

sional' who will not sell a race is marked out as a rare exception, a miracle of integrity, and greeted with thunders of applause. If a member of any reputable profession were hailed with the same enthusiasm merely for keeping the path of common honesty, he would probably feel that the infamy thereby branded upon his calling was greater than the honour conferred upon himself. No professional athlete can ever be useful in affording a model for amateurs, because they aim at a combination of physical with mental development, while he aims at physical development alone; and his endless training would be to them mere ruin. Nor are these men flowers even of physical culture or practical guides on the road to high health; we have constant reason for remarking that their abnormal muscularity is no proof that their general habit of body is good. If we want to single out any trade for special encouragement let it be, at least, an honest and a useful one. Let us give a prize and present an address to our best lumberman, to our best farmer, to our best mechanic, to the best skipper on our lakes. Let us, at all events, not discourage honest and useful trades by exclusively rewarding and honouring those which, as a rule, are the reverse of both.

People compare the contests of professional athletes at the present day to the games of the ancient Greeks. The resemblance is about as strong as that between a plaster cast and the Jupiter of Phidias. Greek athleticism was essentially liberal, not professional. Nor in the bright days of Greece do we find any counterpart to the betting ring with its train of ruffianism and villainy, though we do find a counterpart in the days of the Roman Empire. Burn the betting book, go back to the crown of olive, and we will talk to you about the games of the ancient Greeks. It will then be time to remind you that we are not like the Greeks, a community of slave-owners, dividing their

lives between war and pastime, and making their pastime a training school for war, but an industrial community occupied in peaceful business and living under a rule of serious duty.

Our feeling, not only for classical antiquity, but for heroism is invoked. We can see and are ready to honour heroism in the man who saves the life of another at the risk of his own, in the man who braves any danger or endures any great hardship in a good cause, perhaps even in the policeman who the other day got himself maimed for life and almost killed in the gallant performance of his duty, yet was left, we fear, with little praise and no reward. But to speak of heroism in connection with a professional athlete who wins a race against another professional athlete or against time, and pockets winnings exceeding several years' wages of a good mechanic, surely is absurd. The acrobat, indeed, in the dreadful calling to which he is doomed by the vicious tastes of a still half-barbarous society, displays a strength of nerve which might furnish one of the ingredients in a heroic character; but mere muscle and wind are nothing but a half-horse power, and the presence of heroism is no more indicated by them than the absence of it was indicated by the frail bodies of Alfred, William of Orange, and General Wolfe. If we want to worship mere horse-power let us worship the horse itself. It exceeds in strength the strongest of men; it will not be spoiled by our idolatry, and it will never bring its worshippers to shame by selling a race.

We have put our remarks on this subject in the most general form, pointing them to the future rather than to the past. It may be that, in a particular instance, the international interest of the contest, or the personal qualities of the winner, may form an exception to the general rule. The latter motive is one with which we are ready to sympathize to any reasonable extent. We have only to re-