THE

BRAWNVILLE PAPERS

BEING

MEMORIALS OF THE BRAWNVILLE ATHLETIC CLUB.

EDITED BY

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PREFACE.

Two or three years ago, I was invited by the Editor of THE HERALD OF HEALTH to furnish for that periodical a series of articles on some leading aspects of the subject of Physical Culture.

In yielding to a request which suited so well the bent of my own propensities, I at first thought of throwing the discussion into the shape of formal didactic essays; but after several essays in such a style had been written, it occurred to me that, possibly, a kindlier air of reality, a somewhat warmer and more genial breath of personal interest, might be given to the subject under view, if, instead of being considered in that stiff and systematic fashion, they should be evolved, in a sort of colloquial and playful way, from the exploits and the conversations of a group of characters, whom, at about that very time, as it fortunately happened, I actually saw—in my mind's eye, Horatio—residing all together in a single New England village,

in my own well-beloved Utopia of Gymnastics, the peerless and immortal community of BRAWNVILLE.

The twelve papers, which, in as many months, grew up on the stem of this project, appeared in regular course in the journal for which they were intended; and now, in the hope that they may be of some further use or pleasure to a person here and there, they are published once more; this time, in the more convenient form of a book. M. C. T.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, *September* 24, 1868.

"FOR Athletique, I take the subject of it largely, for any point of ability whereunto the body of man may be brought, whether it be of activity or of patience; whereof activity hath two parts, strength and swiftness; and patience likewise hath two parts, hardness against wants and extremities, and endurance of torments. Of these things the practices are known, but the philosophy that concerneth them is not much inquired into."—*Lord Bacon.*

"A SHORT life is not given us, but we ourselves make it so."—*Seneca.*

"WE are weak, because it never enters into our thoughts that we might be strong if we would."—*Salzmaun.*

"THE first wealth is health. Sickness is poor spirited, and can not serve any one: it must husband its resources to live. But health or fullness answers its own ends and has to spare, runs over and inundates the neighborhood and creeks of other men's necessities."—*Emerson.*

"O BLESSED Health! thou art above all gold and treasure; 't is thou who enlargest the soul, and openest all its powers to receive instruction and to relish virtue. He that has thee has little more to wish for; and he that is so wretched as to want thee—wants every thing with thee."—*Sterne.*

"DON'T let reformers of any sort think that they are going really to lay hold of the working boys and young men of England by any educational grapnel whatever, which hasn't some *bona fide* equivalent for the games of the old country veast in it; something to put in place of the back-swording and wrestling and racing; something to try the muscles of men's bodies and the endurance of their hearts, and to make them rejoice in their strength. In all the new-fangled comprehensive plans which I see this is all left out.—*Thomas Hughes.*

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A very pleasant little story but the publisher has evidently got "nervous" and cut out the "Conclusion" in the drama !!

THE BRAWNVILLE ATHLETIC CLUB.

I.

THE EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION.

ONE clear, cold Friday in January, 1867, I arrived, on the Springfield and Worcester Railroad, at the town of F——, the nearest station, I was told, to the little, secluded village of Brawnville, where I had an appointment to lecture that evening. My correspondent at Brawnville, the Secretary of the association for which I was to lecture, signing himself in full Thomas Richard Henry, had promised to meet me at the station and carry me to the village, a distance, as I had understood, of fifteen or twenty miles. Unfortunately, all that I knew of Mr. Thomas Richard Henry was his handwriting; and, unfortunately likewise, all that Mr. Thomas Richard Henry knew of me was of about the same narrow category. When, however, any two of the descendants of Adam really desire to find each other in a crowd at a railway station, Nature suggests a system of spontaneous recognition: each man stretches his neck and stares for another man who is also stretching his neck and staring. On this occasion, traveling-bag in hand, I gave an abrupt plunge upon the platform, and at once ran

up the signals of a stranger lost and anxious to be found; when, almost immediately, the signals were responded to by a little, parched, shriveled image of a man, with bright eyes and a lame leg, limping toward me with the help of a cane, and saying, rather coldly:

"Is this Mr. T——?"

"You are a good guesser, sir! And I presume this is Mr. Thomas Richard Henry?"

He gave forth no sound, articulate or otherwise. His small black eyes gleamed in their saffron framework of crow's-feet, and seemed only intent on piercing two holes through me then and there. Only his ears had informed him who I was; his eyes, evidently, had not yet made up their report. In a minute, however, still looking straight at me, with genuine Yankee economy, he answered two questions in one:

"The cutter is ready, sir!"

"And I, too!"

In another instant we were side by side in the sleigh, buffalo robes around us, the huge black horse, in the joy and pride of his muscularity and of emancipation from the hitching-post, almost flying over the crisp silver crests of the snow.

There is perennial fascination in human nature. After all, the only thing worth notice in this particular solar system is not a *thing* at all—it is Man! Cataracts, mountains, deserts, pictures, statues, temples, pyramids—what are they; save as related by some tie of action or passion to this million-headed, million-handed, million-hearted essence—humanity? Rome is not so interesting as any ragged and unwashed Roman in the streets of Rome. A new man—he who introduces me to a new man is my greatest benefactor. A new man is a new Revelation from Heaven—an Apocalypse of mystery and power, of joy, agony, wisdom!

And, to me, the great charm in the profession of a public lecturer is the opportunity it affords for seeing and knowing fresh souls. First, you have the strange interest of knowing them before you have seen them. And this alone is an everlasting miracle: that we can wrap up our thoughts and feelings in a sheet of paper; that we can become acquainted, while a thousand miles apart; that we can exchange greetings, and converse, and laugh together with still an ocean or a continent between us. We peer into each other's letters in order to trace the lineaments of each other's faces; we expect autographs to be photographs; and we wonder what all these men are like, from whom have come these voiceless messengers of ink: how tall, of what complexion, voice, and mien; of what heart, and eye, and brain.

For my part, I go forth upon a lecturing campaign as upon an exploring expedition. I go forth with the curiosity and the eagerness of a Columbus, a Sir John Franklin, or a Dr. Kane. I go forth to discover for myself new continents of human nature; to penetrate into tropical realms of human love; to risk crushing and death amid icebergs and Arctic floes of human selfishness; to find my way through mysterious seas of the soul to new cities and civilizations of human custom and prejudice.

And here I was, on that cold Friday in January, in a cutter on my way to Brawnville, sitting in dead silence by the side of a man with whom I had freely conversed at the distance of a hundred and fifty miles. We had exchanged three letters. I had wondered what he was like. Something scarcely definable in his letters had attracted my special notice. The choice of a particular word, the turn of a single sentence, the gleam through the rifts of one phrase of a sentiment gentler and deeper than commonplace souls are likely to be afflicted with, had created in me the expectation of finding in him something more than a commonplace soul. Yet his appearance and manner were disappointing. He was frigid, expressionless, repelling—in one word, a New Englander! Whence comes it, oh, ye gods of courtesy! that New Englanders, especially of the smaller towns, and of the unpaved districts, will persist in sheathing their big hearts and their strong brains in coats of ice, just as those ferocious monsters—the old knights of chivalry—used to sheathe their bodies in coats of steel? There sat Mr. Henry, my correspondent and guide, completely ignoring his guest, completely absorbed in his horse, eyes fixed as flints on distance and futurity; his thin, sharp blue nose pointed immovably forward, like the bowsprit of a ship.

So, in utter silence, we rode for ten or fifteen minutes. I became certain that Mr. Thomas Richard Henry would not be the first to speak, if we waited until the last trump.

I meditated.

This is getting awkward. I ought to break this man's ice crust. There is a soul somewhere inside of this frost-bound,

lip-sealed mortal; no man with such eyes as his but had a soul back of them—and souls are worth digging for, even through ice shells. Souls against gold nuggets, any day!

I knew that no ordinary methods of talk would meet the emergency. I opened out thus:

"Mr. Henry, there are two very odd things about you Brawnville people."

"Ugh!"

That sound! how can it be translated into visible speech? Jaws and lips firmly set; eyes straight ahead; nose, ditto; hands on reins; diffused over the whole visage just exactly the amount of geniality and emotion one is accustomed to behold in—an icicle!

But that sound—"Ugh!" Most expressive monosyllable! Eloquent negation of eloquence! It meant an entire speech. It meant this: "I 'm not at all surprised; I do n't object to hear more; I do n't particularly care—do just as you please." So I did as I pleased; I continued:

"Yes, sir; two very odd things; and one of them, sir, is your own name."

"Ugh!"

His nose and eyes still ahead; general physiological conditions unchanged.

"Yes, sir; and when I saw your name at the bottom of your first letter I burst into a laugh."

"Ugh!"

"And what do you imagine I thought, sir?"

"Ugh!"

"Why, I thought, there will be no difficulty in remember-

ing this fellow's name, 'Thomas Richard Henry!' Why, for all the world, that's only just 'Tom Dick and Harry!'"

I could see that the first shot had gone through. My new friend slowly relaxed; a quiet, shrewd glimmer crept over his wizened face; a couple of sparks twinkled from his eyes; and in some place far down in his throat, somewhere between the uvula and the bronchial tubes, perhaps in a cosy corner of the larynx, he actually laughed! To be sure, it was not much of a laugh, only a sort of guttural vibration—a snigger; very low, almost inaudible, yet it was a laugh. I knew that my shot had told. I inscribed "Victory" on my flag—and waited.

During the next five minutes his lips were gradually getting ready to act. Several preliminary twitches and compressions took place, and then:

"Well—that—is—queer! That 's just—what—all—my boys—and girls—call—me!"

"Is it possible," I replied, "that you allow your children to speak of you so disrespectfully?"

"Oh!—bless—your soul! You—do n't—think—I—have—one hundred—and thirteen—children—do you?"

"Well, I confess I *had* not thought you quite so much of a man. Why?"

"Do n't you—see—sir? I 'm only—a poor—lorn—bachelor. I keep—the—Brawnville—school."

"Worse and worse!" I rejoined; "and do you mean to say that you, the Schoolmaster of Brawnville, with all the solemn responsibility of your great vocation weighing upon you, actually permit such liberty to be taken with your pedagogic dignity? Why, sir, every urchin that calls you 'Tom Dick and Harry,' should be hung up half a day on a nail by his left ear, or be made to stand on his head till a little reverence should have time to trickle down into the top of his cranium!"

"Hold, sir! I was—going—to explain; the boys—and girls—do n't know—that I know—what they call me. I hear—a great deal more than—they think. But, between ourselves—I like it. I like nicknames! The fact—is, sir—I am—all alone in the world. I am a very solitary—being. This nickname seems to bring people near. My only pleasures are in the school, in my library, and at the Club. Perhaps I ought to say that I have one other pleasure—it is, walking by myself in the woods. This nickname has spread from the children to the grown folks; and when, as is often the case, I overhear myself called 'Tom Dick and Harry,' why, sir, it really cheers me up; it gives me a sense of human fellowship."

These words fell from his lips with a quiet, tremulous earnestness that won my heart. He had begun to speak, making long pauses between his words; but as he lost himself in what he was saying, he spoke with as much promptness as was compatible with so much thoughtfulness and sincerity. A sweet, almost a pathetic beauty clothed with its own life, for a moment, those dry, pinched features. I found that I was not mistaken in conjecturing the presence of a rare, choice soul lying in ambush behind that forbidding and insignificant face. I was so delighted with the delicacy and ingenuity of his theory of nicknames, that I resolved to draw him out into a further discussion.

"Yes," I replied, "there 's truth in what you say. Nicknames, after all, are our real names; they are the outgrowths of our characters. The names given to us in infancy are not outgrowths of character; they do not express an individuality; they were given to us before we had any individuality; they were given to us from accident, from caprice, from vanity or avarice. Did you ever hear the story of the poor English woman who lisped, and who, in taking her baby to the priest to have her christened, tried to tell him that she wanted the child named Lucy?"

"No, sir; I think not."

"'Well,' the priest said sternly, 'what is this child to be named?'

"'Luthy, thir!'

"'Lucifer? What a diabolical name! I 'll not christen a child by the Devil's name. Call him John!' And so, before the poor, terrified, lisping woman could explain the sexual impediment to the very excellent name of John, down went the holy drops, and the wretched girl named John was handed back to its disconsolate mother."

Upon this, Mr. Henry burst into a genuine and hearty laugh, and seemed to appreciate the ludicrous predicament of the poor mother and her child.

"Now, my point is this," I continued; "our baptismal names fit our characters just about as accurately as the name of John fitted that little child's sex. Unless a person has a nickname, he goes through life nameless. A nickname is the verdict which our acquaintance pass upon our characters."

"And what is more, sir," joined in Mr. Henry, "people do n't trouble themselves to get up a nickname for a man unless they decidedly love him or decidedly hate him. Now, I *know* the people at Brawnville do n't hate me. So I take 'Tom Dick and Harry' to be a sort of pet name in the mouth of the community, and, though I never told them so, I feel inwardly pleased, I feel comforted, when I find I am spoken of so familiarly."

"What you say, Mr. Henry, reminds me of a sentence in one of Charles Lamb's letters about the death of Norris, the Janitor of the Inner Temple, where Lamb was born. 'Old as I am waxing, I was still the child he first knew me. To the last, he called me "Charley"—I have none to call me "Charley" now!'"

This last remark of mine had an unfortunate effect upon my new friend; it seemed to lock him up. Perhaps he was staggered to find how suddenly he had been drawn from his reserve, and was rebuking himself for his precipitate loquacity. His old manner returned. A bend in the road, a whirl, and his whole attention was again bestowed upon the horse. The sensibility, the thoughtful tenderness, stiffened out of his face. The New England tortoise, in a kind of remorse at having been betrayed to come out so far, drew his head once more into his shell—and I was left alone.

There was silence in the cutter for the space of a quarter of an hour. My reflections took this turn: If this odd genius were not so extremely odd a genius; if he were what Mr. A. Ward calls an "ornery cuss," I would not take the trouble of another attempt to draw him out of his shell.

But as he is an extraordinary curiosity, a *rarissima avis*, I 'll venture upon another experiment. I think I'll try it now.

"But, Mr. Henry, I mentioned that your name is not the only odd thing about Brawnville."

"Ugh!"

"I was struck with the oddness of an invitation to lecture to an Athletic Club—the Brawnville Athletic Club."

As I pronounced the last words Mr. Henry gave a start, as if I had communicated to him a galvanic charge; and, without uttering a sound, he turned his face squarely upon me, gave me an eager, inquiring look, and as quickly reverted his gaze to the front. It was evident that the Club of which he was the Secretary was a subject which took hold of him. I was vastly amused at the unique way he had of manifesting an interest in this new topic of conversation, and felt encouraged to proceed.

"Of course, you know, sir, that a lecturer finds his services called for by all sorts of societies—learned and unlearned, sacred and profane; by Lyceums and Libraries, by Mechanics' Institutes, by Colleges, by Young Men's Christian Associations, and by Young Men's Associations with the 'Christian' left out; and I remember, in England, going down two or three times to a charming place—Henley on Thames—(where, by the way, this new poet, Swinburne, lives) to lecture to a Chess Club; but this is the first time I ever had the honor of being invited to lecture to an Athletic Club."

Again, the words with which I closed the sentence gave

him a start; and again he gave me that swift, eager, searching look.

"The fact is, Mr. Henry, being myself a professed Don Quixote on the subject of athleticism, I was infinitely pleased to learn that here, in this secluded little New England town, there was enough interest on that subject to form a bond of union for a vital and energetic association such as I understand yours to be."

He slowly turned his eyes upon me and slowly perused my face, but no audible word escaped from him.

"It seems to me, Mr. Henry, that the great peril of the American people in the near future is not from the unslaughtered Serpent of Secession, or from the Drunkard at the White House, or from the Dotard at the Foreign Office, or from Mormonism, or Imperialism, or Irishism, or from any other ism, except the Diabolism of Dyspepsia, the Anarchism of Over-wearied Nerves and Lungs. Why, sir, we have no enemy in America, or out of America, that can break our skulls; but we have one in our very midst that is quite able to soften our brains. There 's a great deal of clatter in the Old World about our being on the verge of national bankruptcy; but, for my part, I do not feel half so anxious about the National Bank as I do about the National Belly. I do not know whether our currency be inflated too much; but I am very sure that our lungs are inflated too little. In my opinion, Mr. Henry, it is not of so much consequence to us how many wives any old Mormon blackguard has, as it is how many blue devils our statesmen have, and our preachers, our editors, our lecturers. Since I have got back home

I have heard a great deal of cant about encouraging domestic manufactures; well, there is one description of domestic manufacture that it is high time we should begin to discourage, and that is the domestic manufacture of saleratus and whisky, of pie crust and sweetmeats, and hot soda-biscuit."

While I was proceeding in this strain, my companion kept moving in his seat, quickly turning his eyes upon me, and as quickly turning them away, but not offering to speak. I paused to give him a chance. After three or four minutes of silence, as he did not seem inclined to pick up the thread of discourse I picked it up myself.

"Why, Mr. Henry, what this dear *old* New England needs at present is not more churches but more Athletic Clubs. If every village that has two churches now would just put both congregations together, to worship in one building and to practice gymnastics in the other, there would be more godliness in this land, and more manliness, too; the fashionable theology would be shamed out of its disgraceful Paganisms; and the diseased rubbish which was shot upon Christianity by forlorn old monks who had the stomach ache would be carted off by the scavenger; and men and women would be more prayerful, and more charitable, and more virtuous, because they would have a more regular supply of the gastric fluids, and less torpidity in the liver, and fewer obstructions in the intestinal canal. Why, sir, it strikes me, as I go about the country, that the particular kind of grace that we just now need to grow is the grace of a vigorous circulation and a sound digestion."

I now discovered that my reticent friend was getting ready to express himself. I wrapped the buffalo robe a little more closely around me and settled down into a posture of expectancy.

He turned toward me grimly and turned away several times, and at last broke silence:

"Mr. T——, if you would not think me too forward, being a stranger to you, I should like to shake hands with you on those sentiments."

"Certainly, Mr. Henry; by all means. Those are my sentiments and this is my fist."

And there, on that lonely road, amid the lawless masses of driven snow, the horse all the time plunging forward, as if to prove himself a first-class muscular Christian and a loyal member of the Brawnville Athletic Club, Mr. Henry and I gave to each the right hand of fellowship, as a symbol and a pledge of fraternity in the glorious communion of those who believe that all God's laws are sacred, and that all God's workmanship is good. We both laughed heartily as we shook hands, conscious of the romantic absurdity of such an act on the part of two men muffled up in furs and robes, riding side by side in a cutter on a cold January day.

In a moment, Mr. Henry, with a manner bright but subdued, said:

"I was afraid, sir, awhile ago, that you would think me too bold and familiar in talking to you so much on so short an acquaintance; but, really, sir, what you have just said has precisely touched my own pet mania. You must

excuse me for having talked so much as I did a few minutes ago."

And thus, as it appeared, all that ice-clad reserve, all that frigorific New England numbness of manner, were not the result of any selfish whimsicality or sullenness, but the outward crust in which the fine modesty of a soul nurtured in these rural solitudes had protected itself. I hastened to atone for the injustice which, even in thought, I had done to him, and earnestly told him, that so far was he from having talked too much, that he had not talked enough; that I had been anxious to draw him into conversation, and to compare views with him, and especially to hear all about the Brawnville Athletic Club—how long it had been in existence, on what principles it was conducted, how many members it had, what difficulties it had encountered, what victories gained.

My new friend now talked freely; as, indeed, all men do, if you will but touch the key which strikes the chord vibrating from the heart to the tongue. We had now landed on a platform of cordial sympathy. With no longer any trammels of diffidence, with no more hesitation, with a natural fervor of enthusiasm, in a stream of really noble talk, he began to give me a full account of the Club.

Before we reached the end of his charming narrative, however, we got to the end of our journey; for, in the midst of a most comical description which he was giving me of the various prejudices among the people at Brawnville, with which the Club had to contend, we reached the

brow of the hill beneath which reposed, like some huge winter bird in its protected nest, the pretty village we had been talking of.

Recognizing my delighted surprise, Mr. Henry instantly reined in the four-footed athlete that had borne us there so swiftly, and gave me time to take in a full view of the tranquil scene. It was between two and three o'clock in the afternoon. The sun, approaching now its western couch, threw back upon the pretty village a radiant, yet softened gaze—a gaze that was returned with many a happy smile from the two church steeples, and from all the loftiest roofs of the peaceful town.

"I shall take you," said Mr. Henry, as the horse started down the hill, "to the house of our President, Judge Fairplay. He begs that you will be his guest during your stay in Brawnville. Perhaps, after dinner, you will walk over with the Judge to the Club House and inspect our Gymnasium and Library, and the other departments of the Club?"

"Nothing would suit me better! But, Mr. Henry, what you have told me about the Club is as interesting as a novel. When am I to have the rest?"

"Oh, at any time that suits your convenience! But, I was just thinking of another thing. From the very inception of the Club, indeed from the time its formation began to be agitated among a few of us, I have kept for my own private satisfaction a complete diary of the undertaking. I have never yet shown it to any mortal. But I think I could let *you* see it!"

"Do, by all means!"

"Well, I 'll bring it to you, by and by, at the Club House."

* * * * * * * * *

That night, after the lecture, being, as usual, too wakeful to go to bed, I insisted on Judge Fairplay and his family retiring at their usual hour, and leaving me alone in the parlor to the company of the great crackling wood fire on the hearth, and of the thick quarto volume of manuscript which Mr. Henry had put into my hands.

I had expected the book to quiet my thoughts and fit me for sleep; instead of which I found it so full of exciting facts, and of all manner of quaint, amusing things relating to health topics, that I grew wakeful, instead of sleepy, and could not close the book till I had read it through. I resolved that the Schoolmaster's MEMORIALS OF THE BRAWNVILLE ATHLETIC CLUB should not be buried, but printed; and the last distinct thought I had before gliding into the land of dreams, was that of urging Mr. Henry to let me lay portions of the collection, in monthly installments, before the great family circle of men and women who, in all parts of this vast continent, and far away over the sea, in our beloved Motherland, are readers of THE HERALD OF HEALTH

II.

HOW THE CLUB FIRST GOT TALKED ABOUT.

SATURDAY EVENING, *November* 13, 1865.

AT our last Powwow we got on in Plato as far as III, 403, of The Republic. In fact, we read nearly a page farther into the following paragraph, for we wished to finish the account which Socrates was giving of Music. "Do you think, then, with me," said that grand old Querist to Glaucon, "that our theory of music is now complete? At all events, it has ended where it ought to end; for music, I imagine, ought to end in the love of the beautiful." "I agree with you," said Glaucon.

"And I think, gentlemen," said Judge Fairplay, who happened to be the reader of the evening; "I think, gentlemen, we shall be inclined to say ditto to Glaucon, and, in this harmonious frame, end our divine repast for to-night."

"Hear! hear!" the rest of us shouted; whereupon the Judge closed the book with a great slam, tossed it into the middle of the study table, and then rising and stretching his arms as a relief from his long sitting posture, he said, with a yawn so immense that his sentence nearly foundered in it,

"I 've been peeping ahead a little, gentlemen; and I see that the next subject this glorious old Boy takes up is Gymnastics."

"And, by the bye, Henry," said Dr. Drugger, looking at me, "our next Powwow, you know, is to be at your den."

"All right, gentlemen. I shall be the Wise Virgin, and have my lamp trimmed and burning."

So, to-night we have been having the Powwow here. There are not enough of us to make a very large reading circle; indeed, as we number just four members, we can scarcely consider ourselves a reading *circle* at all—only a reading *square*, one member being planted appropriately at each corner of that geometrical figure.

First comes the Judge, our intellectual autocrat—indeed, the intellectual autocrat of the whole village—who reigns here in Brawnville, unintentionally, and in spite of himself, simply because we all recognize him as our natural monarch. Some people call Nature democratic; and I confess there are some things in Nature to justify it. For example, cholera morbus is a rather democratic institution; the east wind disregards the rank of the man it blows upon; Death is somewhat notorious for being no respecter of persons. Those who have crossed the Atlantic tell me that that respectable body of water is quite oblivious of conventional distinctions. "What care these roarers for the name of king?" Yet, on the other hand, I find this same Nature perpetually founding despotisms among us. I find her perpetually sending into the world some man on whose brow she has written in grand

diamond letters the word KING; and ordinary men are swallowed up in this man's kingliness, just as inevitably as the moon and stars are swallowed up every morning in the golden flood-tide of that great planetary autocrat, the Sun. It always struck me that there was a side of truth to the old high-tory dogma of the divine right of kings—kings, however, not necessarily with crowns on their heads, but with brains inside of them. The Constitution of the United States lays upon Congress the duty of securing to every community within our borders a republican form of government; but if Congress undertake to establish a republican form of government in Brawnville, it must first get Judge Fairplay out of it. While he stays, Brawnville is a monarchy.

Then comes Dr. Drugger, the principal physician of the place—a man at about the middle age of life, fastidious in his tastes, cold in manner, independent, fearless, somewhat given to crotchets, often sarcastic; in disposition decidedly tart, not to say sour. But with all his narrowness, and notwithstanding his saturnine temper, the Doctor is a kind-hearted man. His furtive deeds of benevolence, his stealthy acts of self-sacrifice! are they not written in those chronicles which God himself transcribes from the hearts of the poor?

The third Platonist is the Pastor of the Second Church in the village, the Rev. Samuel Bland—a genial, wholesome, liberal man; liberal, perhaps, rather from temperament, from the happy condition of the gastric and nervous juices, than from a deliberate intellectual achievement of liberalism.

The creed under whose banner he suffers himself to be fighting is a harsh, vindictive, ferocious one; but Samuel Bland has a heart too strong and healthy to be embruted by any amount of theological Thugism. When Samuel Bland passes along Main Street on any cloudy, dismal day, with the east wind blowing raw over the meadows, people hasten to the doors of their shops and say, "There goes Sunshine!" and they warm and brighten themselves in the rays of his big loving nature. His wife says she "always tries to keep him at home between four and five o'clock in the afternoon; for then school is out, and if the boys and girls see Mr. Bland, they chase after him, or head him off, or come some sort of flank movement on him, and surround him six deep, and clamber up his huge body and perch on his shoulders like monkeys, and even squat on the top of his head; that with all her pains, she can't keep a whole coat on his back for one blessed week together; and that if she ever does let him get out of the house between four and five o'clock, she always knows what sort of a job she has before her that evening, and that is, *darning coats!*"

It seems hard to believe that such a man as Samuel Bland can have enemies. The mystery is cleared up, however, when we remember that the old race of Pharisees still breeds vigorously in the world. Our Brawnville Pharisees dislike Mr. Bland; and, on occasion, especially when there are no young men within ear shot, they speak against him. I may as well explain here, that this reserve on their part in the presence of the young men of the village is not for any generous reason, but for an exceedingly prudential one.

Two or three years ago, Deacon Snipp of the First Church was speaking very harshly of Mr. Bland in front of the Post-office, because Mr. Bland had assisted at a regatta the day before; and one of the young men in the crowd told Deacon Snipp that he "would be much obliged to him to shut up abusin' Mr. Bland," and rather plainly intimated in addition that if the Deacon "did'nt shut up, he'd *make* him!" The Deacon continued his discourse, whereupon two of the young men laid hold of him and put him under the pump. To a certain extent, that little affair of the pump seemed to confirm Dr. Pusey's pleasant doctrine of "Baptismal Regeneration;" for, from that moment, Deacon Snipp and the other Pharisees of Brawnville have been so far regenerated, that whenever they feel like abusing Mr. Bland, which is quite often, they prudently look around and ascertain whether there be any body near, of the masculine gender, under forty years of age.

The indictment against Mr. Bland has several counts. Some of these counts apply in the winter, and others in the summer. The principal winter count is that he skates; and not only so, but he skates as if it was fun, and not done, as it ought to be, if done at all, merely from a sense of duty. Deacon Snipp says, "for his part, he doesn't think it becoming in a minister of the meek and lowly Jesus to skate; he doesn't remember that we have any record of Jesus having skated." When some one suggested to the Deacon that there does not seem to have been much ice in the part of the world where Jesus passed his life, the undaunted man replied; "That makes no difference, for if the Saviour had

approved of such a thing as skating, he could easily have worked a miracle and made ice on the Sea of Galilee."

But the sorrows of the Brawnville Pharisees do not cease with the end of the skating season. Nay, they seem then only just begun; and even the seasons appear to be in conspiracy against their virtuous peace. For when winter gathers up its snowy robes, and shatters in pieces its huge breastplate of ice, and abdicates the earth in favor of the dynasty of green leaves, and flowers, and bird songs, then this strange minister seems nearly beside himself with physical delight; he goes ranging over the hills, with a hammer in hand, lending a dangerous support to the infidel and ungodly science of Geology; he seduces the young men into all manner of athletic sports, boating on the river, ball playing, and so forth. "What can be more scandalous," says Deacon Snipp, "than for a minister of the meek and lowly Jesus to be noted for being the best ball player in the county? No wonder the Lord hides his face from his people!" In short, the head and front of Mr. Bland's offending is, that he is—a muscular Christian! He can out-walk, out-run, out-jump, out-skate, out-swim, out-fish, out-hunt, and out-preach any other man for twenty miles around; and from an event which occurred soon after he came to Brawnville, many people have an impression that he could be a very effective operator in another favorite pursuit of mankind, which is usually engaged in with the fists doubled.

The event to which I refer is so characteristic that I may as well mention it now. It was on Monday morning, just after Mr. Bland's first Sunday in the village. As he came

out of the Postoffice, he saw a crowd of men and boys on the opposite side of the street; and being interested in all human excitements, he walked across to see what was going on. As he is but a little gentleman, standing only six feet two in his stockings, it may be imagined just how long he was in comprehending by a glance over the heads of the crowd, the exact nature of the attraction. It was that noble Anglo-Saxon festival, a dog fight! Two great dogs, a mastiff and a Newfoundland, were being spirited on to a battle, and were already grappled in a clutch so furious and bloody that only a very daring man would have tried to part them, and only a very strong man would have succeeded in it. As Mr. Bland reached the edge of the crowd and saw all this, he cried, "Shame! shame! shame!" in a voice so deep and stentorian that the men and boys started as if a note of thunder had smitten them from the clear sky; and the crowd fell asunder abashed, and opened a broad aisle for the giant strides of the new minister, who, coming close to the noble brutes, and seizing each by the neck, tore them apart as easily as if they had been a pair of mice, flung one to the right and the other to the left; and then flashing his eyes indignantly around over the crowd, he sent them slinking in shame in all directions from his presence, by saying: "Go home! go home, you cowards! why should dogs tear themselves to pieces for the amusement of puppies?"

Within the memory of the oldest inhabitant, there never was greater commotion in Brawnville, or, indeed, throughout the whole county, than followed that day's exploit. The story of it rushed abroad in every direction, like the report

of a great battle; and the next Sunday, the Second Church was crowded to suffocation. People came in their teams from miles around to see and hear the young clerical Samson who tore the two dogs apart and sent the crowd of puppies home. Deacon Snipp, however, of the First Church decidedly disapproved of Mr. Bland's performance, especially after it brought such an immense congregation to the Second Church. He said that he "didn't think such conduct was suited to a minister of the meek and lowly Jesus." But one old lady, who happened to witness the exploit from the steps of a store near by, said that "Mr. Bland's bearing that day cleared up for her one very mysterious passage in the Gospel narrative; and that she can now understand how noble was the rage of our Saviour, and how grand and awful he must have looked, when he made a whip and scourged the money changers out of the Temple." This remark of the old lady was reported to the Deacon by Abdiel Standish, a shrewd Yankee farmer who lives just out of the village. The Deacon seemed very much shocked at the profane comparison of Jesus scourging the money changers to Parson Bland quelling a dog fight; and he said to Abdiel:

"Well, I do n't believe the meek and lowly Jesus ever called human beings 'puppies.'"

"Mebbe he did n't," replied Abdiel; "but, Deac'n, one thing 's sartin, Jesus Christ called some folks a wuss name 'n puppies."

"What name?"

"Why, he called 'em vipers, a generation of vipers; an' vipers, I guess, Deac'n, is critters a plaguey site wuss 'n

puppies, any day; 'bout like our mod'n Copperheads! eh, Deac'n? eh?"

This last thrust of Abdiel was an extremely cruel one on Deacon Snipp, and caused that godly man to leave in double-quick time; for, though a native son of Massachusetts, the Deacon is notorious for holding those peculiar political views in which the element of copper is said to predominate. He keeps a portrait of Vallandigham, so it is said, hanging in his bedroom. It is very certain that he frequently quotes from the letters and speeches of that renowned patriot. As the Deacon has a peculiar habit of speaking, on all occasions, in a style which some worldly-minded people call cant, of "the meek and lowly Jesus," and almost in the same breath of Mr. Vallandigham, his conversation, to many of us, often presents examples of an exceedingly mixed style. This peculiarity in the Deacon's talk was tolerably well hit off one day last summer by the remorseless Abdiel:

"Deac'n Snipp 's tryin' t' make us b'lieve he 's a follerin' Jesus Christ and Vallandigham 't the same time. 'Bout es tough a job, *I* guess, es 't would be fur a yoke o' steers to go 'gee' and 'haw' both to wunst!"

But I am getting a long way from Plato, and what we read in him this evening. I have described three of the members of our little reading party—Judge Fairplay, Dr. Drugger, and the Rev. Samuel Bland. The fourth, and last, and least, is myself, the Village Schoolmaster—a subject on which the less said the better, down to the point of saying nothing, which is best.

I prefer the best.

Well, as I have already mentioned, it was my turn to entertain the Powwow to-night; and therefore, being host, I was, *ex officio*, Grand Sachem, and had to read from the magnificent Platonic dialogue which we are spending our Saturday evenings in studying together.

So, beginning at the point where we left off last week, I read:

"*Socrates*—Gymnastics will hold the next place to music in the education of our young men.

"*Glaucon*—Certainly.

"*Socrates*—No doubt a careful training in gymnastics ought to begin with their childhood and go on through all their life. But the following is the true view of the case, in my opinion; see what you think of it: My belief is, not that a good body will by its own excellence make the soul good; but, on the contrary, that a good soul will, by *its* excellence, render the body as perfect as can be; but what is your view?

"*Glaucon*—The same as yours, Socrates."

During the latter part of this speech of Socrates, Dr. Drugger, who cherishes a sort of philosophico-crochety contempt for gymnastics, kept chuckling in grim fashion, and clapping his hands, and saying in undertone, "Hear! hear!" But when I had read the assenting response of Glaucon, Judge Fairplay gave the signal for a pause, saying, with a mischievous glance at Dr. Drugger:

"Mr. Grand Sachem, I respectfully submit that this fellow Glaucon, here says 'Yes,' a little too easily. At all events, I can not indorse his assent, if Socrates means what our Medicine-man seems to think he does."

"What can be plainer," replied the Doctor, "than the meaning of Socrates? 'A good soul will, by *its* excellence, render the body as perfect as it can be.' Bravo, Socrates! That quenches at one broad philosophical sweep all this new-fangled clatter here in America about gymnastics. Look after the soul, cultivate the intellect, regulate the spiritual nature, and the body will take care of itself, without the help of these gymnastic monkey-shines! I 'm charmed to find old Socrates and his son Plato on my side."

"Not quite so fast, Doctor!" rejoined the Judge; "I am not so sure that you have Socrates and his son Plato on your side. I do not think you give the correct interpretation of the text, or that you draw a just inference from it. But, even if you do, I must still dissent; for I hold that grand old legend: '*Amicus Plato, amicus Socrates, magis tamen amica Veritas!*'"

"Bravo, Judge! bravo! bravo!" shouted Parson Bland; and even the Doctor, carried away by the nobleness of the sentiment, and by the lofty fervor with which it was pronounced, smiled his admiration, and exclaimed:

"Well said, Judge! You lawyers are hard fellows to catch! But I still insist that I gave the obvious meaning of the text; and now, the burden of proof is with you to show, that, while Plato and Socrates and my illustrious self are on the one side, your very particular friend Veritas is

really over upon the other side with you. Show that, and, of course, though you will be but two, you will be in the majority."

"Do n't you see, Doctor," retorted the Judge, "if you have given the text correctly and have drawn a just inference from it, you reject not only gymnastics, but your own profession, too? I might turn upon you and say, 'Look after the soul, cultivate the intellect, regulate the spiritual nature, and the body will take care of itself, *without the help of pills!*'"

At this home blow we all set up a laugh, the Doctor included, who, however, immediately rallied so far as to say:

"You lawyers never lose a chance for the *argumentum ad hominem!* Still, you know, Judge, that you have merely made a good hit. You may demolish my profession, but you have n't yet demolished my argument."

"Very well, Doctor; I am content to do one thing at a time. If, indeed, I have demolished your profession, I can not help thinking *that* glory enough for one day. I must feel that I have not lived in vain.

"But earnestly, Doctor," and here the Judge spoke with such an air of mock solemnity as gave an exquisitely comic turn to what he was saying, "what you are kind enough to style a good hit *is* a good one simply because it is a legitimate one. I do not pretend that it settles the general question that you have stated; but it certainly carries out your own doctrine to its direct consequences. If you care more for your argument than you do for your profession,

I honor you for your disinterestedness. But I urge home upon you that if your doctrine abolishes the gymnasts, why, it abolishes the doctors, too. If, then, you are really convinced of what you say, you are bound, as an honorable man, to go home, tear down your shingle, smash your drug bottles, and go into some honest business."

"Change the subject! change the subject!" cried the Doctor. "For mercy's sake, Mr. Grand Sachem, move on!"

I resumed the reading.

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"*Socrates*—We have already said that the persons in question must refrain from drunkenness; for a guardian is the last person in the world, I should think, to be allowed to get drunk, and not to know where he is.

"*Glaucon*—Truly, it would be ridiculous for a guardian to require a guard."

Here the Doctor stopped me:

"Mr. Grand Sachem, being in a charitable mood at this particular moment, I do hope that no one of the company will have the cruelty to copy this passage and send it to our great 'guardian' at the White House. I fear that Andy would think Plato rather personal."

"Ho! ho!" broke in the Parson, "I 'm sure Andy must have seen it already. There can be no doubt that he 's a student of Plato."

"Why?" "why?" "why?" came from us all.

"'Why?' gentlemen! 'why?'" said the Parson, with a

guilty, indeed, almost a sheepish look, as if he were on the verge of some outrageous deed; "how unnecessary a question! Have you not read Andy's speeches? Are they not full of Pla-to-tudes?"

The Parson was saluted by one unanimous howl. "Bah! bah! Parson; and *you* to preach to-morrow?" yelled the Doctor.

"He deserves excommunication," shouted I.

"You say Andy Johnson's speeches are full of platitudes, do you?" roared the Judge. "Well, Mr. Grand Sachem, this is the first time I ever heard lies, bad grammar, blackguardism, and blasphemy called by that name. I move you, sir, that if the Parson ever repeats the ignominy of this night, he be put where the boys put Deacon Snipp—under the town pump!"

"Order! order!" said I, and returned to Plato.

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"*Socrates*—But where can you find a more signal proof that a low and vicious, education prevails in a State, than in the fact that firstrate physicians . . . . . are in request, not merely among base-born mechanics, but even among those who lay claim to the birth and breeding of gentlemen? . . . . And do you not hold it disgraceful to require medical aid, unless it be for a wound, or an attack of illness incidental to the time of year, to require it—I mean, owing to our laziness and the life we lead, and to get ourselves so stuffed with humors and wind, like quagmires, as to compel the clever sons of Æsculapius to call diseases by such names as flatulence and catarrh?

"*Glaucon*—To be sure, these are very strange and new-fangled names for disorders.

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"*Socrates*—Then will you not establish in your city the two faculties of medicine and law, each having the character we have described—to bestow their services on those only of the citizens whose bodily and mental constitutions are sound and good, leaving those that are otherwise in body to die, and actually putting to death those who are naturally corrupt and incurable in soul?

"*Glaucon*—Yes, that has been proved to be the best course, both for the patients themselves and for the State.

"*Socrates*—As for the young men, it is clear that they will be cautious how they incur any need of law, so long as they use that simple kind of music, which, as we stated, generates sobriety of soul.

"*Glaucon*—Undoubtedly.

"*Socrates*—If, then, the accomplished student of music follows this same track in the pursuit of gymnastics, may he not, if he pleases, so far succeed as to be independent of the medical art, except in extreme cases?

"*Glaucon*—I think he may.

"*Socrates*—Moreover, in the exercises and toils which he imposes upon himself, his object will be rather to stimulate the spirited element of his nature than to gain strength; and he will not, like athletes in general, take the prescribed food and exercise merely for the sake of muscular power.

"*Glaucon*—How so?

"*Socrates*—Do you not observe the characteristics which distinguish the minds of those who have been familiar with gymnastics all their lives, without any acquaintance with music? and again, of those whose condition is the reverse of this?

"*Glaucon*—To what do you allude?

"*Socrates*—To the roughness and hardness which mark the one, to the softness and gentleness which mark the other.

"*Glaucon*—Oh, yes. Those who devote themselves to gymnastics exclusively become ruder than they ought to be; while those who have devoted themselves exclusively to music are made softer than is good for them.

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"*Socrates*—Then, whosoever can best blend gymnastics with music, and bring both to bear on the mind most judiciously, such a man we shall justly call perfect in music, and a master of true harmony, much rather than the artist who tunes the strings of the lyre.

"*Glaucon*—Yes, and with good reason.

"*Socrates*—Then will not some such overseer be always needed in our State, Glaucon, if our commonwealth is designed to endure?

"*Glaucon*—Yes, indeed, such an officer will be quite indispensable."

"There! gentlemen," said I, laying down the book, "that is the end of the colloquy on Gymnastics. I confess I had no idea, until this moment, that Plato was such a prophet. In

this imaginary 'overseer' in Plato's ideal commonwealth, what a remarkable and exact prediction of Dio Lewis, who, in our time and land, has, with such ample success, married Music and Gymnastics at the altar of Education!"

"Faugh!" replied Dr. Drugger with a sneering manner that was too natural to him, "Do n't, for God's sake, throw Plato's mantle over that stupendous humbug! Do you know what sign every honest physician sees over Dr. Lewis's door in Essex Street?"

"No; what?"

"Why, that feathered animal which swims and quacks!"

"Ah!" said the Parson; "and is it because he is such a *duck* of a man?"

Here we all darkened our brows at the outrageous punster, and again reminded him of expulsion and the town pump, but he looked utterly incorrigible.

I am myself an admirer, though not without careful discrimination, of Dr. Lewis. I believe him to be one of the true and great benefactors of this age, and of all mankind; and it seemed to me that Dr. Drugger, in his rather coarse attack on him, was thrusting upon us, a company of philosophical students, the warped and tainted verdict of a merely professional hostility. Accordingly I retorted upon the Doctor, perhaps somewhat too much in his own style:

"You said, Doctor, that you and your brethren always see the quacking bird over Dr. Lewis's door in Essex Street. Perhaps I can account for that. I found, the other day, in Thackeray's 'English Humorists' an old maxim to this

effect: 'We see, each of us, what we bring with us the eyes to see!'"

"Oh! oh!" said the Doctor, moving his chair toward me deprecatingly; "that's positively savage! and for a disciple of the divine Plato, too!"

"Well, perhaps it was. I take it all back. But really, Doctor, you do injustice to Dio Lewis. And I affirm that if you will go back and read over again Plato's theory of gymnastics, you will find it a philosophical exposition of the spirit, the scope, almost the method, of the Dio Lewis Gymnastics."

"Come, come, gentlemen!" interposed the Judge "do not let us get to dissecting Dio Lewis to-night. We can summon him to our scalpels at any time. But between ourselves, taking these pregnant and profound words of Plato for our text, I want to suggest to you one practical question: Is it not a disgrace to every man and woman in Brawnville, more especially to those of us who are blessed with influence, and perhaps wealth, that we have no Gymnasium here?"

"I think," said the Doctor, with a half smile, "that the fact is greatly to the *credit* of Brawnville."

"Yes, and in doctor's bills greatly to its *debit*, too, no doubt you find! eh, Doctor?" shouted the Parson.

"Now, gentlemen," joined in the Judge, please to restrain your sparring propensities a moment, while I add this word further. I am deeply in earnest on this subject. I have been thinking of it a long time. I have something rather definite to propose to you. It is too late to go over the

ground to-night; but come to tea with me next Monday evening, and we will have the matter thoroughly canvassed. I shall solicit your counsel, your criticism, and your personal co-operation. I hope that the next twelve months will see formed in this happy village a good Gymnasium, and not only that, but a Sanitary Society, or Athletic Club, or something of the sort, for the discussion of all topics relating to Health."

We all love and honor Judge Fairplay. So we parted to-night to meet again next Monday evening around his elegant tea table.

III.

JUDGE FAIRPLAY'S TEA PARTY.

BRAWNVILLE, *November* 15, 1865.

"MY DEAR," said the Judge, turning to his wife, as we all sat together in the drawing room, "will you pardon for once an allusion to the mysteries of that man-forbidden place, the kitchen!"

"For just once!" she replied.

"If, then, you think there will be time before tea, I should like to read to these gentlemen the passage from Horace Mann, which I showed you last night."

"Oh, certainly!" Mrs. Fairplay replied; "there will be ample time; and if our friends enjoy the extract half as much as I did, they will have a great treat. Harold," she added, speaking to her second son, a bright, handsome lad of a dozen years, "go, dear, to the library, and bring from your papa's desk the book you will find there."

"I do not suppose," said the Judge, "that the bit I want to read will be new to you; for you must all have seen it some years ago, when it was first published. Don't you remember the address Horace Mann gave on the opening of a gymnasium in Boston?"

Dr. Drugger was sure he had never seen any thing more

of it than the cover, if he had that; as a philosopher, he was willing to hear all sides of all questions; he must confess he had never been much edified by gymnastic addresses; but he expected he should be on this occasion, for, somehow, Judge Fairplay had a gift of rendering every thing valuable which passed over his lips.

We all saw the ludicrous struggle in the Doctor's soul between his antipathy to gymnastics and his affectionate courtesy to his friends. The Judge acknowledged the compliment with an amused twinkle of the eye, and a heroic nod. Mr. Bland and I said we remembered to have seen Mr. Mann's address many years ago, and that for that very reason we should like to hear it or any part of it again.

By this time Harold had laid the book on his father's knee. I thought the Judge took it with a sort of tender reverence, and my impression was immediately confirmed; for, while he was turning over the leaves to find the place, he said:

"I am one of those who think Horace Mann to have been almost the ideal statesman. How many-sided was his comprehension; how broad his sympathy; how far-reaching, intuitive, prophetical, was his vision; finally, how grand his moral courage—the want of which is the chronic disease of American statesmanship. His is the praise which few of his political contemporaries can receive—to have turned away form the lower lures of American politics, from the objects which a vulgar ambition covets, and to have devoted his great powers, not to the flattery of the national prejudices, but to

the removal of them. With such gifts as his he might have made far more clamor in the world, gained far higher offices, made far more money; but he chose to enrich his countrymen, by making them wiser, healthier, better! I think that, judged by the highest tests, our Websters, Choates, Everetts, Clays, Calhouns, seem dwarfs—indeed, I had almost said demagogues—by the side of Horace Mann. What did their lives signify, after all? They went with the current, muddy and in the wrong direction as that current was. Horace Mann had the greatness to go against the current, that he might purify it and direct it into a nobler channel, to a grander outlet. How colossal seems the figure of the late President of Antioch College compared with any late President of the United States, excepting—ONE! Ah! *Præclarum et venerabile nomen.* But of Horace Mann's service to popular education, mental and physical, I can not speak without emotion. Gentlemen, there 's not a poor child thumbing his dog-eared spelling-book in a log hut in the remotest settlement of our American wilderness, but owes a personal debt to Horace Mann. If every toiling man on this continent, who has all his life been pursued by Poverty—that ghost that can cast a shadow—but who has been enabled, by the services of Horace Mann, to see his boys and girls, in spite of his own pennilessness, sitting down to the royal feast of knowledge which the good God meant should be spread for all, were to bring but one poor pebble and cast it upon Horace Mann's grave, there would rise a monument over his dust higher than the granite shaft at Bunker's Hill. We ought to gauge a statesman by this

test—not how much does he know, but how much does he know that his own generation does not know. We can say of the true statesman, what Wordsworth says of the wise man:

"'——he sees what he foresaw.'

Apply this test to Horace Mann. Take the question of slavery among us founded on color, the question of slavery among us founded on sex, and that other, that vast question, which so many of our statesmen ignore—of the mental, and especially the sanitary condition of the people; and how great seems the statesmanship of this modest patriot! A moment ago I spoke of the late President of Antioch College in connection with the late Presidents of the United States. Were it not for the one redeeming exception among them, I should feel that I ought to apologize to the surviving relatives of Horace Mann for making such a comparison. Do you remember that grand sentence of gruff old Count Gurowski? 'It is great and stirring to see one's name recorded on the list of the Presidents of the United States; but there is a record far shorter and far more to be envied—a record venerated by our race—it is the record of GREAT MEN!' On that venerated record who can doubt that the name of Horace Mann is written? But, pardon me, dear friends; this is too bad! Here have I been talking so long about Horace Mann, when an infinitely better thing was at our command—to let Horace Mann himself speak. Really, I must beg your forgiveness. Here is the extract:"

Whereupon the Judge, with his fine, manly elocution, read these sentences:

"To a reflecting mind there is a deeper pleasure than could be derived from any mere exhibition of strength, though it should equal Samson's; or of fleetness, though it should emulate that of Mercury. It is because we know that every leap and spring aids in renewing the body, and therefore in giving greater hilarity to the spirit, and superior vigor to the intellect. Every motion helps to construct a fortification against disease, and to render the body more impregnable against its attacks. It requires, indeed, no very strong imagination to see the horrid forms of the diseases themselves, as they are exorcised and driven from the bodies which were once their victims, and are compelled to seek some new tenement. Those prodigious leaps over the vaulting horse, how they kick hereditary gout out of the toes! Those swift somersaults, with their quick and deep breathings, are ejecting bronchitis, asthma, and phthisis from the throat and lungs. On yonder pendent rope, consumption is hung up like a malefactor, as he is. Legions of blue devils are impaled on those parallel bars. Dyspepsia lost hold of its victim when he mounted the flying horse, and has never since been able to regain her accursed throne and live by gnawing the vitals. There goes a flock of nervous distempers—headache, and tic-douloureux, and St. Anthony's fire; there they fly out of the window, seeking some stall-fed alderman, or fat millionaire, or aristocratic old lady. Rheumatism, and cramps, and spasms sit coiled up and chattering in the corners of the room like satanic imps, as they are, the strong muscles of the athletes having shaken them off as the lion shakes the dewdrops from his mane. Jaundice flies away to yellow the cheeks and blear the eyes of my fair young lady reclining on ottomans in her parlor. The balancing pole shakes lumbago out of the back, and kinks out of the femoral muscles, and stitches out of the side. Pleurisy, and apoplexy, and fever, and paralysis, and death hover round; they look into the windows of this hall, but, finding brains, and lungs, and hearts all defiant of their power, they go away in quest of some lazy cit, some guzzling drone, some bloated epicure at his late supper, to fasten their fangs upon him. In the mean time, the rose blooms again on the pale cheek of the gymnast; his shriveled skin is filled out, and his non-elastic muscles and bones rejoice anew in the vigor and buoyancy of youth. A place like this ought to be named the Palace of Health!"

The reading of this eloquent passage was greeted with exclamations of delight, in which even Dr. Drugger heartily joined; for he had a keen intellectual appreciation of a literary masterpiece. Yet it was evident to us that, while his intellect was pleased, his prejudices were suffering from neuralgia.

"Capital, capital!" said he. "Fine piece of idealizing Was not aware that Horace Mann had so much imagination Why, it's poetry—muscular poetry; yes, Judge, rather more poetry, I apprehend, than truth."

Before any of us could reply to this covert hit, tea was

announced, and the subject was lost for a time in general conversation around the table. At last Judge Fairplay said:

"That last sentence from Horace Mann keeps coming back to my mind: 'A place like this ought to be named the Palace of Health;' and I can't quite settle it with my conscience that we have no such Palace of Health in Brawnville."

There was a moment's pause. Would the Judge go on and unfold to us his project, or would he wait to observe the effect of this remark? Presently, Mr. Bland, our clerical athlete, broke silence:

"I know Drugger needs no help in his vocation of resisting all attacks of gymnastics with which Brawnville may be threatened; but he must be rather tired of the monotony of doing all the work himself. If he will permit me, I 'll put in my oar on his side. Let me state to you, Judge, the objection which I know many will make to the idea of having a gymnasium here. This is but a village, they will say, too small to support a gymnasium—far too small to build one. Moreover, it will be said, we do not need a gymnasium here. In large cities, where the air is less pure, where people are inclosed in shops and offices all day, where access to fields and hills and river banks is not easy, there is need of some artificial arena for exercise, some Palace of Health, like that one in Boston, which Horace Mann inaugurated with the magnificent oration from which you have read to us; but here, in this rural village, the case is different. The fields are all about us. A five minutes' walk brings us to

them. Yonder are the hills. Yonder the river banks. Our gymnasium is Nature. We, too, here in Brawnville, have a Palace of Health; but it is one not made with hands. The sky is the dome of it; the trees of the forest are its apparatus; the hills are its galleries; and yon beautiful stream of water flowing through the midst of it is its lavatory. Will it not be an ingratitude—nay, an impertinence—for us to build, by the side of this grand and capacious Palace of Health, any paltry affair of bricks and shingles, such as the best fabric made by man must appear?"

We all waited somewhat eagerly to hear how the Judge would receive this objection, which, by the way, we thought the Parson had stated with remarkable felicity and vigor. The Judge sat some time in silence, evidently in deep meditation, but gazing steadfastly at no more considerable object than his teaspoon, which he turned over and over on the edge of the cup. As he did not offer to speak, Mrs. Fairplay rallied him, laughingly:

"My dear, has Mr. Bland so effectually demolished your project of a gymnasium that you can't speak? Or do you expect to get some help from that teaspoon that you stare at so intently?"

"Do n't be alarmed, madam, about your husband's silence," said the Doctor. "Lawyers are never *unable* to speak, though they do draw a good deal of inspiration from the metal of which that teaspoon is made. He will be all right in a moment."

"Mr. Bland," said the Judge at last, looking up with a smile, and quite ignoring the last two remarks, "do you

remember what church Carlyle—I think in his 'Life of John Sterling'—speaks of going to?"

"No, Judge, I do not."

"Well, he speaks of going, one Sunday, to 'the great Cathedral of Immensity.'"

"Why, my dear," exclaimed Mrs. Fairplay, "what in the world has that to do with the objection to a gymnasium which Mr. Bland has just stated?"

"It has this to do with it—if Nature serves for a gymnasium, it serves for a church, too. If the gymnasium built by Nature renders unnecessary the gymnasium built by man, so, likewise, does the church built by Nature render unnecessary the man-made church."

"There, Parson!" broke in Dr. Drugger, in high glee, "it 's your turn now. Last Saturday the Judge upset my profession; now he 's for upsetting yours! Why, what would the man have left in the world? Nobody, good heavens, but gymnasts and lawyers!—the heroes of the muscle, and the heroes of the tongue."

"No, Doctor," retorted the Judge: "it is not so easy to upset the Parson's profession as it is yours. Neither am I trying to. His profession was ordained of God; yours was ordained of —— well, never mind, I won't mention his name! No, no, Doctor; I am not attacking the Parson's profession, only the place where he usually engages in it. I wish to show him that the same argument which sends the gymnasts into the woods to practice, sends the parsons there, too, to preach."

"I appreciate the argument," Mr. Bland said, with a gracious bow. "But, Judge, do tell us a little more explicitly how you would meet the objection which I stated a moment since."

"With all my heart," said the Judge. "I should reply to the man who says 'Nature is our best gymnasium,' Certainly, and it is our best cathedral or meeting house, too. The groves were God's first temples. There men worshiped in the infancy of society; there they would continue to worship, were it not for certain practical inconveniences, which make it necessary for us to erect a church—that ingratitude, nay, that impertinence, a man-made tabernacle, which, in comparison with the tabernacle which God made—the grand, sky-arched, star-lighted, mountain-buttressed, meadow-paved Cathedral of Nature—is, indeed, but a paltry affair of bricks and shingles. What are the practical inconveniences, do you ask, to worshiping only in Nature's Cathedral? They are chiefly those of climate. There are others, also; but climate presents the first and greatest. It rains, it is cold, the wind blows; therefore, we shelter ourselves in churches of our own building, instead of occupying the one great church which Nature built for us. So of gymnasiums—Nature's gymnasium and man's gymnasium. There is no rivalry between them; they are both needed. There are many days in the year when, as you have just intimated, our best gymnastic exercises can be taken at the river and on the hills. But, in this climate, how many days, weeks—nay, months—there are every year when Nature closes the doors of her big gymnasium and shuts us out. It is winter; so, Nature puts a notice on the door: 'Gymnasium closed for repairs!' The

wind blows furiously; so Nature puts up another notice: 'Gymnasium closed while being swept!' It rains; Nature now puts up the placard: 'Gymnasium closed until washed!' Meantime what are we to do for exercise? The community replies: 'Wait a few weeks or months till Nature's gymnasium be reopened.' The community merely proves by that reply how imperfectly it is educated. The community confesses by that reply that it does not yet understand one of the most important of the primary laws of being—namely, that physical exercise is a sacred ritual for each day's service; that physical exercise belongs essentially to the economy which God has ordained for the harmonies and sanities of existence; no more to be intermitted for a week or a day than food, than drink, than sleep, than laughter, than prayer and praise. Therefore, my dear Mr. Bland, the objection of which you consented to be the mouthpiece for a moment, is but the objection of an imperfect education as to the laws of being. What is for us to do, then? To yield to that objection? No; let us try to remove it by removing its cause."

Mr. Bland was the first to speak:

"I do n't need to tell you, Judge, how entirely, how heartily I accord with what you have said. And I would add just this in support of your view: Man's gymnasium is a preparation for Nature's gymnasium. It is not only true that we can take exercise in a building when we can't do so in the open air; but the very exercises which we get in a building are a help in doing those which we are to get in the open air. They reach muscles which would be otherwise neglected;

they promote erectness and symmetry; above all, they key up the instrument, they tune it, for service in the great orchestra of out doors."

At this point, rising from the table, we adjourned to the library. The Judge has recently received, from Paris, Doré's illustrations of Dante, and we spent some time in turning over those leaves, on which the artist seems to have held a mad revel of horror, terror, and woe. Presently, however, we were summoned to business by the Judge.

"Come, gentlemen, let us get out of Inferno and make our way to some wholesomer region. That sentence of Horace Mann still haunts me: 'A place like this ought to be named the Palace of Health.' I long to see such a Palace of Health in Brawnville. I want to talk over with you a project I have carefully considered. Be my advisers. I have in mind something, not very large, of course, but far more complete, in its way, than seems to have been attempted in modern times; something which shall combine the modern gymnasium with the lyceum, the book club, the debating society, and even the social circle; an institution on the basis of the gymnasium, but, like the old Athenian gymnasia, to be the nucleus and the vehicle for intellectual culture, for the study and discussion of health laws, for the love of the beautiful, for all that can refine, expand, and ennoble the manhood and womanhood of this community, and not merely for this generation, but for the generations that are to follow us. 'This is a fine dream,' you will say; 'but fine dreams do not travel except on golden wheels.' I accept the intimation. Awhile ago I quoted a saying

of Carlyle's. I remember another of his sayings. It is about Schiller. He says that in his early manhood, that great poet 'felt the mortifying truth that to arrive at the ideal world, he must gain a footing on the real.' That is, indeed, a 'mortifying truth.' How often it thrusts itself in upon our petty enthusiasms, collapses our cheap air-castles, mortifies our vanity, our ambition, our youthful hope. Well, gentlemen, I have many things, even about this world, yet to learn; but I think I may consider myself a master at least of that lesson which Schiller learned so early. For my ideal Palace of Health, I have indeed considered the necessity of a footing in the real world. The footing which I propose for it, is just the size of two village lots, to wit: that pair of vacant lots on Main Street, just east of the Post-office, which, belonging to me, I am ready to dedicate to this purpose. Moreover, I have got from an architect in Boston, plans and estimates for our Palace. On the principle that men value most that which costs them something, I wish to induce our people to invest in this enterprise; but my check is ready for half the cost. My idea is to form an Athletic Club; to have it incorporated; to have it erect a pretty Grecian temple, one part being a single large room to be used as a gymnasium, and for lectures; the other part being for a reading room, for dressing rooms and lavatories, especially for a library room in which the literary and social meetings of the Club can be held. We have no lyceum in Brawnville. We never have among us any of the lecturers. We need the stimulus of an occasional visitor from the outer world. Our Club might easily supply that

need. But, of course, the principal function of the Club would be not the importation of talent, but the evolution of it—our own exercise, physical and mental; the diffusion among us of health, and of just ideas upon health, in the broad and sublime sense of that word. I have called you together as my special friends, my intellectual companions, in order to talk this matter over with you before I propose it to the public. I am anxious to assist in the establishment here of something which shall be an enduring blessing to the community. I believe that a genuine classical gymnasium would best accomplish that desire."

Extreme admiration puts out the critic's eye. The next few moments were consecrated to grateful enthusiasm. We thought too much of the nobleness of our friend's nature, to be able to anatomize his project. As for the Parson and myself, it met our views exactly. We cordially indorsed and applauded it. In some matters of detail, there might be room for a suggestion or two from us; in the broad outline of the scheme, none. With Dr. Drugger it was, of course, different. He is a sworn foe to "gymnastic monkey shines," as he calls them. He makes no concealment of the fact; and Judge Fairplay, in asking his presence to-night, must have anticipated his opposition to all that part of his plan which involves gymnastics, a part, indeed, which holds the same relation to the whole that the Prince of Denmark does to the tragedy called by his name. The Doctor, who is a true gentleman, and was anxious to be faithful to his own nature, and at the same time to be not wanting in appreciation of

Judge Fairplay's magnanimity, paved the way for his objection thus:

"We four are friends, dear friends. We are students of philosophy. We are bound together in the fellowship of culture and love of truth. Our intimacy is all the deeper, and all the more fruitful, because it is based, not on identity, but on diversity—diversity in profession, habit, temperament, opinion. The one essential bond between us is the *spirit* in which we pursue our several courses of thinking and living; and that, as Goethe says, 'is the highest matter;' indeed, it is almost the only matter! We respect and love each other. We are honest, each to each, and therefore each to himself. We respect each other's personality, down to the last atom of idiosyncrasy and whim. For this reason, though we differ, we are harmonious; though our opinions clash, our hearts do not. You know, my dear Judge, that I hold very decided views on the subject of gymnastics. If I object to that feature of your beautiful scheme, surely you will not think me insensible to the large and noble benignity of the scheme as a whole."

"I assure you, my dear Doctor," earnestly exclaimed the Judge, "you can not pay me a higher compliment than by bringing to bear upon my plan, whether for support or for censure, your own individuality."

"You are well aware, Judge," the Doctor replied, "that I do not join in what I must call this modern cackle over gymnastics. Perhaps if it had been indulged in with moderation, I might have assented to it. But the new claim for gymnastics, by its extravagance, its pretentiousness, its shallow and illogical clamor, provokes my antagonism and disgust. It is soaked through and through with quackery. I wonder that your literary hero, Carlyle, has not got it into the list of things which he lives to denounce, to wit: '—— fire horses, jotuns, wind-bags, owls, Chocktaws and horsehair, shams and flunkeyism, unwisdom, tythes and unveracities!' I object to the present drift of the public mind toward gymnastics on many grounds. I object to it both as a physiologist and as a moralist. I see in it perils of all sorts. However, I need not go into that subject now; you and I have had it all over before. But, concerning your plan of a gymnasium here, one personal consideration occurs to me. Let me ask if it be not essential to the plan, that you gentlemen who advocate the gymnasium, should show your faith by your works, and personally engage in its exercises?"

"Certainly! by all means!" replied the Judge. Upon this reply, which was spoken with great earnestness, the Doctor sat in silence gazing disconsolately at the floor. Presently, however, throwing his eyes around our little company, he said:

"And do you, Judge, and do you, Parson, and do you, Schoolmaster, mean actually to plunge in among the village boys, and pull your coats off, and there, in your shirt sleeves, and perhaps in the presence of people who for many years have held you in respect, perform antics for their diversion? Shall it be said that Judge, Parson, and Schoolmaster have turned acrobats? That, indeed, would produce mirth; but it would produce also something more than mirth. For no

community can lose its reverence for its chief citizens without a loss of moral and social tone, without the general manners suffering. I can not understand how you can submit to such humiliation. I can but feel that it is unworthy of you. It seems to me that the voice of a true dignity, of a manly self-respect, breathes in those mournful and scornfnl words which Milton puts into the mouth of Samson, when the Philistines came to take him from the mill, and make an exhibition of his muscle for the amusement of a gaping crowd:

"'Have they not sword players, and every sort
Of *gymnick artists*, wrestlers, riders, runners,
Jugglers and dancers, antics mummers and mimicks,
But they must pick me out, with shackles tired,
And overlabored at the public mills,
To make them sport with blind activity?'

How it will breed degeneracy here in Brawnville to have our chief dignitaries turned into '*gymnick artists*,' and along with 'jugglers and dancers, antics mummers and mimicks,' making sport for all those who can buy tickets to witness the show! Ha, ha, ha! Judge Fairplay in his shirt sleeves, standing on his head! I speak now for reserved seats!"

The Judge awaited patiently the end of Dr. Drugger's sarcastic tirade.

"Well, Doctor, as you have attacked me with one quotation, I will meet your attack with another. Against your Milton, or rather against your Milton's Samson Agonistes, I will bring out Bishop Hurd. In one of his Dialogues, that

on the age of Elizabeth, if I mistake not, he has this remark, which seems to me eminently pertinent to the present case: 'But you must not think to discredit these gymnastics with a little raillery, which had its foundation in modern prejudices.' Now, Doctor, you know I always enjoy a fine bit of raillery; and I must say the specimen you have given us is admirable. But as an example of reasoning—well, I imagine you did not intend it for that! Yet, beneath what you have said, lurks the real objection, after all, which deters multitudes of professional men from engaging in gymnastic exercise; it is the feeling that on the whole it is '*infra dig.*' for gentlemen to do that sort of thing. I acknowledge that this objection is not often put into words. For that very reason I am satisfied it is the deepest and most real one. Very well; the only question for us to consider is, whether the objection be founded on just ideas of the Becoming, or only on artificial and therefore superficial ones. Is it based on sound reason, or only on sounding prejudice? Does the ritual of a good gymnasium, conducted in a spirit of refined and enlightened taste, contradict the universal and permanent laws of Fitness, or merely our modern, local, absurd, and transient customs? I should be convinced that the latter is the true view, by the simple fact that you, my dear Doctor, in attempting to portray the unseemliness of gymnastics, found yourself unable to make out a case without exaggeration, and exaggeration of a very palpable and grotesque kind. All that about 'shirt sleeves,' 'standing on the head,' and 'making an exhibition' of ourselves, is mere caricature. These offensive things are not an essential part of gymnastics. You can practice gym-

nastics without being in your 'shirt sleeves,' or standing on your head,' or, making an exhibition, of yourself. In every true gymnasium a special costume will be worn by every practitioner; for example, the Garibaldi jacket and flannel trowsers—a costume at once decorous, easy, graceful, and picturesque. Then, too, the *acrobatic* element is rapidly passing away from our best gymnastic methods, and from the Dio Lewis method, it has passed away entirely. Finally, the exercises will not, by the true gymnast, be engaged in as they are by these 'mimicks' and 'jugglers' to whom you compared us, for show or for pay, but in conscious obedience to a great physiological law, and for our own individual improvement in bodily and mental strength.

"You cited, a moment since, the noble aphorism of Goethe: 'The spirit in which we act is the highest matter!' Apply that wise principle to the case of true gymnasts. In what spirit do they exercise? Is it in a spirit unworthy of a gentleman? Is it in the spirit of acrobats, and mountebanks, and mummers? Is it for vanity, ostentation, lucre? Or, is it rather in the spirit of thoughtful and conscientious men, reverencing all God's laws, and showing that reverence by active obedience? In such a work, pursued in such a spirit, is there any thing undignified, unmanly, or, if you prefer the next word, *ungentlemanly?* If the performance of legitimate gymnastic exercises by the Parson here, or by the Schoolmaster, or by myself, should make any silly people deride, it would be, not because the exercises were unbecoming, but because the people were silly. In my judgment, old Diogenes was a true gentlemen, if he did live in a tub. You

remember what he said when some one spoke to him of the sneers and laughter of certain foplings. 'Diogenes, they deride you!' 'But,' said the grand old fellow in the true dignity of a man, '*I am not derided!*' Why, my dear Doctor, are we in this world to be kept from doing what God requires; are we to be frightened from the pursuit of a healthful and beautiful object, by the grinnings of a clown or the booby stare of an ignoramus? The rude of all nations think that preposterous to which they are unaccustomed. With your frock coat, and silk hat, in the country villages of Turkey, you would be received with the same ridicule that a Pasha and three tails would be in the country villages of America. Let us be philosophers, not the slaves of local prejudice. Let us first ascertain what is intrinsically true, beautiful, and good; then let us follow it, without scorn, without fear. The ignorant will gaze, the silly will giggle; that can not harm us, while our course may ultimately benefit them."

As the Doctor seemed disinclined to carry the discussion farther, Judge Fairplay rose and took from a drawer the plans for the gymnasium which he had received from his architect in Boston. These he spread out upon the table for our inspection. When we had carefully examined them, he asked us to suggest the best method of bringing the subject before the public. After much deliberation it was decided to call a meeting of the villagers for the purpose of hearing Judge Fairplay's proposal and of discussing the whole subject.

As I wended my way home to-night to my lonely room, I

felt revived and cheered by the conversation of the evening; above all, by the clear vision which has dawned upon me of the creation here, in this secluded spot, of a unique and beneficent institution which may yet shed a light across the whole land. Aristotle, speaking of Crete, uttered the aphorism that "Insular positions are favorable to political experiments." So it seems to me, by an obvious analogy, that retired villages are favorable to educational experiments. I expect that Judge Fairplay's plan will be opposed by a few bigots of the Deacon Snipp persuasion; and, no doubt, it will encounter other difficulties of a more important kind. But Judge Fairplay is a man who never fails. This project is the child of his matured judgment, of his conscience and his heart. Opposition will but rouse the energies of his nature and secure the accomplishment of the very object it meant to defeat. To him, more than to any other man I have ever known, might be applied the latter part of that description which occurs in Foster's Essay on Decision of Character: "An irresolute mind might be quelled and subdued by a formidable kind of opposition; but the strong wind which blows out the taper augments a powerful fire, if there be fuel enough, to an indefinite

IV.

THE VILLAGERS IN MASS MEETING.

BRAWNVILLE, *November* 24, 1865.

WE were like Belgium's capital to-night—there was a sound of revelry in Brawnville. For in our quiet village, where reigns the serenity of a population of lotus-eaters, any sound seems like a sound of revelry, which is not a sound of homeward-plodding villagers, or of prayer-meeting devotees. Were it not for the occasional presence of a meandering magician, or of a maundering phrenologist, or of a tempestuous Temperance lecturer, we Brawnvillans, nestling in our far-away rural valley, might consider ourselves treated to the cold shoulder, snubbed, ignored, by the entire outside world. Left thus to our own resources, a very mild beverage indeed acts as a powerful stimulus upon us. I think the dropping of an aerolite into the midst of the town at noon-day would have caused less agitation and effervescence than did the announcement made shortly after our tea party at Judge Fairplay's, that there would be a meeting of the villagers to-night at the schoolhouse, to consider the proposition of establishing a Gymnasium in Brawnville. It had been at first intended to hold the meeting at one of the churches; but this plan was received with such

righteous indignation by certain of our good people that we thought it best to give it up. Parson Bland was sure that his church could be had for the purpose; and the Pastor of the First Church, the Rev. Job Fearful, a most excellent divine, of a meek, inoffensive, and bilious aspect, was inclined to recommend to his deacons the use of theirs, if it should be desired. Mr. Fearful is one of those superlatively modest and angelic dispensers of the Gospel, who, devoting their lives to the salvation of other people's souls, have never the courage to say that they have any souls of their own; and before one wave of Deacon Snipp's scepter, the good man is accustomed to surrender at discretion, and retire into the tranquil cell of his own humility and insignificance. On his mentioning to the Deacons the request that the church might be granted for a village meeting to consider the establishment of a gymnasium in Brawnville, Deacon Snipp rose to an unwonted height of pious wrath, and avowed his willingness "to see the church burned to the ground, and its site plowed over and sowed with salt, rather than have it desecrated by an assemblage convened for so worldly and, indeed, godless a purpose. He was surprised that their honored Pastor should even propose such a thing. It would be a most wicked concession to a carnal spirit that was now rampant in the village. Men were getting to care more for their bodies than for their souls. He did not know what judgment God was about to punish them with for such a removal of the ancient landmarks." One of his colleagues, Deacon Watson, suggested that "Perhaps men would care just as much for their souls, even if they did pay some attention to their bodies; that if by 'the ancient landmarks' Deacon Snipp meant those very ancient and conspicuous ones of round shoulders, and flat chests, and bankrupt stomachs, and stiff joints, and inefficient muscles, the sooner they were 'removed' the better; and that, if the laws of health were ordained of God, he did not see why the house of God was not exactly the place to be used for promoting a more general obedience to those laws." As, however, the use of either church seemed sure to awaken great asperity of feeling, it was decided to hold the meeting in the schoolhouse, and thus avoid complicating the plan by any side issues. But Abdiel Standish, who conceals beneath a rough exterior and a Yankee provincialism an unusual amount of good sense and mother wit, and who never loses an opportunity of worrying Deacon Snipp, met that devout man at the door of the Post-office a few days after the denial of his church, and in the presence of quite a crowd of people, who expected to see some fun, Abdiel saluted him thus:

"I say, Deac'n, why would n't you Fust Church folks let us have your meetin'-house?"

"We think, Abdiel, that the church of God ought not to be used for a profane purpose."

"And do you call it a profane purpus, the raisin' o' funds to build a gymnasium?"

"Most certainly!"

"But, Deac'n, 'spose the objick of the gatherin' was to raise funds to keep the meetin'-house in repair; would you call that a profane purpus?"

"Why, of course not, Abdiel—what a strange question!"

"Wal, Deac'n, ain't our bodies, which God made, jest as sacred as the meetin'-house, which man made? Does n't the Bible say our bodies air 'the temples o' the Holy Ghost?' Now, Deac'n, I should like to know what is a gymnasium but suthin' or other to help keep the livin' 'temples o' the Holy Ghost' in repair, to help keepin' on 'em from fallin' into decay, and becomin' old and rickety afore their time, and unfit for the uses which God 'lmighty intended 'em fur? Ef you call that a profane purpus, why, all I 've got to say, Deac'n, is that your idees of profanity air 'bout as much mixed as the old darkey's idees o' prayer wus?"

"How was that, Abdiel? I do n't know what you refer to."

"Wal, Deac'n, I kind o' thought you did n't—so I 'll tell you. You see, Deac'n, there wus a prayer meetin' among the black folks somewhere, and the preacher asked if some brother would n't lead in prayer. As is often the case in white folks' prayer meetin's, there was a long pause. Bymeby, a half-witted fellow, named Zeke, begun a string o' words that had n't no meanin' to 'em. Of course, the darkey thought he was a prayin' to the Lord; but man could n't make head or tail o' what he wus sayin', and it seemed likely that the Lord could n't neither. So the preacher looked up and said, 'Who 's dat prayin'? Dat you, Brudder Zeke? Jess you hold on, Brudder Zeke; you let somebody pray dat 's better acquainted wid de Lord.' So I say, Deac'n, Jess you hold on, Brudder Snipp; you let somebody talk about profanity dat 's better acquainted with what profanity is."

The poor Deacon made no attempt to reply; for the loud laughter of the crowd, that never failed to appreciate Abdiel's rough jokes, would have prevented any single voice from being heard. So in the general tumult of mirth, the Deacon beat a safe and an orderly retreat.

By seven o'clock this evening the schoolhouse was crowded, as the newspaper writers would say, to its utmost capacity, by a highly respectable audience of ladies and gentlemen, all eager to hear more particulars of Judge Fairplay's plan. I shall not attempt to relate minutely every thing that was done, but shall content myself with those things that were the most interesting and decisive. Judge Fairplay was called to the chair; and the Village Schoolmaster, being usually credited with the ability to write, was made secretary. As I could not make a speech if it were to save my neck from the hempen noose, I was really glad to serve the good cause with the only instrument of expression I can at all command—the pen. On the subsidence of the warm applause which greeted the Judge's appearance on the platform, he made a little speech, which, by the help of phonography and a good memory, I am able to give almost word for word; and I think every word of it is worth keeping.

"My Friends—It is scarcely necessary for me to state that the object of this meeting is to consider the project of establishing a gymnasium in the village. I have long been of the opinion that such an institution was needed here; indeed, I hold that wherever there are people enough to have a church, a schoolhouse, and a postoffice, there are people

enough to have a gymnasium. Society will never be properly constituted, until it be constituted on the basis of spiritual and physiological law.

"A house, erected for human habitation, in which no provision has been made for fire and for the escape of smoke, is not more certainly defective than that series of houses, called a village, in which no provision has been made for bodily exercise. In a certain stage of social development people commit the former mistake; they light fires on the ground in the middle of their huts, and leave the smoke to escape as best it can by its own ingenuity. We look with pity and with wonder upon such poor people—Hottentots, Esquimaux, Irish peasants—and we say that they are in a state of barbarism. By and by, when mankind shall be properly educated in natural laws, they will look with a similar pity and with equal wonder upon us who have committed the latter mistake—who have built a village without building a gymnasium; they will speak of us as having been in the mere murky dawn of a semi-civilized state; as having been only just sufficiently removed from the condition of barbarians to have a vast conceit of our own progress, and exactly far enough out of the darkness to be continually boasting of our own light.

"The more I reflect on the essential elements of civilization the more am I impressed with the preposterousness and the impudence of this Nineteenth Century in ever pretending that the Dark Ages have yet terminated.

"They only are civilized beings who know and obey the imperial laws of this complex life of ours—the laws of

spirit, the laws of matter; and only that village or city is within the pale of civilization which recognizes this broad truth, and is itself an apparatus for carrying it into effect.

"In taking the chair to-night, it is not my purpose to enter at large upon this subject; but I thought it right at the outset thus to state to you my position. I have lived among you all my life. I should like to assist you in making this beautiful and wealthy New England village a civilized one. We have churches. We have schools. We have a library. We have shops, stores, factories, farms. What lack we yet? We lack one essential factor of civilization. We have no gymnasium. That is a disgrace to us. Shall we not conspire together to-night to remove that disgrace? Probably all have heard something of a plan on which a few of us have been consulting together. Our object to-night is to have all consult together upon the plan. I have asked my friend, the Rev. Mr. Bland, to state it to you.

"But before I take my seat, allow me to relate a story out of the 'Arabian Nights.' It is one which I came across last evening while reading The Spectator. Addison tells it somewhat in this style: There was an Oriental King who had long languished under a weak habit of body, and had taken an abundance of remedies; but all to no purpose. At length, however, a physician cured him by the following curious method: He took a hollow ball of wood, and, with an air of great science and mystery, he filled it with several kinds of drugs, after which he closed it up so artificially that nothing appeared. He likewise took a club or bat, and, having hollowed the handle and that part which strikes the

ball, he inclosed in it several drugs, in the same manner as in the ball itself. He then ordered the Sultan to exercise himself with these rightly prepared instruments until such time as he should thoroughly sweat; when, as the story goes, the virtue of the medicaments perspiring through the pores of the wood had so good an influence on his majesty's constitution that it cured him of an indisposition which all the remedies he had taken inwardly had been quite unable to remove. 'And this Eastern allegory,' remarks Addison, 'is finely contrived to show us how important bodily labor is to health, and that exercise is often the most effectual medicine.' It is a good many years since I read the 'Arabian Nights,' and I do not remember what the Sultan did for that very ingenious and sensible doctor. I presume, however, that he rewarded him handsomely, bestowing on him gifts of honor and of wealth worthy so great a monarch. But all that is essential in the prescription for which the Sultan paid so much we can have for nothing.

"We have some admirable physicians among us; and one of them, whom I have the honor to number among my dearest friends, we have here to-night. I think we give our doctors a great deal too much trouble; and, in my opinion, all trouble which is avoidable is too much. We are obliged to afflict the doctors grievously by running to them so often, or having them run still oftener to us. Let us relieve them and ourselves by adopting the ball-and-bat prescription of the Oriental doctor; and, after all, a gymnasium is but a somewhat larger, more varied, and more elaborate ball and bat!

"Do you not remember with what energy John Dryden has insisted on the value of exercise as a means of averting bodily weakness and disorder?

"'By chase our long-lived fathers earned their food—
Toil strung their nerves and purified their blood.
But we, their sons, a pampered race of men,
Are dwindled down to three-score years and ten.
Better to hunt in fields for health unbought
Than fee the doctor for a nauseous draught.
The wise for health on exercise depend,
God never made his work for man to mend.'

"Let us, my friends, in the true spirit of wisdom, and of religion, recognize the truth of that last couplet. Let us, as rational beings and as Christians, so adjust the economy of our lives to the processes of universal law as to avoid all that suffering which comes from folly, and all that dishonor upon the Maker of our bodies which comes from the spectacle of his workmanship in need of so much mending at the hand of man."

It is the characteristic of Judge Fairplay's mind to dignify whatever subject he touches, by connecting it with the great general law on which it rests. Nothing could have fitted the needs of the meeting better than that little speech. For several days past, many of our villagers have been making themselves merry over the thought of a gymnasium here, and have fired off a good many rather flat jokes at the prospect of beholding Judge Fairplay, Parson Bland, and others, performing such pranks as they have witnessed in a

traveling circus. Of course, these jesters but reveal their own ignorance of what a proper gymnasium is, and their total want of reflection as to the connection between exercise and health. Indeed, I am fully persuaded that the vast majority of the American people are still as devoid of any intelligent conception of the sanitary bearings of muscular exercise as they are of the precession of the equinoxes or the use of the Æolic digamma. Accustomed thus far, as is inevitable in a new country, to think of bodily labor merely as a means of livelihood—merely as an inevitable incident in chopping down trees, in plowing fields, in digging canals, in building houses, in making horseshoes, and cart wheels, and baby jumpers—we have not as yet had much occasion to view it as a means of health. Before Judge Fairplay spoke to-night, I thought I noticed on the faces of many present an expression as of persons who had come together on a very absurd errand indeed. I think his speech was to some of them a new revelation. When he concluded, they had the rare and very peculiar appearance of having been struck by an idea.

At this point, before Parson Bland could rise and make the statement which Judge Fairplay had requested, Deacon Snipp sprang to his feet and claimed the right to be heard. The Deacon is a tall and somewhat lank gentleman, with false hair, false teeth, and a foxy smile. To-night, however, the smile had given place to an injured and lachrymose look, which betokened at once the consciousness of superior sanctity, and the expectation of almost immediate martyrdom at the hands of a wicked and perverse generation. His rising

was obviously an offense to the larger portion of the assembly. An ominous sound, as of mingled heel-taps and hisses, came from the back of the room; but, at one look from the chairman, silence was restored.

The Deacon said "that he had risen from a sense of duty to his Master, and the cause of religion and good morals, to protest against the object contemplated. A gymnasium would be an encouragement to all manner of gayety, frivolity, and dissipation. He regretted to see so respectable a gentleman as Judge Fairplay lending his support to such a project. And it grieved him to see a minister of the meek and lowly Jesus"—at this favorite phrase of the Deacon, which upon his lips sounds like absolute cant, and which the people have heard from him to the point of nausea, outcries and stamping resounded from all parts of the room, and completely silenced the Deacon's croaking tones. Judge Fairplay rose and beckoned for silence, and then administered to the meeting a stern rebuke for its discourtesy and indecorum. He told them that "the object of the meeting was free discussion; nothing would be gained by trying to choke down opposition; they ought to listen patiently to every objection, and treat it with a refutation, if possible—never with senseless clamor." He then called on Deacon Snipp to proceed.

The Deacon, who had remained standing during the tumult, and would have made an admirable model for "Patience on a monument, smiling at Grief," now resumed: "He would not occupy their time much longer (cheers from all parts of the house); he had risen merely to enter his protest as an

officer in Zion; he had meant, when interrupted, to express his sorrow that a minister of the Gospel should lend his support to so dangerous a doctrine. It was a sad day for Zion, when ministers were engaged in leading the young into temptation. If this gymnasium should be established, it would open the way for dancing, card playing, billiards, and croquet. (Loud laughter.) They might laugh; but he trusted he should have grace given him to endure the laughter as well as the frowns of a sinful world. He would now sit down." (Vehement cheering at the last statement.)

Mr. Bland now came forward. No contrast could be greater than that between him and Deacon Snipp. Each represents a type of religious character. The Deacon represents the ever-enduring Pharisee type—narrow, morose, ceremonious, self-complacent. Such as he will walk five miles to a prayer-meeting, but will not cross the road to save the poor man who lies stripped and bleeding at the hands of thieves; they are so much occupied in giving mint, anise, and cumin to the Lord, that they have not time to throw a crust of bread to the beggar starving at their gate; they seem to think Christians are to be not messengers of sweetness and gladness in a world already too full of gloom, but so many two-legged vinegar cruets to spill over upon the sports of childhood and the joy of life. As for Mr. Bland—he is what the Brawnville people have named him; he is "Sunshine." The very objections which Deacon Snipp and his sort urge against Mr. Bland would apply with equal force against the light of God's sun. If the former gives a

cheerful view of God and nature, so does the latter; if Mr. Bland chases away darkness, depression, sorrow, and pain, so does the sun; if he is heterodox, so is it! I wonder, by the bye, why the Pharisees do not call an ecclesiastical convention and excommunicate this same sun! Certainly, they have no greater foe extant. Parson Bland began by saying that "he, too, rose as an officer in Zion, not, however, to oppose the plan of a gymnasium, but to say 'Godspeed' to it. Surely, he who was reverently addressed as the Great Physician, and who when upon earth passed so much of his life in healing the diseases of mankind, would approve of every device for averting bodily weakness; there was in a well-conducted gymnasium nothing unfavorable to religion and good morals, to piety, purity, or charity." Mr. Bland then unfolded the project of an Athletic Club; exhibited the plans of the architect; told the people of Judge Fairplay's gift of ground for the site and of half the cost of the building, and concluded by moving a series of resolutions expressing gratitude to Judge Fairplay, and calling for the nomination of an Executive Committee of twelve—six ladies and six gentlemen—to take such further measures as the case required.

Deacon Watson of the First Church, the colleague of the venerable Snipp, rose to second the motion of Mr. Bland for the adoption of the resolutions. He said that "as an officer in the same church with Deacon Snipp, as a follower of the same Master, as a believer in the same faith, he was anxious to show by this act that there was no necessary conection between orthodoxy and antipathy to gymnastics; that he

could not help regarding his colleague's allusion to Mr. Bland as unjust; that Mr. Bland did indeed lead young men into temptation, but it was the same kind of temptation as that practiced by Whitefield, of whom a person once said: 'He was so cheerful that he actually tempted me to be a Christian;' finally, he did not think it was incumbent on those who were zealous for Zion to be jealous of innocent pleasures and diversions."

I had noticed for some minutes that our Platonic brother, Dr. Drugger, was getting ready to speak. Of course, the Doctor, as a man of culture and of really fine feeling, would oppose the scheme in a very different manner from that so natural to Deacon Snipp. The latter utters the objections of religious bigotry—of ignorance and intolerance couching under the shield of piety. The former presents the objections of medical bigotry—of personal narrowness and professional conservatism veiled beneath the mantle of science.

The Doctor said that "it must be evident that the plan of an Athletic Club was already determined on, and that opposition would be quite unavailing; it was, however, none the less his duty to express the stern objection which he, as a man of science, had to gymnastics. Ages ago, Galen, one of the fathers of medical science, had passed condemnation upon gymnastics. That great physician had called the art *κακοτεχνίαν ὀνοματι σεμνῳ*. (Laughter and ironical cheers.) He hoped they would excuse him for introducing a Greek quotation; and he would now give them the translation, which was, that the gymnastic art is 'a contemptible art, smuggled under a venerable name.' For his own part, he

did not object to a little moderate exercise; but the ordinary vocations of life gave them that in sufficient quantity. He decidedly sympathized with Sir Walter Scott's friend, Plummer, who used to say to the great novelist that 'a walk from the parlor to the garden once a day was exercise enough for any rational being, and that nobody but a fool or a fox-hunter would take more.' (Laughter.) The common practice of gymnastics ignored a great physiological fact—that there are in the body two distinct forces, the muscular and the vital, and that the former may be cultivated at the expense of the latter. Men often become strong outwardly and weak inwardly. Suppose they should produce an enormous shell of muscle; it would not necessarily make them healthy. It might rather make them diseased, by drawing away to the surface the life and power of the great vital organs within. It was notorious that acrobats, pugilists, rope-dancers, gymnasts, and other mountebanks (laughter,) were a short-lived race. In certain districts of Germany, where gymnastics have been thoroughly disseminated for a long period, medical statistics report a frightful prevalence of heart disease. (Sensation.) There was another view of the case which he would suggest to parents—the great danger of accidents to their children. Sprains which are carried through life, the fracture of arms, legs, ribs, these are common occurrences in gymnasia; and scarcely a year passes without the announcement of some one being killed in gymnastic performances. (Sensation.) He noticed not very long ago the account of a little boy in a Western gymnasium who got caught among the ropes, and was found dangling there

by the neck, twenty feet from the floor—hung like a malefactor! (Sensation of horror among the ladies.) He objected to the new movement in America toward gymnastics because it was a mania. Americans seem to have some pet mania on the carpet all the while; one day it would be silk-worms, then copper stock, then gold digging, then Shanghai chickens; and now it is gymnastics! (Laughter.) He supposed that this insensate gymnastic mania, like all the others, must have its course; but it was the duty of those who could keep their wits together during this epidemic of madness to do so!" (Cheers and laughter.)

There was just enough of cool, slashing oratorical surgery about this speech to make it very effective. While the Doctor was speaking, Deacon Snipp sat in a sort of rapture, both astonished and delighted at so unexpected an auxiliary; and as soon as the Doctor had ended, the Deacon gained the floor.

After profuse compliments to Dr. Drugger, he said that "he felt strengthened to rise once more and urge upon his fellow-townsmen to beware of what they were doing. They all appreciated the munificence of Judge Fairplay; but the money would be much better bestowed if sent to convert the poor, perishing heathen in Africa. He discovered in this gymnastic movement—or mania, as Dr. Drugger properly called it—only another token of the shocking impiety, irreverence and materialism now overrunning the age. People were beginning to talk in a most presumptuous manner about being able to control the mysterious springs of health. Not so did the ancients believe. No; they used to accept sickness as a providential dispensation and a means of grace. He would illustrate what he meant by an incident in his own experience. He was once ill. A Christian brother called to comfort him, and said: 'What a pity, Brother Snipp, that you are ill.' (Laughter.) To which his reply was: 'No, nothing is a pity which God sends upon us. Do n't you believe in fore-ordination?' (Laughter.) That, he respectfully submitted was the true spirit of the Gospel—resignation to the ills of life; and not this unseemly and rebellious talk about being able to resist the allotments of ill health." After many warnings to them in the name of "piety," "religion," and "the interests of Zion," the Deacon resumed his seat.

Every eye now twinkled as Abdiel Standish—the Yankee Nemesis of Deacon Snipp—stood up to speak.

"I hope, my friends, that I ain't wholly indifferent to the subjick of piety in the land; but the speech what we 've just heerd 'minds me of a bit o' po'try my leetle boy read to me t' other night out of his last library book. It 's writ by a chap over to England which they call Tom Hood. It goes suthin' like this:

"'A man may cry church, church, at every word,
With no more piety than other people;
A daw 's not reckoned a religious bird
Because he keeps a cawing from the steeple.'

"Now I rec'mend that leetle hymn to my friend the Deac'n. I hope he 'll meditate onto it when he goes hum tonight. He has a good 'l more to *say* 'bout piety than most

folks; perhaps that don't 'xactly prove he 's *got* so much more. (Laughter and cheers.)

"He tells us that the ancient saints used to 'xcept sickness as providential; and he 's told us a bit o' his own hist'ry to show that there 's one ancient saint still a livin' in the airth. He seems to think it 's agin the will o' providence to try to stave off disease. Wal, that 's 'bout like some Scotch folks onct, that wus so pious, when fannin' mills wus fust introdooced, that they denounced the machines as atheistikil. They said fannin' mills was gittin' up a breeze when the Almighty willed to hev a calm. (Great laughter.) So I s'pose the good Deac'n here thinks that gymnasiums are atheistikil for the same reason; they is fur gittin' up a good digestion when the Almighty wills to hev a stumick-ache. (Roars of laughter and loud cheers.) Now I respeckfully say to the good Deac'n that, in my humble opinion, when he tells us that diseases is sent onto us by the Lord, he's just slanderin' and blasphemin' the Lord. I do n't b'lieve no sich doctrine. I b'lieve when God 'lmighty made our bodies he knowed what he was about; he made 'em A1, fuss rate machines, to go and b'have 'emselves, ef we 'd only treat 'em well; and ef the machines git out o' order, through our own selfishness, or willful ign'rance, or sin, that 's *our* fault, not his'n. (Cheers.) I do n't b'lieve it 's the will o' God that his young 'uns here on the airth should suffer so. I b'lieve all these sufferings come, not by the will o' God, but the will o' the Devil and the sin o' man. Diseases sent on us by God? Why, it 's perfeckly shockin'! No, they comes from dirt, and laziness, and bad air, and bad ancisters, and food

that is jest heathenish, and whisky, aud other pizins o' one kind and another! (Cheers.)

"Deac'n Snipp says, let this money be given to the poor heathen. Wal, I remember a readin' in a sartin blessed old book I hev to hum, that when the woman came to Jesus, havin' an alabaster box o' precious ointment, and paid her 'omage to him by pourin' of it upon his head, his disciples 'had indignation,' and said, 'this ointment might have been sold for so much and given to the poor.' So it 's very convenient for folks nowadays, when there 's a Messiah to be honored and obeyed in our own hearts and lives, to say why ain't this here money given to the heathen?

"Ez fur Dr. Drugger, I 've got a few words to say to him. He 's made a very larned speech to us to-night; he 's talked a leetle Greek to us; and then, as he knew we wus a crowd of ignoramuses, he 's translated it for us; and he told us 't was suthin' said by an old chap named Galen, who he calls one o' the old fathers o' medikil science; but, ef that 's a specimen o' what he knew, I should think he was one o' the old grannies o' medikil science. Wal, I do n't know as I can blame the Doctor much for his opinions. I s'pose ef I was a doctor I should want to hev lots o' business, and should look onto the buildin' of a gymnasium with great alarm. Do n't that great poet, Mr. Shakspeare, somewhere say suthin' 'bout 'Othello's occupation 's gone?' Ef we git gymnasiums all about, I s'pose the doctors will be very much in the fix that Othello was. That 's prob'ly what 's the matter with 'em." (Great laughter and applause.)

This speech carried the night. The motion for the adop-

tion of the resolutions was put to the meeting by the Secretary and carried by an immense majority, and the Executive Committee of twelve were appointed on the spot.

So ends our village meeting. It seems to me the greatest event that ever happened in Brawnville. The good cause speeds on!

V.

HOW GREAT TRUTHS LIVE IN GREAT HOUSES, AND NEED CONSIDERABLE CASH.

BRAWNVILLE, *June* 19, 1866.

AH me! What a chasm since my last entry in this history of our immortal Club! Not one word since last November! And the worst of it is I have no excuse to offer that any reasonable mortal would accept; unless it be the excuse which Gibbon once gave to a friend for delinquency as a correspondent: "I have been sorely afflicted with gout in the hand, to wit—laziness." I could also plead that my affliction has been greater than Gibbon's; for I have had that particular sort of gout not merely in the hand, but all over!

This inaction of mine has been all the more ignominious because events of the very first importance in the life of the Club have in the mean time taken place. For example: what event in the life of clubs or of men can be of greater importance, or of more precarious fortune, than getting born? Well, since I last wrote, our Club has had that experience. It has actually been and gone, and got born! It *is!* During any day of the past five months it could have

said, in the eloquent language of Horace and of Dr. Arnold, "*Vixi.*"

It has just occurred to me that the biography of this Club proves not unlike the biography of Tristram Shandy, a considerable portion of which is occupied in relating the history of that wonderful individual before he was born—a stage of human existence which people who write Lives do indeed seldom take notice of, but which, if accurately described, would explain many a curious mystery in all the succeeding stages. So far as I can at present remember, Lawrence Sterne and myself are about the only biographers that deserve to be called philosophers, for we went about the business of life-telling as if we knew what was what. We have had the good sense to recount the various careers of our heroes before they came into life!

Let me see. You remember—[by the way, who is "you?" How odd that I should say "you" in a lot of chit-chat written down for my own amusement. I suppose it is because I am a schoolmaster, and am so much accustomed to explain every thing to my pupils in that form of speech. So even when I am talking to myself I say "you" merely from force of habit; just as the fish-women near Edinburgh, whom Sir Walter Scott tells of, go to church on Sundays with their creels new washed and a few stones in them for ballast, simply because they can not walk steadily without their usual load. So I shall stick to my pedagogic privilege of having my own way, and shall talk to myself as if I were my own pupil]—you remember that tremendous mass meeting our villagers had last November; how Judge Fairplay

made a noble speech on Gymnastics; how Deacon Snipp tried to frighten the Nineteenth Century into believing that going to a gymnasium was one of the seven deadly sins, because it would surely lead to dancing, billiards, ten-pins, croquet, and other abominations, and how, on the whole, the pious Deacon rather put his foot into it; how Parson Bland threw some light upon the subject, as was to be expected from one whose local name is "Sunshine;" how Dr. Drugger practiced on our gymnastic project with some very clever surgery, and, indeed, came very near cutting its head quite off; how the comical Abdiel Standish, with his quaint Yankee vernacular and his pugnacious jokes, turned the tables on both Doctor and Deacon, and covered them and their objections with the laughter of the town; and, finally, how the vote for establishing an Athletic Club in Brawnville passed by a great majority, and the Executive Committee was appointed, consisting of six ladies and six gentlemen, to raise the sum necessary in addition to Judge Fairplay's gift.

The Committee discharged their duties and had a report ready in an incredibly short time, thus rebutting the opinion which Mr. Spurgeon entertained of the dilatory habits of committees in general, when he said: "Why, my brethren, if the Lord had put the building of the Ark into the hands of a committee, it would not have been finished yet!"

It must be confessed, however, that our Gymnasium Committee have had an easy task. In fact, their office was almost a sinecure. So great was the enthusiasm generated by our mass meeting that the people, without waiting to be solicited, came to the Committee and offered their subscrip-

tions;* and within three days after the meeting the whole amount was raised.

As an attic philosopher—looking out from my uppermost story window upon this little world of Brawnville, and knowing the rest of the universe only by report—often have I been struck with the extraordinary power of cash in producing intellectual conviction. We Anglo-Saxons are not much addicted to idealizing; and we do not begin to have faith that a truth is a truth till we see somebody willing to put down the solid money in support of it. The most effectual plank in any platform, political or religious, is the one which holds the dollar on it. There appears to be no logic like the logic of a check on the bank. I have heard that when, twenty-five years ago, Cobden and Bright were pouring forth all their resources of argument and eloquence to induce the English people to go against the Corn Laws, they and their party were treated with ineffable scorn by the august London Times. One night it was announced that some members of the Anti-Corn Law League had got together at Manchester, and had subscribed fifty thousand pounds sterling for the cause. Instantly that cause became

*I sincerely trust that this rather startling statement of the Schoolmaster's will not prove too large for the faith of any reader. I have abundant evidence that it is literally true. But what a model town Brawnville must be! Only to be compared with that other New England village where the people are so tender-hearted that they will not allow a skiff to shoot the mill-dam, or any musician to beat time; and where, when the day breaks, the people all turn out from sympathy and help it gather up the pieces.—Ed.

respectable. And the next morning the Thunderer came out with this proclamation: "The Anti-Corn Law is a great fact!"

Ah! a great fact! That is what we idol-worshiping mortals want. Do not talk to us about any of your beautiful ideals! Do not waste your breath in reciting, in our hearing, the lovely prophecies of the mystics! Do not think to gain our attention by any amount of eloquent chatter concerning the *might be* or the *ought to be!* Tell us what *is!* Give us great facts; and, remember, no fact is a great one till it is planted on a circular piece of the precious metals!

For my part, I am under the impression that if Methuselah had come to Brawnville when he was a small boy, and had devoted himself exclusively to preaching Gymnastics till he had taken upon his venerable shoulders every atom of that huge load of "nine hundred and sixty and nine years," the mass of our people would have still remained deaf to what he had to say, unless he could have induced somebody to incorporate the subject in an appreciable modicum of legal-tender currency.

It is positively astonishing, the effect already wrought among us by the announcement that a particular number of thousands of dollars had been given in Brawnville in attestation of somebody's belief in Gymnastics. Only just now, and the cause of Gymnastics was a fancy—the mad scheme of a few enthusiasts. In eighty hours it becomes that dignified, that irresistible thing—"a great fact!"

I almost expect to hear that Deacon Snipp will give in his

adhesion; for what is Phariseeism but the worship of "great facts?"

Judge Fairplay proved himself the wise man we all thought him by foreseeing that the best preacher of sanitary truths we could have here would be a preacher some four stories high, made of brick, and silently proclaiming those truths from its roof top to every passenger along the streets.

Let me go back a moment just to say that we did not wait for our Club House to be erected before we commenced the work of the Club. As soon as the Executive Committee reported that the funds for the building were subscribed, we regularly organized the Club—appointing Judge Fairplay President, having several Vice Presidents, and, besides the Executive Committee, a Board of Trustees. I, the Village Schoolmaster, was appointed to the scribbling department—that is, I was made Secretary. We engaged a large room over one of the stores; obtained a graduate of Dr. Lewis's Normal School as a teacher; formed classes for grown folks as well as for children, and thus set to work. We have also held weekly literary and social meetings of the Club, which have been very beneficial. We have had at our meetings essays, poems, and extemporaneous discussions on health topics, as well as two or three lectures from local celebrities; and next winter we intend to invite lecturers from beyond our horizon. Under the wise and stimulating chairmanship of Judge Fairplay, the meetings of the Club are rapidly becoming a means of education, liberality, and health to this community.

I will now try to give some slight description of our brick preacher of Gymnastics. First of all, its name. We decided not to call it a Gymnasium. That word has been so grossly misapplied in modern times, that it would convey no just idea of the versatile character of our institution, which, in directing attention to physical improvement, does not intend to ignore moral and intellectual improvement too We think that a fatal mistake has been made in these latter days by limiting the gymnasium to the single task of cultivating muscle, thus depriving that very important function of the dignity, and of the manifold sources of interest, which really attach to it when connected with the culture of the total manhood of the gymnast. God has not isolated the physical nature from the intellectual and moral faculties. Why should man? Whatever in the universe is partial, is also false, and therefore disastrous! We discard, then, the abused and degraded word Gymnasium.

What have we in its place?

On a smooth marble slab, inserted high up on the facade of our edifice is this inscription, which answers the question:

BRAWNVILLE

ATHLETIC CLUB HOUSE.

ERECTED 1866.

So God created Man in his own image.—*Gen.* i. 27.

I suppose that every man, woman, and child in the village

has paused again and again before the building, and gazed upon this inscription long enough to have deciphered an Egyptian hieroglyph—pondering the mighty sermon suggested by that text of Scripture so significantly petrified into its context. It has been amusing, also, to watch the farmers who, for purposes of trade, come to the village in their wagons from many miles around. As they drive through Main Street, and reach the point opposite the Club House, they invariably shout "Whoa!" and, as if some great affair of state was to be considered, they sit, solemnly studying the whole structure, perusing with especial gravity the inscription on its brow, and often holding serious, though sometimes also serio-comic, conversations with each other, or with the villagers, as to the probable nature of the building and the import of that venerable text. I had myself, the other day, a rather funny experience with one of these farmers. As I was passing near the wonderful house, I heard some one shout repeatedly: "Hello, Cap'n!" but having myself never enjoyed any military honors, I did not suppose that this salutation could be meant for me. Looking around, however, I discovered that I was indeed the object of it; the old farmer who was desirous of speaking with me evidently granting the title of captain by brevet, as a means of conciliation. I turned to hear what he had to say.

"Hello, Cap'n!" he again shouted, though I stood waiting to hear. He evidently wished to assure himself that I had the gift of articulate speech before he should commit himself further.

"Well?" said I, interrogatively.

"Look-a-here, Cap'n, what 's that air shantee fur—a meetin'-house?"

"Yes; that is, it is a house for meetings—meetings of the Athletic Club."

"What 'n thunder 's that—a new religion?"

"No, not exactly; though some people *do* call the members Muscular Christians."

"Musc'lar Christians, eh? Why, them 's Brigham Young's fellers—ain 't they? them 's Mormons, I s'pose."

"Oh no, no; not by any means. The Mormons propose to give men more wives; the Muscular Christians propose to give them more health."

"Is that all the diff'rence, Cap'n?"

"No, not all; still it includes a good many points."

"Naow, look-a-here, Cap'n!" said he, with a ludicrously suspicious look, "dew yeu take me for sich a 'tarnal greenhorn that yeu think yeu can make me swaller that air yarn? Naow, tell me, Cap'n—honest—ain't that air shantee a Mormon meetin'-house? 'Cause I heerd, down our way, that Mormonism had lately busted out here in Brawnville, and that Judge Fairplay had got took with it, and Parson Bland, too, and lots o' other decent folks, and that there was nobody left to fight it 'cept Dr. Drugger and Deac'n Snipp. Naow, Cap'n, ain't that air the Mormon meetin'-house?"

I could not help laughing outright in the farmer's face at this droll illustration of the habit of Madame Rumor to perform whimsical pranks; and I thought how the Club would roar when I reported to them the reputation they

were getting in the surrounding country. At last I managed to straighten my face sufficiently to tell him something about the real character of the Club, and to beg him to deny the wild reports he had heard; but the more I explained, the more he was mystified. At last he drove away, muttering:

"Wal, whether that 's a Mormon meetin'-house or is n't, it 's the dreffulest queer lookin' shantee I ever seed, any how!"

Our Club House, I imagine, would not be a very noteworthy edifice in New York or Boston—though I can not speak positively, never having visited those Babylonian wonders. But there is no architecural monument in these rural solitudes half so beautiful and commanding.

As you ascend the stone steps and enter by the front door, you reach a sort of square lobby, paved with blocks of dark and white marble, so as to form a sort of mosaic floor. On the right is the Superintendent's office, and on the left the reception room, while in front of you are double doors, through which you are admitted to the great hall of exercise. Within this hall, near the right-hand corner, is a door opening into the gentlemen's dressing room, and near the left-hand corner a door opening into a similar room for ladies. Above the lobby, the reception room and the Superintendent's office is a spacious room called the library, which is to be elegantly fitted up, and to be used for a reading room and for the literary and social meetings of the Club. The great hall is yet unfurnished. It is to contain ladders, swings, horizontal and parallel bars, weights and pulleys, iron

dumb-bells, the wooden horse, a mimic fortress, and all the usual appliances of the most improved German Gymnasium; but a great space in the middle of the room is left free for the special work of the Dio Lewis Gymnastics. Around three sides of the hall are galleries for spectators. We have obtained from Dr. Lewis an invention as unique and efficacious, in its way, as is his own exquisite system of exercises; it is the model of a chair, which can be folded up and placed in a rack at the side of the room, or taken again at an instant's notice and placed for use upon the floor. By this contrivance we are able, without the least trouble, to fill our hall with chairs for an audience to hear a lecture; and again, in a moment, as by the waving of a magician's wand, every chair shall disappear, and we ourselves be resolved into a gymnastic class ready for operations.

As I have already intimated, the interior of our house is yet incomplete. Our plans have been formed in consultation with three goddesses rarely consulted in America all at once—Liberality, Prudence, Taste. We believe that the rooms, when fully furnished, will be exceedingly attractive.

We expect to take official possession of our Club House next week, when we shall celebrate the event by a superb house warming, in the shape of a great public meeting, with speeches, songs, and gymnastic exercises.

Lest I forget it altogether, I think I will now scribble down some of the verses which the literary meetings of our association have already evoked. They are not of a very ambitious character, being thus far inclined merely toward a

familiar and humorous manner. I remember one set of verses which produced great mirth when recited to the Club some weeks ago. They are entitled "Almost a Scholar," and explain the rather tragical circumstances under which an aspiring bookman was induced to lay aside his towering aspirations. Is it not, indeed, one of the most hackneyed sayings of the didactic folk, that great events do often spring from small causes? If Gray, who sang of mute, inglorious Miltons, and of village Hampdens guiltless of their country's blood, had but extended his life to the present, and his observations to Brawnville, he might have added to his Elegy a line or two about the rustic New Englander, who, but for the pathetic reason herein explained, would have been a Bentley or a Scaliger. Here are the verses:

ALMOST A SCHOLAR;

OR,

THE DYSPEPTIC'S LAMENT.

I once aspired to climb that mount
  Where Learning's fane looms grand;
I bought more books than I could count,
And swore that at Castalia's fount
  I 'd drink—while I could stand.
Alas! what did my courage break,
And all my proud ambition shake,

And force me Learning to forsake?
It was—ah me!—the stomach-ache!

Poor fellow! was it not melancholy? I wonder if he were not in some way related to Bulwer Lytton's "Ambitious Student in Ill Health?"

The next series of verses is an attempt to weave into rhyme some of the enthusiasm generated among us by the Dio Lewis Gymnastics. This little poem is adapted to a very familiar tune, and it is often caught up and sung by the pupils as they march about the room or practice the exercises to which it relates. It seems to make no pretension to humor, or indeed to any thing else, except a devout wish to comply with Andrew Combe's recommendation of lustily using the voice while working the muscles.

THE SONG OF THE GYMNASTS.

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO DIO LEWIS, M. D., FOUNDER OF THE NEW GYMNASTICS.

AIR—*Sparkling and Bright.*

Now, gymnasts strong, lift we high a song
  For our art and its triumphs glorious,
That leads the van for the health of man,
  And is over ills victorious!

CHORUS.

Then work away till a better day
On our pill-cursed race is shining;
For the "bell" and the "ring" shall defiance fling
At the fiends of Disease and Pining.

While vigor we quaff, we will sing and will laugh,
And with shouts we will make jubilation;
For all may have health, which is man's highest wealth,
And his heart's most devout adoration.

CHORUS—Then work away, etc.

We hail the glad time when a conquest sublime
Shall earth's bitterest anguish smother,
And to each of our band we pledge the warm hand
Of a friend and a true-hearted brother.

CHORUS—Then work away, etc.

The only other verses that I have preserved or can now recall are a few that, perhaps, have a deeper merit, as evincing, possibly, more thought, satirical point, and vigor of expression. They certainly touch upon a subject of vast importance to us all, and yet one which is sadly neglected—the reaction of our morbid physical moods on the intellectual and religious life. This little poem is entitled

SPIRITUAL DARKNESS.

IN Granada of Spain, in the days that are fled,
Lived a famous old Bishop—rich, handsome, and stout;
And his homilies—so his parishioners said—
Though the good man had often been blistered and bled,
Had but one imperfection—they smelt of the gout.

So, now, many a parson, by greenbacks well hired,
From the Gospel's high message of happiness swerves;
And with toil, and with prayer, and with tea parties tired,
Drones away at such Gospel as can be inspired
By bad air, soda biscuit, and worry-worn nerves.

Shall we wonder that Luther his ink bottle threw
At the Devil, who came for a bit of a talk?
Who of us would not meet with his Devilship, too,
And be scared for our lives to sing out even "shoo!"
Shut up for two years without ever a walk?

And full often the world seems all dark and forlorn,
And the heavens no longer will drop us a smile;
And the heart is oppressed, and the conscience is torn,
And we curse the black moment in which we were born;
All, because—there 's excess in the item of bile!

In our churches it is not more wealth that we need,
Nor round each loving sect a more tall picket fence;

Nor more sermons to charm us—e'en when they do n't feed;
Nor more people to swear to a forty-foot creed;
  No, 't is this little blessing—'t is more common sense!

If mankind of itself half as much understood
  As it knows of a horse, or a whale or a leaf,
We should learn that the body and soul, for some good,
Are united on earth in a stern brotherhood,
  And that each feels the other's least gladness or grief.

VI.

OUR HOUSE WARMING,—AND HOW WE MADE OUR OWN THUNDER.

BRAWNVILLE, *June* 26, 1866.

"YES; I have heard from Col. Higginson. The letter came to-day. I am sorry to tell you that he is unable to be with us at the opening of our Club House."

Such were the words of Judge Fairplay, at one of the meetings of the Club, three or four weeks ago, in reply to the question of a member. These meetings, by the way, are very charming. They are attended not only by gentlemen, but by ladies, and even by some of the little people; and the Judge, who is always in the chair, and always mingles suavity with rigor, contrives to call out among us a good deal of familiar and spontaneous action, while he never fails to maintain the needful amount of parliamentary decorum.

"A gentleman at the other end of the room," continued the Judge, after a pause, "says that he thinks Col. Higginson's inability to come is not to be regretted, because Col. Higginson is an 'infidel.' It is not best to take up much time in this place in discussing this subject; but I am anx-

ious, in all kindness, to say to my friend yonder, that when he makes such a remark about such a man as Col. Higginson, I am more sorry for *him* than I am for the Colonel. (Laughter.) Please do not laugh, friends. You thus put a sting into a remark which was not meant to have any. I do not wish to give my friend a pang, but a suggestion. But as to that word 'infidel'—you know we New Englanders have always objected to the old Southern mode of arguing with any anti-slavery man so unfortunate as to stray into their country. This was their mode: Not to answer his arguments, but to tar and feather *him*. Well, have you ever considered that to call a man by so damning a name as 'infidel' is to use, essentially, the same evasive mode of logic—is to cover the man with a *verbal* coat of tar and feathers? (Laughter and cheers.) On the whole, I think the slaveholder's real coat of tar and feathers is not so bad—nay, that it is not so malignant, or so mean either—as is the theologian's ideal one. The former will wash off—the latter won't. (Laughter.) Pardon me, dear friends; I am, perhaps, betrayed by your kindness to say too much. (Earnest cries of "Go on!") But I want to suggest that we should remember three things, in case we are ever tempted to call any man an 'infidel'—especially, if it should be such a man as Thomas Wentworth Higginson, a gentleman of devout and pure life, and of great benignity of character, to say nothing of his being a patriot, a brave soldier, a superb scholar, and the most exquisite prose writer left to America since the death of Hawthorne. (Great cheering.) Let us remember, first, that this word 'infidel' is but the puppet of Geography, and

that we who use it in such a case do but expose our own servitude to a local narrowness. Consider this. You call Higginson 'infidel'; but the Pope calls both of you infidels—Higginson, and you, too; and the Greek Churchman calls all three of you infidels—Higginson, you, and the Pope; then the Jew gets up and calls all four of you infidels—Higginson, you, the Pope, and the Greek Churchman; then the Moslem is ready to call all five of you infidels—Higginson, you, the Pope, the Greek Churchman, and the Jew; and, finally, some big priest on the other side of the Chinese wall will peep over that huge structure, and swear by Confucius, that the whole lot of you are infidels, and barbarians to boot; and so you can go around the globe, and you will begin to discover that 'infidel' is a bad name, which one part of the map is inclined to bestow on all the other parts. Now, if we New England Calvinists have such a monopoly of the truth that we are entitled to call the first serious divergence from our views a serious error, let us at least show, by the language we use, that our enormous endowment of truth has not deprived us of our good sense (loud cheers), to say nothing of our charity. (Cheers.) That is the first thing to remember. The second is this: that whosoever applies so injurious an epithet for a difference of opinion, inflicts the greatest injury which modern law permits to him, and he really joins the great company of persecutors—he belongs historically to the party of Torquemada, Bloody Mary, and Bishop Bonner. (Cheers.) And this is the third point: that just as a certain sensible preacher objected to the Devil having all the best tunes, so should we

object to the Devil having nearly all the best men. (Laughter and applause.)

"But enough of this subject.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen, as we can not have our new building opened by the author of 'Out-door Papers'—a bit of writing perhaps the wittiest and most effective ever produced on Physical Culture—I propose that we give up hunting for big guns from abroad, and use such guns, big or little, as we have on the spot. Let us fall back on our own resources. Let us have a roaring public meeting to inaugurate the Club House; but let us manufacture our own thunder for the occasion." (Cheers.)

And it was decided that so it should be. And to-night we have had our house-warming, and have executed the programme gloriously, thunder and all.

Our great Hall of Exercise was filled with chairs; and, long before the hour appointed, the chairs were filled with people. There were over the vast assemblage those animated looks, and that buzz of multitudinous talk, which are so suggestive of general pleasure and of eager interest.

At the end of the hall farthest from the entrance, a stage had been erected for an exhibition of the Dio Lewis Gymnastics—the only kind of gymnastic work we have yet attempted; and just in front of this stage was a smaller one to be occupied by the President and other officers of the Club. A sufficient space to the left of the platform was reserved for the classes; while the space to the right was occupied by that obliging and strong-lunged association, the Brawnville Brass Band, which gave its services gratuitously.

Our brass band is probably like most brass bands in rural districts—it is not restrained by any such frailty as diffidence from making itself distinctly heard—not to say felt—at all proper opportunities. It has, in an eminent degree, that powerful quality which has distinguished many of the great orators and warriors of history—a comfortable assurance of its own merits, and of the largeness of its place in the universe; and you may depend upon it, that so long as brass and wind do not give out, a more than cheerful assent will be given to all requests for "a little more music"—as its performances are somewhat generously termed. It is not impossible that, within a room like our hall, this sonorous zeal of our brass band may be rather greater than is altogether agreeable to those among us who chance to be afflicted with delicate nerves and sensitive ears; and I fear that some of our people have at times yielded to the temptation of applying to brass bands in general the compliment that was once paid to bagpipes in general, to wit: that the bagpipe is a very noble instrument, in one of just two situations—either with the listener in a small boat in the middle of a Scottish lake and the bagpipe on a distant hill, or else with the listener on a distant hill and the bagpipe in a small boat in the middle of a Scottish lake!

The meeting was opened with a display of the dumb-bell exercises, performed by some thirty or forty little boys and girls, all in bright and graceful gymnastic costume. It seemed as if the interest of the meeting must have struck

twelve at the very beginning. The most of those present had known of the exercises only by report, and as the fairy-like troupe of beautiful children, to the accompaniment of stirring music (stirring in more senses than one), dashed through these movements, in perfect concert, with great agility, precision, and vigor, with an indescribable vivacity, with an airy lightness and statuesque grace, the people at some passages actually held their breaths from astonishment and delight; and I could see many an eye—no doubt of brother or sister—glistening with happy tears. But when at last the end of the series was reached, and the music stopped, and the little athletes began retreating from the platform to their seats below, the whole assembly rose to their feet, clapped their hands, waved their handkerchiefs, and filled the air with acclamations of applause. It was a sacred scene. It was the irrepressible joy of fathers and mothers, of brothers and sisters, exulting in the new-born beauty and felicity of those most dear to them; but the radiant children, not understanding this explosion of enthusiasm, paused for a moment, almost alarmed, but were soon restored by the discovery that all this uproar and commotion meant praise; and as they reached their seats, and exchanged quick glances with each other, and with their friends in the audience, I thought that I had never seen young eyes dancing and sparkling with so much joy.

It took several minutes for the people to give vent to their emotions and to become calm enough to listen to the speaking; and Judge Fairplay, our President, well knowing that each moment so spent was but driving the cause he loved

nearer to the center of the popular heart, made no attempt to check their demonstrations. Soon, however, another thought, another emotion, seemed to flash from brain to brain, from heart to heart; it was this—of gratitude to Judge Fairplay. There, at that moment, was sitting before them, and about to address them, the wise and noble man, their own neighbor and friend, to whose providence, to whose sagacity, to whose courage and munificence they were indebted not alone for this great and splendid edifice, but for this brilliant proof of what was possible in the development of beauty, gracefulness, and strength in themselves and their children. Nothing could have been contrived by the most consummate artist in the manipulation of human passion more effective for a personal ovation, than such a gymnastic display immediately before the rising of Judge Fairplay. And in this case our pleasure was enhanced by the fact that we knew that no manipulation had been practiced; for the Judge is as modest as he is broad-minded, far seeing, and generous. But when at last the honored man rose to address us, the impassioned logic of the moment seized upon every heart; and again the people sprang to their feet, and again with loud shouts, and hand clapping, and waving of handkerchiefs, continued moment after moment, and caught up and repeated each time with increased energy, they tried to utter to their benefactor in a language more expressive than words, the admiration and the gratitude that filled their souls. When, however, there came at last a lull, silence, as deep as the tempest had been loud, settled down upon the people; and all bent forward to hear what the Judge would

say. But he could not speak. The strong man was overmastered. Twice or thrice his lips moved; his eyes filled with tears; and though with the resolution of a proud man he struggled hard to control himself, he had to stand some time in silence. We all felt that this was the most eloquent speech we had ever known even the eloquent Judge Fairplay to make; and those of us who were not ourselves too full of joyful sympathy with him to do so, once more broke forth into loud and long cheering. When again there was silence, the Judge said, slowly, as if fighting hard for every word:

"I had intended now to address to the meeting a few observations which I thought would be appropriate to this hour; but I must reserve them till, perhaps, a later stage of the meeting. From my heart I thank you for this kindness; and, so far as any agency of mine may be accredited with a small part of the merit of securing for us and for our posterity this admirable edifice, I am rewarded—a thousand and a thousand times rewarded—by the wonderful spectacle of beauty, intelligence, and disciplined energy, just presented to us by these, the dear children of our own village. (Great cheering.) Our friend, the friend of every man, woman, and child in Brawnville—the man who from the very inception of our Club has been warmly interested in it, and who has given to its cause his brain, his heart, and his great influence, the Rev. Mr. Bland, will now speak to you."

No other man in Brawnville, always excepting Judge

Fairplay, could have had so hearty a greeting as that which now welcomed the rising of Parson Bland. He began by saying:

"Friends—I do not envy that man his composure, who, after such a scene as we have just had, with such emotions as we still have, could rise here and make a glib speech. I confess to you that I am still too much under the potent spell of that excitement, that generous and grateful excitement, which has pervaded this entire assemblage, and almost rocked this house upon its foundations, either to speak or to think with clearness."

Mr. Bland, gradually regaining his self-command and his fluency, then proceeded to congratulate the people on the completion of the new edifice, and the success which had attended the first efforts of the Athletic Club; he expatiated in glowing terms upon the manifold benefits which were to flow from the institution upon the whole community, and through all coming time; and then he put the question to them, To whom, in their opinion, more than to all other men, were they indebted for such a vast benefaction; to whose public spirit, to whose discernment, to whose purse? "I see," he exclaimed, "that your eyes answer the question for me." He then suddenly turned toward Judge Fairplay, and in a strain of thrilling eloquence he expressed to him the gratitude of the people now in his presence, and even anticipated the thankful remembrance of the generations yet to dwell there and to partake of the blessing.

During this part of the speech there was no dry eye in the house, unless possibly in the seat which held the festive Deacon Snipp and his amiable friends.

Mr. Bland concluded his magnificent address by pointing out that, after all, the best way of thanking Judge Fairplay was to make a good use of the institution which he had done so much to found.

On a certain former occasion, when, as on the present, the Brawnville Brass Band had given its services gratuitously, its members had taken deep offense at a seeming slight which had been put upon them. They thought—what every body knows is a very unusual thing for musical people to do—they thought that their talents were not appreciated, for the simple reason that they were not called upon to display those talents with sufficient frequency. In drawing out our programme for this evening we resolved to avoid this mistake; and, accordingly, at every possible point we had put in that slightly ironical phrase—"*Music* by the band."

So, after Mr. Bland, came once more the Band, and then another gymnastic display, which produced an impression even greater than that made by the children. This was the series of ring exercises by a class of ladies and gentlemen, all arrayed in brilliant gymnastic suits.

Then the boys and girls came upon the platform again; and, standing in semi-circle and forming a group which, for picturesque attitude and varied color, seemed like some gorgeous transfiguration scene, they sang with piano accompaniment, to the tune "Sparkling and Bright," the "Song

of the Gymnasts." Into the chorus they especially threw an immense amount of vigor, and were assisted in doing so by a large part of the audience, who seemed to exult in shouting:

"Then work away till a better day
On our pill-cursed race is shining;
For the 'bell' and the 'ring' shall defiance fling
At the fiends of Disease and Pining!"

In the midst of the good humor and glee excited by the singing of this song, Judge Fairplay rose and said:

"When men forget that there are two sides to every subject they become bigots. There are bigots upon all subjects—even upon the subject of bigotry. How often do we see that curious specimen of natural history, an illiberal-Liberal, a narrow Broad-Churchman! The greatest thing we have to fear in connection with the Brawnville Athletic Club is, that from the extraordinary success which has attended it, we shall have the argument all our own way; that we shall become intellectually corrupted; that we shall forget that there are two sides even to our pet subject of Physical Culture; and that thus we shall become those most vulgar and offensive of all bigots—gymnastic bigots! (Cheers.) For this reason I think that my friend, Dr. Drugger—the coolest, keenest, ablest opponent of our cause in Brawnville—is really just now about the most useful man in town. It seems to be a part of the Doctor's mission to preserve us from gymnastic bigotry—from athletic fanaticism

(Cheers.) The Doctor has very reluctantly consented, at the urgent entreaty of the Committee, to say a few words to us to-night; and I know you will authorize me in assuring him of the most polite attention." (Cheers.)

The Judge had touched skillfully that chord of chivalrous feeling which is strung in every human soul. The Doctor's ascent to the platform was amid the honorable greetings of those to whom he stood as an avowed opponent.

Morally, there was no finer scene presented during the whole evening—an evening so opulent in fine scenes! The Doctor said:

"I am sure, ladies and gentlemen, that I must be very hardened in my hostility to your gymnastic creed to hold out against such magnanimity as you and your noble Chairman have just displayed, as well as against such exquisite eloquence, such bewitching logic, as your gymnasts have to-night put into their attitudes and their movements. You are likely to conquer me, if you conquer me at all, through my heart and my eyes. (Cheers.)

"I will try to emulate your own generosity by making to you one confession, which I do in a whisper and in strict confidence. (Laughter.) Those beautiful boys and girls nearly took my breath away—and my opinions, too. (Cheers.) I have never before seen the Dio Lewis exercises. Greatly as I dislike Dr. Dio Lewis, I must admit that his gymnastics seem beyond attack. (Cheers.) At all events, I shall have to go home and think the matter over before I shall be able to state any objections to them. I confess that

I do not at present see how the arguments which at your first public meeting I brought against gymnastics in general, can apply to the system of Dr. Lewis. And this admission may be of more worth in your eyes if I tell you that, as a medical man, I look upon Dr. Lewis as a large-sized charlatan. Please do not misunderstand me—I am not converted even to the Dio Lewis Gymnastics. I merely say that I do not at first sight see any objection to them. I intend to keep a close watch upon them. I may yet discover that they produce evil results which are not now apparent.

"But what do we see all about this hall? Your Club is not limited to this species of gymnastics. Already I observe the preparations for the great machinery of the German system—those neck-imperilling engines, those bone-breaking implements, the very sight of which presents a cheering prospect of business for the surgeon! (Laughter.) If, indeed, I looked at this subject with that paltry, that wicked professional selfishness which one of your speakers last winter so unfairly insinuated (here many eyes were turned toward Abdiel Standish, who sat imperturbable as ever), I should favor your gymnastic scheme as full of the most exhilarating promise of disease and mortality! (Laughter.)

"I intend to wait till your great shop is furnished; till your huge tools are in; till your heavy methods are tested; and I now warn you, most emphatically, that if your gymnasium gives me too much professional employment, as I really fear it will, I shall sternly persist in my present opposition! (Cheers.)

"I did not intend to say many words to-night. I will close with one brief remark. Every body is inclined at times to be prophetical. I am so inclined now. I prophecy that these heavy gymnastics, of which the machines are now only partially introduced, will become the favorite ones of just those persons most likely to be injured by them—namely, the young men; that young men, finding in them an opportunity of displaying muscular power and physical prowess, will be tempted to exertions which, while they for a time delude with an outward show of power, really deplete the system of its vitality, and lead to a variety of incurable diseases.

"This is my prediction. Mark it! But, athletes, you can do nothing which would gratify me more than by proving that I am a false prophet!" (Great cheering, and cries of "We will do it!" "we will do it!" from the gymnastic classes.)

While the musicians were getting ready for their next performance, the irrepressible Deacon Snipp, who had manifested great uneasiness during the conciliatory portions of Dr. Drugger's speech, wriggled into a perpendicular position, and requested to be allowed to speak. The audience were in such a magnanimous mood that they did not bestow upon him those marks of their very peculiar consideration with which his rising is generally hailed. The truth is—if the truth must be told—that the Deacon is a bore, an enormous bore, and the very worst kind of an enormous bore, a bore who, saturated and blown out with boundless self-complacency and spiritual pride, bores you to death in the august

name of Godliness. Judge Fairplay graciously invited the Deacon to the platform, and informed him that at the conclusion of the impending musical performance he should have the floor.

This delay, together with his conspicuous position on the platform, seemed to add greatly to the Deacon's comfort. Having now his favorite place—the highest seat in the synagogue, and being in full sight of the whole assemblage, he put on a more than ordinary smirk of sanctity; and, rolling his eyes in a devout frenzy, and swelling his body as if he were in danger of bursting with the pent-up piety inside of him, he looked down upon us all with a face which seemed to say, "I, even I only, am left, who have not bowed the knee to Baal!"

At last the Deacon began:

"I do not propose to speak at great length." (Cheers and, from the back part of the room, expressions of incredulity.) I had originally intended not to come to this meeting. (Great cheering.) But there was one consideration which finally induced me to come. (Shouts of "What a pity!") I thought it my duty to come and stand up before a frowning world (here the whole audience were smiling), and bear witness against this work in which you are engaged. I think that this is the saddest day that Brawnville ever knew. (General mirth.) Unless Providence interferes, I expect to see the walls of Zion falling into decay, and the people going away after idols—ten-pins, dancing, billiards, croquet, and other carnal pleasures. (Here the audience

began to show impatience with this rigmarole, but were pacified by the Chairman, and induced to hear the rest in dead silence.) I am grieved to see some signs that even Dr. Drugger is beginning to yield to this melancholy spirit of worldly mindedness. I have always looked upon him as one of our soundest conservative men. But I trust that, whoever else may become recreant, I, at least, shall remain faithful to piety and conservatism. Thank God, there is, at least, a small band of conservative spirits still left, who will, by the grace of God, stand in the gap against the flood of radicalism and impiety."

So soon as the Deacon had ceased, and while he was yet descending from the platform, loud cries of "Abdiel" rang through the hall. The Committee had hoped that Abdiel Standish would not be induced to speak to-night; for, although he is a man of shrewd observation and acute sense, and in his unkempt fashion often says things which are really worth hearing, he is yet often extremely coarse and personal in his ridicule, and is always shockingly provincial in his language; and we feared that the elevated tone of the meeting would be marred by what he would be likely to say. If he must speak, however, he could not have a fitter victim than the canting and conceited Deacon; and the uprising of the latter rendered that of Abdiel inevitable. He responded without reluctance to the calls of the audience; and, as is usual with him, as well as with many other American orators, he commenced his harangue with a little story.

'While listenin' to the lamingtations of the ven'rable gen'l'man who has jest sot down, I' ve been strongly r'minded of a pussun of my acquaintince who was addicted to the habit of imbibin' that pernishuous flooid which is always greatly improved by bein' thrown into the gutter. But this pussun did n't think so. He was never known to throw any of that flooid into the gutter, 'xcep when he went along with it hisself. (Laughter.) On one occasion he came hum in a state of considible intellectooal confoosion. Bein' still raither dry, he thought, as a great novelty, he 'd try a drink o' water; and he took up a tumbler into which a little ball o' silk thread had fallin' and swallered the water and the silk too. But the end o' the silk ketchin' in his teeth, he took hold of it and began to pull. And he kep pullin' yard after yard, till at last he got frightened, and yelled out: 'Here, wife, come quick; I 'm unravellin'! (Roars of laughter.) I do n't mean to insinooate nothin' 'bout the good Deac'n's bev'rage afore he came here to-night; but I 've jist got this to say: from the very doleful view he takes o' matters and things in general, I can't help the suspicion that he 's unravellin'! (Great laughter.) And not only so, but he seems to think that the univarse is suffer-in' from the same complaint.

"The good Deac'n has given us to-night a sort o' wail about consarvatism.

"Now, we 've got jest two sorts o' folks in this 'ere town. One sort is for improvement. The other is dead set agin improvement of any kind; for the simple reason that they are agin change. And it 's as sartin as mullin stalks that

you can't have improvement without some change somewhar. They want society to stop or move back'ard. They seem to think it 's the chief end o' man to be like a balky hoss; and ef they was agoin' to make a harness, I s'pose they 'd make it all brichin'. (Laughter.) Wal, they 've got a very purty word to call 'emselves. They call 'emselves Consarvatives.

"Now, friends, it sort o' seems to me that whether there 's any merit in bein' consarvative depends 'xackly on what kind of a thing it is you want to consarve. Ef you are a tryin' to consarve what is good, and useful, and true, why, it 's all right; and this Club means to be a consarvative Club. We are for consarvin' people's health; we are for consarvin' youth and happiness, and fresh air, and pure water, and wholesome food, and all good customs. But the great trouble in this world, I 've always noticed, is jest this: those who crow, and cackle, and scream so much about consarvatism do n't stop to ask whether a thing is good or bad; but ef a thing is old, they think it ought n't to be disturbed; they is for havin' things stay jest as they are, whether good or bad. Accordingly, they propose to consarve some things we want to smash up, sech as a good many foolish New England customs, and sins not put down in the catechism—sech as dyspepsy, and headache, and weak backs, and shiffless nerves. But there are still livin' some folks like them that were spoken of the other day in the papers—folks who are so consarvative that ef God 'lmighty had consulted 'em about the creation o' the world, they would have advised him to consarve chaos. (Laughter.) An' what 's more, they

objeck to discussin' things. Now, in my 'umble opinion, ef a thing won't bear discussin', it 's jest because it desarves merely cussin'. (Loud laughter and cheers.)

"We b'lieve in the sort o' consarvatism spoken of by the Apostle: 'Try all things; hold fast that which is good.'" (Great cheering.)

Abdiel's speech seemed to gratify the people wonderfully, and he returned to his seat in triumph. Then came more music; then more gymnastics; then a brief but suggestive speech by Judge Fairplay—which I regret that I was too weary to report; then the song of "My Country" by the whole assemblage; and finally, with three ringing cheers for the Club, and three for its President, and three for the ladies, the people dispersed; fully impressed that we had just attended the best meeting ever held in Brawnville—or anywhere else!

VII.

JUDGE FAIRPLAY'S WAY OF PUTTING THINGS.

BRAWNVILLE, *July* 26, 1866.

"AN old man, renowned for wisdom through half a dozen villages, sat upon the porch of his humble cottage, in the early morning hour, to converse with his neighbors, should any of them that day seek his counsel. First came an athlete—low-browed, ruddy-cheeked, strong-armed, of mighty chest, and with a ponderous frame knit of muscle that moved and glistened like animated steel. 'O father! what more is left for me to do?' 'Find out that you have a mind.' And the athlete went his way. Then, from the communion of his books came a student—pale, emaciated, devoured by the voracity of his own brain and nerves, his eye luminous with poesy, his pure marble forehead towering like some noble dome of knowledge and thought. 'O father! what more is left for me to do?' 'Find out that you have a body.' And the student likewise went his way."

Such was the pretty parable which Judge Fairplay related

to us the other night. He left us to draw forth its meaning for ourselves. And such is a fair specimen of his vivacious way of putting things—a way which I mean to exemplify by further specimens in the course of this paper.

But if I were called upon to state the one cause which, more than all things else, has contributed to the singular and surpassing success of our Athletic Club up to the present moment, I should fix upon this: The Club has, in a hundred ways, embodied and enforced the two verdicts of this sage of the half a dozen villages. It has taught the man of body to discover that he had a mind; it has taught the man of mind to discover that he had a body. Thus it has been a missionary of true harmony to many of our people; and it is now sustained and cherished in the grateful love of all who have experienced its silent benefactions. For, indeed, what benefaction can be greater than that of enabling human beings to come into full possession of themselves? Columbus made the world a whole world by giving to one-half of it the knowledge of the other half. But our Club has done a still grander thing—it has revealed to many a man among us that he was but half a man, and has shown him how to become a whole one. Not more necessary is the western hemisphere to the eastern, than is the body to the intellect, and the intellect to the body.

I have already noted down in these pages some of our methods of developing the body. But it was a sagacious and a fruitful thought of Judge Fairplay to provide in the same institution, a room consecrated to the development of the intellect. For the former purpose we have our Hall of

Exercise; for the latter, we have our Library—the room in which our literary meetings are held, and the arena already of some glowing and stimulating discussions. Each department feeds and supports the other. The exercises clarify the brain, and act as a tonic to thought; the discussions create and preserve intelligent enthusiasm for the exercises. Thus we strive to deserve the title of an Athletic Club—forming athletic minds and muscles.

Our literary meetings are held regularly on Tuesday evenings. As yet, we have not had the least difficulty in securing a full attendance; and this for the simple reason that our meetings are live ones. This, in fact, is the secret of success in meetings of all sorts. For example: one often hears ministers scolding their people because they do not come out to those unique assemblages of the Protestant Church called Prayer-meetings. But why do not people come out to them? It is because in all such cases the meetings are formal, cold, and dead. But people can never be scolded into feeling an interest in dead things of any sort. Touch a real subject in a real way, and at once animation will stream in upon the meeting through the very roof; and the report thereof will go forth as an invitation more musical and enticing than the chimes of all the church bells in Christendom. If ministers and deacons would stop their whimpering, and speak no more hurdy-gurdy speeches, and pray no more hurdy-gurdy prayers; the only difficulty they would have about audiences would be where to put them. But who can be eager to hear fossils croaking unto fossils in one eternal groan about fossils? Jesus had no trouble

to get audiences. Nay, his only trouble was to get away from them. He fled into deserts and mountain recesses, and into the solitudes of lake and river; and still the people pursued him, hurried after him by the everlasting hunger of the human heart for reality. So has it been always. So was it with Luther, Latimer, Knox, Whitefield, Wesley, and Theodore Parker. It was never difficult for them to get people to come to hear what they had to say, because they always had something real to say. So is it to-day with Spurgeon and Beecher. The clue to their success seems to be that they do not play upon the dried catgut of defunct topics; but even in their stupidest moments—and they have such—they invariably smite the living chords of living hearts before them.

The foregoing theory of success in public meetings is substantially what Judge Fairplay has told us a score of times. And he insists that the principle applies to meetings of all sorts. As to our weekly Club meetings, no member is exhorted, much less scolded, to come; every member is made to feel that he can not afford to stay away. It matters not what the topic for the evening may happen to be, the spirit of treating it is ever the same—naturalness, simplicity, the reduction of all theories to the test of experience, discouragement of bombast and oratorical display, perfect liberty to every variety of honest opinion.

No doubt we are very fortunate in having for our presiding officer so wise, temperate, genial, and versatile a man as Judge Fairplay; for he is to us both a stimulus and a restraint. Venerating the slightest lisping of truth, tolerant

of every type of real thought and sentiment, hostile only to insincerity and impudence, he succeeds in evoking utterance from many a hesitant and blushing speaker; while he knows how, either with tingling irony or blistering sarcasm, to check any tendency to meaningless argumentation or to the vanities of pompous rhetoric.

We have two or three members who set up for metaphysicians; and nothing suits them better than to start some flock of impalpable problems, and, with the whole Club for a reluctant audience, to display their ingenuity in word battles and dialectics. A few evenings since they got into one of these cloudy contests, and, after filling the room with a thick shower of words for nearly half an hour, and testing severely the good nature of the company, the Judge, with a sort of grave playfulness, came to our rescue and ridiculed them into silence:

"Now, gentlemen, I think it is about time for some of us who are not metaphysicians to have a turn. Allow me to say, that in such meetings as ours we must constantly try our discussions by a sternly practical test. It may be very amusing to you, gentlemen, to contend thus about the 'Me' and the 'Not Me,' about 'the nature of personal identity,' about 'the essence of the soul,' and so forth; but I can assure you, that what is fun for you is very much like death for us. (Laughter and cheers.) For one, I have listened closely to your words for the last half hour, and at the end of that time, after you have discharged upon our suffering ears almost an infinity of abstract talk, I am strongly inclined to accept the definition of Metaphysics once given by a sensible Scotch blacksmith: 'Two men are disputin' thegither. He that 's listenin' dinna ken what he that 's speakin' means, and he that 's speakin' dinna ken what he's sayin' himself. That 's metaphysic.'" (Roars of laughter.)

This was said in so kindly a way, and with so hearty a humor, that even the metaphysicians joined in the shouts of mirth over their own extinguishment. They will not be likely to inflict another dose upon us without people grinning in their very faces at the recollection of the Scotchman's definition.

I think, however, that there is nothing else which proves so heavy a draft upon the forbearance of Judge Fairplay as any thing like bombast and sonorous ostentation in speech-making. We have among us a few specimens of that pitiless race of mortals who set up for orators—a word, by the way, more maltreated than any other in the language of earth. These orators of ours are compounded, in about equal proportions, of impudence and wind, and upon all possible and impossible occasions they stand ready to scourge us with both qualities. Were it not for the heroic manner in which Judge Fairplay interferes for our protection, I do believe that our meetings would soon be utterly ruined—blown into a hundred atoms by these remorseless tornado gusts of eloquence.

The most incorrigible orator in our Club is an interesting young gentleman named Mr. Leonidas Climax, who holds the position of clerk in the village bank, and is fired with

the noble ambition, as he once chastely expressed it, "of inscribing his name on that immortal scroll of fame on which are already written, with starry letters of imperishable sheen, by the diamond pens of recording cherubims and seraphims, the deathless names of Demosthenes and Cicero, of Chatham, Patrick Henry, D. Webster, and H. Clay!"—"and," as a sarcastic member kindly added, "George Francis Train!" It must be confessed that for this rather stupenous enterprise, Mr. Leonidas Climax possesses a stock of personal qualities which will no doubt enable him to accomplish wonders—a thick head of hair and a thin crop of ideas, a small brain, a large mouth, and an enormous pair of lungs, beside a cool, nay, a sublime audacity, in bellowing forth his resonant nonsense in any assemblage upon which it is possible for him to thrust himself. Mr. Leonidas Climax is not a sensitive person. Perhaps some would consider this a fortunate circumstance for him. Certainly, had he been any thing less than one of those Muscovites, of whom it is said that the only way to give them a sensation is to flay them alive, he would long since have wilted beneath the cannonading of hints, sneers, jests, and supplications with which a much suffering humanity has tried to temper the fatal paroxysms of his fluency. Like all great orators, Mr. Leonidas Climax has his own little peculiarities in speaking, which distinguish him from the common herd of declaimers by a fine flavor of originality. We have read of an orator who never rises to an eloquent passage without first vigorously scratching the left side of his nose; and of another who invariably signalizes his finest bursts of oratory by the

bursting of his coat under both arms. Mr. Leonidas Climax, as has been already intimated, is the proprietor of a little peculiarity which is exclusively his own—namely, to soar into the altitudes, as he would say, by dint of incessantly drinking from the water pitcher. It was in vain that, at the outset of his eloquent career among us, certain members took the liberty of pouring water into a tumbler and of placing it near him, as a gentle hint that if he must drink he should do so in a civilized manner. He is superior alike to gentle hints and to any vessel less heroic than the pitcher; so that the Club has been compelled to avenge itself upon the hydro-bibulous orator by voting an appropriation of twenty-five cents for the purchase of a pitcher for the use of Mr. Leonidas Climax alone. It was in vain that on one occasion a member anxiously inquired of him "whether he did not think his eloquence was already thin enough without mixing it with water." He benignantly answered: "Oh; I can take a joke, gentlemen!" It was in vain that at another time one of our members asked him "if he considered that an orator was raised to the heights of eloquence on the principle of the hydraulic ram?" With the most unruffled good humor, he replied: "Go on, gentlemen; I trust I can take a joke!" In the course of a tremendous speech he made at the Club but a few evenings since, and while frantically engaged as usual in spouting wind and imbibing water, a bit of paper was seen to pass up the table to the Chairman. At the end of the harangue, the Judge rose and with the utmost gravity read from the paper:

"Several members, unable their views to compare,
On a question of order appeal to the chair.
Though of words it be just to make such a slaughter,
Has a windmill the right to go thus by water?"

When the roars of laughter had ceased, the Judge roused them again by adding: "The Chair will give its reply to this appeal in the same manner as that in which it has been made:

"If a windmill can grind without ever a grist,
A windmill can surely do just what it list."

Mr. Leonidas Climax sat with arms complacently folded, and with the most provoking serenity of amiable feeling, merely replying: "You know, gentlemen, that I can take a joke."

"Yes," said the Judge; "but I can assure the gentleman that to us all this is very far from being a joke at all."

"Well," Judge Fairplay said, at the close of the meeting, to a few of us who stood round him in conversation, "we must be philosophical about it. Every debating society that ever existed has had the same trial from two or three members afflicted with this sort of plethora. We must try to bear patiently what all others have to bear; and we must get as much fun out of these fellows as we can. But if our Club should ever perish, I fear its epitaph will be: 'Died, from excess of Leonidas Climax.' No, that won't do. Such an epitaph would be too gratifying to the personal vanity of the murderer. We must indicate the calamity in an im-

personal way, thus: 'Died, from the effects of a gas explosion.'"

But our President is something more than a disciplinarian in our meetings; he is the awakener of much earnest thought on the entire subject of man's physical and intellectual life. In his quiet little speeches he is constantly dropping hints of wisdom wrapped up in allegory; items of statistical lore with wide-reaching moral; choice bits from his readings; reflections on books, on society, and especially on the philosophy of exercise. I rebuke myself for having been so remiss in preserving these casual utterances of our guide, philosopher, and friend; and am constantly promising myself that I will in the future do better things. Here, however, are a few of his sayings and quotations which I have embalmed in my note book:

"SANITARY ATHEISM.

"Is there such a thing? Is it possible to hold too zealously the doctrine that health is a stream whose fountain is each man's own will and behavior? Human nature has the terrible kangaroo gift of leaping—leaping, however, from one extreme to another. Has it not lately, in some instances, leaped from the one extreme of regarding health and disease as wholly God's sending, to the other extreme of regarding health and disease as wholly an affair of human control? May not the sanitary reformer, who has escaped from the hideous superstition of the old hymn,

"'Diseases are thy servants, Lord!
They come at thy command,'

have fallen into the equally hideous fallacy of ignoring God altogether in his computations? Perhaps each of us might say to the other, in the words of King John:

"'Why do you bend such solemn brows on me?
Think you I hold the shears of destiny?
Have I commandment on the pulse of life?'"

"REASON.

"What was it the last speaker said about reason? That reason is a thing not to be trusted? Nay, my friends, take this advice—flee from *cant* faster than you would from a she-bear or a pack of wolves. The moment you attempt to justify that statement about reason, you begin to use the very organ which you decry—you ask reason to prove that whatever reason does prove is worthless. When a young man, I found in the Preface to Sir William Drummond's Academical Questions a paragraph which I then thought one of the noblest in the English language—and I think so still. 'Prejudice may be trusted to guard the outworks for a short space of time, while Reason slumbers in the citadel; but if the latter sinks into lethargy, the former will quickly erect a standard for herself. Philosophy, wisdom, liberty support each other; he who will not reason is a bigot, he who can not is a fool, and he who dares not is a slave.'"

"ANCIENT IDEAS OF PHYSICAL CULTURE.

"The golden age of physical culture has already gone up in this world, even as I trust that golden age is yet to dawn again. There has been a time when, according to Æschenbergh, 'bodily exercises were viewed by the Romans as a more essential object in education than the study of literature and science;' there has been a time when, if we may believe all the great writers of the period, more attention was given by the Grecians to physical culture than to all other departments of education combined—thus presenting to us the historical anomaly of a race transcending all others in intellectual power and versatility, the mere fragments of whose literature are the most brilliant and precious legacy of the past to the present, likewise transcending all other races in devotion to bodily training; there has been a time when men did not call that education which crushes the body while it crams the mind; which deposits facts in the brain, and infirmity in the whole system; which, by a horrible conjunction, mingles the seeds of knowledge and the seeds of disease. There has been a time when men acted on the belief that a cultivated mind is a priceless picture, worthy of being set in a noble frame, and that the attempt to carry over the waves of life a fine mental endowment in a diseased, fragile, nervous, debilitated, and neglected body, is as irrational as would be the attempt to float a handful of diamonds over the ocean in a sieve. There has been a time when the poets, statesmen, artists, orators, and scholars of the age were men of magnificent athletic proportions; were strong heads on strong

shoulders; were royal bodies acting in honorable vassalage to still more royal minds. There has been a time when men whom we call heathens believed it to be their religious duty to reverence and to obey those laws which the Creator has written upon our bodily structures; who deemed physical illness in some degree akin to moral delinquency."

"THE POET THOMPSON.

"A member has requested me to repeat once more those lines which I gave you the other evening from the author of 'The Seasons' and 'The Castle of Indolence.' I thought them familiar to every one. Certainly, they ought to be known to every gymnast.

"'Ah! what avail the highest gifts of Heaven,
When drooping health and spirits go amiss?
How tasteless, then, whatever can be given;
Health is the vital principle of bliss—
And exercise of health!'"

"FUNDAMENTAL.

"In one of our discussions I used this expression: 'The fundamental truths of physical culture.' I have since been asked to state what those truths are. Let us take one at a time. Here is one for to-night: Health is so great, so incomparable a blessing, that it is worth all the trouble necessary to keep it if we have it, or to get it if we have it not."

"THE ANTIQUITY OF GYMNASTICS.

'What art can be so ancient as that of Gymnastics? Indeed, we begin gymnastics before we do volition or consciousness. Certainly we use our bodies long before we do our minds. The cradle is the primitive gymnasium; and the mother's arms, and the toy rattle, and the rounds of the nursery chairs are the first apparatus; and the stretching and squirming of the babe, as he lies in his little bed, or as he measures his length upon the carpet, in his first desperate efforts at locomotion, are but the expressions of a great edict of Nature, proclaiming the absolute necessity of physical exercise."

"SPARTAN GOOD SENSE.

"Those old iron-fisted Spartans knew a thing or two. They had a wonderful genius for hitting the nail on the head. Look at this. Every Spartan citizen must be a soldier; but no one was fit for a soldier unless he were healthy. Therefore, if a puny child came into the world, they voted him not worth raising, and just huddled the poor brat off to the mountains, as food for the crows. That was a little harsh, to be sure. Yet it is probable that a puny child was seldom born among them; for, knowing that a race of heroes could not spring from a race of sickly mothers, they arranged that the mothers should not be sickly. Here is what their lawgivers said: 'Female slaves are good enough to stay at home and spin; but who can expect a splendid offspring, the appropriate gift of a free Spartan woman to her country, from

mothers brought up in such occupations?' Well, if the ladies were not to stay at home and spin, what upon earth were they to do? Why, go to the gymnasium, of course! Yes, there 's the rub. How can you get them to go? The Spartans did it easily. Did they fine them for not going? No. Did they threaten to hang them or shoot them? No. Did they offer them beautiful dresses if they would go? No. They appealed to a stronger motive than avarice, or fear, or vanity. They ordained that no Spartan girl could get married until she had demonstrated her proficiency in gymnastics! So the thing was done, and no more bother about it. Ah! if our American Congress would but take the hint, what a rush of Yankee girls there would be to the gymnasiums!"

VIII.

A CATASTROPHE.

BRAWNVILLE, *August* 5, 1866.

A DOZEN or twenty of us had arrived at the Library this evening at least a quarter of an hour before the time for opening the meeting, and were standing or sitting in groups about the long table which occupies the center of the room. The Judge was already in the chair at the head of the table; and Dr. Drugger, our noble enemy, who often comes to our discussions and contributes to them the precious spice of keen, sarcastic, but gentlemanly opposition, had thrown himself into a chair near that of the Judge, and sat there in a rather lounging attitude, his left elbow resting on the table, and his right leg thrown over one arm of the chair. As usual, he was bantering the Judge in his own facetious and slashing style, describing him as "a gymnastic maniac," declaring that "himself and Deacon Snipp were the only sane men left in Brawnville," and predicting that "in another twelvemonth the Club House would be turned into a lunatic asylum, fully stocked with patients from among the regular gymnastic performers of the present establishment." There is always something racy in the Doctor's

talk; and we no sooner discovered that he was in one of his gymnaphobic moods than we all gathered round him to enjoy the sport.

"Of course, Doctor," replied the Judge, "you know that nothing is easier, and indeed nothing is more common, than for crazy people to accuse all but their own sort of being crazy. You and Deacon Snipp stand forth in this community, now awakened to the necessity of physical exercise, and you two vote all the rest of us mad—just as if two hundred inmates of some asylum were to assemble in mass meeting, and pass some such preamble and resolutions as the following:

"'WHEREAS, The majority of the human family have lost their wits, and have become hopelessly deranged and demented; and

"'WHEREAS, They, having the power of the majority on their side, have erected this edifice and called it Bedlam; and

"'WHEREAS, They have forcibly and cruelly arrested us, the only sane, balanced, and rational people left in the world, and have put the stigma of insanity upon us, and have imprisoned us in this asylum; therefore, be it

"'RESOLVED, That we, whose names are hereunto affixed, the only sensible people Providence has granted to this generation, do solemnly protest against the foul and calumnious treatment we have thus received at the hands of mankind; that we assert before heaven our perfect health and sanity; that we pronounce all men and women, except

ourselves, to be utterly mad, crazy, witless, and demented, and that we can not excuse them for their cruelty to us, except on the ground of their having lost their faculties, and of their being, therefore, not morally accountable. Finally,

"'RESOLVED, That, on the whole, we are glad and grateful that we have this secluded house to live in, where we can enjoy each other's rational society, and are thereby separated from contact with the insane people who dwell beyond these walls.'"

"Well, Judge," said the Doctor, "I am not sure but the Bedlamites have the right of it, after all. Who can tell who are the mad ones—those in Bedlam or those out of it? The latter happen to have the majority now; but suppose the former should go on increasing as they have done of late, and what is to hinder their being yet in the majority; and when they become so, what is to hinder their walking out of their asylums, voting ordinary folks crazy, and shutting them all up in the cells they have just abandoned?"

Here the Doctor burst into laughing, and in the midst of his loud and long "ho! ho! ho!" rolled about in his chair with great mirth, and varied his graceful attitude by bringing down his right foot upon the floor, and throwing the left one over the other chair arm.

"Do you know," he continued, "you fellows in your present muscular infatuation, inspecting your carcasses anxiously, day by day, to see if your arms and chests are growing bigger—like the little boy that pulled up the plant every

morning to see if it had grown any during the night—you fellows remind me of that chap in the Blithedale Romance—see, what was his name?—yes, Miles Coverdale, who, in his pride of muscle, declared that he would have his portrait painted in his shirt sleeves, with the sleeves rolled up, to show his muscular development. Ho! ho! ho! I confess to you, Judge, that I now go out into the streets every morning with fear and trembling, lest I should see you and your brother maniacs, in the pride of your muscular development, and in your anxiety to show it off, actually returning to the fig-leaf costume! Pardon me, now; but I am on the point of saying something rough. Remember, however, I expressly soften it by this modification—it do n't apply to every body in this room. But, really, when I see some of you conceited gymnasts fuming and strutting because of your big muscles, I think of the retort which Cato gave to that brawny old earth-cumberer, Milo. The latter, in his old age, looked sorrowfully at his arms, and exclaimed: 'They are dead!' 'Not so dead as you are, you old fool!' was Cato's reply; 'you never were good for any thing but for your shoulders and flanks.' Your people once laughed at me in an idiotic way because I quoted a Greek sentence to you. Well, I suppose you will laugh nearly as much if I quote a Latin one. But laugh on! What else can sense and learning expect to receive from men all gone to muscle? But hold! I see my friend the Schoolmaster in the crowd. He 'll appreciate this. It 's from his friend Sallust. So listen, you poor degenerate Christians, devoting your energies to the exaltation of the animal over the intellectual, and learn how

superior a certain old Pagan was to you: '*Igitur præclara facies, magnæ divitiæ, ad hoc vis corporis, alia hujusce modi, omnia brevi dilabuntur; at ingenii egregia facinora, sicuta anima, immortalia sunt.*' There! if you want to possess one sane idea, get the Schoolmaster to translate that for you."

The last few words of the Doctor were partially lost in loud screams and in the confused sounds of many voices from the Hall of Exercise, where a number of our members are accustomed to practice for half an hour before the literary meetings of the Club. Though we could not distinguish a word from the midst of these outcries, we were startled by their tone of terror. In a moment hurried footsteps sounded in the lobby and on the stairway, and in another moment a troop of frightened ladies, girls, and boys came bursting into the Library. Their entrance did not add to our understanding of the case, except that it confirmed us in the impression that something dreadful had happened below; for they exclaimed together in a tumultuous jumble of voices: "Oh! oh! Judge Fairplay! awful! dreadful! Oh! oh! broke his neck! Leonidas Climax! Oh! come! Doctor! Oh! awful! shocking!" Dr. Drugger, comprehending that there was work for him to do, was pushing his way through the crowd, when a small "contraband," whom our soldiers picked up in North Carolina and brought home with them, and who has latterly made himself useful in our Club House as a servant of all work, reached the head of the stairs, and shouted in tones audible above all the clamor: "Oh, Massa Fairplay, come dis way! Massa Climack hab broke all de bones in his bressed body."

"There," said the Doctor, turning with a comical look to the Judge, "did n't I tell you that your gymnasium would furnish a glorious increase of business for me?" and with the discharge of this Parthian arrow he bolted down stairs to the scene of the disaster. The rest of us followed as fast as we could, and on reaching the hall we found the Doctor leaning over Leonidas Climax, who lay in a fainting state upon the floor, while several of his fellow gymnasts stood around, anxious to be of some service, and just succeeding in shutting off the air from him.

"Is he severely hurt?" said Judge Fairplay, after a few moments.

"No, not seriously; he has only broken his arm."

"What a pity," whispered one of the members to me, "what a pity that it was not his jaw!"

It was not long before the prostrate orator revived from his fainting fit; and Dr. Drugger set and bound the arm with his usual skill and rapidity. Meantime Judge Fairplay's carriage had been sent for and was waiting at the door; so that the illustrious Leonidas was carried in state safely to his boarding-house. It appears that a class of young men, of whom he was one, were practicing at the horizontal bar; and Leonidas, smitten as usual with "a vaulting ambition" to make a display of himself before the spectators, "o'er-leaped" the bar, and fell not only on "t' other side," but on his left arm, too!

So soon as the accident occurred, and before the extent of it was known, many of the younger people in their panic ran into the street, and as they passed toward their homes

they spread all sorts of wild stories as to the catastrophe, so that in a few moments the Club House was filled with anxious villagers, pale with alarm, and eagerly inquiring if "Leonidas Climax had died immediately after his fall," and "whether the corpse was in Judge Fairplay's carriage."

"Well," said one villager, "I guess Dr. Drugger was pretty near right, after all, about these gymnastic fandangoes. He told us they 'd make work for him."

And one good motherly woman, red and puffing with running and excitement, exclaimed: "Oh, dear me! what a dreadful thing this here horrid gymnasium is going to be! It 'll surely murder and kill all our dear children, and break their bones too! My little Freddy shall never enter this shocking wicked place as long as he lives!"

In the midst of this hubbub and panic, Judge Fairplay, Parson Bland, and others, walked about among the people, and did much to allay the excitement by giving a correct version of the affair, and dispelling the distorted reports that had been spread. To the honor of Dr. Drugger be it said, that, after having attended to the wounded orator, he also helped to check the general alarm by assuring the people, in his cool, self-poised way, that "it was not a serious fracture, and that the young man would be around again all right in a few days, more eloquent than ever."

Word being given that, notwithstanding the accident, the meeting of the Club would take place as usual in the Library, there was a general movement of the people in that direction, partly from curiosity to see what

could now be said, after such a tremendous counter demonstration, in favor of the bone-breaking practice of gymnastics.

The meeting was opened in the usual formal and parliamentary manner, a fact which alone contributed a sort of calming influence. Then several items of prosaic business were deliberately attended to; and, finally, the Chairman said:

"The question prepared for our discussion to-night is this: 'Is it desirable to engage a professional Gymnastic Teacher for the next year?' But the unfortunate occurrence in the early part of the evening has furnished us with a different subject—that of 'Danger in Gymnastics.' It is best for us to face that subject, now that it has intruded itself upon us. Our minds are turned in that direction. The law of successful mental labor is to take hold of the subject which lies nearest to you.

"On the theme, then, which has been thrust upon us to-night, I have a few words to say.

"I do not deny, I have never denied, that there is danger in the practice of gymnastics.

"With this general admission, I do, however, insist upon certain qualifying clauses. 1. Whatever danger exists in gymnastics belongs almost exclusively to those exercises which are *acrobatic*. There is absolutely no danger attending the Dio Lewis Gymnastics; there is next to none attending a multitude of exercises in the heavy system. If, therefore, you desire to get exercise, and to run no

risk, you can confine yourselves to the non-acrobatic movements.

"2. Even the acrobatic movements are comparatively safe to those who approach them gradually, and with due discipline on the preliminary exercises. Accidents generally happen to those who, from impatience or ostentation, hurry beyond their depth.

"3. Granting that there is a certain amount of danger in gymnastics, does it follow that we should condemn and abandon them? By no means. There is danger everywhere in this world, and in every thing. There is danger in taking a walk, a drive, a ride; there is danger in base ball, in cricket, in boating, in swimming, in skating, even in croquet. But you all say of these things that the good to be got out them more than counterbalances the danger attending them. I insist that the same may be said and ought to be said of gymnastics.

"4. I boldly declare that danger is a very desirable element in exercise. There is a precious discipline in danger. Of course, regard should be had to the years and judgment of the gymnast; but I consider no man educated who is not educated to meet danger, grapple with it, and conquer it. And any system of gymnastics which leaves out danger is an emasculated system. There is a whole hemisphere of magnificent faculties which such a system does not touch—the cool eye, the unquivering nerve, the steadfast grip, the unerring thrust, the infallible spring.

"But what I am saying upon this subject is tame and lame compared with what has been said upon it by one of the

greatest living masters of English prose. You can not fail to know whom I refer to. You already know my enthusiasm for our splendid Col. Higginson—my enthusiasm for him, both as a gymnast and as a literary artist, There, Thompson, you are nearest the shelf; kindly hand me down the 'Out-door Papers'—that most exquisite, wise, and gracious Bible of Physical Education. I know the book almost by heart; but I will read from the chapter on 'Gymnastics' the passage which, as you will see, states with a beautiful and forcible eloquence what I have just uttered so inadequately. Let me see—here it is:

"'An objection frequently made to the gymnasium, and especially by anxious parents, is the supposed danger of accidents. But this peril is obviously inseparable from all physical activity. If a man never leaves his house, the chances undoubtedly are that he will never break his leg, unless upon the stairway; but if he is always to stay in the house he might as well have no legs at all. Certainly we incur danger every time we go out of the front door; but to remain always on the inside would prove the greatest danger of the whole. When a man slips in the streets and dislocates his arm, we do not warn him against walking, but against carelessness. When a man is thrown from his horse and gratifies the surgeons by a beautiful case of compound fracture, we do not advise him to avoid a riding school, but to go to one. Trivial accidents are not uncommon in the gymnasium, severe ones are rare, fatal ones almost unheard of—which is far more than can be said of riding, driving, hunting, boating, skating, or even coasting on a sled. Learning gymnastics is like learning to swim—you incur a small temporary risk for the sake of acquiring powers that will lessen your risks in the end. Your increased strength and agility will carry you past many unseen perils hereafter, and the invigorated tone of your system will make accidents less important if they happen. Some trifling sprain causes lameness for life, some slight blow brings on wasting disease, to a person whose health is merely negative, not positive, while a well-trained frame throws it off in twenty-four hours. It is almost proverbial of the gymnasium, that it cures its own wounds.'"

The effect produced by this speech was most happy. The subject being thus opened for discussion, a large number of our members took part in it. Among the rest, our old friend, Abdiel Standish made a few remarks:

"God 'lmighty seems to have fitted up this world with man-traps of all sorts and sizes. Some are on land, some on water, some in the air, and some under ground. But thar they are; and every body which lives in the etarnal world has jist got to run the risk o' gittin' into 'em. I s'pose they wus put here fur some good purpus—prob'ly to make folks keep their wits about 'em, and not go sleepin' and blunderin' through life. And I s'pose one objick of a gymnasium is jist to larn our young folks how to go out into a world full o' man-traps and not fall into 'em.

"I 've heerd some folks here to-night say that for their part they won't never come near this gymnasium agin, because it's dangerous. They 'mind me of a Dutchman down

to New York who was telling that he once belonged to a fishing party, of whom all got drowned 'xcept hisself. Somebody asked him how it was that he escaped. 'O, I shust staid at home and did n't go mit der barty.' Wal, it 's sartain that a man won't get drowned if he never goes near the water; but then if he never goes near the water he 'll never ketch any fish. So a man 'll never break his arm in a gymnasium if he never goes near one; but then perhaps he 'll suffer forty times as much from dyspepsy for stayin' away."

After a great variety of opinions had been expressed on both sides, the discussion was closed by Parson Bland, who made some very sensible remarks. He said that "A gymnasium was very much like the great world outside of it; in either place, if a man blundered from folly, rashness, or impatience, he had to suffer for it. Nor was a gymnasium an instrument merely for cultivating muscle, but for cultivating self-possession also, concentration, courage. Is it not most important to cultivate courage? Certainly! Well, then, it is impossible to cultivate courage except by exercising it; but there is no exercise for courage where there is no danger. Of course, there must be prudence, discrimination, common sense, in the gymnasium, as everywhere else.

"Judge Fairplay has given us a quotation from that noble book of Wentworth Higginson's, the 'Out-door Papers.' If the Judge will pass the book this way I will read another brief passage bearing upon the present subject. It is on the chapter entitled 'Physical Courage:'

"'Once rouse the enthusiasm of the will, and courage can be systematically disciplined. Emerson's maxim gives the

best regimen: "Always do what you are afraid to do." If your lot is laid amid scenes of peace, then carry your maxim into the arts of peace. Are you afraid to swim that river? then swim it. Are you afraid to leap that fence? then leap it. Do you shrink from the dizzy height of yonder magnificent pine? then climb it, and throw down the top, as they do in the forests of Maine. Goethe cured himself of dizziness by ascending the lofty stagings of the Frankfort carpenters. Nothing is insignificant that is great enough to alarm you. If you can not think of a grizzly bear without a shudder, then it is almost worth your while to travel to the Rocky Mountains to encounter the reality.'

"I have only this to add. Gymnasts, are you afraid, owing to what has happened this evening, to whirl on the parallel bar? Then join me immediately after this meeting, and let us go and whirl on it."

The meeting immediately broke up; and nearly every young fellow followed the idolized minister into the Hall of Exercise, and grappled with the ghost that threatened to scare so many people away.

As the company finally dispersed in great glee, I heard one quiet villager say to his neighbor: "Wal, whoever gits ahead o' these gymnasts has got to git up purty airly in the mornin', and carry a good many guns all day!"

IX.

OUR QUESTION BOX.

BRAWNVILLE, *August* 21, 1866.

"ONE half of the world does not know how the other half practices gymnastics." This was Judge Fairplay's abrupt remark to-night, as he took a small, foreign-looking volume from the table and began turning over its leaves. We had just finished the formal business of the meeting, and had reached what we have learned to consider as its conversational stage; and we all understood, by the quiet, yet startling way in which the Judge uttered that single sentence, that he had something more to say to us.

"Every body has heard of German Gymnastics," continued the Judge, as he kept fumbling with the leaves of the book, "and of Swedish Gymnastics, and of Greek Gymnastics; but where 's the man among us who ever heard of Persian Gymnastics? Who can give us a description of an Athletic Club House among the Fire Worshipers? Do you give it up? Do you admit yourselves floored? Well, there is one sure rule I can give you for ascertaining any thing you wish to know, whether concerning the earth or the things under the earth, or the things above the earth—go to the Germans.

Their *forte* is omniscience. They have written a book on every conceivable and inconceivable subject. As George Henry Lewes has said: 'The Germans have written *de omne scibile—et scribile.*' Now, do you know, 'I hold in my hand,' as the speech-makers say, a book written by one of this all-knowing race. It is by Niebuhr. Let me tell you its title—you will be charmed with it: '*Reisebeschreibung nach Arabien.*' I want to know whether the Persians practice gymnastics. No mortal with an English tongue in his head can tell me; so I go to this wise fellow with a German tongue, and he tells me all I require to know. Just listen a moment, while I translate a short passage: 'The Persians have houses which they call *Surchone*—the Home of Strength—into which any one may go to make exhibition of his strength. The first exercise which was used, consisted in placing the hands and feet on the ground, and stretching them as far as possible from each other, without touching the ground with the stomach. While in this position a circle was described with the head, and, after every second circle was completed, the diameter also. Some did this at least eighty times. Then some took in each hand a large piece of wood, and moved it in different directions on their shoulders, forward and backward. Some pushed with their feet against a board placed obliquely against a wall, and some walked about on their hands on the floor. Many began to spring about, sometimes on one foot, sometimes on both, and this as strongly as possible, in order to exercise the body more. Some laid themselves on their backs, with cushions under their heads and arms, and in that position raised in each

hand a very heavy piece of wood, according to a certain tune that was played to them. Few performed this, as it required uncommon strength. The teacher then placed them all in a row, and made them go through a great variety of different motions, which, however, I am unable to describe. After this they began to wrestle in pairs, and, when one was thrown flat on the ground, he reverentially kissed his conqueror's hand. No blows were given, however, as the English do when they box.'

"There! What do you think of the state of Muscular Christianity among these Pagans of the East? By the bye, those fellows who lift heavy pieces of wood 'according to a certain tune that is played to them,' seem to have worked out for themselves the idea of music as an aid to gymnastics; and their case proves that the plan of setting a tune to the movements of the body is not the peculiar invention of Freubel and Dio Lewis. However, I must not delay longer to open the Question Box, and see with what queries you propose to puzzle me to-night."

With this last remark, the Judge drew toward him a little square mahogany box which is now kept standing on the Library table, and is used, as its name implies, as a depository for written questions upon athletic and sanitary topics, about which any member may desire to ask the President. There is a narrow aperture in the cover through which the communications are dropped; and once a month the Judge opens the box in the presence of the Club, and delivers his views upon the topics thus suggested.

Monks and Gymnastics.

"The first question which I fish out from this pool is expressed as follows:

"'Sir—On a recent occasion you stated, incidentally, that the influence of the early monks and ascetics of the Church was unfavorable to respect for the body and to a just care for its welfare. Please to explain this.'

"Well, it appears that in the early centuries of the Christian Church there were tribes of ascetics and anchorites, assuming, indeed, the Christian name, but actually appearing to be ashamed that they had bodies at all. They seem to have imbibed that dogma of Oriental Paganism which taught that matter is the very essence and principle of evil. By a very obvious logic, and with the most religious zeal, they concluded that their duty was to scourge and to lacerate their bodies; to starve, neglect, insult, and maltreat them as a service of piety. Even Luther, who emancipated his soul from so many superstitions, was still so much of a monk that he condemned, as a Pagan maxim, Juvenal's magnificent, though now horribly hackneyed motto: *Mens sana in corpore sano.* I remember reading of one old monk who wanted to express his abhorrence for his body by both words and deeds, and who accordingly named his body 'Balaam's Ass,' and used to rise several times every night to beat it. Of course, during all those ages when the influence of monastic sentiments predominated over Christendom, we can not expect to find any traces of gymnastic culture, or of any

attention, in any form of benefit, to the poor, despised, and detested body. It was a sign of saintliness to be dirty, crooked, sallow, emaciated, and a propagator of intolerable stench. After a man was baptized he had no further external use for water.

Modern Contempt for the Body.

"And it is worth a moment's delay to consider some modern remnants of this old monastic horror of living flesh and blood. For, although this religious scorn of the body may be no longer distinctly avowed, either by sects or by individuals, I appeal to you, is there not diffused through Christendom a vague, almost unconscious, yet very operative sentiment that our corporal natures are in some special sense unworthy, accursed, mean, dispicable, the source and avenue of sin? How many Christian hymns are heavy with this chant of pious horror at the poor body! How many Christian homilies point the finger of saintly scorn and the arrow of ominous warning at our physical natures! How many Christian prayers bewail the sinfulness of the body, instead of the sinfulness of the soul, and complacently pass over to the blame of the former errors and crimes which spring from a proud, a discontented, an ambitious, a selfish, an undisciplined disposition!

"Now all this may be very good Paganism, but I fervently object to its being sheltered under the venerable and joyous shield of Christianity.

"Matter is not the principle of evil. Matter has no property which is sin. Matter has no moral property at all. Matter the 'principle of evil!' Monstrous! Why, matter is the creation of God; and it would be simply blasphemous to suppose that God created the 'principle of evil.'

"And we read in a certain grand old volume that when God had finished this material world, with all its beautiful kingdoms of vegetable, animal, and human life, he smiled his benediction upon it and called it GOOD. Our bodies are but a portion of that material universe which thus received the divine approbation. An inspired writer stands in awe before the marvelous framework of the body, and reverently speaks of it as something 'fearfully and wonderfully made.' The Apostle exhorts us to 'present our bodies a living sacrifice unto God, holy and acceptable, which is our reasonable service.' Would it be possible to do this if our bodies were the very 'principle of evil?' Finally, this—this—seems the very spirit of Christianity, that all God's gifts to us, whether material or spiritual, are good, are sacred, and are to be revered in honor of the Giver; that sin does not consist in the gift, but in the misuse of the gift; that our bodies, being made by God and given by God, are in themselves, in texture and structure, good; that this old, lurking, mediæval, monastic contempt for the body is really an insult and an ingratitude to the Giver of the body; that our bodies contain infinite proofs of the divine beneficence, wisdom, and power, and that therefore they are never to be scorned, nicknamed, scourged, and neglected, but are to be cherished as sacred, with religious fidelity, gratitude, and awe. And thus obedience to the laws on which the body's health depends becomes a matter of religious obligation."

Sanitary Reform.

"Now for the next question." Here the Judge put his hand into the box and drew forth another scrap of paper. "'What is the scope of sanitary reform?' Ah! I can give you a beautiful answer to that question. It is an answer which I remember as occurring in a lecture by that *once glorious* Muscular Christian, Charles Kingsley. 'Sanitary reform,' said Kingsley, with felicitous alliteration, 'is a sacred crusade against dirt, degradation, disease, and death!' What can be desired better than that? Alas, that the author of 'Alton Locke' should become the apologist of Governor Eyre, the champion of a pro-slavery rebellion and a toady to Toryism!"

Fishing for Men.

"What have we next? Why, it is quite an epistle.

"'Sir—Can you interpret to us the meaning of the following sentence, which I lately read in the works of a distinguished living author. The statement seems reasonable; but I should like to know if there are any facts to illustrate and confirm it. This is the sentence: "We may as well throw our money into the gutter, or go to fighting windmills, as to try to make our poor fellow creatures better while we neglect their physical condition. I weary of the old dole of charity which is lost in the increasing miseries of the age."

"'Yours, obediently, Bookworm.'

"Well, Mr. Bookworm, I wonder how you could worm

through books for any length of time and not find multitudes of facts to exemplify that statement. At this instant I recall a story pertinent to the case from Neander. It occurs in his Church History, and, I think, in the third volume. By the way, have n't we Neander on our shelves? Yes, to be sure we have. Hand me, please, friend Thompson, the third volume, and I'll read you something which shows the importance of physical relief as preparatory to spiritual, and contributing to it. Here's the passage the first thing: 'Last of all, the provinces of Sussex [Eng.] were converted to Christianity. Their King, it is true, had been baptized before; but the people continued still to be devoted to their old idolatry; and a few Scottish monks, who had founded a monastery in the wilderness and led an austere life, were unable by that means to gain the confidence of the rude people, or to find any opportunity of preaching to them the Gospel. It so happened that Wilfred, Archbishop of York, a descendant from an English family, was deposed from his office by occasion of a quarrel with his King, and he here sought a field of labor. He better understood how to let himself down to the wants of the untutored multitude. On coming among them he found them in circumstances of great distress—a drought, occasioned by the want of rain, having been followed by a severe famine. The neighboring lakes and rivers afforded, it is true, abundance of fish; but the rude people were still wholly ignorant of the mode of taking them, and only knew a way of fishing for eels. He caused, therefore, all the nets to be collected together, and his attendants caught three hundred fishes of different kinds. A third part of

these he distributed among the poor, another third he gave to those who furnished the nets, and the remainder he reserved for his companions. Having thus, by such gifts and instruction in the art of fishing, relieved the temporal necessities of the people, he found them the more inclined to receive instruction from him in spiritual things.'

"Good for old Wilfred! He was a prelate of common sense, and that is more than can be said of most prelates. He knew that often the best way to fish for men was to begin by fishing for fish. He knew that he could not get the Gospel into men's hearts while there was so much hunger in their stomachs.

"Is there not a sublimer illustration, and one known to all men? Was not this the principle of Christ's ministry? Did he not devote himself primarily to the physical good of the people—healing the sick, letting light into sightless sockets, opening ears to the melody of sound, feeding the hungry, and causing the lame to walk?

"So I look upon our Club House as the nearest auxiliary to the School and the Church. And my friend, Mr. Bland, wins many a soul to the truth by showing men how to leap over the wooden horse, or to whirl on the parallel bar. What can the most impressive sermon do for a man half dead with a torpid liver? Would you save his soul?—first save his body. Would you convert him from the error of his way?—make him go hand over hand up yonder inclined ladder."

An After-Thought.

"There is an epigram of Rousseau which expresses a profound truth, and one bearing upon this very topic of the relations between the spiritual and the material parts of our nature: 'The stronger the body, the more it obeys; the weaker the body, the more it commands.'

"Do you not see how this bears upon the question of a man's moral behavior? What is vice—any vice—but the overwhelming of reason and conscience by an anarchy of passion? But what unmoors the passions from their true places, and drives them in tumult and lawlessness upon each other—what but bodily infirmity?

"And is this to be tolerated if we can help it? No, not for a day!

"I have read to you to-night a description of Persian gymnastics; but I remember something else that is good about these same Persians. It is this fragment of one of their poems:

> "'Make his reason serve his passions?
> That is what man never should;
> To the Devil's kitchen angels
> Never carry wood.

"Does any man doubt that the weaker the body the more imperious and overbearing it is? Why, Voltaire declared that the fate of a nation has often depended on the good or bad digestion of a prime minister. Motley avers that the gout of Charles the Fifth changed the destiny of the world."

Martyrs to Science.

"Somebody wants to know 'what is meant by Martyrs to Science?' I can tell him. About fifty years ago the sensibilities of England and America were profoundly and generously stirred by the story, related by Robert Southey, of the wonderful life and the premature death of a student at Cambridge named Henry Kirke White. No doubt this story owed not a little of its impressiveness to the eminence of the author who told it, and to the charms of that exquisite prose of which the Poet Laureate was so consummate a master. A delicate youth, born in lowly circumstances, with the glorious face and the temperament of genius, attracts to himself the favor of a wealthy patron, and is enabled to enter one of the renowned universities of the world. Pensive, poetical, aspiring, prayerful, and bilious, he pants to satisfy the lofty expectations of his admirers, and succeeds in becoming the model of a virtuous but romantic and lackadaisical student. He wrestles with the stern realities of the Calculus, and indites sonnets to the moon; composes eloquent hymns to his Creator and madrigals to his lady's eyebrow; writes polished epigrams in the style of Horace, which show the elegance of his taste, and essays on Melancholy in the style of Addison, which reveal the disordered condition of his liver; supplicates Heaven for the restoration of his health, and denies himself needful sleep by the help of strong tea, pins, and cold water compresses; utters a pious ejaculation before every meal, and then swallows it with a rapidity indicative of his contempt for the functions of teeth, gastric juice, and all other carnal

things; gains all the highest prizes, amazes all the wisest Dons, violates all the holiest laws of health, and dies in a blaze of glory, a Martyr to Science!

"Success is the mother of imitation; and the unintended evil of Kirke White's radiant and rose-watery career infected the colleges of Christendom. Straightway we had a plague of Kirke Whitelings — emaciated, long-haired, big-eyed, pious, and moony young gentlemen, who excelled in Homer and hypochondria; cultivated prayer, poesy, and dyspepsia; made tender reference in rhyme to their lyres, their lutes, and their longings to be no more; sauntered languishingly by purling brooks, when they ought to have been kicking the foot-ball; sat up burning an extravagant quantity of midnight oil, when they had been much more profitably employed snoring in their bunks; and, while confounding the twinges of a morbid conscience with the pangs of indigestion, and, while mistaking the depression of abused nerves for an angelic summons to leave this Vale of Tears, they awaited somewhat impatiently the time when they also should become Martyrs to Science, bemoaned and canonized by the principal Parish Sewing Societies of the civilized world.

"If this sort of thing had continued, it is impossible to say into what a state the literary world would have descended. It is probable that Science would have come to be synonymous with Sciatica; and the word Learning would have suggested lankness, lassitude, and long hair; the chief purpose of going to college would have been to acquire the dead languages, an interesting cough, the tearful sympathy of old

women, and an early death; the royal road to knowledge would have signified a turnpike leading into the graveyard. An old scholar would have been as rare as white blackbirds and four-leaved clover, and gray hair would have been an infallible proof that its possessor is an ignoramus.

Dr. Arnold.

"Fortunately, before the new philosophy had become rooted in the world, a great, robust, and manly scholar, Thomas Arnold, was called to preside over one of the famous Foundation Schools of England. He was a man who, above all things, scorned cant, effeminacy, and unreality, and he set himself, with all the earnestness of his powerful nature, to the task of exterminating this spirit of literary sickliness. He refused to admire learned noodles of the Kirke White order; he called them by their true names, not Martyrs to Science, but Suicides of Vanity, Ignorance, and Folly. Sir Walter Scott wrote for one of the chapters of The Monastery a motto which depicts the sort of student Dr. Arnold abhorred:

"'At school I knew him—a sharp-witted youth,
Grave, thoughtful, and reserved among his mates,
Turning the hours of sport and food to labor—
Starving his body to inform his mind.'

What business had the precocious little prig to go on in that style? When it came play-time, he ought to play with all his might; when it came dinner-time, he ought to eat with all his might; when it came bed-time, he ought to blow

out the candle and go to bed and sleep with all his might! And he ought to be told that, as to starving his body in order to inform his mind, it was utter nonsense and wickedness, and that the next time he was caught in such silly behavior he should have a thrashing. In this spirit Dr. Arnold reprobated, as an impiety, the whole system of cultivating one part of our nature at the expense of another. He fought it in the class-room and in the chapel; he talked against it, wrote against it, lectured against it, preached against it. He assailed it with texts of Scripture, with the maxims of Greek Ethics, and the verdict of Common Sense. He recalled the old Athenian phrase, *αρετη γυμναστικη*; and he told his boys that just as there was the virtue of honesty, and the virtue of justice, and the virtue of fortitude, and the virtue of charity, and the virtue of reverence, so was there the gymnastic virtue—the virtue of obedience to the laws of health. He told them that this was Christian truth, a portion of the Christianity which existed in the world before Christianity was born. He told them that good health was of more consequence to them than a knowledge of the Binomial Theorem, or than facility in the manufacture of Latin hexameters; that sound lungs and capable stomachs were the necessary conditions of useful scholarship; and that they would be displeasing him, disappointing their friends, and disobeying God, if they postponed bodily vigor to the mistaken requirements of literary ambition.

Muscular Christianity.

"I am not aware that the term Muscular Christianity was ever applied to Dr. Arnold, or was ever used in his time; but there can be no doubt that it was he who first gave the broad and wholesome impulse which has culminated in the habit of thought described by that facetious expression, and that it was his influence which produced such heroes and scholars as Charles Kingsley, Dean Stanley, and Thomas Hughes—a race of men as superior to the type represented by Kirke White, as Shakspeare is superior to Tupper, as harmony and power are to inanity, as physical jubilance is to headache and heartburn, as common sense is to nonsense, as reality is to moonshine.

"What then is Muscular Christianity? In its results, in its practical deductions and corollaries, I have already indicated what it is; but I will endeavor to present a direct statement of the fundamental propositions on which it is based.

"Muscular Christianity is Christianity applied to the treatment and use of our bodies. It is an enforcement of the laws of health by the solemn sanctions of the New Testament.

"In one of the celebrated novels of Thomas Hughes we have an important aspect of Muscular Christianity—that of the right employment of our physical energies—presented to us by one of the most illustrious exponents of Muscular Christianity. Mr. Hughes distinguishes between mere muscle men and muscular Christians: 'Both believe in bodily

strength; but the former in it without principle, and for sensual, selfish, and cruel ends. Whereas, so far as I know, the least of the muscular Christians has hold of the old, chivalrous and Christian belief, that a man's body is given him to be trained and brought into subjection, and then used for the protection of the weak, the advancement of all righteous causes, and the subduing of the earth which God has given to the children of men.'

"In still another view of the subject, Muscular Christianity seems to me to be a vindication of the full nobleness of meaning contained in the word *Education!* That glorious word, so much used, so much abused, grasps within its golden rim every thing which can develop, strengthen, harmonize, and intensify, and render effective all those faculties of our entire nature, intellectual and corporeal, which the Creator has endowed us with; and in the logical application of this truth, it stands forth in assertion of the long-despised and repudiated claims of the body. It says that since every part of our nature is the sacred gift of God, he who neglects his body, who calumniates his body, who misuses it, who allows it to grow up puny, frail, sickly, mis-shapen, homely, commits a sin against the Giver of the body. Ordinarily, therefore, disease is a sin. Round shoulders and narrow chests are states of criminality. The dyspepsia is heresy. The headache is infidelity. It is as truly a man's moral duty to have a good digestion, and sweet breath, and strong arms, and stalwart legs, and an erect bearing, as it is to read his Bible, or say his prayers, or love his neighbor as himself.

"Long creeds, either for churches or for gymnasiums, are stumbling blocks and snares. The creed of Muscular Christianity is as brief as it is just, comprehensive, and sublime:

"ALL ATTAINABLE HEALTH IS A DUTY.

"ALL AVOIDABLE SICKNESS IS A SIN."

X.

THE SCHOOLMASTER'S POEM.

THE following letter from the Rev. Samuel Bland, the eloquent, endeared, and muscular Pastor of the Second Church at Brawnville, sufficiently explains itself, and throws some light upon the subjoined poem.

BRAWNVILLE, *August* 2, 1867.

MY DEAR SIR—Your valued epistle of the 12th ultimo, asking for information concerning a poem written by our Schoolmaster, Mr. Thomas Richard Henry, has reached me. Lest this long delay in answering your letter should indicate an unseemly contempt for your epistolary favors—a sentiment as far from my soul as are the poles asunder—I hasten to explain to you the cause of the same.

I am not aware that the New York journals have particularly mentioned the fact, but during the past year and a half the important office of Postmaster for this village has, through the interposing favor of President Johnson (of whom I shall say nothing, lest I become subject to the Scriptural censure pronounced on those who "speak evil of dignities." *Vide* II Peter, ii. 10; *iterum*, Jude, viii), passed into the

hands of our distinguished and godly fellow-citizen, Deacon Snipp. It must, indeed, be freely admitted by us, that the previous incumbent of the office had really no claims upon the favor of our present rulers, he having lost his left leg in the late war for the Union, and also having received the office from the hands of the late President Lincoln; while, on the other hand, Deacon Snipp could assert his right to the office by the most overwhelming merits—he having raised a Secession flag and illuminated his mansion after the battle of Bull Run, and having been deterred from a similar patriotic act after the disasters at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, only by the fear that his fellow-townsmen would increase the illumination by taking his candles to set his house on fire.

But to the point. Deacon Snipp being, as he constantly insists, a Conservative, greatly objects to what he calls fast things, and especially to fast traveling. He declares boldly that the invention of the steam engine was the work of Satan, and the rapid traveling of the present day is at the bottom of all our woes; such as Abolitionism, Hydropathy, Free Love, and Gymnastics. Therefore, on accepting the Brawnville Postoffice, he made proclamation that the mails between this village and our nearest railroad station—a distance of just sixteen and three-fourths miles—should be drawn not even by horses, but by oxen—a mode of locomotion which he believes to be the true patriarchal and conservative one, and to which he hopes, through prayer and faith (he has a personal objection to fasting), to induce the world even yet to return. This he expects to bring about in

consequence of the approaching conservative reaction. Now, your letter being dated July 12, reached the railroad station in the usual mailbag on the 13th of July, and on remaining there three and a half days awaiting the arrival of Deacon Snipp's oxen, it was finally put into the cart and started on its overland journey to Brawnville. By sundown of the first day, it had made such good progress that it was at least five miles nearer to us than at sunrise; but the oxen and their driver were obliged to tarry for that night at an inn. About noon of the succeeding day, having proceeded about three and a half miles further, the elder ox was unfortunately taken sick at the bottom of a very long hill, and in consequence the team remained there for recuperation over night, the mailbag being placed for security under a haystack in an adjoining field. In the morning, however, the good driver (who, it need not be said, was also a Conservative) was able to resume the journey hither, where he triumphantly arrived in perfect safety with both oxen near the close of the day. But, unhappily, so greatly had he been agitated by the illness of the ox, which he feared might even die on his hands, that he had quite forgotten to carry away the mailbag from beneath the haystack. In consequence of this, several days were consumed in retracing his steps and in endeavoring to remember under which particular haystack along the road he had made the deposit; so that it was only the day before yesterday that he finally returned with the missing bag. I must therefore entreat you, my dear sir, so long as this village continues under the sway of our Conservative Postmaster, that you will grant me a plenary indulgence for

all delays and intermissions that may occur in the discharge of my very agreeable duties as your occasional correspondent.

And now I address myself briefly to the main topic of your letter. You state that in looking over the manuscript volume which our Schoolmaster placed in your hands, and from which you have drawn the very amusing history of our Athletic Club, you have alighted upon a poem entitled "Apollo and the Merchant of Athens." You also state that, as it has been transcribed into the book without any explanations, you would be glad to have me relate the circumstances under which it was presented to the Club. You likewise invite me to give an opinion as to the probable meaning of this very unique production.

The circumstances which you ask about I distinctly remember. Mr. Henry had been appointed, much against his will, to speak in a debate, and we had hoped by forcing him thus to break the ice of his diffidence, to make a frequent speech-maker of him. We all knew that he was a man of vast reading, as well as a wonderful wit, but so diffident that he could never even propose a resolution in public. We believed, however, that if he could be induced to use his tongue at one of our meetings, it would be a great acquisition to their interest. But on the evening designated for the debate, poor Mr. Henry staid away, and as a penalty for his contumacy, Judge Fairplay humorously adjudged that "*he be fined one poem,*" to be presented to the Club two weeks from that night.

The fine was duly paid, as the poem in your hands suffi-

ciently proves. But such was Mr. Henry's diffidence, that at his earnest supplication I did myself the honor to pronounce it to the Club, by whom it was received with unparalleled favor, even by vehement cheers, and by what Homer would call "inextinguishable laughter."

As to the poem itself, it obviously belongs to that class known as the burlesque; but its total meaning, or what I may describe as its deep, cutting, esoteric significance, will not be fully appreciated by the reader till the third or even the fourth perusal.

Under a vail of reckless levity, the poem conceals a profound earnestness, and by drawing the intended victim of its satire on step by step into an ambush of ludicrous delights, it at last unsheathes its dagger with fatal effect.

In one word, the poem is intended to ridicule and scourge those among us (and Heaven alone knows how vast may be their number) who sacrifice bodily health, mental culture, domestic felicity, piety, and indeed all the good of life, on the altar of Money making. For, as has been somewhere remarked by the late Rev. Theodore Parker (who, most strangely, though a divine of almost infinite learning, never, in the course of his distinguished career, received from any of our New England Colleges the title of D. D., which he so richly deserved), the god of this country is not Jehovah, but Plutus.

In conclusion, I would merely add that my excellent friend, Mr. Henry, has taken considerable liberty with the

mythology of Apollo; for the pranks which he ascribes to that god would have been much more appropriately referred to Hermes or Mercury, that matchless wag among the Greek gods, the divine patron of all roguery. But, on the other hand, I have it not in my heart to deny to my friend the perfect right to ascribe to Apollo just such deeds as he pleases. For, if it be not the prerogative of a free-born American citizen to make up his own mythology to suit himself, wherein I ask consists our boasted liberty, and how does a free American citizen differ from any of the down-trodden victims of European despotisms?

Yours, for all truth,

SAMUEL BLAND,

Pastor of the Second Church.

P. S.—Lest any reader, on perusing the Schoolmaster's poem, should still opine that, notwithstanding the peculiar prerogatives of American citizenship, the conduct attributed to Apollo is too ungentlemanly to be believed, I will quote a remark made by our American Chesterfield, Mr. George H. Calvert. "It may sound like a profane libel on the renowned Olympians," says that thoughtful and graceful writer, "but there was not a gentleman among them. Jupiter, their chief, beat his wife; so his claim is barred at once, without looking further into his way of life, which will not bear looking into. Apollo, as the God of Poetry and the Arts, ought to have been a gentleman; but he was so under the dominion of self and passion, that when King Laomedon refused him the promised reward for helping to build the

walls of Troy, he raised a pestilence and destroyed the King's subjects. Moreover, the infliction of plagues was one of his functions—one surely not compatible with the spirit of a gentleman." S. B.

APOLLO AND THE MERCHANT OF ATHENS.

A TALE OF THE PERIOD 450 B. C.

"Of hevenly poems, O Clyo calde by name
In the college of musis goddess hystoriall,
Adres the to me, which am both halt and lame
In elect uteraunce to make memoryall:
To the for succour, to the for helpe I call
Myne homely rudnes and drighnes to expelle
With the freshe waters of Elyconys welle."

—*Skelton.*

—

In classic days, the laureled Sons of Song
Spake of a god, swift, beautiful, and strong—
Apollo, of the Quiver and the Dart,
The long-haired Patron of the Healing Art,
Who pestilence and light and lightning uses,
And watches every night while mankind snoozes,
And is first President of all the pretty Muses.

One day Apollo, feeling rather blue,
As people will, with nothing much to do,

And nobody but goddesses to hector,
And nothing left to drink but stupid nectar,
Flew from Olympus—smitten with a dearth
Of fun and brandy—and about the earth
Resolved to take a turn: but, mind you, first
He would drop in somewhere and try to quench his thirst.

This, in parenthesis, of course was naughty.
But those old gods were just as fast as haughty,
And in most ways the worst examples set,
Besides their way to keep the pharynx* wet.
Yet, like some preachers of the modern day,
They said to folks composed of common clay,
Do not as we do, but do as we say;
'T is what our word, and never what our act is;
Our business is to preach, and yours to practice!

* It is just possible that the Schoolmaster may be occasionally a little too learned for his lay readers; and that some of the latter, having incontinently cut their Physiology while at school, are now suffering a just retribution for their laziness, by being compelled at this point to ask, "What the deuce is the pharynx?" Hoping that if I gratify this natural curiosity by a definition of the pharynx, it will not encourage any future schoolboys in habits of idleness, I will cheerfully append a description of the organ as given with charming clearness and simplicity by Dr. Dunglison. The pharynx, then, gentle reader, is, "An irregularly funnel-shaped membranous, symmetrical canal, on the median line, between the base of the cranium and the œsophagus, which gives passage to the air during respiration, and to the food at the time of deglutition." *Verbum sat.*—Ed.

While in mid air, he spied a House of Call
That stood in Athens, near the southern wall;
And swooping down, swift as Jove's eagle dips,
He soon came out, a-wiping both his lips.

Just at that point, such was Apollo's fate,
An old acquaintance entered by the gate;
A Merchant he, his shop a great resort—
Three golden balls without; within—old clothes, in short.

Apollo blushed his ancient friend to spy,
Though 'twixt the two there was a tender tie.
For once, Jove's son, if all accounts be true,
Quite out of pocket, out at elbow, too,
Had coaxed good Damon, in a moment rash,
To lend him an old coat, and, eke, a little cash.
Between them, then, was formed a friendship fond,
A pledge of interest, in fact, a bond.
But, though Apollo at an early day
Was sworn to call upon his friend and pay,
Five years had wheeled their weary circles round—
Apollo was *non est*, could not be found;
While Damon dressed his grief with this sad salve,
And murmured day by day, "A charge to keep I have!"

Had he but sooner seen whom he would meet,
One bound had borne the god across the street;
Or e'en, of his agility a proof,
He would have given a leap upon the roof.

For, really, t' would be very awkward still
If Damon should present that little bill!
But now, too late, he dons his blandest face
And runs to greet good Damon with all grace:

"I say, old boy," and slaps him on the back,
"I 'm charmed once more to get upon your track!
You 're charmed to get on mine? that 's very kind!
'T is sweet, such welcome from a generous mind.
How have you been these years? How goes the trade?
Ah, yes! let's see; that little bill I made—
No, I have not forgotten—and I 'll bet it,
That, as you live I never will forget it.
Pay up to day? Ah, my dear sir, I should
Be only too delighted if I could!
The fact is, friend, my Gov., old daddy Jove,
Moping with Juno round the kitchen stove,
Doles out his greenbacks with a mean attention
To rules it would disgust his son to mention.
Economy up there, just now, is all the go;
And Mount Olympus has become so slow,
With nothing liquid left, save nectar slop,
I 've had to drop in here to get a drop.
What will I do? When my stoneship comes in,
Upon my faith, I 'll bring around the tin.
But now, I 'll give—'t is all that I can do—
A new edition of my IOU!
But come, old boy, you need a little cheer!
Let 's step inside, and have a pot of beer."

Apollo lends his arm, and in they walk,
And call for beer, and pipes, and sit down for a talk.

"I say, my Damon, if the truth I tell,
It seems to me you are not looking well.
You 're haggard, pale, the crow's-feet round your eyes;
I fear you 're candidating for the skies.
What 's wrong with you? Come, come! how are you feeling?
You know I patronize the Art of Healing."

"Ah!" quoth sly Damon, winking as he spoke,
"I writhe beneath the tradesman's paper yoke.
The worm that gnaws my fast-decaying health
Is that I have so much—outstanding—wealth.
Why am I pale? What makes me haggard, thin?
I 'm forced to dine on promises of 'tin!'
I need a Doctor? Yes, the one whose pills
Would cure me—of so many unpaid bills!"

Apollo smiled, and gave a knowing shrug,
And smiled again, and raised the flowing mug;
His left eye winked, and glistened in its socket;
He took the Merchant's hint—and put it in his pocket!

"Ah! my dear sir, you wander from the point;
Your speech is witty, but much out of joint.
But now a truce to all such sordid trash
As unpaid bills, and irremittent cash.

Let 's give one hour, as thus we linger here,
To lofty contemplation—and to beer!
And, Damon mine, permit me to suggest
A thought well worthy of a longer quest;
Whene'er you chat with an Olympian god
Select some theme less savoring of the sod.
And, by the bye, as saith Dan Cicero,
'T is godlike on mankind health to bestow.
'T would then be godlike (if the knave speaks true)
For me to give a little health to you,
And, as saith Emerson, 'do good by stealth
And blush to find that the best wealth is health.'
[The god's quotation seems a little muddled,
And proves his godship just the least bit fuddled.]
Therefore, you see, I 'm going to pay you twice:
Some day, with cash; but now, with good advice.
Then tell me, Damon, how you spend each day;
What time you have for work, for rest, for play;
In short, your habits; for in them there lies
The secret of health's open mysteries.
The Doctors would have no more pills to give,
Would they but teach their patients how to live!"

And, thus incited, Damon 'gan to tell
The tale of many a merchant's daily hell:
"How Care, with poisoned tooth; and breathless Hurry;
And all the lank and gnawing brood of Worry;
And tyrant Toil, with ever lifted lash;
And Expectation false; and Misadventure rash;

Chased from his days e'en Nature's cheap delights,
And e'en the peasant's slumber from his nights.

"Work! work! work! No pause in its fierce reign.
No bower, no couch, in all its hot domain.
The crystal chalice of Life's ardent prime
He tasted not—he never had the time!
And mid-life's beaker bubbling o'er the brim
Might cheer the drone—there was no time for him!
No time to rest, save in a business way;
No time to talk, unless 't was sure to pay;
No time to visit, save the Merchants' Court;
No time to study, save the stock report;
No time to walk, except a dun to follow;
No time to eat, and scarcely time to swallow;
No time to love, to pray, to laugh, to give;
No time—year out, year in—no time to live!
And, though his days should be five times as many,
No time for any thing, except to turn a penny.

"A home he had—large, opulent, and fair;
He would enjoy it, had he time to spare.
A wife he had—devoted, lovely, true;
But when he saw her last, he scarcely knew.
And some half dozen children called him sire;
He saw them last, last winter, round the fire.
He feared, by Jove, should he the whole lot meet,
He would not know them now upon the street.

Meanwhile, to Commerce he his moment's gave,
And was to be her Martyr, as he was her Slave."

Apollo heard the Merchant's doleful tale,
Pondered it long, and oft pulled at his ale;
At last, with earnest voice and piercing eye,
The god to Damon gave this sole reply:

"Excuse me, sir; but, waiving common rule,
I would just state that you are one —— fool!"

Apollo used a word I must not write,
A word far more emphatic than polite;
A word, however, which, though void of grace,
Was just the word to fit that special case.

But Damon rose, and gave a furious shout,
And spoke of "calling" his insulter "out;"
Yet took his seat at once, quite pacified,
As bland Apollo soothingly replied:

"Oh! surely, sir, you should n't take offense,
I merely spoke in a Pickwickian sense.

"But, come, old boy, let 's take a little walk;
I 'll wait outside; you go rub out the chalk!"

And thus, while Damon goes to pay the score,
The god meanders toward the open door;

Like many a modern blade of noble mettle,
He asks his friend to drink, and leaves his friend to settle!

But trustful Damon, coming forth anon,
Looked for the god—but, faith! the god was gone!

XI.

DEACON SNIPP'S LAST KICK.

BRAWNVILLE, *September* 4, 1867.

THIS night has brought with it a vast surprise.

Ever since our great meeting early in the summer for the inauguration of the Club House, we had heard nothing from the redoubtable Deacon Snipp. On that occasion he stood forth valiantly, and fought a heroic fight against the world, the flesh, the Devil, and the gymnasium; but borne down by the torrent of superior numbers, he turned up his eyes, turned down the corners of his mouth, and beat an orderly retreat. Week after week, since then, had passed peacefully over our heads, and never one movement, one word, one groan, even, from this eminent sentinel in Zion. We began to suppose that the good Deacon had come to the stern resolution of making no further resistance to the inrushing of the dark flood against which opposition seemed so unavailing. Ah! we did pleasure to ourselves, but injustice to Deacon Snipp. Little did we know of the bottomless resource and the pertinacity of that excellent person. We considered our own convenience; we considered good sense, and liberal feeling, and courtesy; alas! we considered not the

nature of Deacons. Grievously had we ignored the truthful aphorism of Mr. Spurgeon: "Resist the Devil and he will flee from you; resist the Deacon and he will flee at you." During this interval of silence our inexhaustible antagonist had nursed, not buried, his wrath. The truce had been most faithfully kept in fabricating a weapon with which to renew the war. His next beginning was to be our ending. The long silence, had we but properly understood it, was only the hush of Titantic forces, in their awful recoil, before breaking forth anew in final and comprehensive havoc.

Silence!
'T is but the note of wrath the while a-nursing,
The still precursor of a furious cursing.

With a tremulous hand, just after the awful shock, have I taken up my pen in the hope of giving some faint narrative of this supreme and most terrific explosion of our village volcano.

It was something thus:

We were pleasantly seated this evening around the long table in the Library of the Club House, and were discussing, with as much tranquillity as such a theme would permit, the subject of "Gymnastics for Women." In the midst of this serene state of things, suddenly we heard a heavy step on the stairs, immediately followed by the abrupt and noisy opening of the Library door. Every one turned to behold the author of this rude intrusion, and every one, with a mixture of amazement and amusement, beheld the august form of Deacon Snipp, as he paused in the doorway in a

kind of spasm of excitement—indignation already flaming in his eye, and the hue of New England rum blazing upon the end of his nose. The good man had evidently prepared himself for this crushing interview by an unusual amount of attention to his toilet. He had on a ruffled shirt, and an old-fashioned dress coat, with slender tails descending to his very heels. I do not mean to insinuate that these articles were all that this excellent person had on; for, I may add, that beside carrying under his arm a green cotton umbrella, he carried upon his legs a pair of venerable trousers, which had withered and shrunk with increasing age, and now descended upon his nether limbs no further than to the top of his ankles. Moreover, his manly bosom—a term which, when applied to Deacon Snipp, must always be understood to include his stomach—was covered by a voluminous though rather bilious buff vest. No one could fail to perceive that the Deacon was a very consistent man, and carried his general principles even into the matter of his wardrobe. Obviously, he was as decidedly opposed to novelties in wearing apparel as he was to novelties in theology, politics, or social science. Standing thus before us, arrayed in all the splendor of his great-grandfather's old clothes, he seemed, indeed, a sort of monumental effigy of Conservatism—his ideas and his breeches being alike contracted and worn out.

For at least two minutes we sat gazing at Deacon Snipp in the doorway; and for at least two minutes Deacon Snipp in the doorway stood gazing at us.

"Will you walk in?" at last spoke Judge Fairplay.

"I WILL!" screamed the Deacon, in such high scolding accents as denoted that he was resolved to walk in any way, whether invited or not. And upon this, advancing up the room with a defiant air, and drawing a letter from his breast pocket, he added in the same yelling tones: "And I've brought a doc-u-ment, the production of my daughter Jerushy, which I demand to have read here, and which ought to convince you, if any thing can, of the scandalous and unscriptural nature of your proceedings in this institution." By the time he had gasped his way to the last words of this speech, he had also arrived at the end of the table where sat the Judge; and hurling the letter upon the table, he suddenly wheeled round and strode down the room, and out of it, with such speed as considerably elevated his coat tails in his rear, and caused them to flutter and flap in the air like a pair of sable streamers. "He hangs out the black flag," whispered the Parson, as the last flap of the Deacon's coat-tails faded from view; "he evidently means to take no prisoners."

The whole affair had occurred so suddenly that we did not at once comprehend its import; but when the apparition had departed, the ludicrous aspects of the scene broke simultaneously upon us all, and the whole company exploded into one long, loud roar of laughter—a laughter dropped, and taken up again, and again, for several minutes.

All this time, while we were giving ourselves up to the transports of mirth excited by the preposterous event which had just happened, the terrible "doc-u-ment" from "my daughter Jerushy" lay unopened upon the table, on the

very spot to which it had been hurled by the indignant Deacon; the Judge gazing upon it with an admirably feigned alarm, as upon a bombshell which might at any moment explode.

And here let me pause to record one word of description concerning that utterly indescribable personage—"my daughter Jerushy." Be it known, then, that "my daughter Jerushy" is a worthy maiden of whom it becomes me to speak with all the respect due, not only to the gentle sex, but to antiquity. She is the only heir to her father's name—an honor so great as to explain the fact of her never having been induced to exchange that euphonious name for any appellation less worthy. Her many graces of soul appear to have had an uncommonly fine effect upon the growth of her body; for she is, indeed, enormously tall. To say that she is also lank, angular, and sour-visaged, might be accurate, but it would not be polite; while it would be equally a conformity to truth, and a deviation from propriety, to apply to her the last line of Chaucer's couplet descriptive of the Carpenter's Wife:

> "Wincing she was as is a jolly colt;
> Long as a mast, and upright as a bolt."

It is possible that Miss Jerushy was once young, but if so, it was at a period anterior to any embraced in the memory of our oldest inhabitant. And, although to the eye of the moderns she has always presented the same appearance of egregious maturity, and of stern dislike to the follies of her sex, there are some dim traditions afloat that she once had a

sort of love affair herself—a love affair which one fine day burst into a thousand pieces, and left her the tart, sanctified, withered, and uncompromising spinster who is known to us as "my daughter Jerushy."

Her letter ran as follows:

"TUESDAY AFTERNOON.

"*To the Members of the Athletic Club:*

"MISGUIDED MORTALS—Dwelling as I do in the atmosphere of piety with which my father's home is always pervaded, and separated as I am from the vanities of this wicked world, it is not often that I receive explicit tidings from the valley of worldliness which stretches out far below me.

"But I have been made acquainted with that zeal for a fleshly gospel, and for a merely muscular and carnal grace, which has unhappily broken out in our once religious village.

"It was a sufficiently mournful token of the decay of Zion that so many professors fell from their allegiance and built that temple to Baal, which, I think, you call a Club House—an edifice erected to frivolity, and unconsecrated by one prayer or psalm.

"But my cup of spiritual grief was filled, when I learned that even the handmaidens of our village are also bowing down to this Pagan fashion, and are learning the unscriptural practice of gymnastics; and having heard that you are this night to discuss formally the subject of woman's part in your gymnasium, I write unto you this letter of counsel, warning, and reproof.

"Where in the Bible can you find the least authority for gymnastics?

"Echo answers, Where!

"That Pagan name does not occur any where in the sacred volume, from Genesis to Revelation.

"But while gymnastics are not mentioned by name, they are referred to, and that with the severest censure. The Apostle Paul (I Tim. iv. 7, 8,) says to Timothy: 'Exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things.'

"Also, is it not a great shame and a scandal, that young ladies should be so negligent of propriety as to take part in diversions which must cause an unseemly exposure of their feet, and even of their ankles?

"The Apostle Paul would not allow women to appear in public assemblies with the head uncovered. What would he have said to you who are willing to show not only your heads, but your ——. I am too much shocked to finish the sentence!

"The Scripture also teaches that woman was intended to be weak.

"But your gymnastics oppose the will of Providence, and the words of Scripture, by making woman strong.

"It is the duty of woman to stay at home and comfort her husband [here there were smiles and profuse whispering among the ladies] and take care of his house. But how can she properly discharge this duty, if she goes to the gymnasium?

"We are also told in Scripture that it is the will of God

that the great duty of woman should be attended with suffering: 'In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children.' But so profane has the world grown, that you gymnastic people openly boast that woman can be so strengthened as to bear children without great pain, and thus thwart the righteous will of Heaven.

"Need I say more to prove to you the wickedness of your present course?

"I pray that you may soon see the error of your way, and turn your unscriptural Club House into a temple of the living God.

"Yours, sorrowfully,

"JERUSHA SNIPP."

As the Judge finished reading this overwhelming "doc-u-ment," and laid it upon the table before him, he said: "Well, I have only one remark to make. As Mr. Squeers exclaimed, when contemplating the nice mixture of milk and water with which he fed the boys at his school, 'Here's richness!'" The Judge then added, in a low tone, to those of us who sat nearest: "When young William Pitt made his first speech in the House of Commons, Edmund Burke, in great delight, declared, 'He is not only a chip of the old block, but the old block itself.'"

At this point, Mr. Leonidas Climax rose. It was his first appearance at the Club since the accident at the parallel bar, and his rising to speak was greeted with general applause, in which the ironical element was much less obvious than usual. His broken arm was still supported in a sling;

but with the other arm he reached across the table, and, drawing the water pitcher to him, he proceeded to take a long draught. After this preparation he made a speech, which, for a wonder and for once, was both sensible and brief.

"Mr. Chairman—I confess I am a little disturbed by one quotation from Scripture given by Miss Snipp. I do not see how we can regard that verse of St. Paul's—'bodily exercise profiteth little'—in any other light than as a censure upon gymnastics. I had never before thought of the verse in this connection. Will you favor us with an explanation?"

"I will refer your question," replied the Judge, "to our reverend friend, Mr. Bland. His answer will be worth more than mine; for, as he is what Leigh Hunt calls 'an official heaven expounder,' you perceive that what he says upon the subject will have a sort of official authority."

"Well," said the Parson, smiling, "while I disclaim the rather dubious compliment implied in the expression of Leigh Hunt, and while I desire for my words no other authority than the authority of sound learning and common sense, I will tell you all I know about the verse—be that of much worth or of none.

"Every thing turns upon the meaning of the original phrase, which our translators have rendered 'bodily exercise. Does that mean gymnastic bodily exercise? Not necessarily If you will refer to Dr. Robinson's Lexicon of the New Tes-

tament, you will find that he translates the phrase 'ascetic training.' That is undoubtedly what the Apostle meant—that ascetic bodily discipline was not good for much. Turn to our honest, sensible American commentator, Albert Barnes, and see what he says. In his note on this passage he uses these words: 'Bodily exercise here refers, doubtless, to the mortification of the body by abstinence and penance which the ancient devotees, and particularly the Essenes, made so important, as a part of their religion.' You see, therefore, that the verse has nothing more to do with gymnastics than it has with sawing wood, hoeing corn, or splitting rails."

"Let us go on with the discussion of the question before us: 'Is it desirable that women should practice gymnastics?'"

This was the voice of our Chairman; and so the discussion went on for an hour or two, almost every man and woman in the room, taking some part in it.

At last the Judge closed the evening's debate with the following judicial charge to the jury—a jury not limited to one sex, or to any particular number of persons. He said:

"A vast amount of the present talk of the world is about woman. In fact, woman always has been the subject of plentiful talk; but it has been talk in the form of flattery, or talk in the form of ridicule. A new department has been added to the world's talk about woman—talk in the form of argument.

"This is a hopeful sign.

When any subject reaches the argumentative stage, depend upon it, that subject is approaching its solution. Schoolboys sometimes give up a problem—the world never does. It clings to its problem and works at it until it works daylight into it, and out of it, too. Furthermore, every question has its pivot. The pivot on which the woman question turns is: What do you consider woman to be? Is she a human being, or is she only a goose?

"You must determine this question before you can determine those other and minor questions which are covered by it; such as, 'Should woman vote? Should woman have a university education? Should woman enter the learned professions? Should woman practice in the gymnasium?'

"Do n't you see that if woman be considered a complete human being, it can not be said that she 'goes out of her sphere,' as the idiotic phrase is, when she merely goes into those affairs which belong to human beings?

"But, of course, if woman be only a goose—a very pretty one, perhaps, very fascinating, and all that, but still only a goose—a brainless, silly, cackling goose, why, the case is wholly altered, and she is certainly 'going out of her sphere' when she presumes to engage in activities which are the exclusive possession of human beings.

"I can not deny that up to latest dates, the goose theory of woman is by far the most popular one. Most men think all women geese. Of course, they are not all blunt enough to use that term; but they have a multitude of equivalents for it. Thus, when a man calls a woman an angel, he really

means a goose; and so on through the whole list of sugared evasions of the real word. Dryden illustrates the whole thing in four lines:

> "'For true it is as *in principio,*
> *Mulier est hominis confusio.*
> Madam, the meaning of this Latin is,
> That woman is to man his sovereign bliss.'

"It is sorrowful to add—for it almost proves the goose theory—that nearly all women likewise hold that theory about their sex. Whenever a fine lady begins to cant to you about women 'going out of their sphere,' set her down at once as an advocate of the goose theory; and, in fact, so far as the lady is herself concerned, you will be quite safe in accepting that theory as the true one.

"A great deal of the shilly-shally, pretty, Frenchy gallantry of society is the utterance of the goose theory; it means: 'Oh, adorable damsel, your worshiper believes that all you are good for is, just as the lady-adoring Parisians so sweetly express it, *habille, babille, dishabille!*'

"Let us come, now, to the precise question before us tonight: 'Is it desirable that women should practice gymnastics?'

"But, in the jargon of Congress, 'I move the previous question!'

"Do you hold the goose theory of woman? Yes? Then pass on! I 've nothing to say to you. We differ on fundamentals, and all argument between us is waste of temper.

"Or do you hold the human being theory of woman? Very well. Then we have some common ground to stand upon, and we can talk with a prospect of benefit.

"Why should woman not practice gymnastics?

"Do you say that she is of the weaker sex? All the more need of becoming strong!

"Do you say that she is delicate? That is a sufficient argument for trying to become robust.

"At exactly this point we are confronted by a very prevalent, and a very silly sentiment—hatched from an egg of the goose theory. It is a sentiment so pernicious that we ought to knock it on the head at sight. On this occasion we will use a club furnished us by Herbert Spenser. In one of his masterful tracts on Education, he has said something which I must read to you. I've brought the book with me for the purpose. Here it is:

"'Perhaps, however, we mistake the aim of those who train the gentler sex. We have a vague suspicion that to produce a robust physique is thought undesirable; that rude health and abundant vigor are considered somewhat plebeian; that a certain delicacy, a strength not competent to more than a mile or two's walk, an appetite fastidious and easily satisfied, joined with that timidity which commonly accompanies feebleness, are held more lady-like. We do not expect that any one would distinctly avow this; but we fancy that the governess mind is haunted by an ideal young lady bearing not a little resemblance to this type. If so, it must be admitted that the established system is admirably calculated to realize this ideal.'

"And if this portrait of the 'ideal young lady,' with which 'the governess mind' is haunted, be not sufficiently clear, you have but to turn to the witty Wendell Holmes, and you will find in his delineation of 'My Aunt' some of the lines drawn more sharply:

"'He sent her to a stylish school—
'T was in her thirteenth June;
And with her, as the rules required,
Two towels and a spoon.

"'They braced my Aunt against a board,
To make her straight and tall;
They laced her up, they starved her down,
To make her light and small;
They pinched her feet, they singed her hair,
They screwed it up with pins;
Oh! never mortal suffered more
In penance for her sins!'

"Why should not women practice gymnastics? Will it be said that American women already get exercise enough? Then next to none is enough! No, no, no! Catharine Beecher says that in all her acquaintance (and you know the Beechers are acquainted with every body) there are not a dozen healthy women.

"Let us not flatter ourselves that this is a Yankee notion—this idea of having the ladies practice gymnastics. Three thousand years ago, Grecian women danced and ran races, and, in later times, took part in the public games with men.

Some of you have read the great work of Mr. Grote, the 'History of Greece.' Perhaps you will remember a passage in his second volume, where he says: 'The Spartan damsels underwent a bodily training, analagous to that of the Spartan youth—being formally exercised, and contending with each other in running, wrestling, and boxing, agreeably to the forms of the Grecian agones. They seem to have worn a light tunic, cut open at the skirts, so as to leave the limbs both free and exposed to view. Now, ladies, do you want to know what was one charming result of all this gymnastic exercise? The answer is furnished by Mr. Grote, a page or two further on: 'The beauty of the Lacedemanian women was notorious throughout Greece.' There, ladies! the finest cosmetics are those with which Nature beautifies her faithful followers. There is nothing like a gymnasium to give us a race of pretty girls!

"But, in justice to my fair countrywomen, I must declare, that if they were as strong as they are beautiful, if they were as vigorous as they are lovely, why—I do n't know what would happen! They would have things all their own way, for they would be omnipotent. Alas, there is no lack of beauty among us, and a plentiful lack of strength! Did you ever hear the story of the Castle of Weinsberg? I 'm sure you never did, so I 'll tell it. It was in the terrible old wars between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines that Conrad III besieged the Castle of Weinsberg. But Conrad could not carry it as easily as he had expected. So he swore, in his wrath, that when he should take the castle he would put every man to the sword; but, being a very polite ruffian, he

promised that the women of the garrison should be allowed to depart in peace, with whatever they chose to carry on their backs. So, when the castle surrendered and the gates were opened, every woman sallied forth with a man on her back; and luckily there were enough women to carry off the whole garrison. Now, ladies and gentlemen, the point in this story which excites my concern is this: Suppose those women had been our dainty, lovely, delicate, feeble American women, how many of that garrison would have escaped their bloody doom? Perhaps one; but I doubt it!"

XII.

LETTER FROM TOM DICK AND HARRY.

March, 1868.

THE Editor of these Memorials of the Brawnville Athletic Club has now fulfilled his promise of laying before the readers of THE HERALD OF HEALTH such portions of the private memoranda of the Village Schoolmaster, Mr. Thomas Richard Henry, as seemed most suitable for publication.

The memoranda, however, cover merely the first year of the existence of the Club, from the autumn of 1865 to the autumn of 1866. But how has the Club fared during all the time which has elapsed since the last date of the Schoolmaster's graphic papers? The extraordinary success of the Club during the first year, might be attributed by the skeptical to the well-known charm of novelty. How has the Club endured the inevitable subsidence of that novelty? How has it borne the chances and perturbations of nearly a year and a half—the cooling of old friendship, the warming of new enmity, and the steady immitigable fire directed upon it from the artillery of its arch-foe, Deacon Snipp? And how

has Judge Fairplay been getting on all this time? And did Parson Bland's people send him to the Paris Exposition last summer? And our endeared enemy, the caustic Dr. Drugger, is he still in the flesh? and is he as devoted as ever to the distribution of calomel and sarcasm? And how is that affluent orator, Mr. Leonidas Climax, with his broken arm and his unbroken resolution to be eloquent?

All these and similar questions, the Editor believes, have risen over and over again in the minds of the innumerable readers of the Brawnville Papers; for he has received letters of anxious inquiry upon these points from all parts of the known world—from Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceanica, and New Jersey! By the letters thus received, the Editor is assured that every one of his readers now feels as well acquainted with Judge Fairplay as he does with his own grandfather, and cherishes as personal a friendship for the Village Schoolmaster as he does for the identical pedagogue by whom he was flogged in his boyhood.

Thinking, therefore, that it would be unkind to close this series of papers without giving some satisfaction to the natural curiosity of so large and respectable a portion of the human family, the Editor wrote to his excellent friend, Mr. Thomas Richard Henry, and begged him to send on a letter which should cover the various topics above referred to.

With a punctuality characteristic of that admirable functionary of learning in the rural districts, the following letter was forwarded. It is herewith submitted to our readers as a

fitting conclusion to this copious, grave, and truthful History of the Brawnville Athletic Club.

BRAWNVILLE, Mass., *February* 5, 1868.

MY DEAR SIR—It is just thirteen months and one day since I had the satisfaction of meeting you at the ——— railway station, and of conveying you in Judge Fairplay's cutter across country to Brawnville, a journey which you have now made so famous through THE HERALD OF HEALTH. Little did I suppose, on that bleak January day, that I was myself on the brink of such stupendous experiences. Shrinking as I have always done from the public eye, it was never in my most aspiring thoughts that the terrible Trumpet of Notoriety was about to blow my humble and cacophanous name through the rondure of its brazen lips.

But why am I surprised? Am I not a daily and nightly student of history? And out of the chaotic and Babylonian clamors of that strange science, can any utterance be so clearly discerned as this? Evermore, evermore do great events spring from small causes. The Napoleonic dynasty would never have been re-established in France, the Crimean and Italian wars would have remained unfought, and the whole current of history would have been turned into a different channel, had it not been for a span of horses in the streets of Paris, some twenty-five years ago, getting frightened and running away and breaking the neck of a certain fine young gentleman who had been driving them. Did you ever hear what gave us the Mexican War, and thence that nourishment to the ambition of the slave power which

tempted it on to the Great Rebellion? It was the neglect, on the part of a single voter in a little country town in Massachusetts, to go to the polls on an election day. And, in like manner, had it not been for Judge Fairplay's man, Isaac, stubbing his toe against a chopping log, one dark night, I should not have gone to meet you; I should not have had that long, confidential talk with you; I should not have committed to you the sacred secret of my memorandum book; the Minutes of the Brawnville Athletic Club would not have been published; and my poor name would never have been caught up on a whirlwind of renown, and tossed about before the eyes of admiring millions.

Can I say that, with all the extreme diffidence which you have attributed to me, I am displeased at this unprophecied celebrity which has befallen me? Ah, how little do we know ourselves! It is related by Sir Walter Scott that a certain Bishop of Durham died of chagrin because somebody peeped into his diary. I do believe that, until I gave it into your hands, I should have imitated the Bishop of Durham had any body peeped into mine. Yet here am I, positively exulting in the fact that the whole world has been doing openly what it would have killed me to have had a single individual do by stealth.

But I must not longer pursue this vein of self-reference. You will think that I am putting on too soon the port and privilege of celebrated men by becoming autobiographical. I must not forget the admirable remark uttered by Horace Greeley in Paris, some years ago, that he would as soon think of running down the Champs Elysées in his drawers,

as to write his own life. Admirable remark, indeed—now, to the delight of Mr. Bonner, and of all his subscribers, most admirably illustrated!

But perhaps you will allow me, in transition to other topics, to mention that Fame hath her humors and inconveniences, no less than Obscurity.

I suppose that I myself have already received from various parts of the country, several dozen letters bearing all sorts of facetious superscriptions, thus: "To Tom Dick and Harry, Esq.;" "To the Limping Pedagogue of Brawnville," and so forth. But—shall I confess it?—the most of my letters have been from young ladies, or, at least, from ladies who did not omit to mention that they were young. Ah, sir, that was a fatal secret which you let out in your introductory paper—to wit: that I am a poor, solitary bachelor! How many sympathetic damsels have sent to me letters of consolation (photographs inclosed), deploring my unblest condition of loneliness, and generously proffering their hearts, hands, and purses to deliver me from it. Who, now, can say that Pity hath fled from this round, whirling earth?

But I am not the only one among us upon whom letters from many places near and remote have been showered. Judge Fairplay has been overwhelmed with this new-born correspondence, and has been obliged to set up that expensive luxury, a shorthand reporter. Parson Bland, too, has had more letters than he could answer, and on several occasions has had to send over and borrow Judge Fairplay's phonographer. Besides letters of a merely inquisitive character,

the Parson has had any number of invitations to new pastorates from churches in town and country, who write to him that they have tried bilious Christianity long enough, and dyspeptic Christianity, and bronchial Christianity, and that now, for a change, they would like to try a little muscular Christianity. Indeed, the business of our Postoffice has so much increased, owing to the fame thus given to Brawnville, that Deacon Snipp, our Postmaster, is more than half inclined to join in the general rejoicing over the success of our Athletic Club.

I must not forget to tell you that during the past summer we have had multitudes of visitors coming to Brawnville, for no other purpose than to inspect our Club House, and to talk with Judge Fairplay, Parson Bland, and the rest of us, about establishing club houses of the same sort elsewhere. In fact, so great has been the rush of people to our lately obscure village, that the keeper of the Brawnville Hotel has not only done an extraordinary business as a landlord, but has found it very profitable to put on a coach between —— Station and the village. In one word, my dear sir, Brawnville is looking up! Lionizing agrees with it! The printing of my poor manuscripts has lifted it out of its famelessness and solitude, and has made it a town of such importance that I confidently expect to see its position noted in Mr. Johnson's next edition of his map of Massachusetts. And now, at last, some of our solid citizens, elated by dreams of a magnificent metropolis upon this site, have resolved to build a railroad from our village to some other place—it does not seem to matter what—and to send a petition to

the next Legislature praying that the Hub of the Universe should be taken up and removed from Boston to Brawnville.

I am sure that you will experience a benevolent pleasure in learning that the people of Brawnville have desired to testify to me, in some way, their gratitude for what they are pleased to term my "unexampled services in contributing to the prosperity of this village;" and that, with a munificence characteristic of Selectmen and other exalted officials in New England, they have actually added to my annual salary the sum of $25. Hitherto, for eight and one-half years, I have taught the juvenile idea how to practice archery, and have received for the same the liberal sum of $450 per annum; so that, as you will readily perceive, if you are a good arithmetician, I have now the princely allowance of $475! Judge Fairplay, indeed, and Parson Bland, and some others of our Club, declared that such an increase of salary was an insult, rather than a compliment; but I do not look upon the matter in that light. As Deacon Snipp is one of the chief men in the Board, I think it astounding that, instead of increasing, they have not taken it away altogether.

You ask me to give you tidings of the principal personages with whom your readers have now become so well acquainted.

I do not know that I have any thing of importance to tell you concerning them. The truth is that we pursue a very even course here in Brawnville, and that changes among us occur very seldom and work very slowly.

As to Judge Fairplay, our village monarch, by divine right of so many regal qualities, he continues to prove, in his own life, how sanitary a thing true goodness is! The twin gifts—Sweetness, Light—whose praises are so rapturously chanted by Matthew Arnold, find their fitting residence in him. And it can not be that the gods would deny perpetual youth and beauty to him whose soul is so bright, and whose existence is so benignly ordered. The years pass over Judge Fairplay to load him, not with their blows of hostility, but with their peace offerings. As I see him walking among us year by year, the counselor and friend of all, so strong, wise, tender, and sincere, I am convinced that he must be, indeed, one of those radiant Ionians spoken of in the Homeric Hymn, who, at their festivals at Delos, "looked as if they were beyond the reach of Old Age or Death."

Concerning Parson Bland, I have already mentioned whatever seems most necessary. Although his fame has gone abroad over the land as a vapor, and has returned to him as a rain-storm of invitations to more lucrative and conspicuous places, he tells us all, by way of balm to our anxieties, that "he does not think it the chief end of a minister of the Gospel to get into lucrative and conspicuous places; that he has not any personal wants which Brawnville fails to supply, and that if he had, he should still stay in Brawnville, so long as he had any unfinished jobs of one sort or another remaining to him there." One evening, not long since, speaking to a few of us at the Club about certain recent rumors of his intention to accept a call to Brooklyn, he said: "It seems to me, that taking any more preachers to Brooklyn is carrying

coals to Newcastle. But why should a minister, once happily settled as I am, desire to change his residence? Why should he consent to throw away all the immense reinforcement of his individual power which comes from the mere fact of sticking? Ah, time enriches a pastorate, just as it does wine. Every year that passes over a happy ministry among one people, only multiplies that host of invisible chariots, and horsemen, and spearsmen who fight for a good man and fight with him. The identical words spoken by me in the first year of my service here would have a thousand times the weight they then had, should they be again spoken in the twentieth year, or the fiftieth. What a grand thing it is to preach, not merely with one's own natural breath and brain power, but with the tongue of a lifetime of faithful living."

At the conclusion of this little speech, the Parson sprang from his chair and seized a huge covered basket, which he had brought in with him, exclaiming:

"But I must be off. I 've a little gospel to preach this evening."

"What! do you carry the gospel around with you by the basketful?"

"Yes, indeed! Many a time the most effectual gospel is that which comes out of the basket, rather than out of the mouth. And I know some poor families down below the mill-dam who would welcome a little basket-gospel this cold night. You know what the hungry farm laborer in Alton Locke said: 'Oh, religion is all very well for them as has time for it; but I do n' t see how a man can hear sermons with an empty belly!'"

And so "Sunshine" left us, and hastened away to the poor cottagers below the mill-dam, to whom his coming was, no doubt, a new revelation of warmth, light, and joy.

You ask about Dr. Drugger. He preserves the same attitude of genial enmity to us with which he began. I think we all love and honor him even more than ever. He is a most useful enemy. He plays the precious part of "Her Majesty's Opposition" in the English parliamentary system. He detests humbug, and all approximations to humbug. He has a genius for criticism. The scalpel of his sarcasm slits the gas-bags of our gymnastic fanaticism just so often as we try to inflate them. Dr. Drugger is indeed the choicest of those whom Sir Philip Sidney terms "Galen's adoptive sons." We love him, because he tries to hide his life in an ambush of stealthy charity. You know Jean Paul has said, with some indignation: "It is a sin that only at torture do surgeons and physicians assist, not at joy!" The anathema does not reach to our Brawnville surgeon and physician—he assists at joy, even more than at torture. For my part, I never met him without being reminded of old Dr. Johnson's tribute to physicians, which, you remember he has left to us in his life of the poet-physician, Dr. Garth: "Whether what Temple says be true, that physicians have more learning than the other faculties, I will not stay to inquire; but I believe every man has found in physicians great liberality and dignity of sentiment, very prompt effusion of beneficence, and willingness to exert a lucrative art when there is no hope of lucre."

But I must hasten to the close of this letter. The school-bell is my master, and his voice will soon be commanding me hence to those noble toils to which my life is consecrated.

Let me sum up a few of the results of our experience in the Brawnville Athletic Club as to the rightful claims of gymnastics;

1. Gymnastics do not claim to be some mystical panacea, some great mechanical patent medicine, that has only to be disseminated in order to bring about a sanitary millenium.

2. Gymnastics do not claim that they can enable every man who devotes himself to them to live for ever, or even to live to be as old as Methusaleh or the Wandering Jew. Occasionally, even a gymnast may be expected to die.

3. Gymnastics do not claim to be absolutely needful to men of all occupations; for example: to blacksmiths, to plowmen, and to professional woodsawyers.

4. Gymnastics do not claim to be able to cure all diseases whatsoever.

5. Gymnastics do not claim to be even beneficial to all men.

6. Gymnastics do not claim to be sufficient for health, unless a man likewise obeys the other great primal laws of health, which ordain bathing, diet, pure air, sunlight, cheerfulness, and a clear conscience. They alone will not atone for drunkenness, and gluttony, and American pie-crust, and poisoned air, and a discontented spirit. and hash!

I remain, my dear sir,

Yours, for the True, the Beautiful, and the Good,

THOMAS RICHARD HENRY, *Schoolmaster.*

P. S. Evening.—Thus abruptly did I close my letter this morning, for I heard the relentless summons of my swinging brass despot in the cupola of the schoolhouse. But I can not now end my communications with you and the great family of The Herald of Health without a fervent "God bless you all!" and without quoting to you two stanzas from a ballad I remember reading in the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border:

"This night is my departing night,
For here nae longer must I stay;
There 's neither friend nor foe o' mine
But wishes me away.

"What I have done through lack of wit,
I never, never can recall;
I hope ye 're a' my friends as yet;
Good night, and joy be with you all."

P. P. S.—"Crito, we owe a cock to Æsculapius; pay it, therefore, and do not neglect it."

THE END.

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