

This art calls into use all the faculties of the mind and body, it teaches one to use the brains to think, and quickly too at that, as they are used in learning a language; then the muscles of the body, being well trained, must respond in the twinkling of an eye to the slightest suggestion or wish the thought expresses; so it will be seen, that the mental faculties play a prominent part in this game of skill, where good judgment is the main essential.

There is nothing I know of, from which more healthful enjoyment can be got, to those immediately interested, than a bout with the foils. Let us, just for a moment, come "On guard" and see if we cannot appreciate the enjoyment that two fencers experience while engaged in the "Assault." Now then, first *Le Grande* salute, which is an exhibition of the most graceful movements and a respectful salutation to the onlookers, is gone through. Then "On guard," the blades cross, there is a trembling together of the steel, the blades seem to be imbued with life and intelligence and to enter into the spirit of the thing, like an old war horse who smells powder and chafes under restraint, eager for the fray.

Now comes the game of head work; every muscle quivers, the eye on the alert, the haunches ready to spring, ready to attack or defend at the first opportunity; there is a momentary lull; now the steel skins, what can be his game? Ah! here came a thrust, yes—no! not yet, we were too quick that time, but very nearly being caught; hello! another follows in quick succession—thrust—thrust; ah, ah! my fine fellow; you will push the fight; all right; I am not averse; and the fight waxes fast and furious; now it is a perfect melee, in which nothing is seen but a confused mass of swords, arms, legs and bodies, all moving, squirming with the activity of two rival cats fighting. "Touch"! Bravo! at last; that was well earned and we acknowledge the hit without reluctance, for it was well done, but now we must try again, as soon as we recover our breath, for we want revenge.

The same is gone through again, only this time we change our tactics, resolved not to be caught in the same trap again. What! touched again? Oh! this will never do, and so we brace up for the final touch. Not that we haven't been braced up before, but it's always a consolation to brace up for the next. Yes! this time we get it, and now we regret that we did not "brace" up before, feeling convinced that if such had been the case, we would have won all three. This is a peculiarity in fencing,—one is never satisfied of defeat. However, we are in a profuse perspiration, which is a happy state to be in for a little while. We shake hands and congratulate the victor, take a bath, and arrange another meeting.

After this is gone through one feels as frisky and chipper as can be imagined, the muscles of the legs are so pliant, one scarcely seems to touch the ground while walking, and we are in condition to execute any task we may be called upon to perform.

(To be continued.)

A YOUNG BIGAMIST.

A correspondent has furnished the details of an extraordinary case of polygamy. A Brahman of Bengal gave away his six aunts, eight sisters and four daughters in a batch in marriage to a boy less than ten years old. The ages of the brides of three generations varied from 50 years to 3 months, and the baby bride was brought to the marriage ceremony on a brass plate. Among the Kulin Brahmans, it is said, the man who receives in marriage the majority of the daughters of a family is also bound to have the rest, otherwise the minority must suffer a lifelong celibacy. The correspondent concludes: "Hundreds of instances like the above might be given if needed."

Current Literature.

There is one man in Washington at present whose name is on every one's tongue, and that is Lewis V. Bogy, a Pension Bureau clerk, the author of the novel, "In Office." The book is not by any means clever, and is of that nasty school of American realism that apes the French in everything but artistic cleverness. It deals largely with the temptations of a lady in the civil service, and makes public a good deal of harsh truth concerning the immorality of many statesmen, some stray leaves of which came so near being unfolded in a certain department at Ottawa last winter. Mr. Bogy has been a bogey man to the departmental officers ever since his unsavory book was published. It deals with the dark side of the civil service and the truth of his pictures has been abundantly attested by the instant recognition accorded to many of his portraits by those who know the capital city. The general impression is that Mr. Bogy has done a good turn to the public, although his book is nasty. But he has very little reason to congratulate himself. He sold the book for \$100 to the publisher and earned his discharge from the civil service at the same time. At the present moment he is one of the best advertised men in the United States, and it is said his publishers have already made \$5,000 out of his book, but Mr. Bogy gets nothing out of all this but fame. (Caswell's Publishing Co., New York, \$1.00.)

"Conduct as a Fine Art," is the title of a book that should be in the hands of every teacher. It is composed of the two essays which shared equally the prize of \$1,000 offered by a Philadelphia organization for the best manual to aid teachers in public schools to instruct children in morals without dabbling in religious details. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. \$1.50.)

"Thirty Years of Wit," by Eli Perkins, is the title Melville D. Landon gives to his latest book. The wit Mr. Perkins has spread over thirty years is a few degrees thinner than vacuum. Coarse humor and horse play cannot be called wit any more than a cross-cut saw can be called a lancet. Coarse rock salt is what Eli Perkins gives us in this book.

Boswell's "Life of Johnson" has been pronounced the greatest biography ever written. Now we have Mr. Percy Fitzgerald coming forward and giving us a life of the ubiquitous Boswell. The most interesting part of Mr. Fitzgerald's book is where Boswell is presented as he appeared in the eyes of his great contemporaries. Miss Fanny Burney turned up her nose, but admired him; Johnson loved but held him in contempt; and Walpole called his "Life of Johnson," "The Story of a Mountebank and His Zany." The truth is that Boswell with all his good humor and effrontery was ahead of his time. He was a reporter and interviewer of the end of the nineteenth century—born ahead of his time. He was a note taker, and everything was grist that came to his mill. Mr. Fitzgerald has used the material at his disposal with judgment, sympathy and appreciation. This book is well worth placing alongside of the immortal "Life of Johnson" in any library. (Life of James Boswell, with an account of his sayings, doings and writings, by Percy Fitzgerald. 2 vols. New York: D. Appleton & Co.)

Those interested in foreign missions will read with much interest "Once a Hindu: Now a Christian, the early life of Baba Padmanji." An Autobiography, edited by J. Murray Mitchell. The book is an autobiography of a Hindu of the higher caste who becomes a convert to Christianity. It contains some interesting information relative to the mission work in India, and is a book that can be read with interest by anyone. (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 75 cents.)

A despatch announces that Alphonse Daudet, the celebrated French writer, is dying. Daudet is one of the great characters of literature. Born of poor parents, he passed, through the various stages of literary life over which so many of our own great American writers have travelled. A poor student, a country schoolmaster, and a starving scribbler on Grub Street, the consciousness of his own genius always kept him steadfastly to his task. It is related of him that in his youth and starving in Paris, he took a bust to a dealer in art treasures and asked him if he desired to purchase the "bust of a great man." The dealer answered in the affirmative, when Daudet uncovered a bust of himself made by a friend. "My dear sir," said the dealer, "this is a bust of you, and you are not a great man." "No," said Daudet, "but I will be." He has amply fulfilled his own prophecy, for some of his works, while tainted with the morbid realism of the present French school of fiction, command our respect as works of art. His style is the purest of the pure; his method faultless, whatever his subject may be, and he can be humorous, sublime, and pathetic to suit the occasion.

The December *Forum* will contain an article by Governor William E. Russell on the Significance of the Democratic Victory in Massachusetts and its bearings on next year's campaign. The same number will contain an article on "Degradation by Pensions—The Protest of Loyal Volunteers," by Lieut. Allen R. Foote, founder of the Society of Loyal Volunteers. Sir Edwin Arnold will have a description of a "Day with Lord Tennyson," describing the home-life of the Laureate, with many incidental criticisms of his works. The financial and international bearings of the Jewish persecution will be explained by M. Leroy Beau lieu, the greatest living authority on the subject. In the same number, M. Camille Pelletan, a member of the French Chamber of Deputies, frankly explains the French feeling towards Germany, showing that at some time another conflict about Alsace Lorraine is inevitable.

Mr. Mansfield's tragical play of "Don Juan" is not only delightful on the stage, but it bears the test of print—if that, indeed, be a test, which, with regard to drama, may well be doubted, since it is action, and not language, in which drama consists, and action, though it may be shown, cannot be printed. This piece moves with celerity; it is crisp and terse in style; it is delicate and poetical in feeling and tone; it portrays character truly and deftly; and it succeeds in telling a dramatic story about Don Juan without introducing the obnoxious element of licentiousness. In act first the author has used an incident from Byron's poem, and in act third an incident from the life of the Duke of Guise (1550-1588), improving considerably upon the use of it that was long ago made by Dumas, in his "Henry the Third." There are in the piece sixteen characters. The central idea is the redemption of a man, through the self-sacrificing love of a woman. The methods applied in the treatment of that idea are those of comic cross-purposes and equivocation. The play is published by J. W. Bouton, New York.

The generality of Canadian newspapers in their style, says Walter Blackburn Harte, a Canadian journalist, in the *New England Magazine* for December, are a curious mixture of English and American methods. In the news department they are very similar to the newspapers in the smaller American cities, and in the editorial columns they are modelled after the English provincial papers. Except in one or two instances, they are destitute of all pretensions to literary excellence. The *Toronto Mail* and *Globe* maintain a higher standard than any of their contemporaries. The *Gazette* of Montreal and the *Empire* of Toronto are almost exclusively political in their scope, and exist as the organs of the Conservative party. The Western papers have little room for anything outside of