

# A MISCELLANY OF SPORTS

By T. R. Coward

**W**ITH the first buds of spring and the smack of the ball in the glove come books on fishing, on camping, on horses and dogs, on baseball, indeed, on all manner of sports. By the time summer is in full swing each year's output would make the start of a respectable library. The wonder is, not that most of the books are ephemeral, but that so comparatively many say so

much that is worth the saying. From the most objective of all sports, baseball, to the most subjective, fishing, a hundred authors have written well.

This sporting year is particularly significant, marking as it does the first Olympiad since 1912 unshadowed by the wars of nations. That competitive sport offers compensation to the primitive in man for the lack of war, there can be small doubt, and now that the factor of personal combat has been eliminated to such an extent from modern warfare, perhaps it will do as well as any other panacea offered for the prevention of war. At any rate, the nations gather to do harmless battle, and whichever nation wins will probably have proved as much as the winner in a real war. If it is impossible to get the diplomats and the munition makers in the trenches by themselves—a hard task—why not decide national differences, not by guns and poison gas and such horrors, but by pitting the athletes of one nation against those of the other on the track and court and links? A Paddock for a Pershing; a Sweetser for a Sims!

Curiously enough, in this year of track and field importance there is not a single book dealing with any branch of the sport. Indeed, technical books on our more popular amateur games are notably absent. Not a new golf book of note has been announced by the publishers, despite the phenomenal growth of the game. No book on tennis, even by the prolific Mr. Tilden, has been published this year. But baseball, prizefighting, fishing, horses, dogs, and sailors have their chroniclers.

The love of fishing cannot be explained. Either you like the sport—and then it rivals love of women—or you don't and it is an unmitigated bore. For the rod enthusiast "Black Bass and Bass Craft"

by Sheridan R. Jones will prove good reading. The bass is one of the gamest fish of all the fighters, and if there is better sport than a fighting fish at the end of a light rod, this writer is from Missouri. If you want technical advice on rods and bait Mr. Jones will give it to you, and much good bass lore besides. "Angling Adventures of an Artist", charmingly illustrated by the author, John Shirley Fox, is an entertaining volume of fishing tales bearing the stamp of considerable individuality.

A typical British production is William Allison's "Memories of Men and Horses", which is probably entertaining and instructive enough if one knows the great turf characters, human and equine, past and present, of the British Isles, but which is hardly for the casual reader on this side of the water. "Dogs and I" by Major Harding Cox, the well known sportsman, contains all manner of material about the breeding and showing of dogs. Being a true Englishman, Major Cox regards the fox hound as the noblest work of God in the canine world, but his heart has room for many other breeds. The book is full of good anecdotes and stories. The author's recommendations to his government during the war for the proper control and breeding of dogs, make interesting and suggestive reading. Another good book is "The Greyhound and Coursing" by Adair Dighton. A deal of it applies only to those who intend to breed and race greyhounds, but the accounts of the various champions and their coursing matches are exciting.

Edward Anthony's "Razzberry!"—the bleacher's cry of derision—is an amusing though uneven performance. The bleacher dispute with the "Old Timer" is a gem. "Fundamentals of Baseball" by Charles D. Wardlaw

is pedagogic in tone and pretty elementary; most ten year old kids on the sand lots would scorn it. For those who like tramping "Shanks' Mare" by Charles Coleman Stoddard is recommended, and for the sailor "A Fisherman's Breeze", the log of the "Ruth S. Martin" by A. Graham Mills. The golf maniac will probably split his sides over P. G. Wodehouse's collection of amusing golf stories, "Golf Without Tears", while Samuel Scoville, Jr. writes for the wild animal lover in "More Wild Folk".

The prize ring still grips the public imagination as no other sport. For one person who has heard of Walter Hagen or Tilden there are a thousand to whom Dempsey is a personal hero. Trevor C. Wignall gives us "The Story of Boxing", a fascinating book. Mr. Wignall does not fall into the error, so common to many Englishmen, of ignoring this country. But as he writes entirely of heavyweights that would be a difficult feat, since the great John L. first strode forth from Boston. We should like a little more about the

smaller fellows. And Stanley Ketchell was a great deal more than "a really good middleweight".

Grantland Rice sums up the past sporting year in "Sportlights of 1923", a handy reference book, lightened by description and verse, which may well become an invaluable annual.

---

Black Bass and Bass Craft. By Sheridan R. Jones. The Macmillan Co.  
Angling Adventures of an Artist. By John Shirley Fox. E. P. Dutton and Co.  
Memories of Men and Horses. By William Allison. Brentano's.  
Dogs and I. By Major Harding Cox. G. P. Putnam's Sons.  
The Greyhound and Coursing. By Adair Dighton. Brentano's.  
Razzberry! By Edward Anthony. Henry Holt and Co.  
Fundamentals of Baseball. By Charles D. Wardlaw. Charles Scribner's Sons.  
Shanks' Mare. By Charles Coleman Stoddard. George H. Doran Company.  
A Fisherman's Breeze. By A. Graham Mills. Brentano's.  
Golf Without Tears. By P. G. Wodehouse. George H. Doran Company.  
More Wild Folk. By Samuel Scoville, Jr. The Century Co.  
The Story of Boxing. By Trevor C. Wignall. Brentano's.  
Sportlights of 1923. By Grantland Rice. G. P. Putnam's Sons.