs and streams, mountain burns, hill-side rivulets, and gigantic waters like the Tay. Scotland too may be described as the trout fisher's Dorado,—that fish being the stock in trade of its lochs and rivers. It is useless, however, to expect good fishing in the neighbourhood of towns and cities; but is there not the railway or the steamboat to carry anglers to far-off solitudes, where nature, with all her pristine charms, is ready to fascinate the visitor? The land of the mountain and the flood, the land of Walter Scott, the land of cakes, the home of the salmon and the trout,—what can the traveller or the angler desire more?

“Their groves of green myrtle let foreign lands reckon,
Where bright beaming summers exalt the perfume;
Far dearer to me yon long glen of green breckan,
With the burn stealing under the long yellow broom!”

Scotland, as all northern anglers are aware, yields a very large share of the salmon which are brought every year to London. Very few of these commercial fish, however, are procured by angling, most of them being captured in a wholesale way by means of the net and coble; but a goodly number of salmon are still caught by the rod, especially at the beginning and the end of the season. There are one or two Scottish societies of socially inclined fishers that rent a cottage and a stretch of water on the Tweed, to which they can proceed during the season in order to enjoy a day or two's angling, and there are other fishing clubs besides. We, however, prefer Tay as an angling stream, and consider its salmon superior to those of Tweed; and the former river has the advantage of not being infested by the bull trout, a fish which has already exterminated the salmon of some rivers, and is now playing havoc in Tweed. Anglers coming from England purely for fishing purposes should at once go north,—or south, if they prefer that route. Let the Thames fisher who is desirous of seeing sport in the far north put himself at St. Katherine's Wharf on board the Dundee steamboat. Arrived at Dundee, let him then go on to Perth, and as he is there at any rate, he should not forget to visit the salmon nursery at Stormontfield, which is interesting both in a scientific and commercial aspect; firstly, because it has largely aided in the solution of several important problems in the natural

and economic history of the salmon, which need not be detailed here, and secondly, because the operations carried on at these ponds have demonstrated that the cultivation of salmon on a fixed plan is worthy of commercial support because it pays. But what our angler is recommended to do is to get away at once to what may be called the angling districts of the Tay and its tributaries. True, at Stormontfield, or about Scone Palace, he may see the nurse of the young salmon, "Peter of the pools," Peter Marshall, "coaching" a brace of beginners in a coble, on an active part of the water. See how deftly Peter zigzags to and fro across the rapid stream, telling his pupils how to comport themselves, anon changing a fly, then taking a leetle pull at the youngest gentleman's flask of very still Glenlivet. Many a salmon has Peter helped out of the water. As we look and listen there comes a double flop on the stream, and we obtain just for an instant a brief glimpse of an immense salmon,—that is to say, it looks immense, for we can see no definite boundaries to it, as it dashes into the water. Peter tells the novice, who looks frightened and is shaky, to give it plenty of line, and the fish rushes off with dreadful rapidity, Peter rapidly directing what is to be done next. The line seems more than once in danger of snapping, as the fish darts from side to side of the water, dashing at one time clean out of the river, and getting pulled back by the awkwardness of the angler. Peter manages the boat

with great skill, so as to humour the fish to the top of his bent. After a game fight, lasting over half an hour, a very nice eighteen-pound fish is lifted clean out of the water with a landing-net, and Peter, wiping his brow, takes a pull at the flask with much relish, and exclaims, "Heeh, sirs, but we've got her at last!" There is some free salmon angling on the Tay, which at times yields a few fish; and in the neighbourhood of Perth and Dunkeld there are plenty of accessible trout streams where one may angle all the live-long day, and no one will ask, What doest thou?

As has been already hinted, salmon angling is desperate hard work. Men have been known before now to hook a fish, play it for two hours, and then lose it! A well-known Scottish editor,—a mighty fisher,—got so excited in playing a fish that he jumped into the water nearly up to the neck, and drowned a leading article for his journal, which happened to be in the pocket of his breeches! But he secured his salmon. We prefer, as we have said, the gentler exercise of trout fishing, and whilst friends have fought a day on the Tay for the venison of the waters, and gone home very tired and unrewarded, we have filled our basket with prime trout from the Shochie or the Isla. Laying aside our own tastes and prejudices, and looking upon the salmon as being the monarch of anglers' fishes, a brief sketch of the economy of a salmon stream may not prove uninteresting to fishers, or, at any rate, to persons who

like to read about fish. It is not long since grave apprehensions were entertained that salmon would be altogether extirpated from our rivers. Most of the large English streams were without fish of any kind. Even the mud-loving eel had been poisoned by the numerous impurities that manufactories have introduced into our rivers. The rental of the Tweed had fallen to a fourth of what it was at one time. The Tay was being ruined by stake nets, and the Solway by overfishing; and the fish that were left in those rivers that had not been polluted by an overflow of chemicals, were gradually becoming smaller, and of course lighter,—the heavy ones being speedily captured, and the young ones not allowed time to attain a great size. The quick modes of carriage that came into use, the facilities afforded by railroads for reaching the larger seats of population, as well as the high price obtained for salmon from the dealers of London and elsewhere, served, and still serves, indeed, to spur the tenants of the fisheries into the greatest activity, inducing them not to allow a single fish to reach the spawning grounds in the upper waters,—where they would be most accessible to some anglers,—if they can possibly prevent it from ascending. Many years ago, when there was only a local demand both for salmon and sea fish, the idea of a failure of the supplies was never for a moment entertained either by proprietors or fishers. The fish were then plentiful enough, a penny a pound weight being a common

price in the neighbourhood of nearly every salmon stream. It was at one time attempted to carry salmon from Scotland to London alive in welled vessels, but as the fish killed themselves attempting to escape, that plan had to be given up as impracticable. The moment it was ascertained, however, that salmon could be carried to great distances if packed in ice, and be found in tolerably good condition at the end of the journey, the price rose to such a figure as put an end for ever to the grievance of farm servants and apprentices who were determined not to eat that fish oftener than twice a week.

The enormous fecundity of fishes,—some of them yield their eggs in millions, and most of them in tens of thousands,—has given anglers and others the idea that it is impossible to affect the supplies by any amount of fishing. The female salmon yields eggs at the rate of one thousand for every pound of her weight. A fish of twenty pounds, as a general rule, yields twenty thousand eggs. As regards the productiveness of a salmon river, the question to be solved is, not how many eggs the fish produce, but how many eggs arrive at the stage of table fish, or, in other words, grow to be salmon of say twenty pounds weight. We have the authority of Sir Humphry Davy for saying that out of the 17,000 ova which each female salmon on an average annually deposits, only 800 in ordinary circumstances come to perfection. Some fishery economists do not allow that

such a large number ever grow to be table fish, and perhaps Sir Humphry did not mean that the number specified by him became table fish, but merely that they were hatched into life. One writer on this part of the salmon question thinks that only one per cent. of the eggs of the mother fish attain the point of perpetuating their kind. The destruction of eggs and young fish must therefore be enormous. Large quantities, it is known, never come in contact with the milt, and so they perish. Countless numbers of the ova are carried away by the floods into unsuitable places, and they too perish. Then, again, numerous fish-cannibals are waiting at the spawning-beds to feast on the appetising roe; the thousands so eaten cannot be calculated, but so they perish. The young fish, again, are always in danger; and although a river may be positively swarming with young salmon, comparatively speaking, only very few of them ever live to reach the salt-water; all kinds of fresh-water monsters are constantly extorting tribute from the shoal. The smolt slaughter which occurs when the juvenile army reaches the sea is awful. Hordes of large sea-fish are always waiting in the estuaries at the period of migration, instinctively aware of the feast that is in store for them. That only a very small percentage of the young salmon which go down to the sea as smolts return as grilse is obvious. Yet that large quantities of grilse are still left is also obvious from the fact that tens of thousands of these

fish are annually killed. Indeed, the fishery-lessee is the greatest enemy of the young salmon. It has been shown very conclusively that grilse are young salmon that have not spawned. Then why kill them? It is surely the worst possible economy to kill these virgin fish before they have at least one opportunity of perpetuating their kind. If we were to kill all our lambs, for instance, where should we obtain our mutton? As a well-known angler has said in speaking of the salmon-fisheries, "The conduct of salmon-proprietors is as rational as high-farming with the help of tile-drains, liquid-manure, and steam-power would be for the purpose of eating corn in the blade."

Were it possible for some of our anglers who have a turn for arithmetic to take the census of any large salmon river, it would be found that by far the largest proportion of the fish were very young, not perhaps over four years old. Anglers have read of the enormous salmons of former days, the sixty and seventy-pounders that figure in various works of natural history, but we seldom see such fish now,—forty-pounders are even very scarce. The great bulk of the salmon now taken are under twenty pound weight. The demand is so great that time cannot be allowed for growth; but in this high-pressure age nothing is allowed to grow old. If we want old wine, it has to be manufactured expressly for us, and as for getting a morsel of old cheese, our grocer says it is hopeless.

A river, however large, can only feed and breed a

given quantity of salmon. As anglers well know, when fish are very plentiful in a stream, they are often lean and poor in flavour. The fish population of such a river as the Tweed must be very large. Indeed, we know that it is, or at least has been so, for, in the quinquennial period between 1841 and 1845, as many as 18,000 salmon, 81,000 grilse, and 69,000 bull trout were taken from it; and it would not be too much to say, that as many were left behind as were taken,—not counting either parr or smolts. Two of the most essential elements of a first-rate salmon or trout water are breeding-ground for the old fish and feeding-ground for the young ones. Without good spawning places, the destruction of ova will be vastly greater than has been indicated, and without good feeding-ground the fish won't thrive. The condition of the proprietors of head-waters has been much improved by recent legislation. They deserved a great deal of sympathy; they had at one time to give their share of the river almost, as one might say, gratis, to the lower proprietors, as a nursery for their benefit. They were deprived of their sport of angling, because the few fish that were allowed to ascend the waters were not in a state to afford the angler any satisfaction. It was a hard case for the upper water and tributary stream men, that they could receive no consideration for the valuable privilege they afforded to the owners of the commercial fisheries on the lower waters, except a few baggit fish. Full justice will

never be done to the upper proprietors till some new plan of working our salmon rivers be hit upon. Were each river worked as if it belonged to one man,—like the Spey,—were the workings of salmon rivers, in fact, made co-operative instead of competitive, there would be a greater chance of justice being done to all the proprietors.

It will be good news for all anglers to learn that pisciculture is extending itself. Messrs. Martin and Gillone, of Tongland, the lessees of the Dee salmon-fisheries in Kirkcudbrightshire,—where, by-the-bye, there is excellent salmon or trout angling at a moderate fee,—have carried it on successfully and on a considerable scale for some years; and in Galway, Mr. Ashworth, since he began the plan of artificial rearing, has increased the produce of his fisheries tenfold. We are instructed by an eminent salmon-farmer, who is too modest to allow us to give his name, that in considering the effect of any practical amount of artificial propagation as compared with the natural process adopted by the parent salmon itself, it is requisite to estimate, firstly, the quantity of ova that a given number of fish annually caught in any river may have deposited in the previous year; and, secondly, the number of years required to produce an average stock of fish varying in weight from six to thirty pounds each. It is rather difficult to fix the average weight of fish caught in various rivers, but the annual number killed may be taken to be, in some salmon rivers, twenty thousand

fish. Experience enables us to arrive at the conclusion that it requires three years to produce marketable fish—from the egg—of the average weight of seven pounds each. The twenty thousand fish annually caught may vary in size from six to thirty pounds. Then again, in spite of the general rule referred to, various fish produce different numbers of ova. A fish of twenty pounds weight has been found to contain nearly twenty-seven thousand eggs, whilst another weighing fourteen pounds would only yield seven thousand eggs. Taking large and small together, it may be assumed that twenty thousand fish had visited their breeding-ground the previous year, and that one-half were females that produced seven thousand eggs each; in other words, that seventy millions of eggs had been left in the rivers annually, and had produced one marketable fish to every three thousand five hundred eggs. This large quantity of seventy millions of fish eggs annually deposited in a river whose produce of marketable salmon only amounts to twenty thousand fish, appears to be a very extraordinary estimate, and leads one to ask what becomes of the surplus?

The Stormontfield breeding boxes and ponds have now been greatly enlarged, so that the proprietors will be able to have an annual breeding, and thus pour into the Tay every year four or five hundred thousand fish! The primary conditions of salmon life, living, space, and spawning ground, are, - as all who have angled on

that river will testify,—to be found in perfection in the Tay. Mr. Ramsbottom, the pisciculturist, says of this river that it is one of the finest breeding streams in the world, and that it would be presumption to limit the number of salmon that might be raised in it were the river cultivated to its capabilities. The main stream has a very large volume of water, and having many tributaries, there is such ample breeding-ground and such an abundance of fish, that if the wonder-working Stormontfield boxes were to throw an annual million of salmon into the river there would still be room enough for all. This is of importance, because a river will only hold a certain population. The sea has ample food for all the salmon kind that visit its deep waters, and as the fish return to the river fat in flesh and rich in flavour, it is not difficult to guess that the food they obtain is fine in quality and abundant in quantity. It is not likely, either, that the food which the ocean affords to the fish will vary much in its quality, but it is well known that the food supplied by some rivers is much less nourishing than that of other waters. The young fish of one river grow fast and have a fine flavour, whilst those of another stream are slow of growth and are lean and comparatively flavourless. In one river a fish of a particular age will weigh nine pounds, but a fish of the same age in a different stream will be a pound or two lighter. Even in the same water, fish of the same age will at different stages of their growth be found to weigh very differently.

Anglers ought to note such facts as these with more exactitude than they generally do.

Were the proprietors of the Severn to enter into pisciculture, say to have a suite of boxes and ponds capable of turning into the main water a million of smolts per annum, and were they to co-operate so as to have only one or perhaps two fishing stations instead of fifty, they would undoubtedly solve the grand problem of how best to conduct a salmon fishery on a large scale. They would, of course, have to guard more and more against the pollution of the stream and its tributaries. The salmon is a dainty animal, and cannot exist except in the cleanest waters. The filthy Clyde has no salmon, neither has the Thames. Other rivers, as many of our anglers are aware, have become depopulated of salmon, and still more of them are likely to suffer from want of fish, unless they become purged of the filth allowed to flow into them. This is a consequence of the rapid rise of manufactories on the banks of waters which were at one time strictly pastoral streams. The question of river pollution is intimately associated with the occupation of the angler. The home of the fish should be pure, and living fish in a stream is the best test of its purity. The future of angling is so bound up in the purification of our waters that we claim permission to illustrate this part of our subject without waiting for the report of the Commissioners who have been appointed to take evidence on the state of our rivers. Alas! our streams are not now what they were a

quarter of a century ago; some of them are but highways for the passage of all kinds of filth, dead dogs and cats,—putrid and foul,—chemical wash, and the abounding liquid refuse of towns, by some uneconomic maladroitness sent to the river that ought to have been kept bright and pellucid, in order to supply the inhabitants with water! In giving evidence before the Commissioners now inquiring into the state of our rivers, the Mayor of Wakefield told how in his young days he had seen the river Calder full of roach and perch, and not a fish can now live in it, nor did his honour think that the water of that river could be made fit to drink by any chemical process whatever. The proprietary of a stream would have also to look after the poachers; for poaching, which was at one time purely a recreation, when the men in the neighbourhood of a salmon river only killed fish for their personal wants, is now a business, and a loathsome business too, seeing that the trade is chiefly in foul fish. The killing of spawning salmon used to be,—it is happily a diminishing practice,—a great cause of hurt to the fisheries. Were the proprietors of any given river to co-operate, there is no doubt but that they could make that river an enormously profitable speculation. What is to hinder a body of anglers from leasing a stream and cultivating it as a salmon farm? They could so regulate the take of fish as to keep out of the market when there was likely to be a glut, and, by employing one or two servants of their own, they could

obtain the profit made by the usual twenty or thirty lessees; they could also regulate and greatly extend their close time, so that an abundant number of fish would be enabled to reach the spawning grounds, which would still further enhance the value of the property. "Routine," as Dr. Esdaile says, "is as fatal to fish as to men, and so torpifies the understanding that self-interest even is insufficient to stimulate to take a simple step in advance in a new direction." The river Spey may be cited as an example of what can be done by good management. It has been told in Parliament, by the Duke of Richmond in person, that the profits of that river, which is mostly his own, were over twelve thousand pounds per annum. To put the case in a stronger way, or as Mr. Russell puts it in his work on "The Salmon," "the weight of salmon produced by the Spey is equal to the weight of mutton annually yielded to the butcher by each of several of the smaller counties of Scotland." And the value of a salmon farm is still greater than that of a mutton farm, because there is no cost price of stock to put down, no food to purchase. As Benjamin Franklin has it, fishes are "bits of silver pulled out of the water." Common fishes may be represented by silver, but the salmon must be represented by good red gold. In the spring time of the year a twenty-five pound salmon on a Bond Street counter may be estimated at seven pounds ten shillings sterling. To conclude this part of our subject, we say that the Spey being providently

managed as the property of one man, although it yields a greatly less number of fish than the Tweed, is far more profitable; and while the Tweed at one time was fished till the middle of October, the Spey closed in August, thus affording a long rest to the breeding fish, and ensuring the success of future seasons.

The reader may think that we are too partial to Scotland, with its lordly salmon and sport-yielding trout, and that we ought not to slight Wales, which some anglers describe as a perfect paradise. We have never fished there, but believe there is really as fine sport to be obtained in the principality, as there is in Cumberland and Westmoreland, where the lakes teem with trout and char. Men who visit these places during their few weeks of yearly holiday, and enjoy the sport they afford in temperance, may for a time "throw physic to the dogs." All we say is, that for real angling the sportsman must leave behind him the baited waters of the Thames, and the dace and chub which have hitherto made him happy, and take to the hills and dales of Scotland and Wales, and the capture of trout and salmon. Of course each angler has his own peculiar tastes, his likes and dislikes, both as to the rivers in which he prefers to fish, and the kinds of fish he prefers to take. We prefer an angling competition on Loch Leven, but many prefer "the Hoxton Derby." One man thinks any fish but the salmon below his notice; another man will prefer to angle in

the broads of Norfolk, whilst many an enthusiastic fisher has to be contented with an hour or two's permissive sport on the ornamental water of the London parks. Exclusives, again, hie themselves away to the fiords of Norway. In fact, anglers are being driven abroad because of the foul state of many of our own rivers.

Whilst the polluted rivers are being purified, and arrangements are being made to throw on to the hungry land that débris of the numerous mills and manufacture which would so enrich the soil, why should not men angle in the sea? We have over and over again tried sea-fishing as a sport, and can pronounce it excellent. We have speared mullet in the basin of Arcachon, we have caught single herrings in the bay of Wick, we have killed saithe in the Clyde, we have handled a smelt net on the coast of Holland, we have taken mackerel in Largo Bay, we have "howked" for eels in the broads of Norfolk, have netted whitebait below Woolwich, caged lobsters at the Orkney Islands, "trotted" for whelks everywhere, dug sand eels from the banks of Fisherrow, dredged for oysters at the Pandores, caught sea trout at Lamlash, handled gobies at Joppa, seen a shoal of pilchards landed in the south of England, participated in the cod fishing at the Wellbank, taken parr wholesale out of the Isla, at the Brig o' Riven, and viewed a whale-hunt in the Frith of Forth! Therefore, we can vouch that sea-fishing has in it all the elements of sport,—and it will yet become

fashionable! Does not the Duke of Argyll occasionally relieve the tedium of his intellectual pursuits by going out to the Loch Fyne herring fishery, and do we not know a noble Marquis who brings in his fish in the herring season, and sells his "take" on the quay at Dunbar? The angling apparatus required by sea-anglers, too, is of the simplest kind, and is generally provided by those who have boats for hire in the villages of the coast. There are places on the English sea-board where this kind of sport may be pursued with the greatest possible success, and after a thoroughly economic manner. It is no joke to play a thirty-pound cod fish, and a large conger eel will try the powers of the most stalwart man we know. Crab fishing among the rocks is good sport, and the spearing of flat fish is not altogether devoid of excitement. Many a pleasant hour might be spent on the glancing waters of the sea in search of the minor monsters of the deep.

In penning the foregoing remarks we have not attempted to dogmatise or dictate in the matter of angling. Nor have we ventured to deal in the slang of the art, or to impart instruction to the novice. As has been hinted, angling cannot be effectively learned from a book. Practice is the one thing needful. A student would learn more from a day passed with Francis, Stewart, or Russell, than he can ever hope to learn from the books of these gentlemen, good as they are. Angling, as all the world knows or should know,

was one of the chief recreations of Christopher North. He has described his work on the rivers with the enthusiasm of a keen fisher, but he says,—and we believe him,—that he never learned the art from books. In fact, the very best anglers cannot write. We knew a great angler living on the banks of Till who could not sign his name; yet he knew more about fish and fishing than all the writing anglers of the age. Persons about to angle for the first time should get a practised friend to “coach” them, and they should commence in a quiet and humble way, and they can begin on any “bit” of water that is within reach. They need not invest in an expensive salmon rod till they have been a few years at the business! Try a worm to begin with. The art of fly fishing will come in good time. New modes of angling are difficult to find out. There are experts who, every year, invent and manufacture new flies, many of them being very unlike anything ever seen in nature. But after all that can be said or done, what the angler desires is a load of fish. Indeed, the crave for fish with some men is so insatiable that they are not too particular as to how they take them. Let them but fill their baskets, never mind the *modus operandi*! Other anglers, again, will treat with contempt all modes of fishing but fly fishing. Worm fishing to some is contemptible. Such *cognoscenti* are great in rods and tackle; they have the slang of the art at the end of their tongue ever ready for use; but we like the quiet fisher best. He

is more deadly at the business ; and, as has been already hinted, the gipsy will beat most of our anglers in obtaining a trout or a salmon, and that too with the humblest kind of apparatus. Angling can at least be praised for this,—that, like fox-hunting, it is a purely recreative sport. It can never become, except to a very few, a business or trade ; neither can it ever become a business for betting on, such as is horse-racing. We cannot charge our recollection with ever having seen as much as one shilling change hands on a bet about fishing.

Some anglers hold that their year does not commence till May,—that they cannot fish till they find the May fly upon the water ; while others, more determined for sport, are on the river side early in April, and keen salmon fishers will have a pull at the monarch of the brook in February. Again, there are enthusiasts who will be at work before the end of January. These are like the gouty man in the well-known engraving. They would angle in a tub in their dining-room rather than not fish ! Men who never obtain their annual holidays till August or September, or who do not live near a river, do not obtain the full pleasure of the angler, however fond they may be of the sport. The country, to our mind, is more beautiful in May than at any other season of the year ; the leaves are greener, the water is more crystalline, the birds chirrup more cheerfully on the trees, and the fish, after a stormy winter, “ feed ” with greater willingness than at the

fall of the year. Happy is the angler who is able to pursue his vocation during the balmy springtime, when the surrounding scenery is surpassing in its beauty, and fresh from the easel of Nature, the sublimest of all painters.

ON YACHTING.

A FEW years ago the wildest Anglo-maniac among our gallant neighbours would have thought and spoken of going afloat for pleasure, as the Latin poet sang of the first man who committed his frail boat to the cruel sea. There exists, however, in these latter days a "Society of Paris Sailing Club," so called, presided over by a French commodore, and consisting of some thirty-two vessels, from one to thirty tons; and, with scarcely an exception, all these yachts belong to French owners. Whether Commodore Benôit Champy's tiny squadron disport themselves on the lower reaches of the Seine, or tempt, from time to time, the rougher waters of the Channel, we cannot tell, but it is pleasant to observe that French sport is no longer limited to the Turf. Nor is it at Paris only that the sport of Yachting has found French disciples. At Cannes, almost, it is true, a British colony, we find established "Le Cercle Nautique de la Méditerranée," with a French commodore and vice-commodore, and some twenty-four small craft, owned, with only six or seven exceptions, by

Frenchmen. Probably here, too, the original impulse came from England, or rather from English yachtsmen cruising in the Mediterranean; but it is not the less gratifying to note that both these French clubs, at Paris and at Cannes, are principally composed of native yachtsmen. In the regatta held at Havre, in honour of the International Maritime Exhibition, a prize, to which the Emperor contributed, was to be sailed for by yachts of French construction and belonging to French owners. One yacht answering to that description was entered in the Channel match from Havre to Cherbourg, all the rest of the competitors being English. The "Imperial Yacht Club" of St. Petersburg owes its foundation to the Grand Duke Constantine, himself a sailor, and a frequent visitor to the Isle of Wight, where, a true descendant of Peter the Great, he has doubtless appreciated the national importance to a maritime State of a sport so favourable to the science of naval architecture, and to the employment of the population of the coasts, as yachting. Of the twelve vessels, all of considerable tonnage, belonging to the St. Petersburg Club, six are owned by members of the Imperial family. The Emperor's yacht, called after our Queen, was built at Cowes. Russia is not an essentially maritime State; nor are the majority of the wealthy classes in Russia in the habit of seeking the seaside, except for baths, gaieties, or the climate. Yachting in Russia is, in fact, an English importation. Russian yachts come from English yards. The Royal

Swedish Yacht Club is no doubt a more genuinely national institution. It counted recently thirty craft of various tonnage, and is under the patronage of Prince Oscar, who, both as a sailor and a poet, can appreciate the merits and the charms of the sport. The Swedes are skilful yacht-builders, as the *Sverige* and the *Aurora Borealis* have shown. Among our Swedish yachting brethren there are, however, one or two unmistakably English names, as there are also in the Royal Netherlands Yacht Club, and indeed in all foreign Yacht Clubs of our acquaintance. In justice to our Scandinavian comrades, we must remember that if they have borrowed yachting from England, it is from their Scandinavian ancestors that the peaceful English searovers of the nineteenth century fetch their birth. And our jolly Dutch neighbours, who spend as much genius and energy in literally keeping their heads above water as some other nations do in maintaining their rank as Great Powers, are certainly no mere imitative yachtsmen. To their prowess at sea our own naval history bears ample witness. As pleasure-sailors, Dutchmen are entitled at least to the merit of having given us a noun, which many yachtsmen never succeeded in spelling correctly. Dutchmen certainly built the first "yachts," though Dutch yachting seems originally to have consisted in towing and being towed sluggishly up and down a canal in a sort of cut-down Noah's ark. Some antiquarians have ascribed to the Venetians,—those Dutchmen of the Adriatic, as a Hollander might

call them,—the honour of having invented this amusement. It may be so. But to all the intents and purposes of our present essay, which deals with yachting as an organized national sport, there can be no question that that sport belongs to the British Isles. The gentlemen at ease, who, on either side of the Atlantic, go down to the sea for pleasure, and not for business, or profit, or duty, will be found, with very few exceptions, to combine in their blood the great kindred elements of the Saxon and the Scandinavian ancestry. It is to the Pagan pirates from the Saxon coasts and to the Slayers of the North, of the ninth and tenth centuries, and to the “Brethren of the Coast” of the Tudor times, that the harmless yachtsman of the Solent or the Thames owes the passion that urges him afloat.

In claiming for yachting as a “national sport” of the British Islanders a certain distinction, we are not insisting on the obvious fact that it is absolutely free from those parasitical industries or vices of gambling and betting which unfortunately degrade so many of our land sports, and have reached even our professional fresh-water aquatics. We do not mean to say that yacht-racing has wholly escaped those sharp practices and crooked arts which have wrested the noble sport of horse-racing from its original purpose as an encouragement to the breeding of the finest and fleetest animals of the purest blood. We shall have occasion to touch presently upon some analogous corruptions which have grown into the customs and usages of

yacht-racing, but which, we are happy to believe, are already tending to disappear rather than to increase. But it has escaped that widespread popular demoralization which notoriously surrounds and infests every racing-stable in the kingdom, and has created a new and disreputable profession, fruitful in crime and misery. From these diseased excrescences Yachting, even in the limited sense of yacht-racing, is, perhaps by the essential conditions and circumstances of the pursuit, singularly free. We do not exalt the practice of yacht-sailing to the rank of a virtue on this account. The absence of corrupting influences and habits is to its credit, no doubt, but only to its credit as the absence of some vices is to the credit of early youth or of old age. A man may be ruined by yachting, if in order to keep a yacht he live beyond his income. He cannot be ruined by yachting as many a racing man is ruined by the Turf. Yachting, like any other amusement, may lead a man into many ways of mischief; but the mischief will neither be the fault of the yacht, nor of the pleasure and sport of cruising. Yachting will always be a tolerably select, if not an exclusively aristocratic, sport; and the more sea-going it is, the manlier, the healthier, the more unexceptionable it becomes. One obvious reason for the comparative innocence of yachting is, that it takes a man away from the artificial pleasures of "the world," breathes into his lungs the purest air, and brings him into close communion with the serenity, the simplicity, the free-

dom, and the repose of Nature. Verily, the sea-life returns the love of its adepts with usury. It strengthens and braces their limbs, steadies their nerves, clears their brains, refreshes their spirits, cools and calms their tempers, appeases and consoles their hearts, and renovates every fibre in their moral and physical frames.

Another sufficient reason for the comparative selectness of yachting is, that a sea-going yachtsman must, in the most exact sense of the word, have a "stomach" for the sport. Now, a sea-going stomach is,—happily, perhaps,—by no means universal, even among Great Britons, who, as Captain Marryat used to insist, should be, one and all, more or less sailors. This previous question of a stomach will always limit the number of active sporting yachtsmen,—more effectually than that other previous question of an income sufficient to buy, fit out, and keep a yacht afloat for four months of the year. Probably in no country in the world,—excepting always the United States,—can there be found so many sea-going stomachs as in the United Kingdom. Nor should it be forgotten that in no seas throughout the surface of the globe are finer opportunities and excuses for sea-sickness to be found than in the waters of Great Britain and Ireland. Here some unfortunate migratory reader, who has made a voyage to Australia and back in a Blackwall liner, or some soldier who has been boxed up for ninety days in a transport, or some man of business who has crossed the "Pond" half-a-dozen times in one of the magnificent Cunard steamers,

interrupts us with a protest. "You know," he says, "I'm never sick. But I most cordially accept Dr. Johnson's definition of life at sea,—'a prison, with the chance of being drowned.' Intolerable monotony,—a dull, insuperable sense of discomfort and uneasiness, even under the most favourable conditions of weather, and with the pleasantest passengers." To such a protest we can only reply, as the monk of the Camaldoli did to the too-enthusiastic tourist, "Cosi passando!" Three months in a packet-ship may well be weary work; ten days in a steamer, with an engine always thumping, and a deadly-lively mob of intimate strangers always in your way, may well be a purgatorial infliction. But, in a vessel of your own,—in a floating home with a choice of companions of congenial tastes and equal temper,—with the faces about you of your own ship's company,—honest fellows who "ever with a frolic welcome take the thunder or the sunshine,"—with your own times and seasons for sailing and staying at anchor, your own pick of ports to visit or to pass, Yachting is what the monastic life appeared to the tourist, rather than what it was to the old monk's life-long experience.

The Yachting world is perhaps more heterogeneously composed than any other of our numerous sporting confederations. From a Lord Chancellor to a fashionable music-master, all sorts and conditions of men have belonged to it. Parliament and Downing Street, the Stock Exchange, the clergy, the bar, the

medical profession, the army and navy, the civil service, the fine arts, literature, commerce, Manchester, and country squires, may all be found side by side in the club lists. Some of the boldest riders and best shots are the most adventurous and devoted, of yachtsmen. All the three kingdoms are represented in the sport. We take pleasure in recording that in the history of yachting, the first in point of date, and certainly not the second in all the qualities that ennoble the sport, stands Ireland. No better or braver yachtsmen than Irishmen exist; no heartier or more hospitable shipmates; no stauncher or more thorough sea-going vessels than those that hail from the Cove of Cork and the Bay of Dublin! Their home is on the blue water, and their daily cruising-ground is on the edge of soundings. Among no set of men, let us confess, are there more eccentric characters, or more strongly-marked varieties of species, than among the yachtsmen of the United Kingdom. For example, take the man who keeps a yacht as a sort of Greenwich dinner afloat, en permanence; the man who keeps a yacht as a racing-machine; the man who keeps a yacht like a man-of-war; the man who keeps a yacht as what the Chinese would call a "family boat;" the man who buys a yacht for a single cruise in the Mediterranean or the Baltic, and sells it on his return, and never goes yachting again; the man who keeps a yacht because he loves the sea, and the freedom and quiet of a sea life; the man who keeps a yacht as a

trawler; the man who keeps a yacht for the love of seamanship, and who is his own sailing-master; the man who keeps a yacht, and never stirs beyond the Isle of Wight; the man who goes round to all the regattas, and never enters for a match; the pert little London cockney who, as poor Albert Smith depicted him, sleeps in a chest in Margate harbour, within a few yards of a comfortable hotel, dresses like the hero of a nautical drama at the Surrey, and,—to do him justice,—knows how to handle the pack-thread, the walking-stick, and the pocket handkerchiefs of his own morsel of a cutter, which he thinks as big as a line-of-battle ship;—there are these, and we know not how many other originals.

Let us show as briefly as possible in what a noble national sense Yachting, as an organised sport, deserves most honourable mention. We are not writing about such acrobatic vanities as “canoe” sailing, which is to yachting what circus-riding is to fox-hunting,—however worthy of admiration, as a somewhat self-conscious exhibition of personal daring and endurance, such imitations of the aquatic sports of our ancient British forefathers may be.

In 1867 there were thirty-one yacht clubs in the United Kingdom,—and, with two exceptions, sea-going yacht squadrons,—bearing the Admiralty warrants; and about 1,740 yachts, of which 240 only were under twelve tons' admeasurement. The total tonnage of these yachts amounted to about 55,700

tons. Allowing one man for every ten tons, we find here a force of 5,700 men,—and boys,—employed in the yachting service. The Royal Thames Yacht Club,—it is the grant of the Admiralty warrant that confers the title of “Royal,”—stands first on the list in date of establishment, the Royal Western of the sister island comes second, and the Royal Cork third. But in justice to our gallant Irish brethren it should be recorded that the Royal Cork is probably the oldest yacht club in the world. It was established as long ago as 1720, although it was not until 1827 that the “Old Cork Water Club” was re-christened the Royal Cork Yacht Club. The earliest record of the Royal Yacht Squadron of England,—as it is now called,—is that of a meeting held in 1815 at the Thatched House Tavern, at which Earl de Grey presided, in the capacity, we suppose, of commodore. The seal of the R.Y.S. bears date 1812, in which year we may assume the original Club was established. But that distinguished society, which is now regarded by all as the head-quarters of the yachting world, comes only tenth on the list, according to the date of its Admiralty warrant, having been preceded in this privilege by the Royal Thames, the Royal Northern,—of Scotland,—the Royal Western,—of Ireland,—the Royal Cork, the Royal Eastern,—of Scotland,—the Royal Western,—of England,—the Royal Southern,—of England,—the Royal St. George’s, of Ireland,—and the Royal London. The Admiralty warrant confers much more than a title;

it constitutes, in fact, the "pleasure navy" of the United Kingdom; it gives the yachts, at home and abroad, a distinct rank second only to that of men-of-war; permits them to carry one or other of the ensigns of the fleet; exempts them from the payment of tonnage dues in British and foreign ports,—local dues on going into basins or private harbours of course excepted; enables yacht-owners to remove their furniture or property from place to place in the United Kingdom without coasting license, to deposit wine and spirits in the Customs warehouses on arrival from foreign ports free of duty, until reshipped for another voyage; and authorises the yachts to take up man-of-war moorings, and their boats to go alongside and land company at the King's sally-port at Portsmouth, and similar landing-places of her Majesty's ships'-boats at the other naval ports. All the foreign Powers of Europe have granted the like privileges in their ports to the yachts of the United Kingdom bearing the Admiralty warrant. No yacht on hire is allowed to carry the colours of the club, or to enjoy the privileges of the Admiralty warrant; and any infringement of the local laws and customs in foreign ports forfeits the warrant, and entails expulsion from the club. When the Admiralty first recognised the public policy of granting their warrants to yacht clubs, no doubt it was not only a privilege that was conceded, but a certain responsibility that was intended to be enforced.

The crews of these 1,740 yachts come from all parts

of the kingdom; principally, it seems, from the Isle of Wight, which even in the time of Queen Elizabeth was a royal yachting station. In the days of Queen Bess there were twenty-nine royal yachts,—that is, vessels in her Majesty's service employed for conveying great personages of State,—always stationed at Cowes. A yacht was understood, in those days, to be a small ship with one deck, carrying from eight to ten guns, and averaging from 30 to 160 tons.

The principal yacht seamen of our day come from Cowes, Bembridge, St. Helens, and Yarmouth,—Isle of Wight,—from Portsmouth, Southampton, Lymington, Poole, Dartmouth, Plymouth, and the fishing villages adjoining these two latter ports. There are some, too, from Gravesend, and other places on the Thames and the coast of Essex. The Cowes men are considered to be, in many respects, the best for yacht-racing; but otherwise there undoubtedly exists among the most influential yachtsmen an objection, too probably founded on experience, to Cowes men. Many of them are said to be lazy, insubordinate, and insolent. Our own impression is, that the Cowes yacht-sailors are for the most part a superior class of men in smartness and intelligence, and in general character, if properly treated,—that is, if placed under a strict and firm, but judicious sailing-master, and kept at a proper distance by the owner of the yacht. There are obvious disadvantages in shipping a whole crew from any one place, and in taking a sailing-master and a

crew from the same port. It becomes an effort of will to get away from a port where your whole ship's company reside. The sailing-master finds it difficult to maintain his authority over men who, as an Eton boy would say, "know him at home." A Cowes sailing-master is rather apt to be on too friendly terms with the tradesmen who fit out and "find" the yachts in everything that is necessary or superfluous. In short, a Cowes crew have some of the defects of the servants' hall. But, taken singly, we believe a Cowes yacht-sailor to be above the average of his class, and a certain proportion of Cowes men to be very valuable elements in a crew, which should always be mixed.

What becomes of these yacht seamen from October to May? Well; there are usually from twenty to thirty yachts cruising in the Mediterranean in the winter; some with a whole family,—children and nurses,—on board. But how do the crews of the yachts that are laid up on the mud all the winter obtain a livelihood? Many of the men who have been employed in racing-yachts all the summer remain idle all the winter, as the crews of racing-yachts get an increase of pay on the days when the yacht is engaged in a race. Many of the Isle of Wight men (from St. Helens and Bembridge) take to fishing and to pilot-boats during the winter. The Portsmouth men are pretty generally watermen, and return to that occupation when the yachting season is over. It should be added that there are first-class yachtmen from Harwich and the Essex

coast who are oyster-dredgers, and who go back to their business in August or September. Some of the Southampton men may be found perhaps in the great packet steamers out of the yachting season, but we should say that, as a rule, few of the five or six thousand men engaged every summer in the yachting service engage themselves for distant voyages in the winter. A few yacht-owners,—especially naval men,—prefer to employ man-of-war's men as more amenable to discipline, and less disposed to give themselves fine gentlemen airs, than the Isle of Wight men. Yet it may be questioned whether seamen accustomed to the discipline of men-of-war make the best crew for a yacht: seamen who have only served in square-rigged ships are seldom the fittest for small fore-and-aft rigged craft. A sailing-master who had only served in square-rigged ships would be absolutely run away with by one of these cutters or schooners which a Cowes man can put through all the figures of a skating-match; or, as we once heard an old hand say, "make her do everything but speak." It has been suggested that every owner of a yacht bearing the Admiralty warrant should,—by a general concert of all the Royal Clubs,—undertake to employ no man who had not joined the Royal Naval Reserve. Of course the Admiralty could not take the initiative in suggesting such a condition. But it would certainly be a fair and honourable recognition, on the part of yachtsmen, of the privileges they enjoy in consideration

of the services they are supposed to render to the nation. Nor, we think, could yacht sailors, although perhaps more than any other class of seamen averse to service in a man-of-war, decline employment on terms which would involve no real hardship or interference with their liberty, while their value as yacht sailors would be sensibly enhanced, and the country would receive a reinforcement of superior and available seamen, sufficient in an emergency to take a flying squadron to sea.

Many of our finest and roomiest schooners belong to owners who seldom, if ever, transgress beyond the sheltered waters of the Solent. Many never go beyond Cherbourg, or the Channel Isles, or the western ports. But, if there are conspicuously home-staying yachts, there are also cruisers that have "sailed beyond the sunset and the baths of all the western stars," doubled the Hope and the Horn, and encountered and defied the icy gales of the Polar seas. Five-and-twenty years ago the Wanderer schooner was astonishing the natives of the South Sea Islands. In 1841 the late Rajah Brooke made his memorable expedition to the Eastern Archipelago in the Royalist, and founded a kingdom. Need we cite the Corsair cutter, a famous cup-winner in her time? She defeated the Talisman cutter, in a match from Cowes, round the Eddystone and back in a gale of wind, by four minutes, and is now, we believe, an ornament of Australian waters. The Albatross cutter went out to Sydney, and so did

the *Chance* schooner. The *Nancy Dawson* schooner circumnavigated the globe. The *Themis* schooner returned a year or two ago from a voyage round the world. The famous Marquis of Waterford visited New York in his brig, the *Charlotte*, and, the story goes, jumped overboard in a gale of wind in the Atlantic, for a wager. The *Alerte* cutter is remembered at the Antipodes. The *St. Ursula* schooner fetched New York in thirty days from the Clyde. There are more British burgees than British pendants in the Mediterranean every winter; and, if proof were wanting that the same spirit animates the fighting and pleasure navy of Great Britain, and that our yachts are not the butterflies of a summer hour, we might recall the service of a schooner of the R.Y.S. on the coast of Syria, when, in the absence of a man-of-war to protect the Christians, she anchored as close to the shore as her draught of water would permit, and, with her little deck guns run out and double-shotted, saved the Christian population of a Syrian village from massacre.

Every summer sees a fleet of British yachts hovering round the coasts of Norway, while the owners are salmon-fishing in the fiords. The late Sir Hyde Parker, in the *Louisa* schooner, was, we believe, the first to set the example. He has been followed, among others, by Mr. Graves, M.P., Commodore of the Royal Mersey Club, who published a most agreeable account of his cruise in the *Ierne*; by Lord Dufferin, whose

delightful "Letters from High Latitudes" made the Foam for ever famous, as the first British yacht that ever showed her colours at Spitzbergen; by Mr. Rathbone, Mr. Lamont, Mr. Brassey; and last, but not least, by the little ten-ton Romp, which frisked one fine morning into a Swedish harbour. A cutter of that modest tonnage accompanied the British fleet to the Baltic in 1854. These instances are enough to show that our Transatlantic kinsmen performed no superhuman exploit, when they crossed the Atlantic in the Sylvie, the American, the Gipsy, the Henrietta, the Fleetwing, and the Vesta. If we are disposed to smile at some owners of big schooners who seldom venture out as far as the chops of the British Channel, we may take comfort in knowing that many of our American friends, who hail from the "Elysian Fields," are bantered by their countrymen for their very moderate cruises up and down the Bay of New York. But it is fair to remark, that out of the forty schooners and sloops of which the New York Yacht Squadron is composed, a very fair proportion have done more than any yachts afloat to sustain the character of a sport of all others most congenial to the energy and enterprise of the Anglo-Saxon family. We shall neither exaggerate nor undervalue the importance of the visits of the American yachts to our waters, when we say, that the easy victory of the America schooner in the Solent over eight English cutters and seven schooners in August, 1857, was well won, though not quite on equal

terms. The *America* was a vessel of 208 tons, O.M.; length over all 100 feet; draught of water aft 10 feet; beam 23 feet. She had crossed the Atlantic under reduced spars and sails, and made a tolerably comfortable passage of it. But she was built all for racing, and the English yachts that sailed against her were about as fit to contend with her, as a roadster with a winner of the Two Thousand. From the moment when she came into English hands, and had her bulwarks raised, and was converted into an ordinary English yacht, her glory as a cup-winner departed. She was beaten in the following year by the old *Arrow* cutter, and by the *Mosquito* cutter, the latter, it is true, a racer all over, and an excellent sea boat into the bargain.

The American schooner *Gipsy*, which had beaten the celebrated *Maria* sloop yacht in a breeze, and was considered by her builders twenty-five per cent. faster than the *America*, was sold in England, and handsomely beaten in a private match by Mr. Weld's *Alarm*. Both the *America* and the *Gipsy* were built for racing only, and, though they crossed the Atlantic, were not adapted to the ordinary service of an English yacht. It is no reproach to a vessel to observe, that she could only win in certain hands. Some horses are only good to win when ridden by certain jockeys. The Americans did their English yachting brethren valuable service in showing them a longer, a finer, and a bolder bow,—the bow of the *America* was almost that of a Japanese boat;—

and in teaching them to lace their mainsails to the boom, to make their canvas to stand as flat as a board, and to set their masts up without a "rake." Perhaps the necessity for lacing, however, is now superseded by the new patent "graduated" sails. The three American yachts which sailed a match from New York to Cowes in the mid-winter of 1866, would certainly have found many dangerous competitors in a match in the British Channel. These schooners were not like the *America*, mere racing craft; their sea-going qualities were tested to the utmost at every point in the course of a stormy Atlantic passage, and were found not unequal to the strain. Handled, as they were, with admirable skill and courage, they fully deserved all the honours they received. They are vessels of much greater power, however, than their reputed tonnage represents. According to the English system of admeasurement, they would show a much higher register. Their spars and sails were such as only a vessel of extraordinary power could carry with safety. In a gale of wind there is scarcely an English yacht that could beat them. In light winds, and a time race over a short course, their powerful qualities would probably be of little avail against yachts more lightly rigged and ballasted. But British yachtsmen would do well to note, that the Americans made the Atlantic passage under comparatively easy sail, and that, of the three rivals, the winner of the stakes was the most cautiously and snugly sailed. In their internal fittings, comfort

was certainly sacrificed, in some measure, to racing considerations. Nor does this detract from the merits of the craft. There is a possibility, we hear, though not, we fear, a probability, of a match being made to New York from Ryde. One spirited yachtsman—a member of the Royal London—has put down his name for £500 towards a prize. We should be glad to see such a match contested by some of our crack schooners. It would teach them the folly of “carrying on,” and persuade our yacht builders and owners to trust more to trim and shape and seamanship than to excessive spars and driving canvas, and a dead weight of lead or iron ballast laid along from floor to keel to counteract the “tophamper.” On all accounts, it would be creditable to English yachtsmen to respond to the generous challenge of their kinsmen beyond the Atlantic by appearing in the Bay of New York with their racing-flags at the fore.

About a quarter of a century ago an active and zealous member of the R.Y.S., who owned a fine sea-going cutter of the old school, proposed to sail a match against all the world round the British Islands. His offer was treated as a joke; but it pointed at least in the right direction, as a protest against the then prevailing habit of keeping yachts for racing only, and without reference to sea-going capabilities. In those days an evil analogous to that which still afflicts the Turf flourished in the yachting world, and produced similar effects. The practice of running two-year-olds,

and of training for high speed for short distances, has resulted, if we are to believe the most trustworthy testimony, in deteriorating the breed of useful horses in this country,—that is, of hunters, roadsters, and carriage horses. In like manner the production of a class of vessels good for racing only, and utterly unfit for any other purpose, threatened to deprive yachting of all its substantial merits as a national sport. Yachts without a bulkhead or any cabin fittings were sent round the coast to all the regattas, under the charge of a special sailing-master and a scratch crew. These cup-hunters were worn and torn to pieces by this usage, and good for nothing except to race, and race, and race again, while yachts which stood no chance in a sailing-match under such conditions were fulfilling regularly all the purposes of seaworthy and sea-going craft. It is highly praiseworthy on the part of the sailing committees of the leading clubs that they should have seen the error of this invidious distinction between racing and sea-going vessels, and have resolved to put an end to a most injurious system. There is, unfortunately, as yet, no permanent and general committee of reference, analogous to the Jockey Club, and composed of flag officers of the Royal Yacht Clubs, to draw up and interpret a code of rules and regulations applicable to all yacht-racing, and enforced by all clubs bearing the Admiralty warrant, for the summary settlement of all disputes. This is a desideratum which we have good reason to hope will be supplied ere long,

thanks to the efforts of the most eminent yachtsmen, particularly of the present Commodore and Vice-Commodore of the Royal Victoria Yacht Club, who have always insisted on sea-going trim for all matches within their jurisdiction. Already, we would fain believe, the days are past and gone when, in a race, men were stowed away below to run over from side to side of the yacht as she lay over on either tack, to trim her as she turned, because every pound of ballast had been shelled out to lighten her. The bad practice of shifting or trimming ballast has been decisively condemned by nearly all the leading clubs of the three kingdoms. There is, however, a diversity of opinion, not so much upon the practice itself as upon the means of preventing it. One of the great difficulties of prevention is the want of uniformity in the rules of the various clubs. It has been suggested that a simple rule forbidding yachts engaged in a match to carry more than their proper complement of hands,—one for every ten tons,—would meet the case. All hands would thus be wanted on deck, and none could be spared below. Each vessel might be required to send a representative on board another to certify that the rules of the race were strictly observed. Occasionally difficulties arise in a contest which only a central board of reference, applying a carefully-considered code of rules, can adjust. For example; it was once an almost universally accepted sailing regulation that yachts could not anchor during a race without forfeiting

the prize. Some years since, in a match on the Thames, a coal-smack came bearing down upon the winning yacht, and the latter, eager not to lose an inch of the way, and trusting in vain that the huge barge would put her helm up, held on her course until, to save herself from a collision, she was compelled to drop her kedge. Notwithstanding this mishap, the famous little Phantom got her anchor up, and was off again the moment the danger was passed, and, still leading, held on her way, rounding the flag-buoy nine minutes before the Mystery, gaining on her every mile to the end of the race, and finally winning in a canter. A protest was entered when her owner claimed the cup, because he had dropped his kedge, though she was winning easy from first to last, and only anchored for a moment to avoid destruction. Here was a case in which a general Committee of Reference would have quashed a most unreasonable protest, and assigned the cup to the unquestionable winner. The New York Yacht Club, whose sailing regulations appear to be most carefully drawn, permits anchoring during a race, and it can hardly be doubted that the permission is, on the whole, judicious; although, in the case of a drifting match in a dead calm with a strong tide running, the reason for forbidding a contesting yacht to anchor is obvious enough. Some other questions have lately been under consideration of the Sailing Committees, such as the restrictions upon canvas and spars in match-sailing. Opinions are much divided

on these points. Some would insist on racing yachts being restricted to "all plain sail;" others demand unlimited liberty of canvas. Without presuming to speak dogmatically on the subject, we would take the liberty to suggest the possibility of fixing a happy medium between the pedantry of restriction to all plain sail only, and the ingenious devices which are carried to excess in the Thames. Of the two extremes of license or restriction, surely the former is the less objectionable. Wetting sails, or "skeeting," may fairly be left to the discretion of each yacht. The principles enforced in yacht-racing, it should not be forgotten, are apt to affect the whole character of yachting as a national sport. We should not regret any regulations which would tend to the reduction in ordinary cruising of both spars and canvas. The complaint of all good sailing-masters of crack yachts now is that they are over-ballasted, over-canvassed, over-sparred. Reduce the sails and the sticks, and there is no need of a lead lining to the kelson to make the yacht stiff enough in a sea-way. Reduce the heavy ballast and the spars at once, and the wear and tear of the vessel will be proportionately decreased, and, with the wear and tear, the continued necessity for repairs on the patent slip. Yachts, like men-of-war, seldom come to grief in a sea-way, because they are admirably found and handled; they wear out rapidly because they are torn to pieces by excessive spars, and by the yachtsman's proverbial love of "carrying on,"

as if a vessel could be driven faster by dragging her lee quarter through the sea.

There can be no doubt of the progressive improvement in yacht-building during the last twenty years. Cutters like the Hebe, the Ganymede, the Aurora,—which were considered prodigies of speed and beauty in their day, would appear to the present generation of yachtsmen as antiquated as the Great Harry among the Channel fleet. These goodly old tubs, with their bluff bows and flat floors, possessed qualities not to be despised even in our time, and not always found in the faster and more elegant craft of a later date. They were stiff, weatherly, safe, powerful, and comfortable vessels, fit for any service, not absolutely dull sailers on a wind, and, with their sheets eased off the least bit, speedy enough to sail round and round a square-rigged ship under a press of canvas, as if she were at anchor. Perhaps they plunged rather heavily in a short confused Channel loup, but they would lay to in the heaviest gale “like a duck,” and run before the fiercest following sea without taking a pailful of water on deck. They steered like a boat, and on short tacks in smooth water behaved with all the nimbleness and alertness of the airiest of waltzers in a crowded ball-room. To the yachts of to-day, they were what the race-horses of two generations back were to the favourites for this year’s Derby,—slower for short distances, less fine about the legs, but stouter, more serviceable, and more enduring. As roadsters or

teamsters of the sea, they were unexceptionably sure-footed, safe, and clever goers. To judge from a specimen, exhibited in a Club-house, of the timbers of a schooner-yacht, purchased by one of the most experienced of our yachtsmen, we should not hesitate to add that these vessels of the old school were built with a solidity and a sincerity which are now as rarely to be found in the construction of our yachts as in the walls of our town houses. Nor must it be supposed that there was no such thing as racing-power in the yachts of that ancient epoch. Happily we can appeal to two survivors of the pre-American period to rebuke the conceit of an age which is apt to fancy it has nothing to learn from its grandfathers. Look at the old Alarm and the old Arrow, both designed by that immortal yachtsman, the late Mr. Weld. The Arrow was built more than six-and-thirty years ago. After her defeat by the Pearl,—a famous cutter of that period, belonging to the Marquis of Anglesey,—Mr. Weld laid her up on the mud, in disgrace, and built the Alarm, as a cutter. Neither as a cutter, nor under her later rig as a schooner, could the Alarm find her equal, on either side of the Atlantic, while she remained in Mr. Weld's hands. Her victories were as many as the matches she sailed in. The Arrow, after languishing some years, was bought by Mr. Chamberlayne, who lengthened her bow. She defeated the America in splendid style, and, until the present summer, had only been beaten by a younger sister

of her own,—the Lulworth, a cutter some twenty-two tons smaller, and designed also by Mr. Weld. In 1863 she defeated the Phryne, a cutter then just launched by one of the ablest and most successful of our yacht-builders, and which has since become renowned for her achievements.

There is, we fear, considerable faultiness in the materials of which yachts are built at present, and if yacht-builders were exposed to the searching criticisms of a committee on the Naval Estimates, some damaging exposures might be made of the state of a yacht's timbers after two years' service. We are bound to express our belief that, if unsound timber is put into a yacht, the owner has often himself to thank for the purchase of a bad article. There is no warranty of the soundness of a yacht's timbers, as of the wind and limb of a horse. Nine out of ten yachtsmen build or buy their vessels in the dark. They seldom, if ever, take the trouble to have the vessel rigorously and systematically inspected while she is on the builder's slip. Perhaps they leave this duty of inspection to the future sailing-master, who is a native of the place, and who cannot be expected to quarrel with the builder. Probably, in most cases, they would not be much the wiser if they depended on their own inspection. Then they are almost invariably in a desperate hurry to get the yacht finished and fitted out, and it may be absolutely impossible for the most honest of builders to provide properly

seasoned timbers at the shortest notice. The majority of yachtsmen who buy their vessels,—and who should be advised never to buy between April and October,—are at once too hasty and too uninstructed to pronounce an opinion between a sound and an unsound vessel. They rush down, with a return ticket, to Cowes, look at the yachts “on the mud,” take a fancy to one, go on board, ask the price, rush back to town, and buy; engage a sailing-master, probably a Cowes man, and leave to him all the business of fitting out. Among all the owners whose names appear in Hunt’s List, very few are qualified to command their vessels. They may be able to steer, and perhaps to sail them; but very few know anything of the mysteries of the rope-walk, the building-slip, and the mould-loft,—of sailmakers, of furnishing ironmongers, brass-founders, ship-chandlers, and other necessary cormorants. The consequence is that many yachtsmen are disgusted at the incessant and everlasting wear and tear, which makes up so much of the cost of the sport. Yet there is really no natural or necessary reason why yachting should be more expensive than fox-hunting. A man who makes his yacht his home for half the year ought to live more economically than he can ashore;—he gets his wine and groceries and spirits free of duty; he has no travelling expenses when he goes abroad. In travelling with a wife and family, a yacht is at once a saving and a convenience. We say nothing of the comfort of carrying a little England with us wherever

we go, and of sleeping at home among our own people. What, in fact, are the legitimate expenses of a yacht? For something like £26 a ton you can build or buy a new yacht, in all respects ready for sea,—excepting iron ballast,—with bedding and blankets complete. The cost of a suit of sails may be estimated by the following proportions:—A suit of racing sails for a twenty-five ton cutter would cost about £125; for a fifty-ton cutter, about £160. Wages have risen considerably within the last ten years. At present the rate is scarcely less than twenty-five or twenty-six shillings per week for an able seaman,—finding himself in food, but not in clothes; thirty-two shillings for the mate,—who looks after gear and stores, from a needle to an anchor, and should be able to lay his hand on what he wants in a moment on the darkest night; and for the sailing-master, who takes care of the yacht during the winter, an annual salary of 120 to 150 guineas, or more, according to the size of the yacht. Then there is the cook, at, say, seven-and-twenty shillings a week; and the steward,—supposing him not to be the owner's own servant,—thirty shillings. All these expenses, however, vary according to the size of the yacht and the caprice of the owner. They vary much according to the rig of the vessel. Four men and a boy,—exclusive of sailing-master and steward,—should be sufficient for a forty-eight ton cutter or a sixty ton schooner; seven men and a boy for a sixty-five ton cutter, or a ninety ton schooner.

A cutter is always the most expensive of all rigs, and a fore-and-aft schooner the least expensive. Between the cutter and the fore-and-aft schooner comes the yawl. The insurance of a yacht whilst cruising would be something like ten per cent. per month; and against fire only, when in harbour or dismantled, a maximum of seven shillings per cent.

Cutters will always be a favourite rig for racing and Channel cruising, because nothing touches them in light weather and in beating to windward. But in a gale of wind, the taking in of a cutter's mainsail, and "stepping" the boom, is like putting a strait-waistcoat on a madman. A yawl has nearly all the speed of a cutter, looks almost as close to the wind, and has the inestimable advantage of a reduced mainsail and boom, and may be sailed very snug in heavy weather under her mizen and headsails only. In a schooner the foretopsails are of very little use, except, perhaps, for running. The fore-and-aft schooner requires fewer hands, because all her sails can be sent up from the deck; and if she chooses to indulge herself in jibheaded topsails, she can send them up "flying." We believe there is no rig at once so easy, so safe, and so cheap as this. Since "the good old commodore" Lord Yarborough's little frigate, the Falcon, there has, if we are not mistaken, only been one ship-yacht, the Sylphide, built at Bremen, and when last in commission, in the Mediterranean, belonging to the Marquis of Downshire. We know

of only one considerable lugger yacht, the *New Moon*, built for Lord Willoughby D'Eresby, by Firth of Hastings. She is, in fact, an enormous boat, 136 feet long, and only 11 feet beam, and even in fine weather and smooth water must require a large and powerful crew. In bad weather and in "blue water" she would be simply impossible. Steam yachts appear to be decidedly and rapidly on the increase, and we must honestly confess we regret the fact. A small auxiliary lifting screw may be useful in a calm; but, however small, it must seriously interfere with the comfort of the vessel, even when the engines are not in motion. If a yachtsman prefers a steamer, it would be impertinent to call his fancy to account, but, for our own poor part, we cannot understand screw-driving for pleasure. A voyage in a steamer is bad enough when it is for business. If there must be steam yachts, let them be steamers out and out, and not attempt to combine the schooner and the dispatch-boat.

For home cruising a comparatively short complement of hands is enough, even for a cutter; for foreign cruising, few hands are a false economy. It is perhaps advisable to have two sets of sails and of rigging, the one for home, and the other for foreign, cruising. One result of the want of concert among clubs, and of a common code of regulations for yachts and yachtsmen, is the frequent difficulty of preserving discipline, in crews which too often include "sca-

lawyers" and long-shore loafers. Nor is this always the fault of the seamen. Yacht-owners are apt to be too easy-going or too fidgety. The crews have too much idle time or too much fussy duty. There is supposed to be a black list kept at all the clubs, in which the names of men discharged for insubordination or bad conduct are inserted, so as to prevent their further employment. But as these lists are not exchanged between the different clubs, a man who is black-listed at Cowes or Ryde may get a berth at Plymouth or at Cork. And there are too many instances of a man discharged from one yacht getting a berth,—probably through the sailing-master,—in another yacht of the same squadron, lying in the same roadstead.

An essay on Yachting would be incomplete without some mention of the most famous racing-cruisers of recent years. We say racing-cruisers advisedly, because these celebrated vessels do not sacrifice the sea-going to the racing qualities. The fastest schooners now afloat are the *Aline* and the *Bluebell*, built by Camper and Nicholson; the *Egeria*, by Wanhill; the *Pantomime* and the *Gloriana*, by Ratsey; the *Cambria*, by Inman. Among the cutters, the most remarkable for speed are the *Vanguard*, built by Ratsey; the *Hirondelle*, by Wanhill; the *Vindex*, built by the Millwall Iron Works Company; the *Phryne* and the *Niobe*, by Hatcher of Southampton; the *Fiona*, by Fife of Glasgow; the *Sphinx*, by Maudslay of

the Thames ; the veteran *Mosquito*, by *Mare* ; and, although lately defeated, the venerable old *Arrow*, whose owner was politely requested some years ago by a correspondent of *Bell's Life* to renounce contests which must be unequal.

One of the most remarkable sailing-matches was the Royal Victoria Ocean Match from Ryde to Cherbourg in 1863. It was run in a gale of wind, and won in capital style by one of the most gallant and generous of yachtsmen, Mr. Thomas Broadwood, in the *Galatea* schooner ; the Commodore Thellusson's schooner, the *Aline*, leading the way with the most liberal ease, and being safely anchored and made snug in Cherbourg roads when the racing squadron passed the breakwater. These Channel matches deserve every encouragement. They tend to make sea-going the rule of yachting ; they create a bond of union between different clubs ; and the only objection we have heard to them is, that they take the yachts away from their stations, and so injure the trade of the local shopkeepers,—an objection which does not strike us as being very formidable. When the yachting world shall possess an institution analogous to the Jockey Club, it will perhaps deal not only with the questions of shifting ballast and restrictions upon canvas in matches, but will abolish the present unsatisfactory system of time for tonnage, which, whether half a minute for one class or a quarter of a minute for another, is full of absurdity and injustice. Were no

time for tonnage allowed, yachts would naturally range themselves in broad classes within certain limits of tonnage, and the public would have the satisfaction of seeing the winning vessel declared the winner. If this should be considered too sweeping a change, at least it would be desirable to fix a uniform system of admeasurement for racing allowances.

Have we justified the "distinction" we claimed for Yachting as the most emphatically characteristic of all our national sports? Consider the amount of money spent every year by private gentlemen in the British Islands in building, fitting out, and repairing this magnificent fleet of 1,740 vessels; the number of seamen they employ,—of seamen's families they support,—the spirit of maritime adventure and enterprise they promote among the population of the coasts,—the heroic founders of colonies, and pioneers of commerce and civilisation they have sent out,—the help and succour they have sometimes carried to their countrymen amidst the sufferings and hardships of distant wars and protracted campaigns! Is it not a cause for satisfaction that the Yachtsmen of the United Kingdom are increasing in numbers year by year; and that to go down to the sea in their own ships, and carry the flag of their country at their own mastheads, is a passion of hundreds of our country gentlemen, who cannot be persuaded to live at home at ease?

ON ROWING.

THERE is a large part of the British public to whom the name of rowing recalls only the great annual contest at Putney, as horse-racing recalls nothing but the Derby. And it is not without reasons that the attractions of the former event are beginning almost to rival those of the great English festival. A very phlegmatic nature is needed to resist the attractions of such races as those of 1866 and 1867. When Hammersmith Bridge is a black festoon of human beings, swarming like bees,—when a score of over-loaded steamboats are jostling each other for the lead,—when a crowd four miles long is covering the banks and choking the roads from Putney to Mortlake, and the two racing crews dash past, oar to oar, each with its eight human machines driven by fiercely-compressed excitement instead of steam,—at such a moment philosophers find it hard to refrain from shouting, and ladies from crying. Mr. Skey himself would, we fancy, forget the very existence of heart diseases, and the most unbending hater of muscular Christianity will, for a moment, set his

teeth hard and clench his fists as though they grasped an oar.

“That needs must be a glorious minute
When a crowd has but one soul within it,”

as Sir Francis Doyle very truly observes, à propos to the St. Leger; and even the excitement of a Doncaster crowd of genuine Yorkshiremen may be matched on the Thames, where, happily, there is less money on the event, but where nobler animals than horses,—for even rowing men have souls, according to theologians,—are struggling for victory.

Yet if we had to give the intelligent foreigner of fiction a taste of the genuine rowing fervour, we should take him to a different scene, where true amateurs are not swamped in a crowd of noisy spectators. We would place him, for example, somewhere below Sandford, or halfway between Baitsbite and Clayhithe, some three weeks before Easter. A bitter March wind should be curling the surface of Nuneham Reach, or tormenting even the sullen Cam into a feeble imitation of rough water. Presently a little knot of men, on foot and on horseback, should approach us at a round trot, and the University crew come swinging with a long sweeping stroke round a corner. As the oars touch the water the boat bounds forward, and sends a long wave washing through the reeds. To inexperienced eyes the crew seems to exhibit a faultless precision of style; but some sagacious mentor, who is watching every

action with the eager solemnity of a general preparing for battle, occasionally breaks the silence by shouting a hypercritical observation at the top of his voice. "Two," it would seem, is not getting far enough forwards, or "Four" is rowing himself up to his oar, or "Seven" running away with the stroke. The accompanying crowd watches every motion, without daring to utter a sound above their breaths; and the whole phenomenon speaks of a vigorous purpose, as though eight-oared boats were by no means playthings, but part of our national defences. I may perhaps assume that my intelligent foreigner would not be anxious to follow this singular running procession, and that he would turn to me for some explanation to satisfy his curiosity. I will attempt to give the substance of the dialogue that would probably ensue.

What, my friend would ask,—especially if he were a German,—is the ground-idea of this phenomenon? Are these fine lads at work by way of discharging a religious duty? Or is it with a view to promoting their health? Or is it possible that some insular idiosyncrasy leads them to take pleasure in voluntarily undergoing the discipline of the galleys? In short, how do you account for the spectacle we have just witnessed?

To this I should reply after the manner of ancient philosophers by asking another question. What are the conditions the perfect fulfilment of which would entitle a sport to be the best of all actual or con-

ceivable sports? And here would follow a Socratic dialogue, which I suppress for several reasons ;—firstly, a Socratic dialogue is a bore to the reader, in the hands of any but a master ; secondly, it is very difficult to bring it to the desired inference ; and thirdly, the Saint Pauls Magazine, like Mr. Weller's vision, is limited. I will therefore take the liberty of jumping at once to the conclusion. We are finally agreed, I should say at the end of a brilliant display of logical fence, that that sport is the best which affords the amplest scope for the employment of the greatest number of the highest faculties ; or, in other words, which is the best trial of the skill which makes the body a perfect instrument of the mind, of the muscular strength and general power of endurance, and therein of the high moral quality known vulgarly as "pluck," and, finally, of the various intellectual powers which are necessary to success in any game that deserves much expenditure of energy. Let us consider rowing under each of these heads, and if it has not the first place in all, I think it must be admitted that as a combination of the three it occupies the highest place amongst all known athletic sports. We will first take the question of skill.

There, the intelligent foreigner would remark, you must admit your case to be weak. Rowing appears to be the amusement of all others in which brute force has the highest value as compared with a trained and cultivated application of inferior powers. Your great brawny University oarsmen are very fine-looking

lads; they may remind one of the gigantic Gauls and Germans who used to astonish the feebler races of the south; but you must admit that they are a trifle clumsy, or, at least, that grace is not precisely their strong point. They may have the loins of a bullock and the arms of a blacksmith; but one would scarcely pick them out as promising pupils for a dancing-master; they come of the race which prefers boxing to fencing, and would bear down its antagonists by sheer weight rather than gracefully transfix them by superior skill.

There is, I should reply, a grain of truth in your remark, but it shows that your powers of observation require to be trained by a little more experience in the art. It is quite true that strength does more to secure success in rowing than in such games as cricket, tennis, or billiards. The weakest point about it is, in fact, that it does not involve much training of the eye. It has often been observed that nothing is more curious in its way than the extreme delicacy of perception and power of instinctive calculation that is brought out in some popular games. To perform a difficult stroke at billiards implies a combination of different powers which is little short of the marvellous. Two or three red and white surfaces upon a green ground form an image on the retina from which the eye, by an unconscious process, infers the position of certain balls on a table. Then by an instinctive calculation the mind determines the precise force and direction in which one

of the balls is to be propelled, and the mode in which it is to rotate so as to produce a given result. Finally, the arm has, by a single blow with the cue, to execute the orders thus given, making a spontaneous allowance for the distorting effect of perspective. The delicacy with which the action of the various muscles called into play has to be combined is almost inconceivable, and the most refined mathematical analysis would fail to solve the problem, whose conditions a good player learns to satisfy instinctively. There is certainly little in rowing to correspond to this wonderful delicacy, which is illustrated on a different scale in such games as cricket and tennis. And yet, there is ample opportunity for a display of skill, which, it is true, is apt to be ignored by a casual observer. A looker-on judges of skill in two ways,—by noticing the results or the causes. In the majority of games he looks chiefly to results. A spectator of a game at cricket sees that a ball is caught or a stump displaced, and admires the skill of the players accordingly. Unless he has a very keen eye, trained by long experience, he cannot judge of a player by his action with any great certainty. We can see that a target is hit, but we cannot in the least tell by looking at the rifleman whether he is a good shot or a bad one; we can see that he avoids certain gross pieces of awkwardness, but no eyes are microscopic enough to tell whether he is bringing his muscles into that perfect harmony which is necessary to secure the desired result; it is impossible for any

observer to judge of the performer's keenness of vision except by arguing backwards from his hits. The telegraphic communication between eye and hand takes place through a set of wires which are entirely hidden from our sight. When, however, a man is successful in a competition of this kind, everybody may be an almost equally good judge of the performance. Now rowing exemplifies the opposite case. Here the result generally escapes our notice. A good observer can tell with considerable accuracy the pace at which an eight-oared boat is going through the water, though it is apt to be affected by many causes for which we cannot make the proper allowance, but it requires further experience to know which of the oarsmen is chiefly contributing to the result. You, my intelligent friend, see eight men swinging backwards and forwards, and are happily unconscious that one is a model of every perfection, and that another scarcely deserves his place in the crew. To you they resemble each other as the sheep in a flock resemble each other to every one but the shepherd, or dogs in a pack to every one but the huntsman, or niggers to every one but a slave-dealer or a missionary. The reason is that rowing has one thing in common with sculpture and other high arts. A statue of first-rate excellence may be copied so closely that it requires a practised eye to discover the difference, and a delicate mathematical instrument to measure it; and yet the copy may be immeasurably inferior to the original. The whole merit depends

upon the last refined touches,—the delicate manipulation which eludes any of the rough tests which we can apply. And so between the first-rate oarsman and a respectable imitator there are imperceptible shades of difference which must be felt rather than seen. If one man's oar strikes the water an inch further forwards than another's, it makes a difference which may determine the fate of a race. If another allows the rest of the crew to anticipate him by an imperceptible fraction of a second, he may shirk half his labour. A gain of an inch in a stroke would win the University race by more lengths than decided the race of last year. Hence the distinction between a winning and a losing crew may depend upon this last refinement of polish in the individual oarsmen and the skill with which the crews are combined. That "coach" whose stentorian remonstrances to "Four" and "Seven" excited your astonishment was engaged in this delicate work; he was the sculptor finishing his statue by touches imperceptible to vulgar eyes; the manufacturer who is conscious that the success of his instruments may be damaged by the smallest touch of rust, or by the most trifling imperfection in one of the joints of the machinery; the poet who knows that perfection of form is as necessary to the genuine vitality of his work as force and vigour of conception. Now you will perhaps understand what is the merit of rowing considered as an exhibition of skill. Inexperienced persons see little of the higher refinements of the art; but

a connoisseur has a field for his observations scarcely equalled in any other game. The great art of "coaching,"—a term which I must assume my foreigner to understand,—has acquired an exceptional development in rowing, or, in other words, the theory of the right mode of applying force has been more carefully elaborated there than elsewhere. In cricket, a man practises bowling till by frequent applications of the rule of thumb he has found out how to produce the desired effect, and the consequences of his skill soon make themselves felt. But in rowing we have to apply a more delicate, critical process, and to judge from a man's form,—that is, from minute peculiarities in his attitudes,—whether or not he is an effective workman. To all which, I must add, that the tendency of every modern improvement is to make rowing more of a fine art, and less of a mere rough contest of strength. In old days, two crews simply set to work with raw, uncultivated strength, shoving a heavy bulk by main force through the water. In the graceful skiffs of the present day it is essential that strength should be applied at the right moment and in perfect harmony; that the boat should be kept steady, that it should be neither jerked nor pressed downwards, but propelled by a steady force in precisely the right direction. It is the difference between cutting off a man's leg with a hatchet and amputating it with proper surgical instruments. And when all the necessary conditions have been fulfilled, the sight of a man applying his power

so as to produce the greatest possible effect, is one in which the connoisseur may recognise a skill equal to that of arts far more refined in appearance.

Well, replies my inquisitive friend, I am not convinced by your ingenious argument ;—this sentence has the merit of paying an indirect compliment to myself, and of being obviously true, for no man is ever convinced on such points till he can judge for himself ;—but perhaps you can make a stronger case upon the other heads.

There, I reply, you are certainly right. No one can doubt that, whatever else rowing may be, it is an admirable trial of pluck. It is, with one exception, the only out-of-door sport practised by gentlemen for which any serious training is undertaken ; and training may be defined as the art of developing pluck. There are, as all moralists know, certain virtues which depend directly upon our physical organs. No man can be thoroughly healthy in mind who has a bad digestion. It is said that Calvinism was eradicated from a certain district in America simply by drainage. A thorough system of drains improved the general tone of health, and put an end not only to agues, but to the gloomy spirit favourable to unpleasant doctrine about predestination. On the same principle, courage is intimately connected with a vigorous condition of body. It is physically possible to go through efforts after a few weeks' regular living which would have knocked you up at the beginning of the period ; but training, if we

look at it from a general point of view, should raise a man's courage, not only by diminishing the painful obstacles arising from excessive fat and other evils that flesh is heir to, but by more directly raising the morale of the subject. A trainer has not done half his work who allows his crew ever to get out of spirits, to contemplate the possibility of disaster, or to dwell upon their own fanciful or real ailments. A man about to start in a severe race should not only be clear in complexion, and well-developed in muscle, but should have the hearty confident smile which, being translated, means "death or victory." There is, as I have said, only one other game which, in this respect, is comparable, and it perhaps is superior to rowing,—namely, running. A man at the end of four miles on land is, on an average, far more fatigued than after four miles on water. His heart has by that time become totally irreconcilable with his other internal arrangements; it seems to be jumping into his mouth, knocking at his ribs, and swelling as though, like a young cuckoo, it considered all neighbouring organs as intruders to be crowded out. Running is perhaps pre-eminent as a means for giving a man a sensation suggestive of sudden death; but in other respects it falls far short of rowing. It develops less skill, for the directions which can be given as to style in running are comparatively few, and an awkward runner more frequently wins by sheer superiority of lungs or legs. And, as I may presently have to remark, it is a very inferior trial of

intellect, because people run on their own legs alone, and not on a system of sixteen legs, therein avoiding the difficulty of bringing the said legs into harmony. Putting running out of the question, rowing has an unquestionable advantage in this department over all its rivals. Cricket is a noble game, and a man plays all the better for being in good health. I believe indeed that the mid-day luncheon is frequently observed to be a critical period in a match. Liquor of different kinds has a singular faculty for getting into bats and balls, and rendering their course unaccountable to the performers. This fact shows that a certain amount of training would be highly desirable; but the occurrence of such aberrations proves also that the necessity for training has not yet forced itself very strongly upon the cricketing mind. A man who could exceed in beer the day before a University boat-race would certainly be capable of murdering his aunt; whereas, a cricketer guilty of a parallel excess would probably shrink, we may say, from any injury to the same relative of a deeper dye than assault and battery. In short, a severe training is the first condition of rowing races. The commandments obeyed by a University crew include severe prohibitions of eating or drinking beyond certain limits for five or six weeks previous to the race; and no similar code is provided for elevens or for the competitors in any other match. If any doubt remains upon your minds, I may quote the dictum of an eminent surgeon, Mr. Skey, that the

University race involves the greatest cruelty to animals of any known game. I consider the term "cruelty" to be exaggerated; but substituting some such words as trial of their muscular and constitutional strength, it is undoubtedly true; and what would you have more?

What, indeed! is the obvious reply of the intelligent foreigner; but I should like to know in what way a boat-race tests any intellectual faculties; for, to say the most, that term of "animals" which you have just employed, though not excluding the human race, seems to imply that in the opinion of a good judge, the competitors in that contest have the lower element of our nature most prominently developed. They are, I repeat, fine-looking lads, but there is something in their looks,—or perhaps in the way in which they are swaddled in divers wrappers,—which suggests affinities to a highly trained racehorse rather than to a transcendental philosopher.

In so saying, is my answer, you show a certain superficiality. To be captain of a University Eight requires qualities which would go some way to make a successful general, though not perhaps to enable their possessor to grapple with the theory of the Absolute and the Infinite. He ought to be a refined diplomatist, to have a rapid and decisive judgment, and the power of enforcing discipline. He should have the courage to hold firmly to his own opinion, and the rarer courage to make changes when it is necessary. A captain requires as much skill in composing a crew as a

minister in forming his cabinet. It is not enough that the men separately should be good,—and the breakdown of any one at a critical moment may ruin the whole plan,—but each must fit into his proper place. There are infinite difficulties in soothing small vanities, and propitiating silly jealousies. As in the larger world, each man chosen is apt to make one grumbler at his selection and half a dozen grumblers at their exclusion; and the mere task of keeping eight men in good temper who are all in a feverish state of hard work and excitement, and who have to take all their meals and pass most of their vacant hours in each other's company, is itself enough to try an angel. Bow is an unpopular man, and ill-natured people maintain that he has been put in out of favouritism. Two takes the captain aside every other morning to reveal to him,—not without gloomy satisfaction,—a sure symptom of some new and fatal disease which he has just detected in a vital organ. Three is a picture of health and strength, but is so clumsy that no one knows whether he can be licked into tolerable shape in time. Four is a heavy good-tempered giant, who serves the invaluable purpose of being a butt to the rest of the crew at feeding times, but he is apt to lose his head, and then he is about as dangerous in a boat as a startled elephant in a caravan. Five would be unimpeachable, but for dark hints that he has a private score at some unknown public-house. Six labours under a chronic grievance, declaring with much loss of good temper to all his fellows

that Four does not take his share of the work. Seven is really delicate, as Two professes to be, and will conceal his ailments till it is too late to find a substitute. And if the captain does not himself row, Stroke probably considers himself to be the one man in the University who understands the art of rowing, and has to be coaxed and wheedled into a decent subordination. The coxswain has been chosen after long deliberation on the ground that it is worth securing an ounce more brains at a cost of a stone more flesh, and all the crew are profoundly convinced that if they lose it will be owing to that superfluous weight in the stern-sheets. Then there are perplexities about the boat, about the details of the work, about the cruel examiners who will torture some members of the crew, about the food supplied, and about a hundred other matters which are a constant tax upon the unlucky captain's fund of good humour. In short, a captain of a University crew is a man who has to put together a complex machine formed of human beings; he has to choose it properly in the first instance, to adjust all its parts to each other, to keep it in good temper and due subordination, to prevent its stomachs from getting out of order or its muscles from growing flabby, and generally to devote to this compound Frankenstein an amount of time and attention which would almost entitle him to preside over an episcopal synod. Many races have been lost from the weakness of the crew, from the badness of the ship, from ill-luck in the start, and from a hundred

other causes ; but the one great and irremediable defect is a want of brains. Of course, this is not peculiar to rowing ; a cricket match requires the exercise of swift and decisive judgment still more than a boat-race ; and there are many other games in which, for the time, the strain upon the nerve and powers of self-command is greater than in rowing. But that which is peculiar, or almost peculiar, to rowing is the necessity of enforcing discipline for weeks, and indeed for months, before the critical day ;—for a good captain will sometimes have made a race safe before his opponent has begun to choose his crew ; his men will be ready to be set in action at a moment's notice. It is the great demand upon this, as I may almost call it, statesman-like quality, which leads me to prefer rowing, on the whole, even to cricket, and certainly to any other amusement.

Assuming that you have established your point, my friend might reply, there is still one question which occurs to the philosophic mind. You have sung the praises of rowing on the ground that above all other amusements it makes great demands upon a man's moral and physical energies ; granting this to be true, there is one thing which, if possible, seems to me to be a still more essential property in an amusement,—namely, that it should amuse. Now rowing, by your account, is, above all things, admirable for the system of training which it renders necessary, or, as it seems,

for the trouble which it gives to the gentlemen in command, and for the amount of deprivation which they have to inflict upon their subordinates. Can you then seriously lay your hand upon your heart and say that rowing is pleasant?

To that I must answer that philosophers require to look into matters rather more deeply than the outside world, in order to make out their case. If millstones were not in some degree transparent, we should be in danger of many unphilosophical conclusions. No doubt most that meets the eye in this, as in some other athletic pursuits, is the endurance of labour and discomfort. There is indeed a certain pleasure about any exertion of power to the man who feels that he has a sufficient stock to draw upon; and neither rowing nor any other exercise should ever be pursued until the system becomes bankrupt, or till a man has to draw upon his constitutional capital as well as upon his daily supplies of strength. Still, there is a certain amount of pain connected with even a moderate degree of this exercise. There are blisters and excoriations upon various parts of your person. There is a horrid aching in the muscles to be overcome. There is the annoyance of turning out in all weathers, when the sun is blistering your bare arms, or the snow forming a soft chilly plaster upon your back. There is the severe strain when a strong headwind makes the labour of forcing your oar through the air almost equal to that

of driving it through the water, or when a flooded stream seems to bring the boat to a standstill as soon as the pressure of the oars ceases to act upon the rowlocks ; and, which is perhaps the most vexatious circumstance of all, there is not unfrequently the misery of feeling that other men in the crew are shirking their work, and cultivating an elegant at the expense of a forcible style. You will seldom feel more inclined to use strong language than when your neighbour rises from his seat as dry as a bone, without a hair turned, and complacently observes that he has found the boat go very easily to-day ; and there are many other vexations to be endured at the hands of the faint-hearted and indifferent. There is in every crew some one who makes it a favour to row ; he generally keeps a mythical parent in the background, who disapproves of the amusement, and occasionally forbids him to continue it at the moment when he has become indispensable ; and there is the over-zealous man who conceals a swelled hand till it has to be cut open, and its proprietor laid on the shelf for a fortnight. And then there are all the detestable annoyances with which fortune persecutes the brave,—the oar that breaks at the start, the boat that has a hole knocked in it at the last moment, and the brutal tutor, now,—it must be admitted, a rarity,—who cuts through all your arrangements by enforcing compliance with some tyrannical regulations as to lectures and examinations. All this, and much more, might be urged by an ingenious *advocatus diaboli*, but

it is based upon a sophistry. There is nothing from Christian morality down to playing dominoes which may not be made to appear unpleasant by insisting upon the incidental annoyances that may result from the practice. After all, the greatest pleasure in life is to have a fanatical enthusiasm about something. It may be the collection of pictures or of foreign postage stamps,—the preaching of teetotalism or of ritualism ;—it matters comparatively little what is the special hobby upon which a man should mount ; but the possession of at least one hobby, if not of a complete stud of hobbies, is the first condition towards a thorough enjoyment of life. It is commonly said that chess is too severe an intellectual trial to be suitable as an amusement ; and the argument is a very sound one against learning chess for those who cannot devote their time to it ; but the intense attention which is willingly granted by a good chess-player is the best proof of the powerful attractions of the occupation. Now this is the real glory of rowing ; it is a temporary fanaticism of the most intense kind ; whilst it lasts it is less a mere game than a religion ; and unlike other games, it lasts throughout a year, and whilst it continues it may be made to occupy every hour of the day.

A rowing man passes his whole day, and day after day, if he chooses, in some occupation connected with his favourite sport. When he is not actually rowing, or running, or conscientiously devouring his allotted modicum of victuals, he may be picking up gossip,

proving to the satisfaction of his own crew that they did the course the day before in 8' 19" instead of 8' 21", and that their rivals were at most 2' less, which is not enough to secure a success. Or he may be going through some subtle piece of diplomacy,—persuading some man to row whose friends, or studies, or health forbid it, or simply lounging about in a dignified manner at some other resort, with the pleasant unconsciousness that men are whispering behind his back, "There is the stroke of the Boniface boat,"—as perhaps in the larger world, though vanity is no longer so simple or so easily satisfied, a man may like to be pointed out at a club as the future solicitor-general, or the best candidate for the vacant bishopric. Little knots of such enthusiasts gather together in each other's rooms, when they might be better employed, and discuss the prospects of the next race as eagerly as their elders canvass the state of the Funds. And the day ends, perhaps, with dinner and a prolonged chat with some celebrity of former times, who discourses of races won by eighteen inches, of the great struggle when the losing crew imitated the fabulous feat of the Vengeur, and rowed till the water reached to their waists, of the more ancient race when the immortal seven-oared crew defeated their antagonists with eight, and of contests in still remoter ages, some of the actors in which have long since attained to bishoprics or high state offices. Miserable trifling, you say, for a human being endowed with a soul, and with more or less of rea-

soning powers ! But that is exactly my point. A man is not a thorough historian till he grudges no expenditure of toil upon trifles, till he is ready to spend a week in determining the true Christian name of some one who died and was forgotten by the world three centuries ago. He is not a lover till he cares about the smallest flower that has dropped from his mistress's hand. And, by a parity of reasoning, he cannot be thoroughly in love with an amusement till its very trifles become sacred in his eyes. The fact that some men spend many days of their youth after the manner I have described, is a proof of the intensity of the passion which rowing can occasionally inspire ; and though some industrious men boast that it need only occupy a small part of their time, I think it is generally found to be like other objects of a devoted passion, —rather jealous of any rival. Too warm an enthusiasm necessarily burns itself out in a short time ; and few men have any opportunity to devote time to it in later life. There are very few navigable rivers where the art can be practised, especially after the epoch at which a man's stomach is inclined to interfere with his knees. Most oarsmen, therefore, confine their period of zeal to the years when they have no distraction more serious than their studies ; or, in other words, can devote their whole time to rowing. And yet, though soon laid aside, there is no amusement which leaves behind it pleasanter memories. To be in the same boat with a man is a proverbial expression implying

the closest conceivable bond of union. If you take a walking tour with a friend, there are hours at least during which he is your bitterest enemy, for no insult is more grievous than that put upon you by your partner in such a temporary alliance when he proposes with an off-hand air to increase the pace by a mile or so an hour, just as you have developed a peculiarly fine specimen of blister on the ball of the foot. It is not in human nature to be yoked to a fellow-creature in a tie of such a nature without occasionally finding that it galls. In such games, again, as cricket, I need hardly say that the pleasure of having made a good score frequently reconciles a man to the disgraceful defeat of his side. But the bond established for the time being between the members of a racing crew, is perhaps the closest known, with the single and doubtful exception of marriage. If Bow has a pain in his inside, its effects communicate themselves to Two, Three, Four, and down to Stroke. They are for the time being a consolidated whole,—like those polyps which, as natural historians tell us, live in a strange community with but one stomach amongst the lot. Anything that disagrees with one, is immediately felt by the rest. They have a common glory or a common disgrace; and the consequence is that in after life there is no bond which establishes a greater claim than that of having belonged to the same crew, whilst the next strongest claim is to have belonged to the rival crew. The Cam is a very ugly stream; perhaps, take it alto-

gether, the ugliest in Europe. Yet an old Cambridge oarsman, walking down its slimy banks, is often moved by a strange emotion, of course to be sternly suppressed. There is not a corner nor a reach which is not associated in his mind with triumphs or misfortunes of which it is the greatest pleasure that they were encountered in common with the friends of perhaps the pleasantest parts of his life. If rowing does nothing else, it serves as a bond of unusual strength for drawing men together at the time when their affections are, so to speak, most malleable and most cohesive; when they have the greatest faculty for receiving and retaining new impressions. Rowing brings back to me some unpleasant associations,—especially certain hardships endured in a perfectly absurd attempt to reduce myself to a state of unnatural weakness, which was called training,—but it is also so inseparably bound up with memories of close and delightful intimacies, that it almost makes me sentimental. To my mind, the pleasantest of all such bonds are those which we form with fellow-students by talking nonsense with them, and mistaking it for philosophy; but an average undergraduate wants some more material bond, and I know none which acts with more energy than a common devotion to such an absorbing amusement.

Of course, replies my friend, the memory of having been shut up in my youth in solitary confinement with one pleasant companion might be incidentally agreeable; and you may sincerely enjoy the recollectoin of a

bondage endured with some early friends. Still you don't deny that it is a bondage, and a very strait bondage. You only say that the fact that you submitted to it proves that, for some inscrutable reason, you must have enjoyed it. But this suggests one other question. You liked your sport so much as to submit to great hardships in its pursuit; did you not like it so much as permanently to injure your health? The fanatical devotion to boating pursuits which indicates, if you please, a certain pleasure in the amusement,—to me quite inscrutable,—must also lead to sacrifices of obvious sanitary considerations to this strange god.

That has been the subject, I answer, of a never-ending controversy. There is a floating legend which is always hurled at the heads of ambitious oarsmen. It is stated of a crew, which performed some astonishing feat, that every man was dead within two or three years. I have heard this legend applied to at least half a dozen crews, and in every case I have found that it was unfounded. Not long ago I met at Henley Regatta five members of one of the crews to which it is most commonly applied. They were all men of unusually healthy appearance for their time of life,—though perhaps a trifle fatter than might have been desired,—and I happened to know two others who were both at that time alive and well. I put down most such stories to the continued existence of what is called, I believe, the mythopæic faculty, which means the faculty of telling a lie in order to prove a doubtful

proposition. Of late, however, one of those little controversies by which the Times kindly amuses our vacations and fills its columns has been raging on the subject; and a distinguished surgeon has given an opinion very unfavourable to rowing. To speak candidly, I have not the least doubt that rowing sometimes causes severe evils to its more zealous devotees. But I have known a large number of the most distinguished oarsmen for the last fifteen years, and very few of them, so far as I could tell, have suffered any injury from the result. Certainly, if I wished to produce models of health and strength, I should take some old University oarsmen; sturdy, square-shouldered, deep-chested men, who seem to have been put together of the best materials regardless of expense. I have known other cases, again, of men who have been quoted to me more than once as examples of the evil done by rowing, for whose weakness I could have assigned a very different cause. Rowing is undoubtedly a severe exertion, and it takes very little argument to prove that it is a dangerous amusement when combined with certain others of a less presentable kind. A rowing undergraduate is, of necessity, a youth in the full flush of strength and animal spirits, who labours under a total ignorance of some very necessary laws of health. Moreover, he is very often, I will not say generally, possessed of no particular ambition in regard to University studies. Consequently in the intervals of racing and training he is a fine, vigorous, and thoroughly idle young man.

Now without relying upon the authority of Dr. Watts, we know that there is a personage who is occasionally in the habit of providing employment for the hands of young gentlemen of this class. Since rowing and other athletic sports have become almost an authorised part of the University system, and have therefore ceased to be in the slightest degree disreputable, rowing has no longer been left in the hands of those who are expressly called "fast" undergraduates; the average of morality may, therefore, be as high amongst the devotees of rowing as amongst other fragments of the little University world; but that is only saying that it includes a good many lads who are rather too fond of pleasure to be particular. There can be no doubt that when a man alternates periods of severe training with periods of undesirable indulgence, he is burning the candle at both ends, and is likely to pay the penalty. I mention this, which it is unnecessary to expand into detail, because I have known many cases in which, so to speak, the saddle has been put on the wrong horse, and rowing set down as the avowed cause of evils that in fact were due to a combination of rowing with much less legitimate amusements,—in some cases to the latter amusements only. When a young man has injured his constitution he tells his mother,—unless he has too strong remains of conscience,—that the evil is owing to the exhausting effects of over-study;—in the same circumstances, he knows that his friends will require a slightly more plausible account, and he makes

rowing the scapegoat. I could even mention cases in which a man has really injured his health by over-reading for examinations, but in which he persisted in attributing his ailments to having rowed two or three scratch races some years beforehand. It is the old story of giving a dog a bad name. Any one who feels a pain in his leg states that the dog has bitten him.

After every deduction on this score, there doubtless remain cases,—I know not whether many or few,—in which rowing has been really the cause of grave and sometimes fatal diseases. Mr. Skey injured his case by over-statement, and by endeavouring to make out what every tyro in rowing knows to be absurd. He declared that over a four-mile course the boats raced at full speed the whole way, each struggling for the lead from start to finish. The thing is really impossible. Any crew that ever got into a boat might be rowed to a standstill in a quarter of the time, indeed in much less than that, if they really exerted their powers to their utmost limit. Nothing is a more acknowledged cause of defeat than an attempt to start at too many strokes a minute, and, in short, it is as mistaken a notion that boats go off at the top of their speed, as it would be that horses in the Derby do the same. For all this, long races such as those at Putney are a severe trial; and still more severe, in my opinion, are the races at Henley. The course there is shorter, but one man frequently rows three or four races in the day under a burning sun, and sometimes with the

result, as I can testify, of complete prostration for the time. The committee ought, in my opinion, to put a stop to this practice,—even at the cost of diminishing the attractions of the Regatta. The great race at Putney, however, is undoubtedly severe enough, though the men seldom seem to suffer very much at the time. One great cause of the injury sometimes resulting was the absurd theory of training formerly prevalent, which, instead of enabling the men to bear the race, seemed carefully designed to weaken them. The doctrine which used to be current amongst young men, so far as there was any consistent doctrine at all, was adopted, I imagine, from that current amongst prize-fighters, who, whatever their own merits, are not qualified to give very trustworthy medical opinions. A prize-fighter was generally an older man, accustomed to a rougher style of living, and bloated by attendance at public-houses. It was a great thing to cut off his liquor, to sweat down his superfluous fat, and to put him on a simple diet. When University lads were trained on the same principles, it was something like training a two-year-old in the same fashion as an aged horse. They had been accustomed to a varied, though not immoderate diet, and were suddenly reduced to great masses of raw beef steak, of which it was a point of honour to swallow as much as possible, with the natural consequences of boils, indigestions, and various other inconveniences. Then, although they were generally in good condition and wind, it was held that they

must be sweated till they had lost perhaps a stone in weight, and a man was proud of the number of pounds of which he could get rid. There was a theory about "internal fat," which was supposed somehow or other to fill up a man's inside, and impede the action of his other organs. It was thought that this might be melted down whilst the muscles were strengthened by steady exercise. I am no physiologist, but I imagine that the human frame has a more delicate and complex organisation than this mechanical theory implies, and that you can't safely melt bits of it out, any more than you can cut bits out, without a danger of deranging the other organs. In short, men were over-fed with indigestible lumps of meat, and at the same time were reduced arbitrarily in weight till they frequently came to the final contest in the lowest tone of health, and broke down immediately afterwards. I hope that more sensible modes of treatment have lately come into fashion, and that even the astonishing fact has been learnt that different men have different constitutions, and consequently require different styles of treatment. And I feel no doubt that with reasonable precautions, the exercise of boat-racing might be made as safe as any other strong exercise. Only the authorities should certainly take care, as they might with perfect ease, that men should not join in such contests without due medical authorisation in all doubtful cases.

What you say, my friend would reply, is doubtless admirable. You have shown, to your own satisfaction

at any rate, that rowing implies an amount of skill, of energy, and of judgment, which makes it an admirable school for many good qualities; that it is a sport which is pursued with a spirit which proves it to be really enjoyable, and that with due precautions it need not be hurtful to the health. I will add,—without troubling you to prove it,—that the love of such athletic pursuits is a very admirable characteristic of English institutes, and, so long as it is preached with common-sense and without cant, deserves the approval of all intelligent persons. But with your permission I must ask one question more;—is not the devotion to such pursuits somewhat incompatible with a due devotion to study? Universities should encourage athletic sports, but surely not to the prejudice of learning.

To this my reply would be,—Pray look at that admirable specimen of Early English architecture which you are in danger of passing unnoticed. Or if no such specimen were at hand, I should endeavour to hit upon some other means for giving a new turn to a conversation which threatened to become embarrassing.

ON ALPINE CLIMBING.

SOME future philosopher may turn aside from more important topics to notice the rise and development of the passion for mountain-climbing. He may pick up, in that humble field of inquiry, illustrations of some principles of wider application. The growth of the passion is accompanied, for example, if it is not caused, by the growth of the modern appreciation of mountain scenery; and few things would be more interesting, in proper time and place, than to investigate the real meaning of that curious phenomenon. Meanwhile we will endeavour to point out another, and a humbler, lesson, upon which our imaginary philosopher may, if he pleases, insist. The history of mountaineering is, to a great extent, the history of the process by which men have gradually conquered the phantoms of their own imagination. We read in our school-days of certain rash barbarians who entered the majestic presence of the senators of Rome. For a long time they were awe-struck by the reverend air and the long white beards of the old men, and remained quiescent, as though petrified by a supernatural terror. At length

an accident revealed that the senators were mortal like themselves, the superstitious fears vanished, and the barbarians proceeded, according to their pleasant custom, to massacre the objects of their late reverence. —Which things are an allegory. There is many a venerable political institution that has imposed upon the imaginations of mankind, until some bold man ventured, as Mr. Carlyle says, to take it by the beard, and say, What art thou? Whereupon it has suddenly collapsed. We will not, on the present occasion, pursue our argument into such lofty regions. It will be quite enough to illustrate the doctrine by the particular case of mountaineering exploits, and to leave our readers to invent such applications as they please. If we were writing a complete record we should have to show, in relating the development of mountaineering, how at first men stood appalled at the savage terrors of the Alps; how gradually they came nearer, and found that the mountains were haunted by no terrible phantoms; and how, when the bolder boys had ventured into the haunted house and come back unscathed, there followed a general rush, into its furthest recesses, of a crowd of followers—perhaps gifted with equal courage, but certainly with less to try it. And we should further have to explain that though the fanciful terrors had proved groundless, there were still some very real dangers to be encountered. At present we must be content with a few remarks upon the most prominent events in the annals of climbing.

For centuries, as we need hardly say, the human mind was in a state of utter darkness as to the merits of mountaineering. Doubtless a few chamois-hunters and goatherds wandered over the slopes of the hills, and found therein a mysterious pleasure, of which they could give no clear account to themselves or to others. If we turn over the pages of any of the early works which treat of the Alps, we find in them a few scattered notices derived from such peasants and hunters who had evidently a fine natural turn for enlarging upon the wonders of their country to the few who would listen to their tales. It is enough to mention a distinguished traveller at the beginning of the last century, named Scheuchzer, whose state of mind may be inferred from a single statement. He labours to prove that such things as dragons really exist, and the principal ground of his argument is the strong *a priori* probability that, in so savage a country as the Central Alps, there must be dragons. Considering that Scheuchzer lived at Zurich, within sight of some lofty peaks, he must have had a strange terror of a region, at his very door, so savage, in his opinion, that it could not but produce dragons, as the natural product of its own intrinsic ferocity. Soon after Scheuchzer's travels, the Alpine mania seems to have begun. Pocock and Wyndham discovered Chamouni; and it became the fashion, as Gibbon tells us, towards the end of the century, "to view the glaciers." The great start, however, is due to Saussure, whom all true

mountaineers revere as the founder of their craft. The year 1786, in which the summit of Mont Blanc was for the first time reached by his guide Balmat, should be the year one in their calendar; and if it were marked by saints' days, the festivals of Saussure and Balmat would be the chief solemnities of the year. Although Balmat and Saussure thus climbed the highest European mountain, the imaginative prestige of the Alps was still enormous. Balmat must have been a first-rate mountaineer, and possessed of unusual strength and toughness of constitution. Saussure himself performed at least one feat which has scarcely been equalled in its way, when he lived for ten days on the top of the Col du Géant, appearing as a magician to the inhabitants of the valley below. Yet the mode in which Saussure and Balmat set about the ascent of Mont Blanc is to the system of modern travellers what the old warfare, with its marchings and countermarchings, and going into winter quarters, was to the audacious tactics of Napoleon. As an old-fashioned general thought he had made a good campaign when he had advanced a few miles and taken a fortress or two in the course of the summer, so Saussure attacked Mont Blanc in due form, with gradual approaches and operations, extending over years. He threw out reconnaissances, established lodgments in the flanks of the mountain, and at last moved to the assault with an army of eighteen guides, spending three days in reaching the summit, and returning to

Chamouni on the fourth. One assault was repulsed by "the reverberation of the sun from the snow;" after that a party of men having passed all the real difficulties, shrank back from the last and really easy bit of ascent; and it was not till a quarter of a century after Saussure had offered a reward for the discovery of a path to the summit, that the first ascent was actually made. Everything shows, as we have said, that the mountaineers of those days were as good on their legs, as sound in their lungs, and fully as courageous as their modern successors; but they could not overcome their instinctive dread in the presence of the Monarch of Mountains.

Saussure opened what may be called the scientific era of mountain ascents, which lasted sixty or seventy years. During that time, that is, till about 1850, there were indeed many ascents made without any pretence of scientific motives, and probably many with nothing but the pretence. The great mountains of the Bernese Oberland, the Jungfrau, and the Finsteraarhorn, were climbed, and many ascents were made of Mont Blanc, chiefly, as we may venture to say, "for the fun of the thing." The leaders in discoveries were, however, still the men of science. Towards the end of the period, especially, Professors Agassiz, Desor, and other distinguished Swiss mountaineers, and our countryman, Professor Forbes, did a great deal to open up the districts of eternal snow for less eminent travellers, whilst their principal motive was to investigate

the theory of glaciers. During all that time, however, mountain ascents were becoming popular for their own sakes. The view which was generally taken of the amusement may be measured by the respect still felt for Mont Blanc. The hold which that noble summit retained upon the imagination is a kind of barometer of the height reached by the mountaineering art. It was still the fashion to attack him after the mode commemorated by Albert Smith. Each traveller had four guides and four porters; the guides went to mass and took leave of their relatives before the start; guns were fired at critical moments; the whole tourist population turned out to watch the ascent; and a dinner was solemnly eaten and toasts duly drunk after the adventurers had returned to the bosom of their families. To have been up Mont Blanc was a sufficient excuse for publishing a book, and the curious in such matters may study sundry small publications of this kind. They are generally thin pamphlets with fearful illustrations. The party is represented at breakfast on a large block of ice, which is balanced in doubtful equilibrium across a yawning chasm which presumably descends for hundreds of feet into the bowels of the earth; or a bending ladder supports the whole party across a tremendous gulf, into which a single false step—— we need not finish the quotation. In Albert Smith's lecture, the speaker abandoned his jokes and puns, and became terribly serious as he described the horrors of the final climb, that being a matter much

too serious for even a professional wit to touch without, as the reporters say, being "visibly affected." The modern tourist rather apologises for having any feelings at all under similar circumstances, and pokes fun at his readers at the most thrilling passages of his narrative.

But now a new era was approaching. The task of analysing all the causes by which it was produced must be left to the unfortunate being for whom so many endless puzzles are proposed,—the philosophical historian. The sect of muscular Christians was arising; it had not yet developed a dogmatic theory, nor appeared in the pulpit or in novels with a purpose; but its future heroes were beginning to stir themselves, and to leaven the world imperceptibly with some portion of their spirit. Their energy in the mountain districts was perceptible in introducing what we may call the transitional era between the ancient and modern forms of the art. Two or three publications revealed their existence to the outer world. Of these we may specially mention two interesting volumes which both appeared in 1856. One was the "Wanderings in the High Alps," by Mr. Wills, and the title of the other was "Where there's a Will there's a Way; or, An Ascent of Mont Blanc without Guides," by Messrs. Hudson and Kennedy. These two books revealed to their readers the existence of a new sport, whose devotees exhibited an enthusiasm unaccountable to ordinary mortals. Some hints had already been

given by Professor Forbes, whose travels in the Penine Alps had appeared as early as 1843; but although the true mountaineering spirit is very evident in his descriptions, it was overlaid by scientific disquisitions from which the mountaineering enthusiasm only crops out at intervals. Mr. Wills, however, and still more unmistakably Mr. Hudson and Mr. Kennedy, were open preachers of the new creed. Mr. Wills, whilst giving many admirable descriptions of adventure, might perhaps leave it to be imagined by the careless reader that a love of scenery and a love of science were the principal motives which would justify mountaineering, and that no one ought to climb without a sketch-book or a barometer. His rivals put the matter in a clearer light by their book, and still more by the adventures that it recorded. They had shown that the ambition of getting up hills, the excitement of encountering danger in the Alps, and the interest of skilfully surmounting difficulties, were a sufficient inducement in themselves. Incidentally, perhaps, they might open a path for scientific observers; more certainly they themselves enjoyed, and taught others to enjoy, the scenery of the remote mountain labyrinths; but they also made it distinctly understood,—for the first time quite distinctly understood,—that mountaineering, whatever its other merits, was a sport to be put beside rowing, cricket, and the other time-honoured sports of Englishmen. Both of the gentlemen named were well-known oarsmen on the Cam, and

they carried the energetic spirit cultivated in boat-racing into a different kind of athletic exercise. Whilst they were the esoteric prophets of the new creed, whose followers had not yet organised themselves into a distinct sect, Albert Smith was preaching to the populace. The more energetic devotees looked with a certain contempt upon a man who could not but confess that he had been dragged to the summit in a semi-conscious condition, and who professed his intention of never repeating his rash experiment. The impartial historian must admit that the singular success of his lectures did much to attract popular notice to a pursuit in which he was certainly not a practical performer.

Meanwhile the small band of true zealots had done much towards lowering the terrors of the high summits. They had thoroughly humbled the highest mountain in the Alps. It was their professed intention to break down the old Chamouni system. They endeavoured to prove that the elaborate apparatus of guides and porters was unnecessary, and that Mont Blanc was by no means deserving of the respectful awe with which he had hitherto been treated. To compare small things with great, they did in mountaineering what Xenophon did in the Retreat of the Ten Thousand. He conclusively proved the weakness of the great Eastern monarchy, and prepared the way for his mighty successor, who was to look round and sigh for more worlds to conquer. Just so Messrs. Hudson and

Kennedy proved that the mountain power was not what it had been thought to be; but the days were not yet come when the mountaineer should pause for want of a field for victory. These gentlemen and their party had gained their object, but only after long trouble and preparation. They had failed more than once; they had trained themselves by careful experience, and were perhaps as good a set of amateurs as ever attempted an ascent; yet they spent an amount of trouble in climbing one peak which would be sufficient, at the present day, to conquer half the mountains in Switzerland. In one respect, we cannot but remark, they set an example which has not often been followed. They made themselves independent of guides, and gave a much greater proof of skill than many men who have made far more difficult ascents by blindly following experienced natives. An amateur is never equal to a man who has passed his whole life in the mountains; but it would be well if more amateurs qualified themselves, without rashness, to rely upon their own powers in difficult places. On this, however, we shall presently have more to say.

And now new disciples began to gather round the first teachers of the creed. The whole Alps lay before them. In every district there were many summits defying all assault. The guide-books were sown thickly with descriptions of inaccessible peaks. Even in the Oberland, the most hackneyed of all districts, few of the loftier summits had been reached. The chain from

the St. Bernard to the Simplon had scarcely been touched; and such regions as Dauphiné and the Engadine were all but unknown to the tourist genus. There seemed to be an inexhaustible field for enterprise. The zealots of whom we have spoken soon formed themselves into a distinct body; the Alpine Club was founded in 1857, and in 1867 the Alps had been exhausted. The word "inaccessible" had, with certain insignificant exceptions, been deprived of meaning. The first harvest gathered was described to the world in the volume called "Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers," published in 1859. The general public first became alive to the importance of the rising sect by the popularity of this volume. It made a decided hit; it was treated with good-humoured ridicule in the *Times*; and the Alpine Club speedily became a byword for a set of harmless lunatics. Like many other sects, they throve upon chaff, and increased and flourished mightily. The volumes which they have since published, five in all, have indeed failed of the success which attended the first; but they contain an account of the complete conquest and annexation of the whole Alpine district. We cannot recommend their perusal to any one who does not take a special interest in the subject, for it must be admitted that next to accounts of horse-racing and cricket-matches, accounts of Alpine ascents are perhaps the dreariest variety of current literature. At first they had a certain interest even for persons who did not mean to risk their necks; but

it is as difficult to secure much variety in narratives of this kind as for a young curate to preach a dozen different sermons on the same text. Certain catchwords about arêtes and snow-slopes and bergschrunds, and staple jokes about eating and drinking and smoking recur, till the average stomach is apt to be turned. The general result, however, of the narratives in question may, for our purpose, be easily indicated.

Mont Blanc, as we have seen, had been thoroughly put down. The monarch could no longer boast that he was inaccessible even to unaided amateurs. Little remained to do to complete his subjection, except to go up the wrong way, as people had already been up the right. This duty was conscientiously discharged, but without attracting much attention. It has become as much a matter of course in fine weather to order guides for Mont Blanc as to take a cab for the city; and it is not clear that with ordinary prudence the ascent is much more dangerous than a pedestrian excursion across certain London thoroughfares. We must take another mountain to serve as a measure of the progress of mountaineering. The terrors of the Matterhorn had now become celebrated. The boldest mountaineers looked at its tremendous cliffs with awe, and felt that there at any rate was a task which would prove beyond their powers. It was the one fortress which promised to hold out after every less appalling summit had been reached. The wild range which extends from the Matterhorn to the Weisshorn

had the reputation of being the toughest part of the Alps. The Weisshorn and the Dent Blanche,—two of the noblest peaks in Switzerland,—were climbed by Professor Tyndall and Mr. T. S. Kennedy, but the Matterhorn still seemed so terrible that the boldest guides shrank from the assault. Every one knows the view of that astonishing obelisk as it appears from Zermatt or the Riffell. The extraordinary boldness of the outline produces a perfectly startling effect. One would say that the architecture was too daring for stability. Indeed, we have frequently heard it questioned whether it is not too daring for beauty. The audacity is carried to a point at which there is a suspicion of the grotesque. Some people are half inclined to class the Matterhorn amidst freaks of nature, to compare it with the rocking-stones, or the natural bridges at which ordinary tourists stare, rather than to put it beside such superbly graceful peaks as the Weisshorn or the Jungfrau. We do not agree with this rather hypercritical observation, for the Matterhorn impresses us as perhaps the most sublime object in the Alps; but it is undeniable that its pyramidal mass is carved into such amazing forms as to produce a perfectly unique effect.

Now, the point most to be remarked here is this,—that the effect described is principally due to certain delusions of perspective. It is true, of course, that the Matterhorn is flanked by some of the most terrific

of Alpine cliffs. The face, however, which to an inexperienced eye seems almost vertical, is not really steep nor difficult of access. What is more singular is, that even an experienced eye is generally deceived by these appalling slopes. Mr. Ruskin has taken the Matterhorn as a text for expounding, amongst other things, the delusive influence of certain laws of perspective, and has, as it would seem, fallen into some rather curious mistakes himself; but he does not mention, so far as we are aware, the particular fact that the Hörnli arête, as it is called,—that which faces the spectator from Zermatt,—is really, tremendous as it appears, of moderate inclination. It was, indeed, generally thought by the guides that it would be possible to reach a considerable height by following this ridge. One of the most eminent of Swiss guides once stood with us at its foot, and we almost agreed to attempt the ascent of the mountain by following it. Unluckily,—or, it may be, luckily,—we resolved to inspect it from a different point of view, and we found the change of position more effectual than a similar change was found in Balaam's case. The mountain re-asserted its magical prestige, and the cliffs again looked so tremendous that we finally abandoned our intention. Yet the first successful attempt was made along this ridge; and up to a lofty point, where it was necessary to cross a different face of the mountain, it was made without any risk or difficulty.

The Matterhorn thus frightened off all assailants for years simply by putting on a resolute face. It looked so fierce that the boldest refused the attack. All the early attempts were made from the other side, and for a long time the same cause served to protect it even there, although at first sight there was more promise of success. For several years bold mountaineers with good guides made resolute attempts, and came back convinced that success, if not impossible, was at least highly improbable. Professor Tyndall,—one of the best amateur climbers, as well as one of the leading scientific authorities in the Alps,—reached by far the greatest height. With him was Bennen, one of the boldest of guides. They both looked at the final cliff, and declared it to be impracticable, though an Italian guide who was with them appears to have thought otherwise. At any rate, when Mr. Whymper came the next year to try a final assault upon the great peak, this Italian guide had engaged himself to one of his countrymen to make the attempt by Professor Tyndall's route. Mr. Whymper returned straight to Zermatt, attacked the mountain by the terrible Hörnli ridge, found his way to the top without serious difficulty, and was just in time to look down upon the Italians who were at the foot of the last climb. Since that time two routes have been found for surmounting this dreaded cliff on the Italian side. The ascent was made three times in the summer of 1867, and on one occasion a girl not twenty years

old reached the point from which Professor Tyndall turned back in despair. Truly, the terrors of the Matterhorn have vanished,—at least on the southern side,—and with them the Alps may be said to have finally lost,—with one exception,—their imaginative prestige.

The terrible accident which occurred on the descent of Messrs. Hudson and Whymper's party has indeed added fresh terrors to the route by the Hörnli arête, and it will, perhaps, be long before that route is again taken ; but it is more than doubtful whether, if it had not been for the accident, this would not have become a favourite ascent, and one which might, under ordinary circumstances, have been taken with safety. The impression is now so great that guides will not face the one dangerous passage, and they allege plenty of reasons to justify their caution. The rocks, they say, are rotten and full of ice, and in the afternoon would always give dangerous footing. The year 1865 was unusually favourable, because the mountain was almost bare of snow, and the accident was due to a different cause on that occasion ; but in most years the passage would always, they say, be one of more than ordinary risk. We venture to doubt, in the face of this, whether the reasons have not been invented to justify the unwillingness to pass an ill-omened spot. This place, almost alone amongst the Alps, is, as it were, marked with a black stone, and defended by a superstitious feeling, which has expired in other places daily traversed, though of equal intrinsic danger ; and

if two or three successful ascents were made it would probably vanish here also, and the ascent of the Matterhorn from Zermatt become a regular and acknowledged part of the mountaineer's programme. Nevertheless,—in spite of our own reasoning,—we do not advise any one to encounter perils which are not the less real because they act chiefly upon the imagination of the guides. At best, the Matterhorn should not be assailed by men who cannot place full reliance upon the nerves of all their companions.

The expression of this opinion makes it necessary to say one word more, for it seems to imply a belief that the accident was caused by a want of the precautions which might have rendered it impossible. If the passage in question is not more dangerous than others daily traversed, some one must be to blame for the occurrence of the accident. It is painful to say a word which may be interpreted as condemning brave men who are now dead; and there was not in the Alps a braver and better qualified guide than Croz, or an amateur more daring and skilful than Hudson. They were the strongest and most experienced men in their party, and no two mountaineers could be named superior, if equal, to them. Yet we must add that the cause of the accident seems to us to be perfectly plain, and one which ought to be understood. It was simply that there was an inexperienced and untried man in the party, without,—and this is the important point,—a due force of

guides. We do not say who was to blame; but if it was right to take a novice in the art up a mountain supposed to be the most dangerous in the Alps, it was certainly not right to take him with only three guides amongst four gentlemen. If, as is a moderate rule, there had been a guide between every two gentlemen, the accident could hardly have occurred. But we do not wish to insist upon a very painful subject.

The conquest of the Matterhorn substantially concluded one era in mountain-climbing, and it suggests several reflections as to the future of the art. One great inducement for climbing has all but disappeared. No one will again know the pleasure of being the first to plant his foot upon a hitherto untouched summit. The mountaineers may labour to make frivolous distinctions, to claim credit for small variations upon established routes, and to describe how for the first time they have walked up the right side of a glacier instead of the left. But the process is a depressing one, and cannot last long. It is like the effort of a company of shipwrecked men to find a few crumbs strewn about the scene of their former meals. Even this resource will soon be exhausted, and then the pleasure of discovery in the Alps will be reckoned amongst extinct amusements. It is a mere foretaste of what is coming to the world at large. We have the misfortune of being confined to a limited planet, and must take the consequences of our position. When there is a railroad to Timbuctoo, and

another through the central regions of Asia, our great-great-grandchildren will feel on a large scale the same regret for the old days, when the earth contained an apparently inexhaustible expanse of unknown regions, that the Alpine traveller now feels on a very diminutive scale. But when the bloom of romance has departed, travelling will not cease. It will perhaps be more interesting to an intelligent mind, though the glories of Columbus or of Livingstone will be no longer amongst the possible objects of ambition. It is not quite so clear that this will be the case with mountaineering, or that men will feel the same interest in ascents when they can no longer hope to rival the glories of Saussure, of Forbes, or of the modern race of the Alpine Club.

There has, indeed, been a common cry, which was especially strengthened by the accident on the Matterhorn and two or three catastrophes which occurred about the same time, that under no circumstances was the game worth the candle. And we are quite prepared to admit that if we were to look forward to a yearly repetition of such misfortunes, it would be difficult to defend the practice of climbing, delightful as it may be in the opinion of its true devotees. We believe, however, that the facts show that the danger is by no means such as has sometimes been asserted, and that mountaineering, if pursued in a reasonable spirit, will be found to be not merely a healthy and delightful, but also a very safe, amusement. Thus, we

may remark that for a long period previous to the Matterhorn catastrophe, serious accidents had been exceedingly rare. Dr. Hamel's party had come to harm on Mont Blanc from a contempt of the advice of the guides, and three Englishmen had perished on the Col du Géant owing to a total absence of the usual precautions. Still numerous parties had ascended Mont Blanc and other mountains every year without a single misfortune, and, even in later and more adventurous times, experienced mountaineers who obeyed the rules of prudence have enjoyed almost unbroken security. The Alpine Club now numbers over 300 members, and has from the beginning included nearly all the most enthusiastic climbers. Yet, with the exception of the Matterhorn catastrophe, no serious accident has ever happened to one of its members. One or two gentlemen have managed to tumble over their own axes, and a distinguished member, in the ardour of science, succeeded in getting under a falling block of ice, and being considerably damaged for the time; but with these exceptions we believe that the club has remained entirely free from misfortune. There have been almost as many lives of tourists sacrificed on Snowdon as on Mont Blanc since Dr. Hamel's accident, though it must be admitted that the number of ascents of Snowdon has been considerably larger. The explanation seems to be simple. The Alps, as we have said, repelled travellers chiefly by imaginary dangers; they looked so steep, so big,

and so slippery, that people feared to attack them,—to say nothing of the fanciful horrors of the “reverberation of the sun’s rays” and the rarefaction of the atmosphere to which the earliest race of climbers were subject. As it gradually became apparent that these dangers had been over-estimated, there was a natural tendency to regard all mountain difficulties with contempt. Both travellers and guides, in many instances, lost sight of the plainest principles of prudence, and were taught by sad experience that there were some very real dangers in the Alps, though those are not always the greatest which are the most conspicuous. In this way, the advice most required by mountaineers is opposite to that which should have been given to their predecessors. They need not be told that many of the apparent dangers are illusory, but should rather be reminded that there are other very serious ones whose presence sometimes is only perceptible to an experienced eye, and that the observance of certain precautions is necessary to justify them in pursuing their favourite sport.

We may hope that the terrible lesson of the Matterhorn has, for some time at least, impressed this necessity upon the minds of most mountaineers, and upon their recognition of it depends both their safety and their pleasure. The first, and one of the most essential, rules applies to the position of the guides. Mountaineering differs from most sports in this, that the difference between the professional and the amateur is

unusually great. The players generally beat the gentlemen at cricket, and no amateur oarsman has much chance with a really good waterman; but a contest of gentlemen against guides on the Alps would be far more hopeless than a similar match in either of these games. The great reason is, of course, that most men take to the mountains comparatively late in life. Grown-up men of average powers of walking are perfectly capable of undertaking almost any ascent. There will be a very great difference, indeed, between the pace and the ease with which different men can do their work; a light, active walker will beat a heavy, short-legged rival by many hours in the ascent of a first-rate mountain. Still, with good weather and favourable snow, there is no peak in the Alps beyond the reach of a good average walker, and a man who can do his thirty miles a day on level ground may confidently undertake the most difficult feats that have been hitherto accomplished, unless he has a special antipathy to uphill progression. So far, then, although guides are as a rule very superior to amateurs, particularly when weight has to be carried, the superiority, though decisive, is not absolutely crushing. Some very good walkers will even equal,—though they cannot surpass,—a really good guide at a steady, uneventful climb. But that in which guides have an unapproachable advantage is a kind of instinct, difficult to describe, which is only given by life-long experience. It is not so much in performing gymnastic feats,

though an accomplished chamois-hunter will often succeed in exploits at which the most active Englishman can only stare in astonishment. He will walk and leap upon slippery edges of ice and bare surfaces of steep rock as though he were possessed of a mysterious amulet,—the only magic being that of long practice. There are, however, very few places in which this cat-like power of keeping a footing under difficulties is really essential. It looks brilliant, and often saves time; but a little patience will generally find a way of circumventing difficulties which cannot be directly encountered. In short, it is a far more important element of success to have a tolerable amount of endurance than to be unusually active. The power of performing feats is scarcely ever indispensable, whereas a capacity for good steady plodding is generally all that is required for the ascent and that is necessary to enjoyment. It is when we come to a higher branch of the art, to a thorough knowledge of mountain craft, that guides show that superiority in skill which makes their aid in many cases indispensable. A good guide, who has probably been trained as a chamois-hunter, who has at least been familiar from his earliest youth with the mysteries of the climbing art, acquires a skill which we can only compare to that which savage tribes display in following a track by the eye. Suppose, for example, that a party with one of the first-rate guides is moving to the ascent of a new mountain. It is often thought, by those who have not

tried, that in this case guides and amateurs will be about on a par. Nothing can be further from the truth. There is, perhaps, a difficult glacier to be crossed, and beyond it a long wall of rocks, mixed with ice, to be climbed. The guide will, in the first place, select the most practicable route for climbing the rocks. He may not be able to say whether it will prove practicable or not, for that depends upon minute peculiarities about the rocks and the ice which only reveal themselves on close inspection. But if the amateurs and the guides differ as to the best route of assault, the chances are at least twenty to one in favour of the guide's opinion. The next thing is to lay down the best line for approaching the rocks through the tangled labyrinth of crevasses. Here a good guide will at a glance determine the line to be taken, and will follow it unerringly without a single mistake, whereas a traveller has an equal chance of selecting the worst route, and when he is in the midst of the distorted masses of ice, will probably find that he has lost his clue. On arriving at the rocks, the guide, again, will be able to give a thoroughly trustworthy opinion as to the state of the superincumbent snow; he will know exactly what is the danger of avalanches or falls of stones, and will adopt the best means for avoiding such dangers. In the actual climb the travellers constantly lose their place, as it were; that is, they confuse the different pinnacles of rock, and fancy that they are at one point which they have

marked from below, when they are really a long way off from it. The guide never commits such a blunder, which may frequently cause the failure of an expedition. To mention only one other point out of many; a guide has the most perfect confidence in retracing the exact route by which the ascent has been made, although on the return every feature of the mountain is seen from the reverse side, and has, as every traveller knows, an entirely changed aspect. In a wilderness of blocks of stone, each as like to another as sheep in a flock, he shows a facility like that of the shepherd with his sheep in recognising each separate block at which he has cast a hasty glance in the morning. There is no part of a mountaineer's craft so difficult to acquire as this; and for want of it travellers are constantly bewildered and hopelessly at a loss, where their guides never hesitate for an instant. Even in a fog or a dark night a guide will find his way by what seems an unaccountable instinct, simply because his mind has become accustomed to mark and retain the most trifling details, which make no individual impression upon an inexperienced mind.

In all these, and in many other respects, a guide has the unapproachable advantage conferred by habits which have become instincts, and it is a real pleasure, when the traveller has become qualified to judge of the skill displayed, to watch a thoroughly good mountaineer finding his way through the various difficulties that obstruct every new ascent. The most obvious

moral is that a difficult ascent should never be attempted by a novice without a sufficient force of guides. It will often be of no avail to have even the ablest and most experienced amateur as a substitute; for, in addition to the points of superiority already mentioned, the guide has the professional instinct strongly developed;—that is, he is always ready to give assistance at the very instant it is required; and assistance, to be of any value, should generally be given without the delay even of a fraction of a second. A fall which may easily be arrested at the first moment becomes irresistible at the end of one or two seconds. The amateur forgets to move till the accident has actually begun. A good guide will see the first incipient symptoms of unsteadiness. In the next place, when good guides are taken, it should be a point of honour to listen to their advice. As a rule, such a guide errs on the side of audacity; he takes a natural interest in the success of the expedition; and he is accustomed, in chamois-hunting, to venture into far more dangerous positions than any which travellers will probably encounter. It is far better to give up any ascent whatever than to urge a man in whom you have confidence to go on where his judgment is against going; and if you have not confidence in your man, it is best to come back and get another guide.

It is sometimes made an accusation against Alpine climbers that they tempt poor peasants into positions of peril by the offer of a few francs,—to which several

answers may be made ; as that, if the risk is as small as most travellers believe, the temptation is not unjustifiable ; further, that the travellers themselves undoubtedly run a greater risk than their more active companions ; moreover, that the guides are perfectly well able to judge for themselves, and exact a sufficient payment for the risk incurred. These answers are quite satisfactory, but only on the assumption that a guide is never unfairly pressed to proceed at critical moments ; for then the danger would certainly be increased to an excessive degree, and an unfair advantage would be taken of a man's natural desire to distinguish himself. In short, it should be laid down as part of the elementary code of a mountaineer's duty, that certain prudential rules should be strictly observed, and that the worst of all breaches of prudence is a determination to proceed in defiance of the opinion of an expert.

There is, however, another corollary to this doctrine, upon which it is perhaps more important to insist at the present moment. We have endeavoured to show that guides have an incontestable superiority over amateurs, and that the most lamentable accident that has hitherto happened was caused by the want of a due force of guides. We may add that it is our profound conviction that an attempt to dispense with their services on a large scale would lead to an immense increase of accidents. Nevertheless, there is another side to the question. It has been too much the

fashion of late years for men to trust everything to their guides. Gentlemen come out to Switzerland, and before they know what a crevasse means, they undertake the most difficult expeditions in reliance upon the skill of others. This is fair neither to the guides nor to themselves. It is unfair to the guides, because it is an enormous tax upon their strength. A gentleman was not long ago roped to a guide to cross a glacier, and soon made it manifest that he looked upon the rope as intended for towing purposes. He considered, that is, that the guide was to drag him bodily through several miles of deep snow. He soon learnt better, and showed himself to be a good walker. But his example may be taken as an illustration. Inexperienced travellers become dead weights, though generally after a less literal fashion, and throw the whole responsibility upon their guides, without being able to assist, or even to follow by their own unaided energies. They thus impose a tax upon their guide which is in every respect unjustifiable. Such a traveller is equally unfair to himself. Many cases occur in which it is of importance that each member of a party should be able to answer for his own safety, though he need neither find the way nor give any assistance to his neighbours. On a steep snow slope, for example, a man should have perfect confidence that his own legs are to be relied upon; he should be quite confident that he will not make a slip which, at a critical moment, may endanger a whole party even of able mountaineers, and with-

out that confidence no one should undertake difficult expeditions. Moreover, an inexperienced man misses three-fourths of the pleasure. He has the misery of being lugged over every obstacle, and feeling that he is a useless clog upon his companions, and he entirely fails to appreciate the skill displayed, and to take an intelligent interest in the ascent. He is like a man who should be strapped on the back of a horse to follow a fox-hunt,—a source of danger and annoyance to his friends, and a trouble to himself.

The true principle, then, seems to be obvious. Every aspirant to mountaineering honours should take care to qualify himself by cautious expeditions on his own account. There is plenty of pleasure to be obtained in the lower mountains. Nothing is more delightful than an ascent of some of the lower peaks in perfect solitude, or with two or three friends. A very little experience will show a man what he can safely undertake. A few walks without guides will teach a great deal that may be entirely overlooked when another man's eyes and legs have to be implicitly trusted. There is an intense pleasure in finding one's own way, and gaining confidence in one's powers. The traveller soon learns to attend to a number of circumstances which are easily missed by those who are dependent upon others. He gains some of the instinct which is so highly developed in the professional guides, though he will never be able to rival them, and, if he undertakes more difficult expeditions

according to the ordinary system with a good guide, he will be able to admire with intelligence their splendid exhibitions of activity and mountain craft, and to feel that he is not a burden upon their energies. It is true that there are certain limits to his powers, and he will be able to appreciate them the more clearly. If he finds himself qualified to undertake difficult expeditions,—such as the ascent of Mont Blanc or the Finster-Aarhorn,—he must be content to make more elaborate preparations than he would need with professional assistance,—to wait for perfect weather, to retreat under a smaller stress of difficulty, and to be content with more frequent failures. He must be specially careful to secure a safe retreat, and must not venture upon unusual feats and *tours de force*. But he will be able to judge for himself, and to call in assistance when needed. The really difficult excursions,—for example, the ascents of the Weisshorn or the Matterhorn, or expeditions which require unusual skill upon glaciers, great labour in cutting steps, and familiarity with the state of the snow,—will probably remain forbidden to him without such assistance. When he undertakes them they will be all the pleasanter from the knowledge which he has acquired in his own adventures.

We have insisted the more upon this consideration because it seems to be the great want of this, the last era of mountaineering. The adventitious charm of absolute novelty has gone for ever. But every

mountain is new to a man who attacks it for himself, who arranges his own scheme of assault, and carries it out by his own efforts. Amongst the less dangerous mountains there is plenty of room for this, which will always be a charming form of exercise. For,—and this is the last remark we need offer,—there is a pleasure about mountaineering such as few amusements can afford. Those who go with some supplementary object, to collect flowers or to make observations in geology or in glaciers, will find that their favourite pursuit gains additional charms when it leads amongst the magnificent scenery of the Alps. Whatever nonsense has been talked upon the subject, there is nothing grander in nature than the wild scenery of the high mountains, with its strange contrasts and rapidly shifting effects. A man who has passed a few hours even at the Jardin or at the foot of the Matterhorn has learnt what is really meant by natural sublimity. If he has a touch of poetry in his composition, he cannot but be profoundly affected by the strange solitudes of the eternal snow, by the mighty cliffs, and the soaring peaks changing their aspect with every passing cloud that drifts through them and every ray of sunshine that strikes upon them. When wandering amongst their inmost recesses, he bears away indelible impressions such as are hidden from the traveller confined to the valley, and tormented by cockneys and inn-keepers. And, if it is necessary to descend to lower considerations,

there is nothing which in moderation has a more potent influence upon the health. To breathe the pure air of the Alps after eleven months in London streets is an escape from a close prison. The lungs expand, the step becomes firm, and the appetite sometimes startles even its owner. Amongst all pleasant memories of such delights, let us try to revive one which many of our readers may have enjoyed. Let us place ourselves in imagination on a sunny shelf of the mountains about four p.m. on a glorious day in July. Behind our backs towers some mighty pyramid, which, after long calculations and various attempts, we have succeeded in scaling that morning. A cairn, just visible through a telescope from the valley, testifies to all posterity that the summit has at last felt the foot of man. We have descended through various difficulties till at last we have been greeted by the sound of the cow-bells floating up through the thin air. And now we have reached the *châlet*, emptied a pailful of delicious warm milk at a draught, eaten some gigantic hunks of bread, butter, honey, hard-boiled eggs, and cold fowl, and, after lighting a pipe, lain down on a bush of Alpine roses, to enjoy the pleasure of lazily regarding the glorious scenery and a little village,—not unprovided with a comfortable inn,—at our feet. Such moments leave vivid recollections, and cause those who have once tasted them to vow that they shall not be without successors. We hope that by encouraging the proper mixture of prudence and

courage, of self-reliance and due respect to better experience than their own, the members of the Alpine Club may long continue to enjoy one of the purest and most stimulating of athletic pleasures, and encourage new generations to follow their footsteps, though they can no longer hold out a hope of new conquests.

ON CRICKET.

DR. JOHNSON defines cricket as “a sport, at which the contenders drive a ball with sticks in opposition to each other.” Whether this somewhat hazy description was an expression of ill-will, like that which he caused to explode upon fishing,—whether it was another specimen of the “interstitial vacuities reticulated or decussated,” by which he disguised the simplicity of a net,—or whether it was “ignorance, madam,—sheer ignorance,” does not matter much now. For the game at which Lord John Sackville and “Long Robin,” good men of Kent, challenged all England and beat them; the game which was stigmatised by the stout old “Gentleman’s Magazine” as levelling and mischievous, has become, at the end of a hundred and twenty years, that by which Englishmen may be recognised in every corner of the earth. Where a score or so of our sons are found, there is found cricket; where they are not, cricket is not; and the ethnologist may hereafter find a very sufficient guide to their presence by the inseparable concomitants of fossil stumps and bats.

Into the causes of this peculiar institution not merely failing to flourish, but steadfastly declining to take the smallest root, in soils unshadowed by the British flag or its successors, it is needless to enter here. Few of those who understand the game at all, and have any knowledge of national character, will fail to recognise, if they cannot define, the inaptitude of aught but the Saxon element for such a sport. At any rate, if the theory lacks precision, the fact is transparent enough. Far away north, our Russian colony at St. Petersburg fails to tempt the descendants of the Boyards to emulate us in the field. On the race-course they enter as participators; on the cricket-ground they will not step, even as spectators. Austria is, I believe, guiltless of the attempt. Germany may witness a few spasmodic efforts between "The World" and Public Schools, at Homburg or Wiesbaden. At Florence, Rome, or Naples, the unwonted spectacle of cricket-bags may startle the natives into momentary wonder at what the Forestieri are up to next. But it is the English alone who take part in the game; and, with the exception of a few misguided Frenchmen, who have been tormented by the superhuman energy of a certain secretary into supporting the game with their occasional appearance before, and hasty retreat from, a dangerous wicket, no progress has been made towards any international contest in this behalf. Even the Spaniard has got a love for horse-racing after the English fashion; but neither Gibraltar nor Cadiz has seduced him, by

Anglican example, to doff his sombrero for a club-cap; and the whole Continent of Europe may be safely pronounced to contain no real cricketer, save in these isles and their dependencies. America tells the same tale. In Canada the game flourishes. In the States of the Union, in which English blood is not much mixed, it maintains a precarious existence by the side of baseball. Elsewhere, who ever heard of it? Our own dependencies in India cannot create native players; and although, by unremitting diligence,—more for the pleasure of overcoming difficulties than anything else,—one or two Englishmen have taught the Australian native to present a more than creditable appearance, their existence is a mere phenomenon which has no significance so far as the nationality of the game is concerned.

Were it not for the special character which is here claimed, all this would be odd. Here have the French, to go no farther, copied other sports, which we have also carried to the end of the world, with almost ridiculous fidelity. At rowing they have managed to present a creditable front. Horse-racing they, like ourselves, are carrying to a reprehensible excess; the minutest details of an English race-course are reproduced, and, I may add, with improvements; the phrases familiar to us all reappear there in strange garb, such as “breack-down” and “gentlemans rider;” the very luncheon, pride of an English drag, is served up on the Marquis de T.’s coach-roof with lamb and mint sauce,

sherry and "palale," within reach of what one would have supposed more appetising delicacies from Potel's. Yet on the selfsame day when this was going on at one end of the Bois de Boulogne in the afternoon, the secretary hereinbefore alluded to could not by smile, prayer, or menace, convene a dozen French people at the other end to partake in a match between Paris and the Marylebone Club itself, although duly set forth as the "premiers joueurs d'Angleterre." No; they could shoot pigeons after the fashion of Hornsey Wood before its destruction, within earshot of the Lac at mid-day; they could go down with English grooms and English horses to the races in the afternoon; but your crickets, no. Tennis, some might urge as an exception to the rule I am about to lay down; it is not so really, and very, very few Frenchmen care even about that; but it may be safely affirmed that a game by which you get no money, which involves, nevertheless, much muscular exertion, and, above all, in which you may get very considerably hurt, has nothing to recommend itself to any one but an Englishman. Let us keep it so, and enjoy it by ourselves.

Of course every sport has its advocates. I read a good deal, very well said, about the special merits of hunting, rowing, fishing, and shooting, which may be fairly said to sum up the out-door exercises of our day. Football has gained a little temporary position, but few busy men can really partake of its somewhat hazardous conflict. Coursing is a cross between hunting and

shooting, and is, in fact, like racing to the multitude, —a thing which is to be looked at only ; while archery and croquet may pair off together. Now the great merit of cricket is that it combines many of the merits, and few of the demerits, alleged to exist in the other sports. Shooting, for instance, is social only by accident. In theory, and too often in practice, it is eminently selfish. So in hunting,—the grandest excitement out,—you share the sport with others, but you grudge them that share. It is not because everybody else is enjoying himself that I feel the sacred fire of joy ; I am not aggrieved if he should do so ; but when I am first over the brook, or can pound the whole lot, and go on alone, the consciousness that their pleasure is over for the day lends no pang of remorse to my heart, but, on the contrary, increases my demoniac delight.

So far, then, as competition goes, the dearest triumph in this case, as also in shooting or fishing, is obtained by the ill-success of everybody except yourself ; the enjoyment is not therefore a social one in the true sense. Rowing brings in the element of joint success at once ; but it seems to me to do so in rather too forcible a way ; for the oarsman becomes only part of a machine, which will reflect great honour and glory on others, but very little on himself. It takes a keen eye and a good judge to pick out number four's merits ; and the better the rest row with him, and he with them, the less he can be singled out for praise. Here

the enjoyment is social enough ; but the soul of man must pine for a little individual honour and dignity, which, while not impairing the joint effect, shall send him home with more satisfaction than that of the off-leader in a team. It is in this that cricket, as I conceive, shines pre-eminent, hitting, at it does the exact line between the duties of citizenship and the sweetness of *monstrari et dicier*, &c. No man is an Ishmael here. "We won," says the eleventh man, and "I made two catches, or got two runs when they were wanted," as the case may be. In rowing, the last choice is, or ought to be, the worst ; he is the blot of the eight ; he spoils the lift of the whole boat ; he never ought to have been in. He may row out his very inside, he may be utterly unworthy of one tithe of the abuse which falls to his share ; but there he is, and he cannot redeem himself, or ever be more than "that man we were obliged to put up with when Robinson smashed up." Contrast him with the corresponding *bête noire* in the eleven. The latter has every minute an opportunity of becoming famous ; every minute of each day during the match he has a marshal's bâton in his pocket ; and on him at any moment may the countless cheers of Lord's be concentrated, as having done the thing which saves or pulls off the match. If he make a mistake, he has the others' merits to fall back upon ; if he does a good thing, it is all his own, and he has the additional pride of feeling that his fellow-cricketers reap the advantage ; and therefore, I say, an eleven is better

constructed for combining both sorts of competitive ecstasy, than is an eight-oar boat.

If, moreover, the cricketer can enjoy virtuous pleasures to a greater degree than his solitary rivals in the hunting-field, or than the integral but consolidated crews on the river, he can hardly copy all their vices. He may be always riding jealous, he may be constantly trying to wipe other men's eyes, but he has this check, that there is a duty to others to be done. Riding over hounds, or disappointing other men at fences, are crimes against the code of gentlemen; shooting your friend's bird is as bad; but when you have avoided such sins, you may ride your horse to pieces in the first five minutes, or miss bird after bird, till you lie down and gnaw turnips with rage;—you have only yourself to injure and to blame. The man at the wicket is differently placed, he has a side to uphold, and a ring to detect his shortcomings in so doing; and jealousy or ill-temper is best kept out of sight under such circumstances. It is very annoying to miss an easy leg-hit, but after a few explosions, a player subject to such supervision soon gets tired of whirling his bat about to show how he feels it. Very disheartening is it to see your field fail in catch after catch, but a bowler's benedictions are more usually deep than loud, after a good public education, such as his mates in the pavilion can and do give him. And the result is that, take it for all in all, specimens of submission to authority, and of self-sacrifice for common weal, may be seen

every day in our great matches, which are earnest of ability to do the like in the sterner relations of life. A well-organised eleven out in the field, silent and obedient, is really a fine sight. Over after over, perhaps, the obstinate enemy retains his place at the wicket; the bowler keeps "pegging away;" the field relax no jot of vigilance; by the mere beckon of a finger from the wicket-keeper a piece of strategy is carried out, and one or more of the force are moved to command a supposed weak point. As the good ball is bowled, played well, and fielded deftly, an answer of applause comes from many hands all round the black line of spectators, and the several performers have their reward. For it is curious how very soon the public learn to be critics, and just ones. Every now and then they make mistakes in injudicious approbation, or undistinguishing blame, but, as a rule, the ring's verdicts are sound; and incompetence or buffoonery is soon detected and reprobated, while steady play, where brilliance would be wrong, is fully appreciated. At the public school matches indeed it is a point of honour to applaud everything, good, bad, or indifferent, done by your own side; but, on other great occasions, no more discriminating audience than that at Lord's ever sat in the most fastidious opera house of Europe.

A striking instance of this true cricket feeling which animates the habitual frequenters of great matches was afforded but the other day at Lord's. With any other

clientèle, the combined attractions of a lovely day, a band playing, and twenty-two noble lords and honourable commoners engaged in strife with such men as I Zingari, would have drawn thousands from mere curiosity. How The O'Donoghue would field, I should myself have believed to be a question interesting of solution. But it was thought not to be real cricket, and such an entire absence of humanity has not been seen on the forms around during the year. As it happened, Parliament distinguished itself so much more up in St. John's Wood than it has done of late at St. Stephen's Hall, and showed the blessings of good government and good temper in such an engaging light, that I hope, at any rate, one eminent statesman was there to take a lesson, and to see what a really good lot of fellows he had to sit among. But the general public set their face against aught but stern cricket, and stayed away accordingly.

It is amusing to see how the characteristics of different men show themselves in such an arena, and how opportunity is given for the exhibition of that which in ordinary life stands concealed. For instance, it has often been observed that a very conceited man, who seems to be shamelessly bumptious, is really the most nervous of creatures. At cricket this is detected to a certainty. More than alive to his own merits, but fearful to a degree that something will happen to mar their due exposition, the brazen youth advances with his bat behind his back, under his arms,—a favourite

attitude of this class,—or swinging it jauntily along as if he cared for nothing. Vain boasting! If you wish to see a real funkier, look at him when the dreaded moment arrives, and Wootton prepares to put down one of his best. He must still feign calmness, or he is nothing; but you see by the twitch of the hand, the glove rapidly raised to the face, and replaced on the bat-handle, the jerk of the elbow, and perhaps the uneasy lifting of the foot, that his fear of a “duck,”—as by a pardonable contraction from duck-egg, a nought is called in cricket-play,—outweighs all other earthly considerations. He escapes,—the uplifted hands of the bowler proclaim how narrowly; therewith his spirits rise, and he walks round the wicket to show his muscle. The process repeated once or twice, he takes heart; conceit assumes her sway; he tries to hit a straight one to leg, and falls, returning to the pavilion with a full and complete explanation, inch by inch, of the extraordinary conduct on the part of the ball which led to the result.

There is one qualification which ought to be made with regard to the universality of cricket among us. The proposition is true only if applied to the ideal Englishman, the member of the upper and middle classes, who comes up to our large towns, or emigrates to our colonies, and who is looked at apart from local origin. When we get to considering England on the map, and divide it into counties or districts, the rule no longer holds good. Move your English labourer,

and he becomes a cricketer naturally, like others. While at home in the country village, he is governed by the habits of those immediately around him. Some counties have never done anything in the national game, so far as the working man is concerned; in others, it is his delight, and almost single pastime. Hampshire was the earliest in the field; and although her cricketing powers have waned, they have never wholly failed. For the last thirty years, however, Kent, Sussex, and Surrey, in the south, have been conspicuous for village greens studded with evening practisers, and for matches, in which superior form is shown by mere labourers. Cambridge and Norfolk, in a less degree, maintain this position in the eastern counties; and then come Nottingham, Yorkshire, and, of late, Lancashire, in the north. The last-named county has improved wonderfully in the last few years, and the game may be fairly considered as safe to exist there for many a year to come. Sheffield has been the great fountain-head from which Yorkshire cricket has found its way into the three Ridings. But Nottingham has, from time whereof cricket memory runneth not to the contrary, stood firmly at the head of northern practice. And it is curious to note how style, as in the public schools, is perpetuated there to this day from early years in the century. Free hitting, more particularly to leg, has been a characteristic of their eleven ever since the oldest memory. Sometimes they have had bad bowling; more often, as just at the

present moment, almost a superabundance of good; but no one has ever seen them come up without lots of hitting. Indeed, one particular branch of this specialty is indigenous. The old hands used to follow the ball when it was capable of being played to "leg," and with a laudable indifference to the laws of mathematics, believed that if hit in the same direction as it was already travelling, the ball went farther. It was at Nottingham that this was discovered to be a mistake, and that the true way is that now invariably inculcated, of getting forward to the pitch, and leaving the conflict of forces to direct the ball more or less square to the hitter. The value of the discovery is proved by the scores made, for it would not be too much to say that one-third of the hard hits are effected by this method alone. It is in the nature of things that batting should improve just as execution on the piano or violin does. Passages which our fathers were scared at are now played easily by every public performer; and in the same way boys now play balls by rote, as it were, which would have puzzled an early English professor to death. Constant practice, with a good eye and ready decision, will soon make an average man into a fair batsman. Bowling is more like poetry, and cannot be so manufactured; and a bowler must be created with natural advantages if he is ever to shine. When found, he is like a *tenore robusto*,—a priceless treasure. Some few years ago one of the counties named above had an apparently inexhaustible supply.

Now, they have not one. On the other hand, Nottingham, then weak, has at least half-a-dozen now in the very first rank.

The remaining counties may be divided into those which have some native cricket, and those which have none. Of the former, Leicestershire would doubtless stand well from her neighbourhood to Nottingham, were it not for a lamentable absence of grounds in her villages. Herefordshire, Wiltshire, and Devonshire, I believe, can do something; but for the rest there is little sympathy with the game,—and as for the Principality, a Welsh cricketer is as scarce an article as a Welsh cricket-ground. Probably the Welsh are too much employed in providing the needful flannel for more enlightened districts.

A hundred and fifty years ago, our fathers played in the Artillery Ground, Finsbury Square. Then Londoners came to White Conduit Fields, and the “noblemen and gentlemen” made laws at the “Star and Garter,” in Pall Mall, scene of the Chaworth tragedy, in which Lord Byron’s predecessor in the title got off so easily. From this by lineal descent came the present Lord’s; the pedigree being first Dorset Square, then the site of the Regent’s Canal between South and North Banks, and lastly, let us hope and believe, a final resting-place hard by the Clergy Orphans. Private liberality advanced the money necessary to acquire the ground so as to avoid future pilgrimages; and now, after many vicissitudes,

the M.C.C. can boast of managing their own matches on their own ground. The other great metropolitan place of sport is far more modern than most visitors believe. It is not yet thirty years old, but in that short time it has fixed itself firmly,—among a certain class more firmly, than ever the more exclusive club in the North-West has been able to do. There may be fewer carriages, and fewer ladies,—but a great day at the Oval will show more citizens, and witness more chaff, than the most crowded performance at its rival. They may drink less cider-cup; but then have they not 'Atfield, as the pleasant compound of gin, noycau, gingerbeer, and ice, is joyfully called? And with or without the initial aspirate, an excellent drink it is. Possibly the growing outrecuidance of the professionals may have at one time received a little more encouragement on the Surrey side than it ought, but the Committee seem to have seen the error of their ways in this respect. In all others they have done much for the cause of cricket, and although not law-givers, they have always set an example to law-abiders.

In the country, days gone by tell of Broad Halfpenny and the Hambledon Club, and these, with the grounds of Lord Tankerville, the Duke of Dorset, and Sir Horace Mann, formed the playing-grounds of the inventors of cricket as it is. Since then cricket at Canterbury and Nottingham, Oxford and Cambridge, has flourished on the same grounds till the present

day, although at the latter university the stage has been changed from the public common to an enclosed field hard by. Brighton has been driven from house and home more than once, and Sheffield also; both, however, finding pastures new. The Leicester ground, upon which many a grand match has been played, and as many runs got as on any, is now a series of streets of the conventional pattern of red brick houses with chimneys at each end. All honour to the Committee at Lord's for rescuing the old place from similar profanation.

It is not, however, to the old idea of a club with its local habitation, whence it sallied forth to do battle with the stranger, and to which it expected the stranger to come in his turn,—not to the great county grounds with their home and return matches,—that the present increase of cricket is due. It is no doubt true that in days gone by the idea of a club without a ground was an impossible one; but within the present generation of cricketers a new order of things has arisen. Subscriptions for keeping the turf in good order, for engaging professional players to the end of practice, and for defraying expenses of transit on the annual outings, were generally found to hamper the progress of cricket. Many a man was willing to play who had no ground near him; there was many another who could ill afford to subscribe to the numerous clubs anxious to avail themselves of his prowess; and all were inclined, if possible, to emancipate themselves from the trammels and

expenditure which the employment of professionals involved. The founders of the far-famed Zingari saw this, and inaugurated a new phase of the game which bids fair to become of dimensions enough to swallow, or at least unduly interfere with, the older and more legitimate form of contest. They started the heresy of a purely amateur body, with no ground, and no professional assistance, to which the subscription should be nothing, the entrance-fee never to exceed the subscription, and which should play at the individual expense of each man wherever and whenever they could light upon ground fit to receive them, and entertainment for man and bat should be offered. The early advantages were great. The founders improved gentlemen's bowling,—always the weak point, and which few had the courage and determination to practice; they created a strong esprit de corps in the limited body of members, and they took good cricket into places where county contests were impossible. It seems strange that men should have waited so long for such a simple enlargement of a possible field of action; but when the egg had been once set on end the Zingari were not long in finding imitators. Cambridge set up her Quidnunes; Oxford followed with her Harlequins; and now a countless body of cricketers, with nearly every name, reasonable or absurd, by which such a fellowship can be indicated, flood the columns of our newspapers. To say the truth, these imitators are but a *servum pecus* as to nomenclature.

The Zingari indicated their principle of action clearly enough, and were therefore for some time annoyed by absurd plagiarisms of their defining name and style. This wore off after a space, and some attempt at originality was made. The army had their Knickerbockers, Rugby her Butterflies, Eton her Wanderers, Harrow, I think, her Blues, and the sons of Erin their "Na Shuler." These were perennial. The Incogniti, the Etceteras, the Perambulators, the Cricket Company, are also all alive; of the Peripatetics and several like-named institutions, we do not hear much now; and many having been founded with no original bond of union, and for no imaginable reason except that they may flaunt a name and a ribbon, perish almost in the first year of their existence. Their number becomes almost a nuisance; but it is at any rate a distinct testimony to the soundness of the original idea, and makes the reminiscence of a time when no such combination was dreamed of almost incredible. For after all there ought to be a moving, inspiring idea in the formation of every club of this sort. It is of no use to endeavour to get up fictitious sympathy with what are technically termed sides. I can't do it, nor can you. Married and Single, Tall and Short, Old and Young, are only so many variations of the first half of the alphabet against the second; and, for utter lack of interest, commend me to an "A to K." Such a division makes a good practice game, and is better than none; but it never can be more than a side.

Bring a lot of hardy Norsemen to fight inch by inch with the South, and you see a real contest, and take your side; better still, if you set county against county, and watch the patriotism which an artificial division can never evoke; or set school against school, university against university; and in days which seem never likely to return,—the Gentlemen against the Players. Party feeling is after all the true mainspring of life, and party success the pleasure above all others. If you cannot contribute, you can at least share it. The English are accused of reducing all things to pounds, shillings, and pence; the money-boxes at Lord's or the Oval know well by this standard the difference between the anxious crowds who watch one sort of match, and the listless indifference of the few loungers who drop in at the other.

And this brings me to the monster cricket nuisance of the day. It is bad enough to see a parcel of ninnies airing a flaming ribbon and a sonorous name in the newspapers, and duly paying for the insertion. It annoys one, but it does no real harm. It pleases them, and don't hurt the game. But it is far otherwise with the so-called England Elevens, which go caravanning about the country playing against two bowlers and twenty duffers for the benefit of some enterprising publican. If it were only for the bad cricket on the side of the twenty-two, the thing would be intolerable enough. Imagine a whole district scoured for miles for anything in the shape of a player, and the strange

ill-matched result in the shape of twenty poor beggars treading on each other's toes with bran-new spikes, missing catch after catch, and eventually going in one after the other, like sheep to the slaughter, to "'ave their hover of Jackson," as "Punch" put it in that wonderful cartoon by John Leech,—and you have a fair average of the locals. What good it does them to have a round 0 duly affixed to their names in the county paper, and to pay in purse and person for the privilege, is hard to conceive. But it is their own business. The real evil is that done to their hired antagonists, and to the game which they at any rate are competent to adorn. There are, perhaps, some thirty or forty men who would, before the name had become a byword, have been honoured by being called "England" players. In time past the mass of these men stuck to their counties, while a few of the best were hired by the great metropolitan clubs as bowlers, and released when claimed by their county. They were proud of being asked to play. They came up to Lord's and earned their five pounds for winning a match. They were civil and contented. In an evil hour for cricket, old Clark of Nottingham, a shrewd man, and one who saw where money was to be got, conceived the idea of propagating cricket in distant parts. In the exercise of his quasi-episcopal functions, he took to himself a dozen other missionaries, and before and after the regular cricket season transported them to any place ready to pay for their services. But

then it was only before and after the regular season that this was done, except when a blank week offered itself. There can be no question that, for the time, a great deal of good was done. Many a man who had imbibed the rudiments soon learnt to play better. Many more were stimulated to begin, who had never dreamed of ericket before. Clubs were formed, and all went well for the true interests of the game. The mine, however, was soon discovered to be rich enough to tempt fresh adventurers, and a second eleven was formed in opposition. Both sets, too, began to look upon the casual engagement in a great match, or the more permanent employment at so much a week, as a thing not to be compared in point of profit with the new method ; and, moreover, the vanity of the professionals was tickled. They found themselves rated higher in the rural districts, more petted and praised, than was possible at a good honest inning or a fair day's bowling at Lord's ; and by degrees the two duties began to clash. Fresh rivals, too, sprung up. The Eleven and the United Eleven found themselves met by new if less influential bands, and a competition arose which was not other than acrimonious. Unluckily, just at this time Australia and America seemed fair fields for earning fresh honours and fresh money. A rivalry as to who should share in the new venture was originated ; animosity was engendered ; and from the effect of this petty strife metropolitan cricket has not yet recovered. Whether it will ever do so is still a

moot point. Nearly the whole available talent has been withdrawn. Men of one faction refused to meet men of the other in the field; and paid professionals insisted on dictating to those who paid them the associates with whom alone they would consent to act. The result has been to destroy one match of the greatest interest, for it is absurd to consider the matches between Gentlemen and Players for the last two or three years as worthy of the name; and it would be an easy task to pick at least two elevens able to defeat that which contended under the name of the Players of England in the matches of the other day. What was still worse, this absurd jealousy for a time precluded some of the county matches altogether; and it is only in the present year that Nottingham has condescended again to enter the lists against her old antagonist, Surrey. At Lord's, the Marylebone Club, unable to endure the dictation of their own servants, are compelled to lose the services of men who have on that ground won all the honours on the prestige of which they now trade; and it is certainly well for the true interests of cricket that the committee persevere in refusing to give way. The struggle will be long, but, I fancy, none the less certain in its result. When those who have carried a reputation earned in London to the provinces have passed away,—and a career like that of a travelling cricketer is not a long one,—their place cannot be filled. No calico will be needed to conceal gaps in the hedge at Fuddleton-cum-Pipes,

and to repress the undue attention of non-paying spectators, when all that can be offered to the rustic gaze is a worn-out Lord's man or two, backed by eight or nine youths who have never won their spurs. To London they must come before they can earn a livelihood at starring, and it will be the fault of the managers of our great clubs if they again find their engaged players deserting them in the middle of a season for the flesh-pots of Twenty-twos. But, in the meantime, much mischief will be done; the new hands will lose the chance of forming themselves on the style of the old, and many a day will probably go by before such cricket can be seen again as but a very few years ago might be seen any Monday at Lord's or any Thursday at the Oval. The evil of schism is bad, but I think that even worse remains behind. It must be that the style of play in the next generation will be materially injured by the habits induced. To play carefully against twenty-two fielders cramps the hitter; to play carelessly against the two poor slaves of bowlers who are engaged match after match to assist, and indeed supplant, rustic incompetence, must be still more injurious; while the effect on the professionals' own bowling and fielding, with nights spent in the train, and with days passed in hammering against a side positively annoying from its incapacity, may very well be conceived. I once saw a rural authority in one of these abominations hold his bat stiff and stark for three mortal hours against the best bowling England could then produce. He made

four runs, or rather the ball did for him, in that time. Fancy a man like Hillyer having to bowl against forty-four such people every week! No wonder that bowling is not so straight, and not so killing;—no wonder that innings increase to figures which our forefathers would discredit.

This brings me to ask, Do people play better than they did? I think an impartial looker-on would say that they hit loose bowling better, and then he would have nearly epitomised the truth. Hitting, like playing the violin, as I said in another page, is a matter of education, depending upon your tools and your experience. When a man had a hook to bat with, he was compelled to hook every ball to the side which nature points out. When he got the present bat to deal with, and three stumps to guard, he naturally learnt to keep his weapon straighter, and to hit in that position also,—in fact, to drive. His offensive tactics were governed by his defensive necessities. Individuals grow wiser, and so do nations; and the cut, the old leg-hit, the draw, the new form of leg-hit, and finally what they call, in cricket phraseology, the “Cambridge poke,” supplemented the original drive. As the bowling was not so straight as the old underhand, the power of making fresh hits supervened. And I think it would be wrong to deny that more balls are hit in more different places and different methods than was the case years ago. It is natural, and it is so, as far as we can learn from past heroes. But whether the game is

played throughout as scientifically, whether bowlers are better,—they are certainly not so straight,—and fielders more careful, is a very different question, and might receive a different answer. Cobbett and Lillywhite, and in later days Lillyer and Wisden, were most assuredly more on the wicket than the same class of bowler is now; and, so far as brilliancy is concerned, I doubt, if Nottingham were polled, whether its players would declare Wootton to be the equal of his predecessor, Redgate. The last-named man was, indeed, more like the present school of bowlers than any of the others mentioned above; but, in his day, I should think he was fully equal to any now at work. And it should be remembered that it had not then been found necessary to remove the restrictions on bowling which then fettered his arm. It may be that the new school of batters would have played down the above quartett as easily as they do some of the straighter men of the present day; but it seems, to one who has seen both epochs, that the older men found “devil,” lacking in our lot of bowlers now-a-days, and had the precision and uniformity which is certainly not now a characteristic of the other school. You hear often now of “So-and-so’s day.” Cobbett never had a “day.” The evening and the morning were the same.

Still, to recur to the hitting, it must be acknowledged that the rising stars of the present day are more numerously brilliant. And it is with pride that the young men can tell their “temporis acti” friend to

look at Buller and Lubbock as they are, at Mitchell as he was and may be again, and to mark how they get runs safely and easily off good balls, and how all round they hit. Our fathers justly admired Pilch, referring all other batting to his standard. It may be presumption, but I suspect our young friends would be right in saying that off the same number of balls either of the two first-named would get half as many runs again as that renowned ancient, and that without causing a pang to the most rigid precisian.

So far, then, let us rejoice in progress, and admit it is not altogether the badness of the bowling which has improved the hitting. If representative men are wanted of the two styles, one would give Pilch for the one, George Parr for the other ; and those of the old school who might hesitate to put Kentfield behind Roberts at billiards would, I fancy, be nevertheless ready, taking them upon all sorts of ground and against all sorts of bowling, to give the palm to the younger man in cricket.

Before 1800 there may be said to have been two periods of cricket ;—one antediluvian,—cricket in a state of nature, when everybody hooked balls to the on side with a thing like a packing-needle, in wood, and the ball might or might not run through the middle of a sort of gallows without getting the man out ;—when the wicket-keeper had to put the ball with his fingers into a hole, and the batsman might knock such fingers about as much as he liked. No Boxes or Lockyers in

those days. Then there came a great Star-and-Garter meeting in 1776, when, by adding a third stump, they made the game something like what it is now. Just before the present century began, the stumps were raised, and remained as then fixed for many years,—three inches lower, and one inch narrower, than at present.

From that date cricket may be divided into five periods. The first of batting, gradually overcoming bowling, according to its certain tendency. The struggle may be protracted, but the result is no less sure. As grounds are made better, and bats more precisely adapted to bring out the full mechanical power of the striker, the ultimate triumph of defence over attack is assured. The cricketer can bring no *Armstrongs* to countervail the newest iron plates. In his mimic war the one is capable of improvement; the other depends solely on the adroitness of hand, to execute what the head plans. And so it was that men bearing names still remembered among cricketers,—*Budd*, *Osbaldeston*, and *Lord F. Beauclerk* for the gentlemen; *Lambert*, *Beldham*, and *Howard* for the players,—made the scores too long against the under-hand bowling of the day. *Old Mr. Ward*, too, and *Beagley*, were just beginning their long careers in a way which showed too plainly that something must be done; and some time in the year 1817 the stumps were raised and widened to their present limits.

Still on through this second period marched the batting force. *Old Beldham* at fifty-five showed that

he could stop in all day with forty-eight more square inches to cover ; and before ten years had elapsed the attackers again began to complain. But out of this darkness arose light in an unexpected quarter. Whether Miss Willes did or did not invent round bowling is not quite clear. If anybody practised it before, the aspirations of that ingenious person were nipped in the bud ; and it had no separate cricket existence until the lady's brother noticed the " spin " received from a delivery with the arm straight, and the brave Kentish man forthwith essayed it under the very nose of the high priests at Lord's. This was in 1822. That conservative body had not yet been educated to such a pitch, and sternly forbade him ; whereupon a contemporary record says that he left the ground in dudgeon. Five years later Lillywhite and Broadbridge started the new system for the rival county of Sussex. Another émeute was the consequence, and the most noted cricketers of the day signed a round-robin, pledging themselves not to play against such an innovation. As the merits of the system soon became obvious, the opposition failed ; and the third epoch of cricket commenced after a very rough fashion. Those who could bowl well did so with the new light ; those who could not, let it alone ; and for some time the two men from Sussex, with Cobbett of Lord's, kept the innings down, and the extras, as they are called at cricket, were still of reasonable dimensions. Perhaps these, though long past, were the palmy days of cricket, and those to

which old Fuller Pilch, in his well-earned retirement, must look back with the most pleasure. But there arose a first-rate fast bowler in the new style, one Redgate. Forthwith every one said,—Let us bowl as fast as he does, and we, too, shall get wickets; and with that commenced what I have called the fourth period. Byes innumerable, wides out of all proportion to the runs got, may be found in the scores of the second decade of the new system. Smashed hands and broken shins were the necessary concomitants. This state of things necessitated pads; and a man who had scorned to interpose aught but the jaunty silk stocking, which underlaid the breeches of his youth, between the ball and his leg, was now compelled to come up to the wicket a thing of cork, india-rubber, and wash-leather. A better day, however, was sure to dawn. The fast bowling, entrusted to incompetent hands, soon became too expensive; and old Clark of Nottingham showed that there was some good in the old system yet, and that at any rate it made men play at the ball, instead of making the ball run against their bats. Thus the due commixture of the two systems, applicable at different seasons and to different patients, which we now see mainly practised, was obtained; and until the last few years, when practice has brought batting to such perfection, the contests of my fifth period were pretty even. Now, however, it seems as if something more must be done. It takes a column of a newspaper to give the names of those who have this year alone

made more than a hundred runs,—a thing our forefathers regarded as an event to be specially chronicled. That such large innings are hurtful to the game is obvious. Besides showing theoretical inequality, they destroy interest by making it impossible to finish matches; and, what is more to the purpose, they make the game too expensive by prolonging the duration. Some new reform is imperative. It will doubtless be effected; and I do not think that our legislators will follow a bad example by quarrelling as to whose the honour of instituting it shall be.

Now that the Gentlemen and Players have lost their spell, and the North comes no more to fight the South, the two most interesting matches of the year are Oxford against Cambridge, and Eton against Harrow. For we have one school-match left, and volumes might be written upon it, even shorn as it is of older glory. Why twelve thousand people come at all; why, when they do come, they all shout; why, if a ball is within a yard of the wicket, everybody bawls “bowled;” and why the batter, who hits round in empty space, and nearly knocks his stumps and the hostile wicket-keeper over in one fell blow, is always declared, by an elliptical form of expression, to have “played;”—these and many other matters, such as why people who never were at any school at all wear the supposed winning colour, are too wonderful to be found out. Not so difficult is it to see why Harrow beats Eton. They have no river, it is said sometimes; but that is, as all

who know what a school eleven is, beside the question. There are quite as many good fish out of the river as in it. The real reason is shown as soon as the first ball is bowled; when the Eton boy, whether he be at the wicket with his bat, or out in the field with nothing but his good right and left hands to take care of him, stares startled at the bounce and hop. A dead flat,—dead in more senses than one,—does not prepare the young idea for Lord's, as does the side-long hill, lively enough itself, at Harrow. In the palmy days when Eton had fine elevens, she was much better than Harrow, and won accordingly. But when pretty evenly matched, it seems that Harrow wins here; and as the ground has certainly not been better since 1850 than it was before, the score against Eton has told its tale. Many say it is always six to four against Eton at Lord's, and I really believe it is.

One great merit which cricket has now, it had not always: I mean the absence of gambling. At one very sad time, when matches were made for money, and each side had its avowed backer, they were bought and sold as a natural consequence. Intentional overthrows were constantly spoken of, and it was well known that certain players were as much under the thumb of particular men in the ring as certain jockeys are now-a-days, by the voice of scandal, declared to be. This all died away, however, forty years ago. The game was not safe enough, and betters grew shy. Since that time, with the exception of a year or two

when they took to book-making about who should get the highest score on each side in great matches, gambling has been unknown, I believe, upon the cricket-ground. Betting, of course, there is. What will not Englishmen bet about?—but it is all outside, and unconnected with the game itself. Players, except when specially engaged for the season, as at Lord's, earn their five pounds for winning, and three for losing, like jockeys. With that they were once content, and will be so again, when the rage for starring is over; and what with the indiscriminate prodigality of the public towards a favourite, and the opportunity for turning an honest penny at practice, or by selling cricketing gear to admirers, a steady-going young fellow will do very well during the portion of his life available for cricket as a profession.

The literature of cricket is boundless. It fills half the sporting papers, and a good deal of the others. It may be rather monotonous; and, unless it be a very ready writer who holds the pen, it is necessarily so. There was once, I remember, an excellent reporter, whose evident pride it was to use a different word for every victory in the wrestling-rings of Cumberland. When as many as forty or fifty falls were tried, it was hard work; but he was equal to the occasion, and Rabelais himself could not have been more fertile in varied epithets. Such powers, however, are given to but few; and our cricket reporters are doomed to a bead-roll of pretty cuts and magnificent drives. Still

their reports are carefully studied. Every line has its earnest and conscientious reader; and when the final match of the year comes, greedy minds give themselves up to that most astoundingly recondite lore, the "Averages." Marvellous is the compiler; more marvellous the reader. There is one class of cricketers, indeed, who live but for this. They have been most unwholesomely stimulated by the prominence given, and do and think nothing but how to increase their figure. They will go down to obscure places, and obtrude themselves upon unwilling colleagues, for the sake of an ignoble score; and they afford during the season unmixed amusement by the pertinacity of their efforts. Their sole aim is to see, stuck at the end of their names, some cabalistic figure, like this, 23—39, an ingenious device for avoiding fractions; and to have added a number of asterisks, denoting "number of times not out."

Bowlers also have of late been infected with this curious itch. In their case, however, it is attended with more serious injury to the game. A desire to deliver so many "maiden overs," is opposed to the whole object in view,—which is to get the man out;—as cheaply as possible, but at all events, out. If this can be done by temptation to hit, the giving of such temptation involves far more credit than the mere pounding of a succession of balls which a man can play down harmlessly. Especially as the player by the mere force of doing so gets his eye in most

dangerously. The number of maidens can never do more than indicate mediocrity or poverty of conception at one end or the other. It is well to keep on knocking at the door, as Wisden did, but not always at the same panel.

The Lord Rector of Aberdeen has thought fit to say, upon a recent occasion, that "athletics now assumed the dimensions of a national calamity." It is from no personal experience of his own, we may feel sure; but he might, as an old Balliol man, remember that the most honoured names in the cricket-field, as well as on the river, have sprung from the college which has long stood first in literary power at Oxford. I venture to give him one parting bit of advice to substitute for some portion of the metaphysical curriculum of the university which has placed him for a time at its head,—a slight modicum of cricket. It may teach his pupils one or two things they do not apparently learn at present, and it will, at any rate, contribute there, as it does here, to manliness, self-dominion, and modesty.

THE END.





1776

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1778

