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SERMON FROM SHAKESPEARE



I have of late lost all my mirth, foregone all custom of exercise.
 Hamlet, Act II, Sc. 2.

"All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," is a very old adage. Shakespeare was undoubtedly not a dull boy, but the most casual reading of his dramas will show that his boyhood days were not entirely spent in the Stratford grammar school and his father's shop. He was a very human boy, familiar with every form of boyish games and exercises. The "Sports of Shakespeare" would make a large volume if treated exhaustively. He has numerous allusions to hunting, coursing, angling, swimming, to tennis, bowling, wrestling, archery and other manly games and sports. His allusions are never far-fetched nor incongruous. They fit naturally into the warp and woof of his dialogue. The allusions to courting the lady, to fencing, as in "Hamlet"; to swimming, as in "Julius Caesar," and the "Tempest"; to hunting and to hunting dogs, as in the "Midsummer Night's Dream" and "As You Like It"; to bowling, as in "Coriolanus" and "The Taming of the Shrew"—are the allusions of a man familiar with the things referred to.

One illustration will be sufficient. Bowling is one of the most ancient sports. In Elizabeth's day it was almost the national game of England. Shakespeare frequently uses it to enforce a thought. In "Coriolanus," he says, "Like to a bowl upon a subtle ground, I have tumbled past the throw"; in "The Taming of the Shrew" he illustrates a point by saying, "Thus the bowl should run, and not unlicked against the bias." Much of the healthy outdoor spirit that pervades Shakespeare's plays is no doubt due to his personal familiarity with many sports. No mere student or scholar could have written any of his dramas.

Games play an important part in national life. Study a nation's games and an excellent judgment can be formed of its character. The Anglo-Saxons are largely the result of their sports; what other people can compare with the Anglo-Saxons in the matter of outdoor sports, and what other people can compare with them in adventurous daring and true manliness? In their college and schools and on their village greens they have learned "to play the game," and it has hardened their muscles and braced their wills for the greater game of life. The heroes of England have made on the playgrounds of such schools as Rugby and Eton. Football and cricket have taught the youths of Great Britain manliness and chivalry towards opponents. It is necessary to visit other races to find concealed weapons or to fear a blow in the dark.

Hamlet complained that he had lost all his mirth, and followed it up by saying that he had foregone all custom of exercise. The melancholy Dane would have been less melancholy had he mounted his horse and taken a brisk gallop with the hounds, or, instead of philosophizing on life and death, on friendship and action, had he played a neighborly game of bowls with Horatio or even old Polonius; he would have seen the world and his times in a brighter light. At any rate he should never have allowed himself to get into such a physical condition that he could be described as "fat and scant of breath." That is had enough in an old man, but for a young man it is disgraceful; no wonder that he had of late lost all his mirth. Games and sports keep the spirit young and the heart light. The mirth of nature and the sunlight of the open fields become part of a man who lives to some extent an open-air life. The farrows ploughed by Father Time come late to the brow of one who enters enthusiastically into sports while he may.

Games are after all a species of work, but they are work from which ordinarily the element of gain has been eliminated. They are played usually for pleasure and honor. They, too, generally give man a change of occupation, and that is the highest form of rest. They give strength to the arm, activity to the muscles and keenness to the eye. An education in sports is as essential to a man as intellectual training. Without a sound body, a sound mind is almost impossible.

Sports give self-confidence and self-control. The swimmer feels himself master of the sea; the hunter delights in his mastery of his powerful servant, the horse. In contests in the field, the playful battle, the mimic warfare teaches the contestants to give and receive knocks, to take victory modestly and bear defeat with a patient mind. There is of course danger of sports becoming brutal. Hunting is often mere slaughter; games are often practically struggles of professional gladiators. But as a whole hunting is practised for the invigorating pleasure of the chase; games are indulged in in the spirit of friendly rivalry, and the cheer at the close by victor and vanquished alike is the spontaneous expression of hearts made manly by sports. The custom of physical exercise gives health to the limbs and a mirth to the mind that is in every way salutary. A nation of athletes cannot be but a happy, generous and a wise nation.



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POPE ON FASHIONS.
 No Love of New Notions, Says Report.

M. A. P. London.

The pope, whose pastoral letter denouncing prevailing feminine fashions had been widely circulated and read upon in Italy, has never been a lover of what Americans call new notions. A year or two ago some one presented him with a motor car. When it arrived in the gardens of the Vatican his holiness looked at it curiously for several minutes, examining minutely the various parts of the machinery. Cardinal Merry del Val, who was present, suggested a ride around the gardens in it, but the pope shook his head. "You go," he said, "and I'll walk after you." The cardinal, however, persisted his point. "Why should I do that," was the answer, "When, as it is, my walk in the garden is over all too quickly? Why should I use this machine, which will shorten my usual exercise still further? No, I will not use it, but I will make a fine show in the Vatican museum. We'll have it put into a glass case, my dear cardinal."

After Seeing Roosevelt.
 Washington Post.

General Collins, ex-congressman, who was not a warlike spirit in spite of his title, once called at the White House, and tried vainly to switch Mr. Roosevelt from his talk about a big army and navy. General Collins referred to the recent bursting of a big gun aboard one of the man-o-war's—men which killed several sailors, saying that it was a regrettable occurrence. Mr. Roosevelt said that, of course, it was too bad, but added: "We are not going to stop teaching our men how to shoot just because a few weaklings are making an outcry against it."

At the close of the interview General Collins and Congressman Keiler started to walk back to the former's hotel. When they reached the portico of the White House, a cold, penetrating wind was blowing, but General Collins undisturbed his overcoat and his undercoat and began to shake them vigorously.

"What's the trouble, general, lost something?" asked Keiler.

"No," said Collins, "I'm just trying to shake the gunpowder out of my clothes, that's all."

The Booming of Portland.
 Portland, Maine, has been variously and with a certain amount of truth termed the Forest City, the City by the Sea, the City of Longfellow, the natural resort, and the city of the Grand Trunk, and a writer points out that it has more money invested in manufactures and is actually turning out a greater variety and value of manufactured articles than either of the "mill cities" or any other city in the state. That fact was recently brought out by the Maine bureau of labor statistics, and it is emphasized by the Portland Products Exposition, which has just been opened under the joint auspices of the Board of Trade and Retail Merchants' Association, and which, apparently, has already aroused a civic pride and enthusiasm that seem fully warranted. During the last five years the Board of Trade has expended \$21,000 to advertise the resort.

TROUBLES OF A PORTER.
 Two Women Gave Him a Problem to Solve.

London Opinion.

The porter was greatly perplexed. At High Polo—a lady with a large net entered the train. She was a middle-aged, tall, angular, tailor-made woman, and she looked sternly at the commercial traveler in the seat opposite through her lorgnette. Before seating herself she opened the carriage window, and sent it down with a bang. At Hildon Cross another woman came in.

She had fluffy hair. "I an appealing look in her blue eyes. She sat down and glanced at the open window, and shivered pathetically; then she looked at the commercial traveler.

"I shall be frozen to death!" cried the fluffy-haired lady.

"If this window is closed, I shall suffocate!" cried the other woman.

The porter opened his mouth. He started to raise the window. Then he retreated. Dazed, he turned apologetically to the commercial traveler. Both the woman also turned to the commercial traveler. That gentleman rose, passed by the ladies, opened the door to the platform, and went out, followed by the porter.

"And what, sir," said the porter, "would you say as 'ow I should do, sir?"

"It's quite simple," said the commercial traveler. "Leave the window open as it is, open till one lady is frozen to death; then close it and suffocate the other. I'm going forward for the rest of the trip."

Needed Medicine.
 "The late Frederick Remington," said a Philadelphia artist, "had a humorous way of illustrating his arguments with incidents from real life."

He was speaking once on prohibition. He described a trip he had once made in the prohibition state of North Dakota. He told how he rode through Degroot, Maza, Benzoin, Iola and other towns in the Devil's Lake neighborhood, putting up for the week-end at Minnewakan.

"As Remington was buying a cigar at the Minnewakan drug store, Saturday night a cowboy entered. He wore a red shirt and bearskin leggings, and he carried a two-gallon demijohn."

"Jack," he said to the drug clerk, with a loud laugh, as he swung the enormous demijohn on the counter, 'Jack, fill her up. Baby's sick.'"

Reasons for Happiness.
 William Muldoon, the noted trainer, was talking, apropos of the Jeffries-Johnson fight, of training.

"In training," he said, "the strictest obedience is required. Whenever I think of the theory of training I think of Dash, who, after eighteen years of married life, is one of the best and happiest husbands in the world."

"Dash," I once said to him, "well, Dash, old man, how do you take married life?"

"According to directions," he replied.

Mrs. Charles H. Bush died at Brockville, on Thursday, from nervous trouble. She was aged sixty-seven. A husband and three sons survive. She was an active Presbyterian.

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