

The Forum

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THE TEACHING OF OUR RECENT ECONOMIC EXPERIENCES.

THE teaching of the recent economic experiences of the United States ought to prove most instructive to all its citizens, and more especially to those to whom the control and direction of the educational forces of the country have been entrusted. These experiences may be briefly summed up by saying that probably no other country has ever incurred in so short a time such an amount of financial and industrial disturbance and disaster; the effect of which, expressed in terms of money-loss, aggregates hundreds of millions of dollars, and finds illustration in part in the following particulars.

The national Treasury, of late years so overflowing with surplus revenues that millions of dollars (\$21,458,718 in 1890 and 1891) were given for the privilege of simply anticipating the payment of debts funded at low rates of interest, now faces the certainty, independent of any change in the methods or rates of taxation, of an annual deficit of necessary revenue of something like \$30,000,000. A decrease in the gross earnings of the railroads of the country from May to October inclusive, of at least \$30,000,000; of which \$12,053,000, or, eliminating the World's Fair business, \$20,000,000, occurred in the month of August alone. The loss occasioned by destruction of property by fires in 1893, in excess of that experienced in the previous year, and undoubtedly in a large degree the result of incendiarism contingent on hard times, is estimated at \$25,000,000. Between the 4th of May and the 12th of July, deposits to the amount of \$194,000,000 were withdrawn from the national banks alone. Between

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ARE FOOT-BALL GAMES EDUCATIVE OR BRUTALIZING?

AN indignant editorial writer in a great medical journal of our country characterizes foot-ball as "a worn-out, brutal old game, second-hand from England."¹ Certainly it is an old game; worn-out it certainly is not, unless the events of this autumn show it to be; but whether it is necessarily brutal or not, is a point about to be discussed. It is probably more universally played in this country than any game except base-ball, when base-ball was at its height of popularity. So universally popular is it, so do the great colleges of Harvard, Yale, and Princeton set the fashion of sports, that every small and great college in the land has its foot-ball team. Small boys in Gramercy Park are imitating their seniors, and workmen in great manufactories gorge themselves for five minutes from the dinner-pail, and then rush off to spend the remaining fifty-five minutes of the hour for the midday meal in foot-ball. Our newspapers are full of accounts more or less graphic, and always illustrated with the portraits of captains, full-backs, and full teams. So far from being worn out, the old game has a revival in the United States, and is at the very height of this revival. This is true also of England, where foot-ball, after many vicissitudes of favor and fashion, holds its own at the great public schools.

The present objections to the game, as a rough one, are not at all new. It has always had a bad reputation, and such was its character in the time of James the First, that that monarch forbade his heir-apparent to play it, and he himself describes the game, in one of the numerous learned treatises he was so fond of writing, as "meeter for laming than making able the users thereof." It seems to have been played in England in the early part of this century with a great deal of roughness, so that shutters had to be put up and houses to be closed when it was going on. The ball must have been kicked much oftener then than now. Fatal accidents occurred then as they do at the present time, and finally foot-ball day died out. But there was

¹ The "Medical News," Nov. 18, 1893.

a revival in England, and the modern Rugby game is essentially the one that is played in the United States to-day, while at Harrow and at Winchester kicking alone is allowed.

It is fifty-three years since Yale University—then Yale College—began to play foot-ball. But then it was only the Freshman class that played with—or rather against—the Sophomores. It is said that the game there was born from threatened bloodshed; that is to say, from the threat of a fight between the Sophomores and the Freshmen. This combative way of settling a difficulty between the two classes was gravely proposed, but the Seniors came to the rescue, and, as a compromise, the disputed question as to which was the stronger class was arranged to be settled by a foot-ball match. The game of this time was very simple. The ball was roughly formed and covered with leather. The two classes faced each other some distance apart. A ball was placed between them, and they rushed for it at a given signal. They seem to have had a fight all the same, although that was not the name of the game.

This is said to have been Yale's first foot-ball game. The Harvard men learned it from Yale. So much was said in the year's interim of the comparatively innocent annual foot-ball fight between the Yale Freshmen and Sophomores, of its roughness and dangers, that each new Freshman class was torn by dissensions as to whether the usual challenge should be sent to the Sophomores; but generally, if not always, the fighting side won the day, and a game was played. The intercollegiate contests finally stopped all this, and men are now selected with great care from all the classes to make up teams, to train which a great deal of time is spent, during both vacation and term time, by retired players who act as coaches, until the team to meet Harvard or Princeton is chosen. It is openly charged that in some colleges men are allowed to enter and remain, who do no studying of any account, simply because they are good quarter or full backs. This is probably not true of the older colleges, where all the players seem to be chosen from *bona fide* students; yet it is impossible to resist the conviction, judging from the interest of college faculties in the game, that a very good foot-ball player must be a very bad scholar indeed, if allowed to drop out on account of his standing, so long as he is an important member of the team.

But it is not for the sake of writing an historical account that I have undertaken to discuss the game of foot-ball as now played between the colleges. So many questions as to the influence of the

game upon the intellectual, the moral, and the physical conditions of students have lately arisen, that I have thought it proper to attempt to re-sift the now large mass of evidence and give an opinion as to whether the game ought to go or to stay. Judging from the general tone of the press, King James was right in refusing to allow his son (afterward Charles the First) to play foot-ball. It is claimed on many sides, and by people entitled to great respect for their opinions, that it is a game that can never be properly played; that it cannot be placed on a footing like that of base-ball, cricket, or other athletic amusements, because it is intrinsically brutal and dangerous. There are also side issues of perhaps less importance to be tried, such as whether the game is so engrossing in its influence as to interfere with proper studies and discipline in college, and whether it promotes gambling. But this first issue belongs to base-ball and boat-racing equally with foot-ball, except that the latter game, being so much more popular than the others, involves more students in its pursuit. This side issue is thus a question that pertains to all competitive athletic exercises among college students. It does not seem to me to be one that will ever come to any great importance, since it is obviously under the control of the college authorities to determine just how high a standard of scholarship they shall prescribe. In other words, how much they shall allow athletics to interfere with study is purely a matter of discipline. Besides, a young man is in college chiefly to learn how to study. He can never become a great scholar in the best American college, during his four years of undergraduate life, although he may imbibe a spirit and learn methods which may some day make him one, if scholar he is to be. But it is not intended that many of a given class shall become great philologists or mathematicians. The college will have done its full duty to a young man if it puts him in a position whence he may become a learned man, or a good business man, or an accomplished jurist, a statesman, or a sound scientist. I dwell on this point, because I think the great functions of an undergraduate college are sometimes confounded with those of post-graduate and university training. Young men in undergraduate colleges are really boys,—large boys, if you please, but still boys,—and, as boys, actually need much physical as well as mental culture. Much open-air amusement that may be properly omitted from professional schools cannot safely be left out of the curriculum of an undergraduate college, without the dangers that come from the repression of a natural physical excitement. Not

until the growth of the body has come to a standstill, can this great need of what may seem to be excessive exercise remain unsatisfied.

As to gambling and other vicious habits said to be engendered by foot-ball, they affect very few men compared with the thousands directly participating or interested in the game. Much of the gambling consists of the talk of young boys, some of them connected with no college, although they ostensibly wear its colors, and none of them having much money. Certainly general immorality is not fostered by the training necessary to make a good foot-ball player. The standard of scholarship and morals is perhaps higher in our colleges than it ever was, while there has never been a day in our country when physical culture has been carried to such an extent. The general average of attainment is greater, as also the capacity for endurance, thanks to the gymnasium, and boating, base-ball, and even to the now severely condemned foot-ball.

The only question I propose to consider in any completeness is the one involving the risk to life, limb, and health, and this as regards foot-ball alone; for I start with the concession that the general growth of a taste for games and sports in the open air has been and continues to be of the greatest service to the intellectual, moral, and physical condition of young men in colleges,—and not to them alone, but to young men in schools and engaged in mechanical occupations all over the land. The substitution of out-door sports for those of the gymnasium in-doors has been of marked benefit. Gymnasiums are good, but open-air exercises are better.

It must be conceded, I think, that all out-door sports involve a certain degree of danger of bodily harm to those participating in them. There have been serious injuries even from the innocent and feminine games of tennis and croquet. Young men are frequently injured in training for, and rowing in, a boat-race. This is also true of base-ball. Shooting accidents, in shooting for amusement, are common. It is not long since one of the princes of the royal house of England lost an eye in a shooting-match. Then, again, daily duties involve dangers. Railway travelling in the United States, last summer, certainly was a very dangerous means of getting about. Outcries against rare and exceptional sources of accident are not unusual; and in the matter of the danger from hydrophobia, for example, they have led here and abroad to most extraordinary legislation and most unfounded schemes of cure for a disease that is so rare that it hardly figures as cause of death in the statistics of the great city of

New York. Just now there is a good deal of excited writing, in medical and lay journals, against the alleged enormities of foot-ball, and there is some justification for it in the fact that serious accidents and death have not infrequently resulted from games. It is claimed that such accidents are invariably connected with the game, and that brutality also has become an essential and constant feature in the game as played between the colleges. If these things be true, there should be no future for foot-ball among civilized people, any more than there should be for prize-fighting.

A severe English critic says: "In the old game you kicked the ball; in the Rugby game you kick a man if you cannot kick the ball; but in the modern American game you kick the ball if you cannot kick the man." Dr. Amidon has collated from the columns of the London "Lancet," during the year 1892, a list of 109 cases of injuries from foot-ball games, sufficient to require hospital treatment. Among these were eleven fatal cases, and many of the others were serious, such as may handicap their victims for life. For example, there were three cases of compound fracture of the arm, one of compound fracture of the elbow, five of compound fracture of the leg.¹ Such an accident not infrequently costs its subject his life.

The catalogue of the "Lancet" is certainly a terrific one; but, to be complete, it should be accompanied by a list of the kind of players, telling whether they were amateurs or experts, and stating also the nature of the discipline maintained by the umpires,—whether or not "slugging" or foul play of any kind was allowed. It is to the disgrace of those who have had any hand in it, that vicious, unmanly things have been done by those calling themselves gentlemen, and who were playing with gentlemen. The writer knows, from the actual statement of one of the persons concerned, that a famous foot-ball player was bitten by an antagonist while he was down. The game in which this occurred was one between students of two great colleges. It has been often commented upon in our newspapers; but for one truthful account of foul play of this kind there are many misstatements about foul play that never occurred.

I have also had occasion, as a near friend of the sufferer, to see a tumor removed from the forearm of a famous foot-ball player, which was of such a doubtful character as to its nature as to keep me in suspense for a week, until a microscopical examination by experts

¹ A "compound fracture" means that not only the bone, but the skin and flesh down to the bone, and connecting with it, are broken.

happily could say that the tumor was an innocent one and not cancerous. The possibilities in the latter case were not pleasant to contemplate. My readers may not all know that cancerous disease often, although a blood disease, takes its origin in an injury. It was not supposed that there was any foul play connected with the receipt of this injury. The surgeon who performed this operation told me that he knew, from his own professional observation, of not less than four foot-ball players in famous teams, who had received serious injuries requiring surgical treatment, some of which would more or less hamper their subjects during life. I knew also a member of a foot-ball team in one of our colleges, who was obliged to give up all study for a year or more, and whose head was not then performing its functions properly. I state these instances in my personal knowledge to show that, in addition to having read the catalogue of the "Lancet," I am not entirely ignorant of what may occur in foot-ball. Another notable case which has excited much comment is the one occurring in Farmington, Conn., where an amateur player was paralyzed, and subsequently died, from being fallen upon in a game.

But, on the other hand, foot-ball is not alone in having its accidents. It was only during the last summer that a very prominent and valuable member of the medical profession was injured for life, on his knee, by the rebound of a ball used in bowling. Very lately a professor in one of our colleges, and a student whom he took out rowing, were drowned by the upsetting of the boat. The accidents from what everybody calls perfectly legitimate and proper amusements are in quite large proportion to the numbers of those engaging in them. I mean such amusements as bowling, sailing, boat-rowing, horseback-riding, driving, base-ball, cricket, shooting, coasting, and so forth. What boy or young man has not suffered accidents in such amusements? We cannot fairly press the argument from frequent accidents too far, because people are injured in foot-ball. We are bound, if we wish a decision for its abolition, to prove that not only is the proportion of accidents in excess of those in other sports, but that they are necessarily incidents of a proper game of foot-ball. The expert foot-ball players themselves say that no man is fit to play foot-ball until he has been coached from the simplest to the most trying places, and that a large proportion of the terrible accidents are among young men who are unfitted, from want of training, to take what are great risks to them, but which are not risks at all to young men properly chosen and properly coached. The most numerous of

the accident cases admitted to the wards of the old New York Hospital in my time as house-surgeon were from the ranks of amateur boxers, and of untrained, unskilled men—hostlers, stablemen, day-laborers, and the like, who are notoriously fond of horse-play. Of the driving accidents in Central Park, the greater proportion are among or caused by persons who do not know how a horse should be harnessed or driven. The terrible case at Farmington, of which so much has properly been said, was that of an amateur undertaking to do what an expert only should attempt. I am unable from the data at hand to analyze the table in the "Lancet," but I am sure, from similar investigations, that such an analysis will show that a large proportion were scarcely accidents, but natural occurrences among those who were never prepared by training for the game.

It is, however, true that radical changes have been made in the Rugby game (although I observe that a Yale professor claims that it has been improved here), which have increased its difficulties and danger. The flying wedge—the forcing of a solid triangle of vigorous men upon one or two isolated but sternly resisting players—is a modern innovation that ought at once to be abolished. Foot-ball has become too much a game of mere massed force, exerted—as in the wedge—upon antagonists who have no real chance to resist. Those who look on are beginning to lament the absence of kicking and great runs. One critic says of the Princeton and Yale game:

"On Thanksgiving Day only two incidents relieved the monotony of the inveterate 'lining up' and 'bucking the centre.' The first was Butterworth's magnificent run, and the second was when little stumpy King, of Princeton, in the second half, on a fly catch, picked up his feet and went down the field like a meteor flash."

As to "slugging," if one umpire be not enough to prevent it, watchers should be called into the game, who should be sufficient in number to see that no man can have the opportunity to strike an antagonist, and, if he does, that he shall be banished from the field then and forever. Mr. Walter Camp fully recognizes the dangers of the innovations and the atrocity of "slugging." He and all experts in athletics deplore the excessive "mass playing," and fully admit the necessity for reform; and there is no reasonable doubt but that the general and timely outcry of the press will result in good: but I do not think it will banish games between colleges, although it is to be hoped that it will cause it to be no more dangerous than the ordinary

sports of young men. A recent reviewer of two books on college sports ("The New York Evening Post," Nov. 25, 1893), says:

"There is a line, however, which separates roughness from brutality, and there are many lovers of the game who, after watching its recent developments with grave concern, believe that that line has been crossed."

And he quotes a "frank admission that foot-ball has deteriorated," and continues:

"With the introduction of the wedge, much of the picturesqueness of foot-ball passed away. Many a regret is heard because the days of long passes, open play, free running, and repeated kicking are gone. The wedge contracts the play; it huddles the players; it removes the brilliancy and effect of individual effort, it injures too many players, a dozen ankles and knees being sprained to-day to one ten years ago. These disadvantages have called forth adverse criticism relative to the wedge."

The reforms I have indicated would, as this reviewer adds, rehabilitate a game that has ceased to be *foot-ball*. That there may be still foot-ball without serious accidents, those who witnessed the game between Yale and Harvard in Springfield, and Princeton and Yale in New York, certainly will admit. There are many things that young college men formerly generally indulged in, that are now in a not-to-be-regretted limbo, thanks to the craze for foot-ball and boat-racing. Hazing and assaults upon tutors are among them. The whole country, to the humblest hamlet, feels the impulse from the struggle for mastery at Hampden Park and Manhattan Field. It is an impulse which tends to self-control and discipline, and the cultivation of habits which strengthen the whole physical and moral being.

Colonel Church, in the December number of "The Century Magazine," quotes reports from sixty-seven institutions of learning in the United States, giving information as to the influence of foot-ball upon class standing, and upon physical, moral, and mental development. The general conclusion from these reports, he says, is that foot-ball holds the chief place among athletic games in developing qualities especially necessary in an officer of the army or navy. Preservation of temper under trying circumstances, subordination of individuality, prompt decision and action, and tactical and strategic combinations, are said to be qualities promoted by playing foot-ball.

The Duke of Wellington, himself an Eton boy, is alleged to have said that the boys of the public schools of England—"the boys of Eton and Harrow"—won the battle of Waterloo. Whether he actually said this or not, he might have said it, and it may be true.

The historian of to-day may add that it was the same kind of boys that were the men of Inkerman and Balaklava; and, to turn to our country, the memorial tablets of Harvard, Yale, Annapolis, and West Point show that the trained athletes of our colleges were not found wanting in our great civil strife, when their service in the foot-ball team, the base-ball field, the boat-rowing match, and the riding-school, stood them in good stead for some of the moral and physical endurance required on both sides.

That vast crowd of forty thousand people in New York on that beautiful November day—an orderly, well-dressed, even cultivated and intellectual mass of humanity, in great measure composed of brave young men and beautiful young girls—were not there to gloat over an injury done the boys who were their brothers, their friends, or perhaps their lovers. Those fathers and mothers looking eagerly and anxiously upon their sons struggling for the mastery had no other object than to cheer on young athletes, who by stern self-control and great diligence were there to show their capacity and endure hardship, as becomes soldiers and men. It is a travesty in description to compare such a scene, as some critics have done, to the spectacle of a bull-fight. Rather let us compare that vast crowd and those trained young men to the Greeks at the manly games of a Spartan type in classic Olympia. No one was seriously hurt on this day or at the recent game between West Point and Annapolis.

I do not believe, with proper oversight and a return to foot-ball as it should be played, that serious injuries are at all essential to the game. I plead, therefore, for reform; but that against which I raise my voice is the abolition of what under proper control benefits directly and indirectly the physical and moral being of thousands of the young men of the country. It will, indeed, be a sad day for us if the creation of a proper system of athletics in our colleges—which has produced a better race of men than the old haphazard means for exercise were capable of doing—should be overturned in consequence of brutalities in the foot-ball game. Neither do I share the wish expressed in some quarters that foot-ball may not be played in New York, where thousands who else would never see a great trial of endurance and skill can see and enjoy it. It is good for New York to see the college boys, and for a few hours join in their enthusiasm; and it is good for college boys to play upon the broadest of arenas, and to be subject, if need be, to the severest criticism.

D. B. ST. JOHN ROOSA.

PRESIDENT SCHURMAN, OF CORNELL UNIVERSITY.

THE game of foot-ball as now played, and the advisability of permitting intercollegiate matches to be played away from college grounds, are matters now receiving a good deal of attention in the newspapers, from which source the people are learning of the magnitude of problems regarding the development of physical training at colleges, which have arisen to perplex and distress the men to whom our youth are entrusted for the purpose of procuring a liberal education. It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that educators themselves have not all along been painfully conscious of these problems, or that they have not striven to find wise solutions. They will rejoice that the press has been moved to second their efforts, and in this reinforcement of popular sentiment they will recognize the promise of a satisfactory adjustment of a difficulty with which, unaided, they have not been able to cope. But they have received little new information from the newspapers which have of late given so much attention to foot-ball and other college games. There is scarcely a fact or an argument in all the recent writing on athletics which does not repeat what was said more than two years ago by Professor Wilder, of Cornell University, in a paper since published by the University of the State of New York, in *Regents' Bulletin*, No. 8, pp. 360-375.

As to foot-ball, if there was truth in Dr. Wilder's strong but judicial condemnation then, it is still less open to question to-day, for the character of the game has steadily deteriorated, as the experts themselves now declare. The "flying wedge" and other modifications of the play, which have lessened the relative importance of running, kicking, and catching, have transformed the game into a contest not merely rough, but dangerous to life and limb, brutal in itself, revolting to look upon, and degrading to the humanity of both participants and beholders. As I understand the matter, however, these conditions are not essential to the playing of foot-ball. And if by a foot-ball convention, or in any other authoritative manner, the game could be rescued from the brutalizing features which have given a shock to our humane sentiments, I should think it entitled to a new trial on its intrinsic merits; and I see much in it (at any rate as it used to be played) which makes me think it would permanently hold a place among the games proper to young men. A rough sport it must always be; but a certain degree of roughness is no bad seasoning for the recreations of those who are conscious of superabundant physical

energy. If, on the other hand, the game cannot be purged of its revolting excrescences, its fate is sealed; and foot-ball contests will be remembered only as survivals, in the midst of civilization, of the outrageous sports of barbarians. Until the effort at reform has failed, however, I shall not believe that foot-ball is in itself a coarse or undesirable form of physical recreation.

Though much has been said of late in regard to the brutal character of foot-ball, the gravamen of the best criticism seems to extend to the general policy of intercollegiate athletics. It is charged that the pitting of the "crews" and "teams" of one college against another is undermining in the students, and also in the public, those intellectual interests for the nourishment and cultivation of which all educational institutions exist. These contests, it is said, pervert the object of the colleges and set up false standards of excellence; they cast down the laurels of scholarship and exalt the trophies of the sporting-ground. Should students who have been sent to college for the training of their intellects and the formation of their characters be permitted to make a gladiatorial spectacle for the mobs of our great cities? Is there no shame in the taking of gate-money? Do not these intercollegiate games foster a predominance of athletic interest which can be traced in the conversation, thought, and reading of the students when in college residence? Nay, is not the college world the scene of a semi-professional athleticism, which engenders betting, condones trickery for the sake of success, and knows no other glory for *Alma Mater* than the pæan of victory on the athletic field?

There is some truth in these implications, but also much error. The work of the college or university goes on noiselessly; it is not exciting enough for the newspaper; and when the athletic doings of a few students—say, from one to five per cent of the entire enrolment—bring the institution into public notice, the accidental circumstance is invested with a significance, and heralded with a fulness of details, altogether out of proportion either to the character of the event or to its place in the life and activity of the institution as a whole. Intercollegiate athletics may appear to be a great business for the colleges because for a day they are the talk of the entire city; but it is not so. Nor do I think that they have led to a general lowering either of the intellectual tone or of the scholarly work of the colleges. On the other hand, I believe that the moral evils which seem to be inseparable from intercollegiate sports in great cities have been less exaggerated than any other objections which have ever been urged against them.

Why do we have these contests? The answer is not far to seek. Rivalry and emulation are the psychological sources of all sports and games; and the play takes on an intensity of interest as these impulses are deeply stirred, not merely at the time, but also in anticipation. By its very nature, therefore, any college game demands for the perfection of enjoyment a second college to play on the other side. Failing this, the game may be played between different classes or departments of the same institution, though with less zest, or with a diminution of that thrilling satisfaction which fills the student's mind and heart on the occasion of a victory over a different institution. It is natural, therefore, that there should be contests between different colleges, but what is natural is not always expedient or right. It would be absurd to attempt to put an end to sports, for they have deep roots in the nature of man—roots which strike even into the soil of animal life. But athletics may be regulated: restrictions may be put both upon the games and upon the players. And the whole question before us resolves itself into this: what kind of regulation should sports to-day receive at the hands of college authorities?

Now I will answer that question by asking another. What duty do teachers owe to students under the terms of the contract which the institution virtually makes with its patrons, its benefactors, and the public? Surely the duty of teaching them during the whole of the college year as officially announced. Is it not then a breach of trust, though a breach more common than the observance, when college authorities permit students to absent themselves from their daily exercises, or remit their daily work, for the sake of engaging in out-of-town contests or exhibitions? Some foot-ball "teams" have been absent from their colleges as much as one-fifth of the entire fall term, in order to play with other organizations. This is certainly wrong. The primary, the inviolable duty of educators is to keep all the students at work in the college during the entire period which has been announced as the college year. Where this is not accepted as the rule, holidays for such contests should be announced in the calendar. I do not assert that to this rule there may not be occasional exceptions. But if so they must be justified as special instances. The presumption is always against students going away from the college to play games during term time, because their sole business in college is to study. The college is not a training-school for racers and players; the degree of B.A. does not mean Bachelor of Athletics.

But what of holidays? If members of different institutions choose

during the summer vacation to measure their strength or skill against one another, I see no great objection. It is a private matter; and as it takes place when students are scattered all over the country, it is free from most of the abuses which have been deplored. It is different, however, with the Thanksgiving recess. And I frankly express my opinion that, if college "teams" are to continue the practice of going to great cities, and drawing thither hundreds—or perhaps, more correctly, thousands—of students, in order to make a "Roman holiday" for the crowd, on the sole condition of the crowd paying gate-money,—a thought so humiliating that I will add nothing concerning the dangers to this goodly company of youth in a strange city,—neighboring institutions of learning may be compelled to consider the advisability of instituting scholastic exercises at Thanksgiving in order to save their students from the influences of so demoralizing a spectacle.

College games, then, are to be conditioned, in the first place, by the fact that the players are students who should not as a rule leave the college during term time.

A second limitation, which will, I think, be deemed fair and manly, is that these contests between students should be regarded as exhibitions *for students*, and not primarily for the public. They are prostituted when they are treated as money-making shows. The proper place for them is the college field; and in cities this should not be given up to the crowd.

Thirdly, not more time should be given to games than is compatible with the demands of study. Training for intercollegiate contests has now reached such a pitch that a foot-ball player, for example, on one of the best "teams," must give the larger part of his time during the season to practice and preparation for the contests. Now one of two things is evident. Either these students are shown favors by the college authorities, or the standard of scholarship required of all members of the institution is absurdly low. What an athlete can study in a small fraction of his time cannot fill up profitably the studious hours of the average undergraduate.

I will say in conclusion that I believe, not in less, but in more of physical training and exercise for students. My ideal is a moderate participation in athletics by large numbers, and not an excessive and unjustifiable devotion on the part of a few. Why, for example, should not hundreds of students of Cornell University be seen every spring term rowing on Lake Cayuga under the instruction of a competent director? I would rather have an endowment for this general

training than for any coaching of experts, however effective it might prove to be. In a few years I suspect the current views on athletics will be looked upon as hallucinations; and we shall all return to the good old watch-words of self-respect, moderation, and the greatest good to the greatest number.

J. G. SCHURMAN.

PRESIDENT ANGELL, OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN.

IN answer to the inquiries of the Editor of THE FORUM about foot-ball as now played, and games played elsewhere than on college grounds, I would make the following remarks:

Interest in the game has, I think, not yet become so general and so absorbing in the West as it is in the East. But it is rapidly growing, and Western colleges and universities are likely to have to deal soon with the same problems respecting foot-ball as are now embarrassing the Eastern. I regard foot-ball as a valuable athletic game. It calls for and cultivates temperate and regular habits of living, vigor and agility of body, quickness of perception, readiness of resource, manly courage, skill in planning, and subordination of the individual will to coöperation of the team. These are all admirable fruits of good athletic training. Unhappily, as now conducted, the game seems to be attended with too much danger, and tempts players who are not thoroughly disciplined to some unworthy tricks and to occasional "slugging." I believe that it can be relieved of its objectionable features without depriving it of the interest that it now excites, and I hope that it may be. Perhaps this would require a considerable modification of the rules now followed, but if such modification of them furnishes the only relief from the danger and abuses now complained of, it should be cheerfully made.

In my opinion the cases are rare when it would not be better to have the games on college grounds. Many of the undesirable concomitants, which it is not easy to prevent when the game is played in a city of considerable size at a distance from the colleges, would, it is probable, be generally avoided in the college town. Still I am not confident that this would always be true, if the excitement over games should continue to be as great as it now appears to be in the East.

May I add one remark on another matter? A large part of the public and many newspapers are censuring college faculties for not suppressing the evils connected just now with the game. Does it not occur to the public and to the newspapers that the evils are in no

small degree due to their extraordinary, not to say irrational, manifestations of interest in the contests, and in their extravagant hero-worship of a victorious player or team? Did Dr. Woolsey or Dr. McCosh ever occupy such a prominence in any issue of the daily journals of New York as the Yale and the Princeton team after their recent victories? To win in such a contest, when the eyes not only of many thousand actual spectators are on them but also those of millions of newspaper readers, what risks will not high-spirited young men take? And in the attendant excitement, when all the world is going wild, how many zealous youths are tempted to bet! In the flush of victory, how many easily fall into vicious ways of celebrating the triumph! At least in the East, these games have become a part of the life of the public. And if reforms in the conduct of the games are needed, the public and the newspapers as well as the college officers must take part in accomplishing those reforms.

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COLLEGE athletics, with all the objections that can be raised to the conditions just now so painfully thrust upon public notice, are an unqualified good. They have done more to purify, dignify, and elevate college life than any other influence brought to bear in the past quarter of a century. No man who is conversant with the inside history of the public schools and universities of England and the colleges of America can question this. Many forms of disorder, "barring-outs," "stacking rooms," and so forth, have almost disappeared since the animal spirits of our youth had a systematic outlet. Good morals have been vastly benefited by the strong appeal which systematized athletics make for out-door life, by the constant testimony which they bear to the close connection between frugality and regularity of life, and vigorous manhood. Vices—some of which cannot even be named—which exist wherever men, especially civilized men, are brought together, have been greatly checked. Clean living has found a great coadjutor. Let any man of fifty compare the college escapades of his own day with those of the present time, and he will then confess that the rare exception of to-day was frequent. College life is not to be charged with these irregularities. Put a number of men together, with human appetites, vitality, and a love of freedom, and they will do the same things in city or country or col-

lege. Neither parental nor collegiate restraints have ever prevented, or ever will prevent, these things. Something better must be laid before our youth, and a stronger attraction must take the place of the attraction to evil.

While I am a strong believer in college athletics, I am not at all of the opinion that they are the best form of bodily exercise. I fully agree with the view expressed by Professor Mahaffy in his "Greek Thought," that not athletics of the gymnasium and the *palestra*, but "field sports—hunting, shooting, fishing—have produced the finest type of man." The virtues of horsemanship, shooting, and fishing are more akin to mastery of self, and the close relation of man to nature. They beget the larger and the broader man. But they require time and money beyond the scope of college life. Even at Oxford, tandem-driving has long been reckoned the eighth deadly sin, and fox-hunting, which my reverend tutor indulged in each Thursday during the season, came next in the *index expurgatorius*. Field sports being largely out of the question, let us weigh the things which are available for the bodily training of our students.

Among the college sports, foot-ball, base-ball, and lawn-tennis are practically universal; track athletics, boating, and lacrosse are next in order; while cricket and other games are played but little in American colleges. Tennis is the game which makes the strongest claim for genuine popularity. Its clean and wholesome nature, its moderate demands upon the strength of the player, and its sufficiency as exercise, give it a high place in the list of games. Its weak point is its comparatively private character. It takes no place as a factor in class or in college life; it enlists no large number in its games; it has no gregarious, no communal force. This is a serious lack. Men need in college, as in citizenship, a focus. The town-meeting of the student-body is found on the athletic field.

Foot-ball has many claims for popularity. It has all the dubious but powerful attraction of a contest between man and man. This is an element in human nature which must be directed, since it cannot be suppressed. It shows itself in the competitions for honors and in oratory, in every form of sport, in every phase of human life, at the bar, the hustings. It is a force which may lead to mere envy, strife, or cheating, or may make men emulous of all virtue. Foot-ball, when properly played, is a school of morals and of manners. The man who loses his temper in the scrimmage will be surely outplayed. The man who plays an off-side and unfair game may at a

critical moment lose the few yards which will give his opponents victory. As for the brutality of the game, the element of opinion intrudes here. I do not think it brutal. Its brutality will depend on the men who play it, the referees and umpires, the men who from year to year make rules for the game, and on the alumni and faculties who tacitly or otherwise approve the rules. This much must be admitted. Foot-ball is a game for boys or very young men, and it requires careful training for hard games. It may be, therefore, a dangerous game. It exposes younger men to injury from mature men. The untrained boy is out of place in the contest.

Is this necessarily an argument against the game? Certainly not. There are few sports which do not require some practice or training. It means, first, that if it is to remain a college sport it should be guarded on the one hand by excluding mature men,—in short, by a strict undergraduate rule; and on the other hand, by keeping back undeveloped boys,—for example, by refusing permission to members of the Freshman class to play match games. Again, there creep in from time to time phases of play which, while not at all brutal, are dangerous. Thus, the “wedge” is simply a test of pushing power. When the wedge breaks, the men are so entangled that sprains are of frequent occurrence. After playing the old open game in this country, I played the old-fashioned wedge game at Oxford, and was at once impressed with its clumsy and dangerous character. It was with the utmost regret, therefore, that I saw it introduced into American foot-ball, in a more effective and scientific form, but only rendered more dangerous thereby. Keep foot-ball to the undergraduates; eliminate the younger element of the Freshman class; have the medical director omnipotent in excluding boys weak in heart or suffering from strains; see that there are enough umpires to check sudden gusts of temper (boys are human, but should be taught the penalties of too much human nature), and not only enough umpires but men of resolute love for fair sport: do all this, and foot-ball is a game to hold to. Let professionalism creep in, let men take post-graduate courses in order to play foot-ball,—nay, even encourage graduates to play,—and the game may soon be tabooed.

Of base-ball, less need be said, though I am convinced that base-ball is a more serious problem within college walls than foot-ball. The special skill and the special danger of the positions of the pitcher and catcher make the temptation to professionalism greatest just there. A man brought to college to play in a position of this sort is

a moral canker long before he is known; for some of these men are beyond detection at first, and, when known to some who ought to care more for college morals than for college games, are not always unmasked. More than this, base-ball has a longer period of training and a longer season, and more games played away from college. Football is played from about the first of October to the first of December; base-ball from the middle of January to the middle of June.

The time that such sports occupy may be only what is properly given to physical training. It may be half the day. In Lafayette College the time is practically just what is required in the gymnasium, and at the same hours. The loss of time is more in the talk and discussion which spring up around a topic of absorbing interest. A foot-ball season, for this reason, may become as bad as a presidential election to the country at large. Ordinarily, however, this is no great evil, and foot-ball is a better subject for social talk than some things that used to intrude into such coteries as now waste time over athletic possibilities. The real student is not distracted. The average college man, who will not "talk shop" any more than the average business man, is not materially injured.

When we come to consider the evil influences engendered by college athletics, we face a different condition of affairs. There is a great and crying need of reform. The sore spots are "foreign games" (games played away from the colleges) and gambling.

My personal convictions are that college games should be played on college grounds, and only on college grounds. Further than this it is not necessary to go, if training on the part of the team is what it should be; for it should be borne in mind that, if the players are well managed, it is not they, but the camp-followers, who are responsible for the dissipation which takes place after games; and I am confident that I am within bounds when I say that the more serious acts of a bad nature are caused by young alumni and former students. This latter class is a large and always an aggressive one, especially when they have been dismissed from college. The small colleges are not much troubled with the evil of "foreign" games. They feel, however, that their athletic interests suffer from the ill report which proceeds from the aftermath of the great city games. As a loyal alumnus of one of the great colleges which share the degradation of the disorder in New York on Thanksgiving night, I especially hope that Christian education may soon be cut off from any part in that awful desecration of a great national feast-day.

And desecration it is. We think of the day as one set apart for the giving of thanks to God for national benefits. The memories connected with it make the home the first of these benefits: the Christian home with its self-respecting manhood and womanhood. Next to the home, citizenship is the most precious of these benefits,—free citizenship which imposes the duty of observing the law and proving the right of men to govern themselves. Upon such a day to find great institutions founded for the training of our young men in the highest manhood turning them loose upon our greatest city to lead it in a very carnival of vice, is shocking in the extreme. Make as much allowance as we can, we cannot excuse it. Streets ringing with rowdy cries; theatres stormed and interrupted; houses which no young man should ever enter—saloons, dance-halls, and worse—thronged with excited, overwrought young men, who would never have come in contact with such scenes but for the conditions of this day,—are such circumstances the proper avenues to happy homes and useful lives, or the first acts in lives of temptation and vice? Not all are college men,—not a majority, not even a large minority, it may be; but without the college element, without the fluttering ribbon of blue, or crimson, or orange and black, without the college game, the Lord of Misrule would not walk the streets this night.

And how much gambling in and out of college is caused by these great games? In college the feeling with most men is sober, and opposed to the thought that lies at the basis of gambling, whether it be the calculating desire to get something for nothing, or the reckless desire for excitement. But in the hotel corridor, on the field, or in a shouting crowd of irresponsible unknown men or rivals there is only character to steady the half-developed boy. A bluff, a taunt,—and the bet is made that eventually makes one man a gambler and deprives another of his proper spending-money for months. And then it is surely a shame to feel and know that a college game is as much a gamblers' field as a race-track.

The question of gambling concerns the small colleges but little. Few men learn to gamble where they have nothing to stake. Poverty is a blessing in such a case. More money changes hands, it is said, on the Thanksgiving game of foot-ball, than all the boys at many a college of three to four hundred students spend in a year. Gambling is a universal vice, however, and a most fatal one. Anything which tends to lessen it will be a boon to the country.

What has been said of gambling applies also to the question of

gate-money. It is the lack of money which seems to our struggling colleges to be the root of all evil. They stand agape when they learn from the public press that the income from the Thanksgiving game of foot-ball is greater than the total annual expenditure of their trustees for the support of twenty-five professors and the education of three hundred boys. What does this imply? A wild extravagance in athletic outfits, in travelling with special cars and stopping at expensive hotels, in hiring trainers,—an extravagance which communicates itself to the smaller colleges and leads them dishonestly to contract bills for athletic supplies which they can never pay.

Public opinion demands that there shall be an end to this. The way to stop it is to play all games on college grounds. Not only must the games be played on college grounds, but on such college grounds as have about them the college atmosphere. A city ground used by a college will never have this. How many parents have read with wonder, and alarm for their boys, of teams going to Springfield several days before the game, and of the preparations there? How many have wondered why it was that, despite a widely published proclamation requiring students to report at one college at midnight on Thanksgiving, or at noon on Friday at latest, that the team remained at a New York hotel till Monday, and then returned in a triumphal procession? Had the team ceased to be students? Or were they, as some newspapers said, too battered and bruised to return? If the former, why? If the latter, then the game as played is brutal, and its grave should be prepared.

Whose is the responsibility? Let us not shirk our share. College life is as important as college learning. The teaching which instructs the mind, but leaves the man an uninformed and half developed being, is radically wrong somewhere. No college can say, "*We teach* the students, and our responsibility ends there." The colleges must be tried, as other institutions are tried, by their fruits. Wise parents expect their sons to be taught by example as well as precept, and to be made men as well as bachelors of arts.

There are, therefore, real abuses connected with these games. But shall we abandon the manly features or reform the abuses? It is a question for the large universities to answer. The smaller colleges will be able to hold their boys within bounds for the present. The small college is still democratic. Its president and faculty and students are still the closely knit fabric of a simpler time. There are no distinctions of rank and wealth. The president relies on the

love of the boys, and wins it by seeking to aid them in all right ways. No high wall of affairs shuts him off from them; no intrusive demands of the outside world draw them away from him. The influx and efflux of a great university make the voice of the public more potent. What are the people saying?

(1) *Foot-ball is become too dangerous; accidents too serious.* Let the colleges heed the cry. Let the alumni and faculties put on foot a radical revision of the rules. Let games be only between college boys. The Eton-Harrow cricket-match is a greater function in England than any university match. Everywhere the youth of a country are dearer and more influential than the brutal manhood. Make foot-ball a fine sport of manly boys, and there will be fewer prize-fighters, "toughs," and men of doubtful character at the games, but more mothers and sisters and wise and prudent gentlemen. Drive out the professionalism, bring in the spirit of fair play, and revive a love for the distinctive spirit of each college's own breeding.

(2) *Games in great cities have become the occasion, if not the cause, of vice.* Let games, then, be on college grounds. Then if this or that college cannot, or will not, suppress drinking and gambling, it will remain with public sentiment to decide whether they deserve support or not.

Let us all, as citizens, as well as teachers or preachers, seek to build character on a sound basis. Let us relegate every brutal sport to the limbo to which our Puritan forefathers sent bear-baiting and dog-fighting, and to which we are trying to relegate the survivors of such barbarities, as prize-fighting. But do not let us lose our heads and throw away our manly sports. We might as well abandon a democratic form of government because Tammany Hall has grown up under it. Reform, and not destruction, is the need of the hour. What we need is to combine to urge the naturally studious to cultivate their bodies; the naturally vigorous in body, to cultivate their minds. Such efforts will only partly succeed. But instead of the sharp line between the stoop-shouldered student and the riotous or negligent loafer, there is now a large and well-ordered majority of men who study well and take a reasonable amount of physical exercise. As college elocution centres on contests in oratory and debate, as college literary work centres on college papers and college essay-prizes, so college athletics centres on teams and match-games. Prizes and teams and match-games all have their evils, evils of distraction and attraction; but they are indispensable until some better plan of stimulating and perpetuating effort is devised. ETHELBERT D. WARFIELD.