

The Rockwood Review.

THE PROPER IDEA OF SPORT.

Caspar Whitney's efforts on behalf of an improved condition of affairs in American Sports, have on the whole been admirable, and his page in Harper's Weekly is always readable. That such a censor has been required is well known, and it is to be regretted that one who ordinarily a fair critic should on some questions show such bad temper, and want of the very spirit of fairness he asks others to cultivate. Mention England or Canadian sport to him, and it is like shaking a red rag at a bull, and he immediately becomes so ultra American that one might easily infer that gentlemen did not exist outside of the United States. His ill tempered sneers at the representatives of Oxford and Cambridge Universities a few weeks ago, were in execrable taste and not calculated to do good. It is a notorious fact that the average American is the worst loser in the world, simply because the idea of winning is the central idea of sport with him; even Caspar Whitney cannot get beyond this in international contests, and his criticisms of these events are invariably ill natured and unfair. As far as the Oxford and Cambridge vs. Yale and Harvard trials were concerned, the contests were simply between what should be the best elements in these Universities. The Americans did their best, and were beaten by a better team, took their defeat as gentlemen should, and made a pleasing impression too often absent from such contests. What if other American Universities have better performers than those who went to England, it has nothing to do with the question. Those of us who know what the usual composition of American teams who fight for international honors is, are delighted to think that once at least a team of Americans has been found to do battle for their country. Generally speaking such teams are composed of hirelings scraped together from the four corners of the earth, with we

are sorry to say a great many Canadians thrown in. Scarcely a Canadian who has become prominent in sport, has escaped offers from Universities or Athletic Clubs in the U. S., and that so many have succumbed to the tempter is a matter of regret and shame to us, especially as they are Americans only as long as they win, Canadians when they lose. When Canadian sport is mentioned, Caspar Whitney immediately begins to sneer, and even goes to the trouble of mixing up yellow journal ideas of the Alaskan question with international yachting contests, although how they affect each other is difficult to understand. The Seawhanka Cup contests have certainly been unsatisfactory to the Americans since they have invariably lost, and lost with the worst grace in the world. The races have developed little or nothing but freaks rather than boats, but who have the offenders been? A careful comparison of the boats built for trials does not show that the worst of the freaks came from this side of the line. True it was that the much abused Dominion was the greatest departure from the normal of all, but she proved to have qualifications worth developing. The unfortunate Constance-Glencairn fizzle was not the fault of Canadians, but the result of the babyish conduct of the Americans. The race committee with great good nature made several changes of course, to suit the hypercritical Yankees, but no sooner made than another protest was lodged. The result of the race was not in question, as it was Glencairn weather, and the Canadian impression is that the Americans would have shown to much better advantage by taking their defeat like gentlemen. We certainly can commend our lads for their ability as a general rule, to accept defeat with quite as good grace as victory, and in England our athletes are honored for their manliness and gentlemanly behaviour.