

exceedingly inconvenient, especially in tempestuous weather, that if the traveler limits his fare to \$80 we advise him to take the inside room with one companion, although it is sure to be breezeless in hot weather and dark at all times. Four persons endeavoring to dress in a space about eight feet square, when the vessel is pitching and rolling in the "roaring forties," do not succeed without heroic patience and innumerable mishaps.

The cool, fresh air admitted by the ports usually tempts the occupants of outside rooms to keep them open, and to complain when the stewards close them; but it is never safe to retire without seeing that they are screwed up.

The bath-room of the modern steamer is one of its greatest luxuries, but if there are many passengers, and especially if the passengers include a number of young Englishmen or Canadians, to whom the morning "tub" is the invariable attendant of breakfast, it is necessary to see the bedroom steward as soon as you go on board, and have the hour recorded at which you want to bathe. The water is cold, but it is the veritable brine of mid-ocean, and the chill can be taken off by a can of hot fresh water, which the steward will obtain from the galley.

The most important consideration, however, is the location of the state-room. In old-fashioned vessels all the sleeping accommodations are "aft," that is astern, where, naturally, the pitch of the steamer is most perceptible, and where, in heavy weather, the propeller as it strikes the water, produces a concussion terrible to the nerves and annihilative of repose. But in the steamers of more recent construction, the saloon, ladies' cabin and state-rooms are amidships, and if the traveler is solicitous about his comfort he will see to it that this is the case in the vessel which he selects for his voyage. Even when the rooms are amidships there are discomforts peculiar to that arrangement; but if applications for berths are made in season, and if the plan of the steamer is consulted at the agent's office, a location may be obtained where the pulsations of the powerful engines are inaudible, and where in the heaviest weather the only motion apparent is a gentle heaving. Choose a room some distance aft or forward of the engine, and see that it is not in proximity to the closets. At the same time if the reader is fastidious he should be prepared to pay for a first-class berth; while if he is nervous, sea-sick and irritable, the best ship built will still seem uncomfortable.

Having had a state-room assigned you, put as little as possible into it. Any box or valise that is not absolutely wanted during the voyage should be stowed in the hold, and marked accordingly when it is sent to the wharf. Sensible and economical people do not "dress" at sea. Old clothes may be worn out on the voyage; new ones are sure to be spoiled by the sea air and the paint and grease which are prevalent on the cleanest ships afloat. Be fully prepared for extreme changes of temperature. Leaving New York, and for several days afterward, you may have warm weather, and suddenly a wintry cold may come which will necessitate woolen under-

wear and over-wraps,—a transposition as familiar in July or August as in April or May. A hanging dressing-case of brown holland backed with oil-cloth, with pockets for sponge, comb and brush, etc., etc., is useful, and may be swung from the wall of your room. A steamer chair is also necessary for a lady or any elderly person, although it is superfluous to a strong young man.

The seats at table are assigned either at the office of the company when the berth is engaged, or by the chief steward on board, and experienced travelers say that a position near the captain or purser is advantageous; these officers usually select personal acquaintances for their nearest neighbors, and others who are not of the elect have no more right to insist upon a particular seat than they have to take possession of a state-room which they have not engaged, however, they are sure to find every attention paid to their reasonable wishes. As a matter of fact one seat is not better than another; the table is loaded, and the stewards are untiring in their courtesies.

Before going on board provide yourself with some loose silver and gold, as American currency is heavily discounted by the pursers. Be at the wharf at least an hour before the time of sailing, and if your departure is to be in the busy season, engage your passage as far ahead as possible.

WM. H. RIDEING.

#### The Origin and Practice of Polo.

THREE summers ago, some young men in New York formed the Polo Club, and built a sumptuous house at Fordham, with grounds especially laid out for the game. Previous to that time polo had not been played in America; it was introduced *via* England from India, where it had been known since the days of Scheherazade. The grounds of the Polo Club were open to all spectators. Upon a level greensward fourteen athletic young men arranged themselves in sides, mounted on vigorous and hardy-looking Indian ponies. They wore colored shirts, velveteen riding-breeches and the small turbans which have come to be known as polo caps; the color of the caps and shirts indicated to which side the players belonged. The Indian ponies were uneasy, and shook their heads and whisked their tails, and shied this way or that. By and by a man advanced to the center of the field and threw up a ball, and simultaneously both sides charged for it with mallets five or six feet long, the heads of which were like those of ordinary hammers. The contest was fierce and precarious. Approaching each other at full gallop, and spurring their ponies to further exertions, the opposing players met in a knot, from which they endeavored to extricate themselves by sudden wheels or dashes forward. The ponies plunged and reared and kicked. The mallets were raised and whirled at the ball, often missing it, and sometimes striking the head of an unlucky player or the flank of a pony. Now and then a successful stroke was made, and the ball spun toward a goal with the prospect of entering it, but as it reached

the verge, a well-directed blow sent it flying into the middle of the court again; and so the fortunes of the game fluctuated until the ball was passed into the goal. The victory was not won without some mishaps. Exasperated beyond endurance by the blows of the mallets, the ponies "bucked" and threw their riders. It is evident that the spectators had most of the amusement, and the participants retired sore and wearied.

With experience and practice the members of the club have eliminated much of the roughness that first attended the game, and it is seldom now that a man is unseated, or that he or his pony is struck by the mallets. As an exercise in horsemanship, the game is incomparable. It develops nerve, self-possession and stamina.

The ground is four hundred feet long and two hundred and fifty feet wide; it is inclosed by tall white poles fifty feet from each other, and the ends are marked by two more poles, twenty-five feet apart, each bearing a white flag. The ball must be driven between the flags to secure a victory.

According to the rules of the Westchester Club, the ponies must not exceed fourteen hands in height, and must not show any vice; spurs with rowels are

not allowed, except on special occasions; a player may interpose his pony before an antagonist to prevent him from reaching the ball; when the ball falls out of the boundary it must be returned by an impartial person, and before the ball is thrown up by the umpire at the outset of the game, each "side" must be stationed about twelve feet within the goal posts; swinging the mallet is particularly prohibited.

The present summer is likely to extend the public interest in the game; an English team will inaugurate a series of contests with the Westchester Club, and other matches will be played by the clubs at Long Branch, Buffalo, Pomfret and Woodstock, Connecticut, all of which have been established during the past two summers. There is no reason why there should not be a polo club in every large town. Suitable ponies can be purchased for seventy-five dollars apiece, and the other equipment necessary is inexpensive. The gentlemen connected with the Westchester Club are desirous of encouraging the game, and information will be cheerfully given by Mr. Hermann Oelrichs, No. 2 Bowling Green, New York, to whom application should be made by letter. ALEXANDER WAINWRIGHT.

## CULTURE AND PROGRESS.

### The Art Season of 1878-9.

THE past winter and the present spring, beyond the usual run of seasons, have been busy with affairs of art. Four main exhibitions have given artists so many capital chances of exposing the results of their labors before the multitude, and of earning whatever advantage may accrue to them from the criticism of the daily and weekly press. Whether the criticism has been favorable or unfavorable, discriminating or foolish, is, after all, a secondary matter. The American public is too thoroughly trained to the habit of looking at more than one side of every question to take praise or blame of an artist without due caution; they may remember strictures or eulogies, but those whose favor is of any importance are sure to suspend their judgment until they can see for themselves whether the criticism be just or unjust. And, fortunately, the critics of the daily press are of such different mind in regard to the merits of artists, that if there be any good in a picture, some writer will be sure to bring it out prominently, even if it strain his own conscience a little.

#### THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN WATER-COLORS.

FIRST to open, and the exhibition most heartily welcomed by the public and the press, was the Water-Color Exhibition, with its multitude of small pictures at low prices,—just the thing to tempt small investors. But there are more artistic grounds for this society's financial success. Water-colors lend themselves better to the artistic

qualities of our painters than oils, and the public understand and like them better. There is a quality among the Americans of the eastern and middle states that is called, for want of a better term, Puritanism, and although this characterization does not really fit the case, it will be sufficiently understood. This Puritanism, then, makes us a little obtuse to, and a good deal afraid of, anything that looks mellow, languid, or luxurious; so that when a painter does exhibit signs of a strong feeling for color, we are apt to fight shy of him. Water-colors are crisp, clear, and, unless in the best hands, crude; but even crudeness is not so terrible to us as richness of color. It is like our fear and contempt for what is called "Frenchness" of manners, and like that may be termed a provincialism—healthy, it may be, but still a provincialism. The narrower limits and greater simplicity of water-color drawing predispose Americans to excellence in this branch, just as the wider range and greater complexity of oil-painting cause many of those who venture into that field to produce compositions rank or turgid in color.

It would take too much space to name all the artists who made a mark in this exhibition. Among the well-known, Mr. Winslow Homer bore off the palm. No better man could be selected to point the above moral than Mr. Homer, with the exception that his painting in oils is not rank or turgid. But his force lies in quick, light sketches, and his talent for color finds in this medium its very happiest expression. His New England children treated as shepherds and shepherdesses were very real