

that the same Force which ruled the territorial world, should also be a law for the celestial.

It is not probable that bodily strength will ever again form so important an element in a political or religious system. Yet the admiration of muscular vigour remains a fixed and strong passion of human nature at all ages and under all circumstances. In Mr. Hughes' well-known story, the boy who points out to Tom Brown the youthful heroes of Rugby shows him three or four athletes and only one prize-man. Nine out of every ten boys who did the same thing would have awarded honours in the same way. Once out of school, the dux of the class must yield precedence to the boy who can best run, leap, fight, or swim. Young men generally attach more importance, or at least pay more homage, to bodily strength than to mental power, for every one of them can appreciate the former when he sees it, though there are many who can neither recognize nor admire the latter. Few care to know who the prize-men of Oxford and Cambridge may be—the double-firsts, the senior wranglers, but once or twice a year all England talks of the captain of the cricket eleven, or the stroke oarsmen of the University boat. Even staid and elderly business men, the very ballast of the community, often show flashes of the same enthusiasm. They read the sporting journals, they discuss the merits of pugilists and pedestrians, and often slip away from their desks and counters to spend an hour or two which they know will be well employed in active exercise of some kind or other. No age or class of mankind is insensible to the attraction of muscular sports. A much coveted quality, however, is always one that is hard to acquire. It is not easy for a man of sedentary occupation, however enthusiastic he may be, to become a good gymnast. It takes long practice to acquire any degree of excellence beyond a very moderate average. It takes steady practice to retain it when acquired, for of all accomplishments this is the one which rusts most rapidly by neglect. A week or two of inaction will destroy powers which required a month's steady application to form them. Moreover, steadiness and perseverance are qualities in which the amateur is generally deficient. The point at which he aims is always a distant one and attainable only by a slow and fatiguing journey. But his mind is bent upon getting at it by a short cut and an easy road. Showy performances are his delight, and exercises unconnected with special feats are his abhorrence. He wishes, without undergoing much hardship, to rival the excellences of men who make a lifelong study and practice of arts to which he can devote only the margins and waste fractions of his time. When he discovers that he must either modify his aims or renounce them altogether he chooses the latter alternative and falls back upon recreations that will serve to amuse his mind without fatiguing his body. Impatience and over ambition are the chief stumbling-blocks in the way of all amateurs. The man who would cultivate his muscular powers not as a means of livelihood, but as an innocent and healthy amusement, must compare himself not with experts, but with those who enjoy opportunities similar to his own, and he must be satisfied with a mod-