

AMATEURISM.*

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The development of intercollegiate athletics, and of inter-institutional athletics in general, during the past few years has been correctly characterized as mushroom-like; but a growth of such character is not without cause, and such a cause is real. Imaginary causes cannot produce a situation such as we now have with reference to the interest of the public, as well as the student body, in inter-institutional and international sports. Hence it has been my hope to discover,—not so much the evils, which are numerous and serious, in connection with inter-institutional athletics,—as to try and find out why these athletics are growing and what is the nature of the forces producing them.

Inter-institutional sports do not exist for the benefit of the competitors. In this respect they differ radically from college or institutional athletics. When a single institution spends in one year a thousand dollars on each of one hundred men, who shall carry the reputation, the glory of the institution hopefully toward victory, and the one hundred men who are picked out for this supposedly physical training are those who by heredity and by environment are least in need of such intensive physical training, it becomes perfectly clear that the direct object is not the physical betterment of those inter-institutional athletes. When as physicians we examine these men who are competing for their institutions, we find ourselves divided as to whether the sum total on the physiological side has been beneficial or not beneficial.

When 40,000 persons come together to watch 22 men—plus a certain number of substitutes—play football; when there is an intense spirit of partisanship, often associated with the transfer of large sums of money; when the character of the play tolerated by the public opinion of the spectators is a dominant factor in the minds of the spectators as to what is ethically right and what is ethically wrong—then those 22 persons are creating and expressing ideals with reference to those things that are highest in life, ethical conduct and social relations. This game is particular—and intercollegiate sports in general—cannot stand or fall because of the number of knees sprained or the number of hearts dilated or even the number of lives lost—because lives are lost in a far larger way and with far more direful results through social

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and moral demoralization than through the physical injury of a comparatively few persons. The question must turn upon the effects of this playing upon the moral character of the general student body.

As one of your speakers has indicated, athletics represent the chief interest and form the ethical and social relations of the men who in the future are going to dominate this country. Granted that approximately two per cent of the young men of America go to college (I believe there are slightly more than this) and that these two per cent are going to hold 50 per cent of the positions involving the greatest leadership in the public opinion of America—then this athletic problem becomes most significant.

Let us turn to the case of the loyal alumnus, with whose loyalty I sympathize. He has means. He lives in some other city than where his alma mater is located. He retains that interest in athletic sports which he developed in college. He is the patron of the high schools in his vicinity in their athletic sports. He functionates as an athletic official, as contributor of prizes and trophies. He is on the athletic boards for the management, the conduct of athletics. He has a genuine, personal interest in the boys. He is interested in those who do well in their studies and he is immensely interested in those who excel in manly sports. Here is a young man who is finishing his high school work. He has done well in scholarship, very well in athletics. The alumnus believes in the boy and he loves his college. He wants the boy to go to college. The boy cannot go to college in his present financial situation and so the alumnus says, not only quite innocently, but laudably, in so far as he thinks, "Go to my college and I will see you through." He believes he is doing a good thing for the boy as well as for the college. So the boy goes to college. I have stated the case as favorably as I think I can state it, in order to show its untenable position a little later. I have given not a hypothetical, but an actual case.

I will give another, that of a member of the faculty of an institution, a man of independent means, who loves his institution and who has been connected with its athletic organizations for a generation. He likes the boys individually; he gets acquainted with them. He gets directly in touch with them, and through graduates, with desirable boys coming out of secondary schools. Occasionally he says to a boy, indirectly, of course, "Come to this college and I will see your way through." He believes in the boy thoroughly and unless he has a good character, as well as excellence in athletics, he would not do it. He puts him through college. And so he maintains in that university several of those

boys that are of great credit to the university from an athletic standpoint.

I will state another case, still further over the line, that of the athletic trainer, who is not a member of the faculty, who has had put into his possession, not his own private funds, but for his own private distribution, a considerable sum of money to use in precisely the same way as in the previous case, except that it is understood definitely that these funds are to be expended for athletic purposes.

The effect of all this can be seen from one side by noting its relation to the secondary schools. Boys in our secondary schools are usually approached when they make exceptionally good performances, either in major or in minor sports, with so-called "offers" from some one interested or connected with some college or educational institution. The father of one boy in Brooklyn boasted that his boy got letters from 43 different educational institutions. He was incomparably the best boy in this part of the world in his special line, and it was a very desirable line from the standpoint of athletic representation. Such a condition makes a commercial atmosphere, and boys speak very freely about it. They have spoken to me on the subject and they say: "I have such and such offers. I am going to wait and see what I can get. I want to go to college, and this is the best way of doing it. This is the thing on which I stand the best show and I see no reason why I shouldn't do it." And I do not know that the boys can be blamed. It is a perfectly simple, open and shut, pay proposition. That is the situation which the secondary schools must face because of the present situation in the colleges. It is better now than it used to be; things have to be done far more indirectly than formerly.

Question: Who makes those offers?

They come almost exclusively from individuals, not from organizations and not from the officers of the institutions. There are such offers from institutions, but they are not reputable institutions, not such as would be associated with this body.

Question: Do you consider the officers of institutions as parties?

Not directly. It was the effect upon the secondary school boy, or his standpoint of looking at it, that I was considering. It is on the moral side that interests me most.

The result on college athletics of securing for the colleges these men from the secondary schools who are particularly expert is this: if it is worth while to play baseball or football extraordinarily well, young men will be attracted to baseball and to football as a means of social advancement, financial advancement, and

business advancement. In one of our insular possessions a young man, a native of the land, with hardly any preliminary training ran 100 yards in ten and two-fifths seconds. He is now studying in this country on a government scholarship, and so far as we know, that is the only thing that made anybody think of him as a desirable scholarship man. The presence in our athletic competitions of a group of men who are peculiarly expert, so shuts out the chances of the average man that he will no longer compete. The competition is no longer fair or even. This is the history of athletic sports from the days of Greece down. The professional in competition with the amateur throws out the amateur. That has been already accomplished in American colleges and secondary schools, and is being done even in the grammar schools of America. A boy came to me two years ago. He was going to one of our high schools, and he said, "I want to play on the football team. I would like to go to college; it would be a good thing, and if I can play two or three first-class games, it is all that I need." He needed certain help, and he came to me thinking that I could help him and would. His case is not an exceptional one; his honesty is exceptional.

The playing for compensation, directly or indirectly, particularly in summer baseball, creates a group of men with whom it is unfair to amateurs to play, because the competition is not even. It is an unfair competition when the man who plays for fun and recreation plays with men who get compensation. It is not a question of morality; it is a question of fairness, and whether we want to keep athletic sports at all as a medium of fun and recreation. I have dwelt on the primary difference between the amateur and the professional, because that is a primary question. The professional can only remain a professional on the basis of his doing super-excellent work. When he gets into a condition where he no longer wins, his livelihood, his remaining in college (if he depends upon that source) is gone.

I am not an advocate of the easy loser. I think the primary difference between sport in America and in England is a distinction of this kind. The English criticise us for the intensity with which we take our athletic sports; they say we train too hard for them and that our men will punish themselves to finish first. They say we go into athletics with the desperate earnestness with which one goes into a battle. I think that is right. The ability to do a thing tremendously, to take hold, to expend all of one's power, to go to the limit, that is the quality that is making America what it is. Of all the aggravating persons to play tennis or anything else with is the man who plays pretty well, but who does not care very much whether he wins or loses. The

true spirit of sportsmanship involves the doing of one's absolute best. I am not contrasting the easy loser with the graceful loser, nor the honest loser; but I am advocating the doing of one's best absolutely, training if it is worth while going into it, carrying the so-called "honor" of America at the Olympic Games, and then if it is worth while to regard himself as a representative, to put himself in the most perfect condition to represent this country.

A new conscience is developing in the civilized world. The first time this was particularly brought to my mind was in connection with the Dreyfus trial. So far as I know, that was one of the first cases of injustice to an individual where the whole civilized world responded. History is full of greater or equal cases of injustice, but history is not full of any cases where interest was taken by the world in the fate of such a man. A new era in honesty has dawned and loyalty has been extended in a new way. To mention only a few examples of this: the recent great reconstruction of public opinion with reference to the operation of trusts, due to the undoubted dishonesty of certain trusts; the complete disapprobation which has been thrown upon certain men who represented these trusts, men who in their private lives are absolutely impeccable. Twenty years ago the public would never have condemned them, and some of them are the most surprised men at being condemned. A new social conscience is awakening. The recent discoveries in connection with our banks and particularly the reaction of public opinion to them, indicate this new feeling of corporate honesty as distinguished from individual honesty. The corporate conscience is being developed; it is the chief characteristic of the century on which we have started. This is predominantly a social century. The difficulties are not difficulties to be solved by science, but they are primarily difficulties with reference to human relations. Because of the large aggregation of individuals there is need of that form of education which shall guide men in their corporate relation to society. The community in our country is not situated as the Jeffersonian Democrats seem to imagine (excuse me, gentlemen, I do not mean to introduce politics) of a group of independent individuals. We do not exist as independent individuals. We exist in groups; those who stand as individuals are relatively few. The successful party politician gets the men who can handle his group, his crowd. This is the same spirit as that which makes the boys' gang—both the chief evils and the chief good of them.

My belief with reference to intercollegiate athletics is, then, that they do not exist for the individual playing; they are not done for the benefit of the competitor. They are for focusing

the consciousness of an institution, and in that they meet the coming social demand.

The basis of ethics is loyalty. I have seen a number of schools in this city in which there was no feeling of school consciousness as a whole. There was no assembly place to accommodate all the students, no outside function which brought them together. There was no occasion through which they could become conscious of each other and conscious as a group. I have seen such schools, under the influence of a team going out and representing them in athletics, awoken to consciousness, awoken to loyalty to their school. That, I take it, is the great object of inter-institutional sports, the unconscious object—the necessity for something that shall weld into one the attention of the student and the faculty body, something so fundamental and unitary as to permit inclusion in its sweep of practically all the members of an educational institution.

Athletics are important, it seems to me, not as athletics, but because of this social effect and because social opportunities similar in character are so few. The times demand men with higher corporate morality. That cannot be gotten from lectures, nor from books. That cannot be gotten even through the example of persons who are merely fine in their personal lives. It can only be gotten by doing the thing itself, by being loyal to the whole. The point of view that I wish to present here is that there is no other avenue open by means of which it is possible to develop the idea of corporate, or inter-institutional morality, that which represents the individuals but includes them as a whole, as inter-institutional athletics. A generation ago there was a debating association in Ohio that included a large number of colleges and did this same thing. There the general interest was in the inter-institutional debate, and it brought out the feeling for the whole. Class spirit in America is declining because of the growth of numbers and because of the elective system of courses. This was one of the opportunities for the development of the social spirit, but it has gone.

We say, "represent the honor of the institution," and I think that is coming. Within my own memory, at an intercollegiate meeting in the United States—it was a small one—the two colleges were tied and the last event was a mile run; red pepper was thrown into the leading runner's face and the event was won by the rival college; and the man who did it was tolerated in the institution from which he came! No man could remain for a day in an institution who should do this thing now. The standards of morality are advancing fast, and I take it that the time is not far distant when public opinion will not permit cor-

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porate action which is now not tolerated in individuals. Students may be trusted in the rooms of their friends. They will not steal the possessions of their friends, but the time has not yet come when games will not be stolen if the thing can be done. This is a reach toward corporate honesty to which we are tending.

When Arthur Duffy confessed that for years he had been humbugging athletic officials, that he had really been taking money for his athletic prowess when he had pretended and sworn that he had not, he mistook the public judgment that would be passed upon him. He apparently thought that the public would regard it as a great joke, and that he would be regarded the lion of the athletic hour. He was mistaken. Public sentiment has branded him as a man who for purposes of financial gain has lied continuously and systematically and who, through his great skill, has been able to defraud athletic organizations by misrepresenting his amateur status, thus keeping other athletes, who were amateurs, from successful competition.

Here is a powerful social force. It may work toward a higher social morality or toward a lower one. If the various athletic bodies—this Association and the Amateur Athletic Union—co-operate in maintaining inter-institutional athletics on a really amateur basis and develop the strong as well as fine phases of corporate character, we have before us such an instrument for the development of the kind of character as the world now needs and is looking toward.