

tions in the price of flour or meat, or in rent or clothing, all of which the workman would find to be very serious limitations on the real purchasing power of his money wages. Even when we get figures for these latter elements they profit us little. The average price of flour for a particular year may be a high one, but this may be due either to continuous high prices throughout the year, or to an abnormally high price for some months, in which the workman has felt it very little by reason of his ability to provide substitutes for flour at that time. No mere wage statistics, moreover, will tell us whether the workman, under the wages current for either point of time, had work enough for all the year around, or for but a part of the year. Again, the price of board or the total cost of living may have remained the same, while improvements in transportation have added to the table beef and mutton from the West, fish from the Pacific coast, and canned goods from all parts of the country or of the world, thus enabling the same money, or the same wages, to furnish that prime necessity for man, a varied diet. Countless parallel reasons have led men to impeach the validity of almost every collocation of figures, and fair-minded men, while admitting the figures as conclusive upon their own judgment, have often shrunk from any attempt to impose them upon the judgment of others. The figures do seem to show that Mr. George is utterly wrong, and that the condition of the workingman has improved greatly during the past half-century. Every new collocation of figures which brings out the same result strengthens the mathematical probability of that conclusion, and yet we can hardly say that the inherent weakness of figures has so far been overcome that the case is decided.

Under such circumstances, the summer exodus may contain indications which are more trustworthy and of more real weight than any mere figures can be. A column of wage statistics may, out of willfulness, inattention, or pure ignorance in the compiler, omit elements which are essential to any complete or just conclusion; but no such imperfection can be attributed to such a social fact as that which we are considering. The summer exodus is the mathematical result of a composition of all the forces which bear on the question: it omits no consideration which is essential to the conclusion; it assigns to each its comparative importance with an accuracy which no human compilation of figures can hope to reach; and its summing-up may be of the greatest service in showing us whether the progress of the past fifty years has really been accompanied by any relative increase of poverty. If the summer exodus has grown only as the country has grown; if it is confined to the same social classes to which it was confined in 1839; if the numbers who take part in it have increased only in proportion to the increase of those classes; still more, if there has been any relative falling-off in number — then we may as well admit that there is the strongest of indications that our progress has not done much for poverty. If, on the other hand, we find that the numbers of those who can now indulge in the summer's outing have grown far beyond the mere numerical increase of population; that the annual movement has penetrated further downward to social strata which could not have thought of it a half-century ago — then we may surely take the whole development as a fair indication that progress has done something to take the edge from

poverty, unless we are to take it that the people are obstinately bent nowadays on taking vacations which they cannot really afford. It is from this point of view that such social phenomena are most worthy of study, as well as most easy of apprehension. There are not many who cannot make some contribution to the discussion; and the greater the amount of light which is poured upon it the greater is the likelihood of a just and permanent decision.

Outdoor Sports.

THERE comes to the American people, with the hot weather, the season in which outdoor sports seem to reign supreme. Boat-races and baseball matches follow one another in bewildering succession. The newspapers reek with championships and gossip about champions and would-be champions. You shall find the spectators at a single game of baseball outnumbering the entire population of such a city as Boston a hundred years ago. Schoolboys are no longer the only ones who are thought to suffer such amusements to come between them and their work; an equal interest in outdoor sports is attributed to judges and lawyers, editors and reporters, merchants and clerks; and it is even said that our Saturday half-holidays are in many cases due less to interest in the health of subordinates than to the desire of principals to witness some outdoor athletic contest. At any rate, it should be understood that lack of interest in open-air amusements is no longer to be included among the faults of the American people.

We may grant at once all that is claimed for the new development by its professed admirers. It will doubtless exert a strong influence against the intrusion of weak lungs, hearts, and livers into our pulpits, editorial and court rooms, and other scenes of professional work. It will make those who take active part in it more prompt to think and decide in emergencies. It will check the feverish eagerness of Americans in their pursuit of work for the sake of work. And the increasing number of those who are able to take part in it is merely another fact in evidence of the greater comfort of modern life and of our people's stronger leaning towards healthy amusements as a break in the monotony of unvarying work.

All this and more might be granted without making out an impregnable case for the modern development of athletics. It is not enough to prove the objects good, even with a likelihood of attaining them; it is often more important to attend to the correctness of the methods employed, for they may be such as to bring with them new evils which more than counterbalance all the good that has been attained. The amusements of a people are not at all beneath the attention of a sound social philosophy; they are often symptomatic of tendencies which cannot yet be seen in any other way, as the real nature of men comes out most clearly in their moments of relaxation. When the Roman noble went into the barracks of the gladiators and bet his sesterces upon their chances in the morrow's contest, the evil omen of the scene was not in the mere brutality of the sport, but in the disappearance of all that had once made up the Roman idea. No matter whether the sport in question was cruel or refined, the men and women whose souls were

absorbed in it were no longer of that breed which had brought the civilized earth under control of the Roman Peace. When the Byzantine mob went into ecstasies of excitement over the alternate victories of the blue or the green drivers in the circus there were none of the cruelties which marked the outdoor sports of Rome; but the pettiness of mind which found satisfaction in such relaxations was echoed in the bombast and conceit of Byzantine historians, and in the cowardice of the Byzantine emperors, who trembled behind their strong walls as successive deluges of barbarians, crusaders, and Mohammedans swept around them.

The relaxation of mind and body which is found in outdoor sports is by no means the most important circumstance connected with them: they are much more important as representatives of, or centers of influence in, the growth of the people. Viewed from this standpoint it is a serious question how far the modern athletic régime is a social benefit or a social injury. The development of a people is seen nowhere more clearly than in their ability to distinguish means from ends, and this is nowhere more true than in this matter of amusements. One may be glad to see a people turn work into play from time to time, from a conscious longing for relaxation, and yet see nothing admirable in an interest which makes the amusement an end in itself, and not a means to something better. Our newspapers give columns of expensive dispatches detailing the foreign "triumphs" of two American baseball nines, while they have no longer space or

readers for more than a meager summary of the debates in Congress. Crowds surround the bullet-boards to watch the reflected glories of a boat-race, while the demands of business are so imperative that they cannot spend an hour twice in a twelvemonth in keeping alive their membership and influence in their party's primary association. If we are to gauge the popular interest in outdoor sports and in any more serious occupation by their respective shares of the Sunday newspapers, what is to be thought of the mental and moral standards of our people?

The whole question is one on which no appeal is possible except to the individual consciousness and conscience. A man should be able to tell, in his own case, whether his interest in outdoor sports is for their own sake or as a means to a higher and better end; whether he is a grown-up child, "pleased with a rattle, tickled with a straw," or a hard-working man, who feels the need of decreasing the strain upon his energies from time to time in order to keep them in full efficiency. His ability to consider his own case impartially will test his ability to estimate the general influence of outdoor amusements as we have them. These amusements are of no importance whatever in themselves; they are of the greatest importance as indications of a general drift, and it is a most serious question, on which every man ought to have an opinion, whether they are now indicative of greater comfort or of popular degeneracy, of higher standards of living or of lower standards of work.

OPEN LETTERS.

Indians, and Indians.

MR. REMINGTON'S descriptions of the Apaches and Comanches in this number of *THE CENTURY* have all the vividness of an impressionist, and are undoubtedly faithful as impressions. There is a tendency, however, among the people at large to accept a brief impression for a complete portraiture, and so to form general ideas out of a few details entirely inadequate for such a purpose. There are Indians and Indians, and he who should form his general impression of the Indian from a glimpse of the savagery of individual Apaches would find it necessary to discard his work and begin anew in the presence of the peaceful and skillful Zuni. It is true that the determination of methods of practical dealing with the Indians must depend somewhat on their character, but if the whole mass of Indians were as bad as individuals are sometimes represented to be the duty of dealing justly with them in all relations would still remain untouched. Whether or no the Indian of to-day is an attractive person to us is a small matter; the supreme matter is that he shall have no ground for a charge of injustice against us. No characterization of the Indian can be in any measure adequate which does not exhibit the various types found among the different tribes, the degrees of civilization reached, and the varying grades of material advancement represented by individuals and communities. Those who have studied the question on the

ground are agreed that while the army view, the view of the frontiersman, and the view of the philanthropist are each true in individual cases, none of them contains the whole truth. The Indian character is as varied as the character of the white man who sits in judgment upon him. Reversing the usual process, the Indian might base his impression of the whites on the indifference and somewhat scornful protection which the army man offers him, or the undisguised greed and unscrupulousness of the frontiersman who covets his lands, or the sometimes unpractical temper of the philanthropist whose whole desire is to serve him. All these types exist, and yet neither of them represents the great body of whites.

What is known as the Indian Question has made great and substantial progress during the last ten years—progress not only in the development of public opinion favorable to an award of an exact justice, but in knowledge of the real character and capacity of the Indian himself. No one who has any real knowledge of the matter ever thinks of the Indian to-day as controlled by any single passion or as represented by any single type of character. He recognizes that in dealing with them we are dealing with a body of people who differ among themselves as widely as the people of any other race. Moreover, what can be done with the Indian is no longer a matter of speculation. Much has been done in education, in agriculture, in social organization, and in diffusion of the spirit, occupations, and