

qu'elle peut établir son règne dans les consciences individuelles et il est très clair également que les préoccupations eugéniques répondent à un courant nouveau qui va grandement influencer sur la mentalité des peuples occidentaux. Ceci est très loin d'être un mal. C'est un bien. Il faut même voir là un renfort précieux que reçoit la morale alors que des circonstances multiples semblaient tendre à son ébranlement et à son affaiblissement croissants. L'homme s'habituera peu à peu à l'idée que les concurrences internationales lui commandent de ne pas laisser sa propre nationalité fléchir en nombre et en qualité devant les autres et qu'en même temps les conditions assez rudes du *struggle for life* lui commandent de mettre au monde et d'élever des êtres aussi fortement constitués que possible. L'observation des lois de l'hygiène et de la morale l'aidera à satisfaire à ce double commandement mais ce sera une aide quelque peu négative écartant simplement ce qui nuirait à la nature, ce qui la dégraderait et l'affaiblirait. Une aide positive, une aide propre à magnifier, à fortifier la nature lui viendra de la culture physique. C'est ainsi que l'eugénie nous ramène aux sports. Plus les générations nouvelles se montreront eugéniques, plus elles seront sportives.



### England's duty.

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On the principle that crying over spilt milk is always an unprofitable occupation — and, be it added, not infrequently an undignified proceeding! — the less that is said in public about the comparative failure of the British athletes in the Stockholm Olympiad the better it will be for the reputation of British sport. This is by no means the same thing as saying that the lessons of the Games should be forgotten, that those who failed in the contests should also fail to learn from their defeats, or that they should hesitate about adopting the line which should be followed in order to retrieve their laurels ; but such matters should be discussed only in private — or, when in public, in a dignified, gentlemanly way — and the decisions arrived at should spell action, not merely talk. This is the only

way in which the past errors can be corrected; and the course which is open to all true sportsmen, the only course which is open to them, is straight as a die ahead. Far too much has been said and written since the close of the Stockholm Games; and it must be admitted with regret that the tone of a good deal of the comment has been well-calculated to create a far worse impression in the minds of foreign critics than that which was produced by the failures of the athletes in the contests.

The Englishman has always been considered by the Continental sportsman as the ideal sportsman; but if the spirit of petty huffiness which has been shown hitherto continued, he would soon be dethroned. It is not to be supposed that many of the opinions which have been expressed are the views held by the athletes themselves; but, unfortunately, such fine distinctions as this — the fixing of the guilt upon the guilty only — cannot easily be drawn by people abroad. And even if the much-harried British athlete is absolutely innocent, if he is the victim of the overzealousness of his friends and of irresponsible critics, the prestige of British sport must inevitably suffer from such recriminatory methods as have been adopted since the Stockholm Olympiad came to a close.

For example, to talk of withdrawal as the only adequate way of showing their indifference to, or disapproval of, the Games is to ridiculous to be seriously discussed. What such an action would really show — and no amount of argument would make the public believe anything else — would be that the competitors were so bitterly disappointed by their failure to win that they had not any heart left to begin preparations for the next Olympiad. It is impossible to withdraw or, at least, it would be a shameless action which would brand the men who were guilty of it as belonging to that most contemptible class of « sportsmen » — save the mark! — who are excellent winners but very bad losers. National pride should prevent British sportsmen from countenancing such a course as an even remotely possible solution of the problem by which they are confronted. Great Britain absolutely must compete at Berlin in 1916, or a stigma will for ever rest upon the escutcheon of British sportsmanship; a hand has been laid to the plough, and now there can be no looking back.

What would the first question to be asked by continental athletes very naturally be, if withdrawal from participation should be the course adopted? It is not pleasant to think about

it; but what would be said has already been hinted at — in fact, rather more than hinted at abroad! « Are the English really such good sportsmen as they are supposed to be? Or are they good sportsmen only when they are winning? ».

This is what is being said abroad to-day; and it must be admitted that a refusal to participate in the Games in 1916 would supply an answer which could not be very much softened down by any amount of eloquence. What we, Englishmen, need is a clean, strenuous course of preparation for the Berlin Olympiad. Happily the good old motto, « win if possible, but lose rather than win unfairly », is still cherished by most English sportsmen as a sacred tradition; but it must be burnished up diligently, for it has become somewhat tarnished of late. And the worst of it is, from the British point of view, that there is some ground for the doubts which have been aroused in the minds of foreign athletes, as regards the depth of British sportsmanship, and that the punishment, which should fall only upon the heads of those who did all in their power to handicap the British Olympic Council in their efforts to secure a thoroughly representative team for Stockholm, is falling also upon the heads of the innocent.

Money has become a mighty great power in the world; but it is not yet quite omnipotent, thank goodness. So, it is very foolish, very puerile, to suggest, as some of the critics have suggested, that this or that sum is required in order to ensure success when the Games take place in Berlin in 1916.

Such arguments might be sound if it were a case of buying the services of the best professionals obtainable; but in the case of the Olympic Games, they are nothing short of ridiculous. No amount of money will ensure success — though a certain amount is, of course, necessary to defray the incidental expenses of training, transport, maintenance, and so forth. The only thing which will secure the victory is the determination of the competitors to win, by bringing themselves to the highest pitch of efficiency and by doing their level best when the critical moment arrives. If this is done, there can be little doubt about the results — for the British athletes are quite capable of making a good show, and of upholding their country's honour, against all comers.

English sportsmen have so long been used to « walk-over » when in competition with foreigners that they hardly take competitions of this kind seriously even yet : and the fact that they have done so has made them indifferent. But surely the fact that they can no longer go in and win just as they please, should

stimulate them to greater efforts to secure success ? If they cannot make the necessary effort, and win, then their vaunted superiority in the world of sport was all a sham : for it was no great triumph to win hands down when there was no serious competition offered.

It has now come to pass that the English sportsmen are to be tried by ordeal. By what they do at Berlin, in 1916, they will be judged; and this fact should put every man among them on his mettle. As the Americans say, it is « up to » the British athletes to prove that they deserve the reputation they so long enjoyed, and that they did not retain it simply and solely because there was nobody who took the trouble to challenge their claim to supremacy in the world of sport. The stuff of which British athletes are made is of first-rate quality ; and there is no reason why they should not regain their proud position, as the masters of sport, by heading the list when the Berlin Olympiad takes place.

Let them then be up and doing — and by the greatness of their efforts let them silence their critics once for all. Above all, let them not allow the nasty rumour that they are only good winners gain currency.

Had England never taken any part in the Olympic movement, nobody could have questioned her right to remain aloof, however much the abstention of a nation of sportsmen might have been commented upon. But since she has joined in with the other nations — the young sporting nations — she cannot withdraw with dignity. Above all, she cannot withdraw at the moment when her sons have sustained defeat. The fact that England organised the Fourth Olympiad engaged her in the movement beyond retreat; the fact that British athletes won the Games in 1908, placed them under a moral obligation to continue in the competition; and the fact that the Games at Stockholm went against the British competitors compels them to stay in, if only in order to retrieve their lost supremacy. The combined weight of these facts is so great that, even if it were desired — and such is not the case — there is no alternative but to take part, and to make a specially brave show in the Games at Berlin in 1916.

But now let talk cease and work begin. There is much to be done; and the capital report of the Stockholm Olympiad which has been published by the British Olympic Council shows that in the members of that body British athletes have representatives in whom they can trust implicitly. This report is a model

of fairness and sound criticism; but it only proves what everybody with any inside knowledge already knew — that the members of the British Olympic Council did their best to organise the team for Stockholm properly. They failed because they were so cruelly handicapped by public apathy and by open opposition; but it is to be hoped that they will not meet with these obstacles again, and then they will succeed. It is England's plain duty to give her athletes a fair chance — and she cannot be so unsporting as to refuse to discharge her obligation in this respect, at any rate.

The conclusion arrived at two years ago, as the result of the inquiry into the state of sport made by the « Sporting Life » — that there were « too few to play, too many to look on » — was very significant; and, unhappily, it is even more applicable to the existing attitude of the public to-day than it was then. That such should be the case is a sad admission; and unless there is a change, sportsmanship will die of inanition. The failure at Stockholm is the first tangible evidence that has been forthcoming to show that the decay has already begun; and it now remains to eradicate the fell disease, by drastic methods if need be. Everybody must bear his share of the responsibility; and every capable athlete must place his talents at the disposal of his country, if the lost supremacy of Great Britain in the world of sport is to be regained.



## L'équitation populaire : but, conditions, moyens.

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On a nié assez longtemps dans les milieux adonnés à la culture équestre qu'il *pût* et qu'il *dut* exister une équitation populaire. Certains professent encore à cet égard des théories intransigeantes; ces deux mots, disent ils : *équitation* et *populaire* hurlent d'être accolés; ils sont contradictoires. De telles protestations apparaissent vaines et sans portée : vaines car si la démocratie veut toucher à l'équitation comme elle a déjà touché à presque tout, il est bien impossible de l'en empêcher; sans