

Edmund Burke's company of grasshoppers under a leaf in a field where a thousand cattle are quietly feeding; but, after all, the great silent classes are in the majority. The common sense of mankind agrees with the poet Horace in his excellent praise of the joys of retirement:

*Secretum iter, et fallentis semita vitæ.*

One of the best antidotes and cures of the craze for publicity is a love of poetry and of the things that belong to poetry—the beauty of nature, the sweetness and splendor of the common human affections, and those high thoughts and unselfish aspirations which are the enduring treasures of the soul. It is good to remember that the finest and most beautiful things that can ever come to us cannot possibly be news to the public. It is good to find the zest of life in that part of it which does not need, and will not bear, to be advertised. It is good to talk with our friends, knowing that they will not report us; and to play with the children, knowing that no one is looking at us; and to eat our meat with gladness and singleness of heart. It is good to recognize that the object of all true civilization is that a man's house, rich or poor, shall be his castle, and not his dime museum. It is good to enter into the spirit of Wordsworth's noble sonnet, and, turning back to «the good old cause,» thank God for those safeguards of the private life which still preserve in so many homes

*Our peace, our fearful innocence,  
And pure religion breathing household laws.*

#### The Ethics of Yachting.

OF the large sports, outside the field of athletics, which have stirred the pulses of men, there is only one which, according to the standards and tastes of the present time, may be called a noble sport. Those that are brutal, like pugilism and bull-fighting, are now generally held to be ignoble, and those that stimulate the gambling passion of the age are more or less degrading; it is only yachting which in the realm of large sport continues to raise men to a sense of self-mastery and a mastery of nature's forces, with no other aim than the crowning of emulation with the laurel of honorable victory.

Yachting is the large sport above all others in which the unquestioned honesty of the contestants is a primary matter of course. With the gambling sports it is different. They are to some extent hedged about by rules made for the purpose of keeping the contestants and their employees within the bounds of fair dealing. It is true that men of the highest sense of honor engage in them, but the majority of the devotees who follow the sport as gamblers are satisfied with what is known as gamblers' honor. With them an imputation of fraud leaves no stain on the sport if the charge cannot be proved.

But in yachting the slightest breath of scandal capsize the pleasure of the contest. Its rules do not assume the liability of a deviation from the ordinary lines of honorable conduct; they provide merely for a basis of measurement by which the relative force of the contestants may be determined, and for a common understanding as to rights of way, so that accidents may be avoided, or, if they occur, may be accurately charged to somebody's account. They provide for a remeasurement

in case an opponent thinks a mistake has been made in the intricate computation, or through negligence. They prescribe that the «trim» shall not be altered, and that certain minor adjustments shall not be made, within a fixed space of time. In effect everything is left to the honorable disposition of the contestants, and in recognition of that fact a winner of a prize makes formal acknowledgment before taking it that he has adhered to the rules. In match contests an owner's representative, with, perhaps, a member of the governing committee, sails on each yacht, not for the purpose of spying a possible propensity to alter ballast or gain an advantage by some ingenious bit of smartness or meanness, but to observe from the point of view of each contending yacht mistakes as to the course, obstacles that may unexpectedly appear, and accidents which from the nature of the sport are always to be apprehended.

In yachting the responsibility for a dishonorable action cannot be shifted from an owner, in charge, to his officers and crew. The latter have it in their power to weaken a stay or a rope, or to do some malicious injury calculated to impair the efficiency of a yacht; but they can do nothing outside the strict performance of their duty which would give their yacht an advantage over a rival. The discipline essential to the successful handling of a great yacht, no less than the mechanical factors involved, precludes the possibility of effective dishonesty by subordinates. So if a greater insult than an imputation of personal dishonesty could be offered to a yacht-owner, it might be conveyed in a vague charge that his officers and crew had assumed the responsibility of cheating in his behalf. That not one man among a large crew would be found willing to safeguard the honor of an employer would be a supposition quite preposterous.

Under the moral conditions which prevail in the sport of yachting an unsportsmanlike suspicion is as much out of place as a dishonorable action. A yachtsman who lodges a suspicion of dishonesty against a contestant is in honor bound to rest from the contest. There could be no true sport in such a match. Somebody must be ruled out—either the accused as a dishonest yachtsman, or the accuser as being in a state of mind inconsistent with honorable competition. If the accuser, from easy notions of other people's sense of honor, should fail to see the impropriety of racing with an imputation of dishonesty in the balance, the regatta committee ought to act instantly and with decision. Investigation might exculpate the accused, but that would not of itself exonerate the accuser; to proceed with a contest under those conditions would be to invite disorder, for a yachtsman capable of an unsportsmanlike suspicion would be prone, in case of defeat, to find other sources of dissatisfaction, and in the end to revive the charge of dishonesty as a cloak for his chagrin. A committee which would allow such an incident in yachting to be smoothed over, either out of mistaken courtesy to a guest or to save a great contest from collapse, would not be equal to its duty, and would merely run the risk of exchanging an unfortunate failure for a disgraceful fiasco.

In a common respect for sportsmanlike honor, international yachting has shed a new luster on the nautical



inheritance of Englishmen and Americans; but if the sport must be conducted according to the ethics of the race-course, with suspicions of unfairness and unmanly bickerings, we believe the yachtsmen of both countries would prefer to know that the *America's* cup, and all other international trophies, were lying at the bottom of the sea.

#### A Model Dramatic Performance.

THE recent performance in this city, by Sir Henry Irving, Miss Ellen Terry, and the London Lyceum company, of Mr. Comyns Carr's play «King Arthur» was a complete demonstration of the falsity and absurdity of the various pleas advanced by the majority of our so-called managers in extenuation of their failure to provide wholesome and rational entertainment. These autocrats of the footlights claim that they are obliged to cater to the public taste; that there is no popular demand for, or appreciation of, the serious, poetic, romantic, or literary drama; that they produce the best plays to be had in the market; and that they cannot justly be held responsible for the lack of able playwrights and competent actors. The exact reverse of all this is the fact. As we have pointed out in previous articles on this subject, the public has no voice in the selection of the theatrical fare set before it, but invariably patronizes the best dishes, of whatever kind they may happen to be; whereas our managers, with very few exceptions, do not know good from bad, have no independence of judgment, and are absolutely terrified by anything like originality on the part of an unknown author. They have discouraged native writers by importing nearly all their plays from Paris or London, and have stunted the artistic growth of young actors by a system which debars them largely from opportunities of proper training.

If Sir Henry Irving had been a manager of this kind, instead of being a man of force, ambition, and intellect, devoted to his profession and resolved to establish its right to a place among the arts, he would not now be the most famous actor playing at this time, as he undoubtedly is, in spite of his faults; nor would the London Lyceum be the only real dramatic school worth talking about in the English-speaking world. What is and what has been the secret of his success? Not his dramatic genius, for no actor of his eminence has owed so little to natural inspiration. Not inherited fame, for he is the first of his family to win renown upon the stage. Not chance, for his upward progress has been slow and steady, and from the first he has been the architect of his own fortunes. The simple explanation is that he has had faith in the eagerness of the public to patronize the best work, and courage enough to act upon his convictions. This may sound like a truism, but it is one that cannot be insisted upon too strongly. There never was an actor who has been assailed more vigorously or more persistently by the critics than he. His warmest admirers must admit that he has essayed characters for which he is unfitted physically and temperamentally; and yet, in spite of occasional personal failures, his managerial career has been one long and unbroken record of triumphant prosperity.

Many of the most striking characteristics of his liberal and enlightened theories of management were

exemplified in his representation of «King Arthur,» which was a delight not only to cultivated men and women, but to the great mass of fairly intelligent theater-goers. The public crowded the house at every performance, although the ordinary prices of the seats had been nearly doubled. Yet it appealed, not to that love of the morbid, the sensational, the grotesque, or the vulgar which is supposed by our modern managers to dominate the popular mind, but to the natural admiration, common to mankind at large, of what is beautiful, romantic, poetic, heroic, or ennobling. If the play had been presented through the combined efforts of a check-book, a dry-goods house, a decorator, and the ordinary stage manager only, the appeal probably would have been made in vain; altogether too much would have been left to the imagination. Sir Henry Irving knew how to surround the personages of the playwright with the atmosphere and spirit of the place and period to which they were assigned. To secure all possible accuracy and consistency in the designs of the costumes and scenery he employed the services of one of the greatest experts in such matters—Sir Edward Burne-Jones. For the incidental music, used with such admirable effect, he went to one of the most popular and gifted of modern composers, Arthur Sullivan. To the general preparation he contributed his own extraordinary intelligence and energy, his keen sense of pictorial and dramatic effect, and his intense appreciation of the value of minute detail. The result was an entertainment of the rarest excellence in all its distinctive features, whether literary, artistic, or theatrical. More than one of those beautiful stage-pictures will live long in the memory of those who witnessed them. The scene at the magic mere, with its background of rugged rock and glimpses of darkened landscape, its storm-clouds streaked with red, its chorus of spirits, and the flashing brand «Excalibur» rising from the silver waters, was full of the atmosphere of romance and mysticism, through which the figures of *Merlin* and the *King* moved with majestic effect. What, again, could be more in consonance with the spirit of the play than the noble and picturesque hall at Camelot, with its groups of knights in clanking armor, and the fluttering array of pennons encircling Arthur's throne? The whole thing was instinct with the very breath of chivalry. Certainly no lovelier woodland picture than that of the «Queen's Maying» was ever set on any stage, while the final tableau of the «Passing of Arthur,» fit conclusion to so refined and imaginative a pageant, was a triumph of theatrical illusion.

In this rich and appropriate, but never profuse or gaudy, setting the literary and poetic qualities of Mr. Comyns Carr's scholarly and elevated play found perfect expression, while the dramatic elements were duly emphasized and interpreted by a company of experienced, but not brilliant players, drilled in the observance of the nicest coöperation. It was this delightful harmony of purpose and achievement that constituted the charm of the performance, quite as much as the noble, tender, courtly, and pathetic *Arthur*, or the charming and sympathetic *Guinevere* of Miss Ellen Terry.

The potency, versatility, and profound insight of the actor have won for him present and lasting renown. His fame as a manager will be still more enduring, for he will leave behind him a standard by which his suc-