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THE notion which has been mooted in England of holding a periodical meeting of representative athletes drawn from all parts of the British dominions, is one deserving the serious consideration of all concerned with the destinies of our race. From time to time, during the last fifty years, there has been an outcry against the increasing cultivation of athletics, and opponents of the movement have often invoked the evidence of laboriously compiled statistics to show that a scientific pursuit of them is injurious alike to mind and body. It is stated that a systematic development of the physical system precludes the possibility of high mental attainment, and many would hold out to youth as its one ideal great distinction in the provinces of learning, science, and art.

It is not surprising that such stress should be laid upon intellectual proficiency in a generation bursting with unprecedented rapidity from the state of ignorance and purliness in which its predecessors have been buried. The age of brute force seems to be melting away before the light of universal intelligence, and in the first access of pride at the wonderful achievements of the modern mind, there is a tendency to overlook the interests of the corporeal machine in which the mind inheres, and to sacrifice it unduly. The growth of modern cities, that marked feature of our time, tends towards intellectual contact, but the brightness of mind ensuing from it is gained at a certain expense of wear and tear, which is not noticed so long as the movement is in its first flush of success, but must inevitably lead to physical and mental deterioration if the physical needs of human nature are ignored.

Intellect is very well, but its wonderful achievements have never yet had the same power of kindling electrical admiration and common sympathy as have exhibitions of physical courage and prowess. The past ages have been those of battle in which the individual counted for something and hero-worship was possible. The race have not yet grasped the modern generalising tendencies wherein persons are swamped in masses representing a movement, and individual eminence is more gradingly conceded than formerly and more rapidly forgotten. War, which used to furnish heroes for the popular Walkhalls, now promises to become more and more impersonal, and should the fighting take place at the long ranges indicated by modern weapons, physical distinction in this province of human activity will almost cease. Glory, like other things, will become centralized, and fall exclusively to the share of the generalissimo, who will invisibly direct the operations of millions of human units from a single point.

It seems to have been always a characteristic of the English race to plume itself upon its excellence in some sort of national sport. Centuries ago archery was the pastime in which they took delight, and the proficiency attained in times of peace served them in good stead when the day of battle arrived. Even in those times the out-of-door games which now excite public attention appear to have existed in embryo, and to have been pursued with a roughness far exceeding that incidental to them nowadays. Like the news of famines and epidemics, isolation prevented the reports of injuries occurring in a certain locality from getting widely known, and the probability is that the proportion of accidents in the athletic field has decreased everywhere with the introduction of more scientific methods. Be that as it may, modern intercommunication only tends to intensify the English love for active recreations, and to beget that hero-worship which seeks to embody its ideal in individuals.

Nothing is more binding than the pursuit of a common aim or ideal. It is falsely supposed that the passion of sexual love is the most intense and daring, but it depends upon personal and narrow motives, and is not a tenth part so enduring as the passion for religion, country, art, science, or other abstract ideas, on account of which many are continually seen sacrificing themselves for a lifetime, or voluntarily renouncing life and liberty. Among the English-speaking peoples the passion for field-sports appears to be the bond which serves to make them incline to one another during the piping times of peace, and the common sentiment it produces is some earnest of the approximation which would result from the presence upon them of a foreign war.

The idea of instituting a Pan-Britannic Olympiad, where the selected champions in every department of athletics shall compete for the laurel-wreath, or its modern substitute, the silver pot, is one for the acceptance of which events during the last generation have been insensibly preparing the way. Each year witnesses the disappearance of some of the old-fashioned provincialism that infested the minds of our predecessors, and a wider enthusiasm and a wider humanity is slowly taking its place. Nothing (not even their debts) has done more to impress upon the minds of the English people the importance of the colonies than the feats of colonial champions in the arena of field sports, and any little animus which may be begotten by the lop-sided judgments upon the colonies of irate *litterateurs* in English periodicals, vanishes like smoke before the cordial recognition of the victory of Australia over England in the cricket-field. No one likes to be beaten, but games of skill are the best means of curbing puerility of temper and of testing the faculties of perseverance and self-command in the losers. If there is one more gracious and pleasing spectacle than that of supreme excellence it is the sight of the honest admiration tinged with regretful envy of the excellence which comes next to it and by which it is most capable of being appreciated.

The significance of the recent bye-election at Wellington cannot be denied even by the Conservative party in New Zealand. Indeed, many of them, in anticipation of an easy victory on the part of Mr Bell, were industriously pointing to the coming contest as one which was going to put out the light of public approbation from the hopes of the present government. Inasmuch then as the reactionaries revelled in the prospect of an easy victory, by so much the more disappointing is the result of that election. The complexion of the victory is enhanced, too, for the Radicals, by the fact that it has been won in the capital, which is by no means the stronghold of the progressive party, and in the face of a candidate whose personal abilities are fully recognised, and who had at his back a weight of social and monetary influence quite exceptional in the annals of electioneering. Rarely, indeed, do the Conservatives secure a better representative man than Mr Bell, and if such a champion cannot succeed in plucking the wreath of victory at the polls, they cannot very reasonably look for a reversal of the popular verdict at the ensuing general election.

English novels and English poetry are stuffed full of romance. Romance is in these chiefly connected with the passion of man for woman and woman for man. Its object is to intensify, to minister to the illusions begotten by an over-excited brain, which distorts a certain commonplace creature of the other sex into an ideal being such as the world never saw before and never will see again. Life is full of illusions. These constitute the stock of hopes which, like carrots dangled by the rider before a donkey's nose, induce man to put his best leg foremost. Without such mankind would be torpid animals, but they would also be less sensitive ones and suffer less. Dickens wrote his novel, 'Great Expectations,' which at its close leaves the mind unsatisfied. Life is one long great expectation, and at its conclusion even the most prosperous have a sense of imaginings ungratified and cravings unassuaged, and depart hoping for their fulfilment in the hereafter.

But of all illusions those begotten by the love-sickness are the earliest, the most acute, and the most common. It is the most convincing proof of the irresistibility of natural forces that in the face of this passion all human beings are as clay in the hands of the potter, just as if Nature dreaded

the superevocation of reason with growing years, and made the attack all the stronger in consequence during youth. The tendency of modern times is to trace scientifically the changes of the human mind from its beginnings, and it would be interesting to ascertain if what we know as love-sickness torments the unsophisticated savage in the same degree as civilized man, and whether the dusky maiden whose cannibal papa is about to eat the interesting stranger who has won his daughter's heart, suffers keenly at the thought of her lover being taken into the family in that very material fashion. It would also be interesting to know what are the remedies which the barbarian father prescribes for his daughter when she cannot have the man of her choice, and refuses to be comforted therefor. Does he cut off her head as a nuisance, or present her with a new calabash for a foot tab? Pending the introduction of clothing by the missionaries, the device of soothing her with gifts of bonnets, gloves, and dresses is not open to the poor man, so he has not much alternative between whacking her into submission and giving her the object of her desire.

The thought is an interesting one, and is provoked by the recent determined suicide of a Maori girl because she was crossed in love by her relations. We hear a great deal about the superiority of our race, but despite the anguish and hopelessness breathed in European novels by characters who have lost their beloved and the awful threats of disappointed lovers in real life, Caucasian young men and young women show less of the courage of their convictions than did this Maori girl. She has clearly taken the sentiment expressed in the English novel too seriously, not knowing that in real life Europeans get well and consent to love again. If their beloved one has died they are content to postpone following until required in the ordinary cause of nature, and meanwhile obtain such ample consolation that one may be justified in assuming that the re-union of the lovers in the hereafter will be a cool one.

As Thackeray says, we all, from Hercules and Rinaldo downwards, have endured the pangs of disprized, thwarted, or disappointed love, but unlike the simple savage (who realizes not the gap which separates our theory from our practice) we generously abstain from dying. White men, of course, do so because they know that males are scarce in the world, and it would be forsaking the post of duty. There is not the same reasons for the love-sick white woman failing to die as she often threatens to do when the heart-complaint fiercely seizes her. We must therefore conclude that she consents to exist for her own sake, and in the sneaking belief that there is still for her some balm in Gilead. Why novelists insist upon holding up this picture of the hopelessness of woe which is so inconsistent with experience can only be explained upon the ground that morbid sentimentality pays. When, however, the missionary comes to the untutored savage woman with store-clothes and the English novel, she takes things *au sérieux* and commits suicide.

WHAT TO DO WITH SEVEN.—A Father, writing to the *New York Ledger*, says: 'In a recent number of the *Ledger* you say: "It is, in fact, a vulgar error to suppose that a parent's authority over a female child ceases at the age of 18. That is an utter delusion." Yes. But I should like to know when it begins. Having seven daughters, varying in age from two to twenty, I have some little interest in the question. My own contribution to its solution is my statement that—beginning with the youngest—my first regularly wakes me at six with screeching; my second paints all my photographs in her earliest manner; my third utterly declines to learn the multiplication table; my fourth refuses to dine in the nursery and howls on the stairs until called down to the parlour; my fifth objects to go to church, because the preacher is so ugly; my sixth made me stay for her at a party till three in the morning; and my seventh has announced that I may tyrannize over her young affections for another long and cruel year, but that on the day she is twenty-one, she allies herself in marriage with her Cousin Peter, whom I hate for his own sake and his family's. If, therefore, you can give me any light which will give me any authority over one or all these young ladies, I shall remain uncommonly obliged.'

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