

the object of their delight, live exclusively in the movements of that object. It is a paroxysm of infatuation which proves that the crowd, victims of their sporting inclinations, give vent to their instincts. As a matter of fact, it is also the only excuse which can be given for the unbecoming acts committed at these games. It can only be under the sway of an unutterable frenzy that a person can forget oneself to the extent of being unable to find other means to manifest his delight than to throw up canes and hats, in the case of gentlemen; or, in the case of ladies, to mistake for percussion instruments the heads or backs of those in a lower row.

In going still deeper, it is easily found that such a state of things is not only natural, in the circumstances, but that it could not be otherwise. The reason of it lies in one of the mysteries of Nature — heredity. What must be the effect upon the race of those unbridled emotions of the sportswoman, when her nervousity, strained to the highest pitch, compels her to drum the head of her neighbour? Her caprice which, in this case, is nothing but a raving passion, must a *fortiori* be the cause, by its communication from being to being, of our becoming a born sport, just as we are born a musician, a poet or with a vinous scar.

Thus predestined, the individual is doomed. It will be useless for him to revolt; expelled by the door the natural will re-enter through the window. He cannot help it,— he must be a sport.

The kind of education the sport is called upon to receive will assist the evolution. Long before discovering that our alphabet exists, he will have won his first stripes by a series of victories which will designate him for such or such game in preference to any other. The school or the college will do the rest, as eloquently attested by the trophies which adorn the parlors of scholastic establishments. There they will know, in resorting to the appropriate exercises, how to turn to account the special aptitudes of the subject, for the sake of keeping a cup or adding a new one to the list of victories by means of which they advertise their establishments. Absorbed by the games, the trips, the suppers to celebrate victories, and other amusements inherent to a sporting life, the young sport, naturally more inclined to frolics than to studies, must necessarily develop his physical side to the detriment of his intellectual side.

Constantly gravitating around the same idea, the intelligence will only be developed in that direction, getting atrophied in every other respect, as does a limb left too long inert. Consequently, we must not wonder if we can scarcely move without running against the anomalies which result from the fact that the passion for sport excludes everything else.

They rush to the Oval or to the Arena to see a game of lacrosse, baseball or hockey; but the seats remain empty if a play of Shakespeare is given at the Russell, no matter how good may be the company. The attraction of an exhibition of wild cudgelling or desperate kicking eclipses the charm of poetry. Such is the prosaic ideal which stirs up those souls! The theatre is the most suitable place to have a clear idea of this unfortunate state of things. At a performance at Bennett's you feel that the audience is in its element; nothing is lost to the spectator. The more it is burlesque, the greater is the enthusiasm. The contortions more or less grotesque of alleged dancers and singers delight the crowd. The "tableau," however, changes if, from that falsified vaudeville, (the real vaudeville differs essentially from that travesty) we turn to a serious drama. We soon find out, by the laughing which greets the most pathetic passages, that the spectators are out of their element. The enthusiasm is gone and re-appears only with the comic part to disappear with it. They converse to keep awake. I have seen people, in the orchestra stalls, playing dice during a whole act. Realizing, I presume, that the plot to follow was too much for them, they had recourse to a pastime more appropriate to their natures.

A similar state of things exists in music. Its influence instead of elevating morals and ennobling souls, has only succeeded so far to lift feet. Confined generally to trivialities of a low order, it could not affect the masses otherwise. Their taste has been so wrongly cultivated that for them musical incongruities and music are synonymous. They fall into ecstasy when hearing the Anvil Chorus from *Il Trovatore*, embellished by the farcical addition of six anvils and six cannons. They applaud the Coronation March from the *Prophète*, played in the same movement as the finale of the *William Tell* overture. They rush to competitions where a brass band is classified with a symphony, an orchestra with a singing-band, and cannot help yawning if they hear a programme of serious music.

In return they idolize a red-skin because Nature has endowed him with muscles of locomotion which assimilate him more to the canine or equine species than to the human race. For the same reason they carry in triumph the winner of a Marathon race to the home that, by idolatry, they present to his winged feet. Fabulous amounts are offered to enjoy the sight of human brutality. Money flows to keep up clubs in which the muscles are the most important factors. But by want of the necessary help they un pityingly condemn to obscurity minds which could have achieved the only fame people can boast of without forfeiting the end for which they have been created.