

The Evergreen.

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My Contribution.

While sitting in my room one eve,
The latest EVERGREEN there scanning,
I read a pleading paragraph,
And soon upon a verse was planning.

But for my life I could not find
A subject which would make good
reading;

I thought I might, perhaps, turn out
A verse or two on farms or seeding.

But having never farmed a farm,
Nor seen a seeder while 'twas seeding,
I think my verse would be quite dry,
And scarcely worth the time for reading.

So I shall leave the task to one
Whose labors tend to crops and cropping
For I know his—unlike my verse—
Would not be quite so bad or shocking.

—L. L. G.

ATHLETICS.

TRAINING AND ATHLETICS OF THE GREEKS.

To the Greek boy this world was a world of training, for body, mind and soul, a world of endurance, of physical pain and torture; but a world having a bright side as well as a dark one; for the Greek lad underwent all fatigue and hardship for the glory of Greece. He felt well repaid for a life of stern training if he won the much coveted wreath of wild olive leaves.

The lives of Greek boys were not all alike. The hardy Spartan scorned the training of the Athenian as weak and effeminate, yet the object of each was the glory of Greece. By hardship and exposure the Spartan boy was made strong and hardy, and, when about to go into his first battle, was given a shield by his mother, with instructions to return with it or on it. Only strong and healthy children were allowed to live, the others being taken to some old glen and left to starve, or perish from cold or the attack of some wild beast. This was indeed the "survival of the fittest," and was not

without its good results. But what a cruel survival it seems to us, and at what great cost were those results gained!

Having been deemed worthy of life, the child was kept at home until his sixth year. After that he was sent to school under the care of a pedagogue, who watched over him carefully, to see that he found no bad habits. One of the boy's first lessons at school was foot racing. This was an essential in the training of the Greek soldier, not that he needed to run from battle, but because the Greeks always ran to battle singing hymns. Another lesson was that of stealing, and a severe flogging was forthcoming if a Spartan had suffered himself to be caught. This also was a necessary part of the Greek boy's training, for, when the Grecian soldiers were on the march, they never carried food, but lived by foraging. The boys wore not hats or shoes, their one article of dress being a simple chiton, a long piece of cloth fastened over the left shoulder, leaving the right arm free. Once a year, all the boys were taken to the temple of Diana, where their courage was tried by flogging. They were so eager to be thought brave, that some of them were flogged to death without a murmur, thence the saying, "Spartan bravery."

The Athenian boy was also trained in gymnastics, and became a great athlete, but was not required to undergo the hardships imposed upon the Spartan lad. The Athenian's aim was to be an orator, and for this reason much of his school life was spent in the study of grammar and the arts.

But, though these two types of the Grecian boy were so differently trained, they both looked forward with great interest to the Olympic games, which all Greeks attended, and for which all Greek boys trained. These games were not instituted merely for pleasure, but as a form of worship. In a beautiful valley of Elis, one of the Greek States, stood the city of Olympia. In this city was the splendid temple of Zeus, and it was here the Olympic games were held, and from this place they gained their name. This temple, according to Greek legends, had been erected by Hercules, a son of Zeus, by whom it had been decreed that a great festival should be held there every four years, in honor of his divine father. To make these occasions more attractive, Hercules founded many athletic games, racing, boxing, stone throwing, swimming, etc.

To insure a full attendance of all Greeks at these games, there was always a truce of one month declared, and a safe conduct was assured to the inhabitants of all the Grecian States. Ships were sent to bring home the people from all the colonies. Young men and boys came to participate in the games, the old men to look on and think of the time when they had taken part. The night before the games, the multitude was assembled in the olive forest about the temple, and here might be seen sleeping side by side men who a few weeks before had met on the field of battle. But now they were avowed friends, for it was unlawful to carry arms at this time, and, moreover, it was the greatest crime a Greek could com-