

THE DANGERS OF ATHLETICISM.

The prevalent love of athletic sports is no new phenomenon, though some forms in which it is manifested are the developments of this age. It may sound paradoxical, but we fear it is a truth, that real love of athletic recreations in these days, when games attract large crowds, is far less felt than in earlier days when athletic contests were less popular. The indulgence in athletic sports for recreation, or for health has, to some extent, given place to a passion for popular applause, for securing renown through newspaper notices, and, in too many cases, for the material rewards of victory.

The rich enjoyment which cricket players in the old land, as also many here, get out of this, the noblest of games, enjoyment which is not tarnished by any sordid considerations, has no attraction to those who struggle for popular applause and the cheap eulogies of a sporting editor. The matches now played before audiences give rise to betting on a scale which is to be regretted. At any of the more popular athletic contests large numbers of the spectators exhibit all the gambler's excitement, his delirious eulogy of those by whose skill, or prowess, he has won his neighbour's money, or, his impotent, insensate rage at the players by whose failure his money has been lost. Betting on amateurs is considered very "bad form" in Great Britain, even by those who will put up their money on a professional's match. Here, when young clerks who are engaged in banks, insurance or mercantile offices, or who are college students, engage in an athletic contest, the crowd of onlookers address the players by slang, or pet names, in language which implies that the game is regarded as chiefly an opportunity for betting, or, a show got up for the gratification of a miscellaneous crowd. Professionalism is eating the honour out of athleticism. Amateurs of the class named put themselves in care of a trainer. This attendant lubricates them with oil before they commence a game; he administers a drug to young players to keep them from heart failure, or swooning, and "posts" them in all the tricks of a professional. Hence the marvellous, the most regrettable contrast between the every-day manners of many a young office clerk athlete and his conduct during games. Courteous and polite in the office and street, he is tempted to become a rowdy in a rink. Violence is so common in modern games, that a contest without a broken head, or limb, or some severe contusion, is thought a tame affair. Fatalities are quite numerous from a blow, or concussion, or fall, or intense excitement. The champion of an American college boating club, who is a splendid specimen of both intellectual and physical manhood, is to-day an invalid owing to over-straining in a match, by which his career is likely to be heavily handicapped.

Physical exercises which, when engaged in for recreation, develop strength, are made the causes of life-long weakness, of obscure tendencies to disease

which undermine the physical constitution, by such exercises being practiced for ostentatious display before popular audiences. An eminent physician informs us that heart disease is becoming sadly prevalent amongst young athletes, and trouble in another organ, by which health is impaired, is becoming painfully common. When they become applicants for life assurance thousands of athletes, whose physical prowess has elicited the cheers of onlookers, will find their application blocked by a medical examiner.

Athleticism needs cleansing from the stain of gambling. The craze amongst young amateurs for popular applause, for newspaper notices, calls for discouragement. Amateurs should leave these delights to professionals. Sports that develop strength, self-possession, quickness of observation, alertness in action, are a form of athleticism worthy of every encouragement, but they are wholly distinct in motive and wholly different in their effects from those popular contests which are becoming too prevalent.

BIOGRAPHY OF THE LATE HENRY B. HYDE.

The directors of the Equitable Life Assurance Society, after the death of its eminent founder and president, committed to Messrs. James W. Alexander, James H. Hyde and William Alexander the task of preparing a historical sketch of the late Mr. Hyde to be published by the Society. A copy of the biographical sketch is before us which was the outcome of their labours. The story of his life is told with that charming simplicity of style which draws the reader on from chapter to chapter. Mr. Hyde was early initiated into the business of life assurance as his father was representative of the Mutual Life in Boston. It was from observing the operations of that company while in its employment; from conferences with other agents; from his father's instructions, and from studying the business from both the standpoint of buyer and seller, that he came to the conclusion that there was an opening for another life assurance company. He decided to undertake this work, which led to his founding the Equitable Life Assurance Society in 1859, when a very young man. He found strong support amongst his associates in church membership. He took the singular course of mentioning his project to the president of the Mutual Life and his frankness cost him his appointment, he regarded himself as dismissed. He at once opened an office in the same building, placed a sign 30 feet long with the inscription, "The Equitable Life Assurance Society of the United States," which was hung immediately over the smaller sign of the Mutual Life. Young Hyde must have had staunch, well-to-do friends for, on the day the new office was opened, risks were written to amount of \$100,500. His high character, frankness and courage brought him the