

agement? Cannot sport be left to take care of itself? Are men naturally so inclined against it, that amusement has to be vigorously bribed into existence? But, as a matter of fact, the practice of boating as a national sport is not framed by such matches, and we question the amount of amusement derived by the thousands who wait, watch, lounge, gamble, drink and fight for one or two days in order to see two men pull their pro-gile skiffs through smooth water for half an hour. It is not the game, but fictitious circumstances connected with the game, that develop the unnatural excitement we all deplore.

Just because cricket is a national sport in Britain, it does not need the encouragement of thousand dollar prizes. When such stimulants are given, the game falls into the hands of a few professionals, and ceases to be played on village greens.

Look at the real state of the case, and then let any candid man answer if the whole thing does not seem expressly arranged to encourage the practices of drinking, gambling, and rowdyism rather than any useful object. More can be said for almost any other contest in which physical strength and skill are displayed, than for boat-racing as conducted at present. In a contest of yachts, or sail-boats, not only is seamanship displayed; but the best lines and mode's for vessels are discovered or tested. Much can be said for running, leaping, wrestling, or other such games. Even horse-racing, bad as it is in its concomitants and in its results, is usually over in a short time, because the races come off on the appointed day, no matter what the weather may be. But nothing is gained by a boat-race except to show that on a certain day A. B. was a slightly better rower than C. D. Next year C. D. would just as likely as not come in first. Absolutely nothing is proved, and no benefit conferred on the country or the community. In the second place, the success of the race depends on so many things, especially the state of the water, and the weather, that delays are almost always necessary; and thus not only is time lost, but the natural tendency to undue excitement is stimulated to the fever point. Men who went out only to see a race are led into practices they themselves must afterwards be sorry for.

And, thirdly, the large sums staked or offered as prizes bring into prominence professionals who think it no sin to mislead the public as to their real powers or to "sell" the race, and such practices are terribly infectious. The champion from the States in the recent contest said that he lost the St. John first prize because he did not wish to beat his opponent too much, in order that he might mislead the Halifax people in their betting. On the supposition that he told the truth, he was not ashamed to offer, as the explanation of his defeat, that he had tried the trick of a blackleg.

But to argue the subject seriously is perhaps a mistake. The late races have cost St. John and Halifax directly thousands of dollars in time and money wasted, in business suspended, and men unfitted for their work for several days; and indirectly ten times as much in the gambling spirit fostered among our boys and young men. We speak not of the outbursts of blaspheming, rowdyism and drunkenness, that the newspapers describe or hint at, on the Kennebecasis and about the Four Mile House. Every one can see and condemn such things. But gambling is dangerous because unseen and seductive. Its spread among us would be a public calamity of the worst kind. And yet the respectable men who have encouraged those races have done their best to make it take root here. They have been the means of bringing among us notorious swindlers, the scum of cities of the United States. By means of these gentry, aided by the excitement that the Press seemed to do its best to work up, there was hardly a boy or man that came under their baleful influence that was not induced to gamble in one way or another. The money risked was in some cases their own; with others it was their month's wages advanced; and in other cases it was stolen outright. Was it worth while having all the disgust and discomfort and disgrace—present and prospective—connected with the races, all the loss and immorality and demoralization, merely to find out whether A or B was the better rower? Was the game really worth the candle? When we think of it, was not the whole business excessively childish, or—worse?

We implore the gentlemen who have