No. 86 Health, Education, Recreation

ORGANIZED ATHLETICS, GAMES AND FOLK DANCING

BY

CLARENCE ARTHUR PERRY

DEPARTMENT OF CHILD HYGIENE, RUSSELL SAGE FOUNDATION

PUBLISHED BY THE

DEPARTMENT OF CHILD HYGIENE OF THE
RUSSELL SAGE FOUNDATION

400 METROPOLITAN TOWER, NEW YORK CITY

3-11-25

This pamphlet is a reprint of Chapter X of "The Wider Use of the School Plant," by Clarence Arthur Perry.

Organized Athletics, Games and Folk Dancing

By CLARENCE ARTHUR PERRY

PEDESTRIANS in a certain street of the Bronx district were momentarily halted one afternoon by the sight of three small boys who shot from the gate of a public school and darted across the road as if a policeman were after them. As the boy in front was smaller than the other two, by whom he was being chased, the pursuit was quickly ended, the two bigger boys seizing the little fellow before he had gone far. Each took an arm and, wheeling him about, they marched him back with a decisiveness that showed confidence in their authority and ability to act upon it. The prisoner to the surprise of the bystanders showed little resentment and actually smiled in a shame-faced way as he was being dragged through the gateway, now crowded with shouting boys who surrounded the trio like a body-guard as it marched down the yard.

The yard was not large; it had a concrete floor and was surrounded by buildings and a high brick wall. Here and there were distinct groups of a dozen or so boys lined up around gymnasium

mats, and it was to the central one of these knots that the runaway was now brought by his captors. The circle opened. Coat and hat were stripped from the victim; he was placed on a chalk-line drawn across the mat and told to jump. The place where he landed was marked with a crayon and he was made to try again, and then once more, each time jumping a little farther. After three trials he was told to take a place in the line and watch the others practice. One boy of athletic build and forceful manner acted as leader, instructing each one as he stepped on the chalk-line when to spring, how to swing the arms and pull up the knees, how to take care in landing not to touch the mat at any place back of the imprint made by the heels. The surprising thing was that while a good jump always aroused enthusiasm there was a constant interest in the efforts of the puny, undersized fellows who received, indeed, the lion's share of attention from the more expert ones and who were kept more rigorously at practice. One of the teachers came out to help coach the jumpers. He handed his coat to one pupil, his hat and eye glasses to another, and demonstrated with his own lanky body the best method of projecting it through space. Finally a smallish lad with wizened features jumped and when his mates saw his mark they groaned. "My boy, do you smoke cigarettes?" the teacher asked, laying his hand on the jumper's shoulder. The boy hung his head.

These boys were getting ready for a competition in which it was the jump of the whole class that counted. At the final tests the distances reached by all the members of that class would be added together and the sum divided by the number of jumpers. The quotient would constitute the mark of the class. The group was composed of sixth grade pupils while the three other knots of jumpers scattered about the yard belonged to the fifth, seventh and eighth grades. Each class competed only with the other classes of the same grade in the borough, and after the records were all in, a trophy was awarded to the class which had made the highest average distance. Last year this school had won the trophies which had been offered in all four grades.

In the winter time a similar competition was held in "chinning," and in a large ground-floor room which served as a gymnasium a long ladder was inclined against the wall in a way that made it possible for boys of all sizes and several at a time to practice the "pull-up." A principal in another school had put up horizontal bars in the doorway of his class room where the boys "chinned themselves" during the period assigned to physical training as well as at recess time and after school. Trophies were awarded the classes showing the best averages for their respective grades in this competition and likewise in the class running contests which are held in the spring. In all three events every boy in the class has to participate,

so the poorer athletes receive constant coaching from the more expert boys.

The principal's office in this Bronx school contained many trophies. They were beautiful shields with bronze plates upon which were engraved the names of the classes that had won them from time to time. The records of the classes in the standing broad jump were also given. The average jump of the fifth grade boys was a trifle over six and one-half feet; the sixth year lads had reached full seven feet, the next grade two inches farther and the eighth graders seven feet seven and six-tenths inches. These were the best records yet made in the five boroughs of Greater New York. On the wall neatly framed were several certificates announcing the award in former years of trophies which had now passed on to other schools, while a bronze bas-relief and a couple of silver cups on a cabinet in a conspicuous corner testified to other victories on track and field.

THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS ATHLETIC LEAGUE OF NEW YORK CITY

In 1903, Mr. James E. Sullivan, Dr. Luther Halsey Gulick, then Director of Physical Training in the New York public schools, and Superintendent William H. Maxwell, got together and devised a plan for providing school boys with athletics. After presenting the scheme to a number of prominent business men, who immediately gave it

their support, it was outlined at a meeting of the principals. To demonstrate its entire feasibility and give impetus to the movement a track and field meet at which 1500 boys ran races, jumped, put the shot and performed other feats of strength and agility was held in Madison Square Garden. Indoor sports upon such a vast scale had never been seen. The newspapers gave the event wide publicity, while the occasion itself not only generated enthusiasm among pupils, parents and school officials, but won the sympathies of influential men and women and gained support for the cause. In December of the same year the Public Schools Athletic League was incorporated, application for the charter being made by seventeen citizens whose number included the City Superintendent of Schools and persons prominent in military, ecclesiastical, financial, athletic and educational circles. Mr. Roosevelt, then President, not only praised the new venture in an open letter, but became the honorary vice-president. Under such circumstances was the League launched.

Its specific objects, as set forth in the by-laws, are "to promote useful athletics and gymnastics among the attendants in the elementary, high and collegiate departments of public educational institutions of the City of New York, and in connection therewith to co-operate with and support athletic associations, provide athletic grounds and teachers, organize games, offer prizes and conduct

competitions." The funds it disburses for trophies, medals, clerk hire, printing, advertising and the expenses of running games are derived mainly from voluntary contributions and membership dues which are $10 per year for annual members; $50 paid in one sum secures life membership, while a person paying $100 becomes a patron. At present (1910) the membership is large enough to make possible an annual expenditure of over $10,000. In the accomplishment of its purposes the League carries on the following activities, one of which, class athletics, has been partially described in the introduction to this chapter.

Athletic Badge Competition

With a view to encouraging an all-round physical development on the part of the greatest possible number of boys, distinctive badges were offered to all who should perform the following feats:

Class A—Bronze Badge
60 yards dash.....8⅘ seconds
Pull up (chinning on bar).....4 times
Standing broad jump.....5 feet 9 inches

Class B—Bronze Silver Badge
60 yards dash, indoors..... 8 seconds
or, 100 yards dash, outdoors ...14 seconds
Pull up (chinning)..... 6 times
Standing broad jump..... 6 feet 6 inches

High School Boys—Silver Badge
220 yard run.....28 seconds
Pull up (chinning on bar)..... 9 times
Running high jump.....4 feet 4 inches

According to the rules "no boy shall be admitted to any contest who has not received a mark of at least 'B' for the month previous in effort, proficiency and deportment, the principal of the school to be sole judge in this matter," and a further restriction requires that all competitors must show signs of making an effort "to secure good posture." The badge, which is a button shaped like an oblong shield with a winged classical figure and a monogram of P. S. A. L. in bas-relief, can be won only by qualifying in all three tests.

In 1904–05 when the trials were first held 1162 boys, about 2 per cent of those who entered, won badges. Each succeeding year the number of successful competitors increased until in 1908–09, 7049 badges were awarded. These trials were held in 115 elementary schools containing a total of 47,540 boys in their grammar grades, in which the competition is general. In thirteen high schools 1130 youths competed and 308 qualified for the solid silver buttons. The Winthrop trophy, a bas-relief representing "The Soldier of Marathon," which was donated by the president of the Board of Education to be awarded annually to the school having the largest proportion of its eligible pupils (boys from fifth grade up) among the winners of the badge, was won by a school in which 59 per cent of the enrolled boys were successful. In several other schools from 40 to 50 per cent won the coveted buttons.

In five years 16,428 lads have won the athletic

badge, but they form only a small fraction of the number who have been benefited through competing for it. Standing both for all-round athletic ability and scholarship these neat bronze buttons are highly prized by their owners, who frequently wear them in their lapels for years after leaving school.

Class Athletics

This activity involves an even wider participation in physical exercise by school boys, since in order to have a record stand at least 80 per cent of those enrolled in the class must take part in the competitions, and no group of less than eight members is counted. Insistence upon participation by the *entire* class would have been preferable, but it was found impracticable on account of absences due to sickness and other unavoidable causes, and 80 per cent was the largest proportion considered feasible to require.

The events in which classes are allowed to make records and the seasons when they are tested are as follows:

Standing broad jump	Fall
Pull up or chinning	Winter
Running	Spring

The various distances run by the four grades allowed to enter these contests are:

Fifth Grade	40 yards
Sixth Grade	50 yards

Seventh Grade.....60 yards
Eighth Grade.....80 yards

In each event the record for the class, as has been stated above, is the average of those made by its members. The distances to be covered and the duration of the tests, to avoid the risk of any overstrain, are carefully adjusted to the physical strength of the different groups. In timing the running contests the method adopted to lessen the possibility of error is thus described in the League rules: "The boys are lined up behind the starting-mark in the order in which they are to run; the timer, who also acts as starter, stands at the finish line and gives the signal for each boy to start. As the first runner crosses the finish line the second runner is given the signal to start. As the last boy crosses the finish line the watch is stopped. The record is found by dividing the time elapsed by the number of boys competing. If an ordinary watch is used the first boy should be started when the second hand is over the '60' mark."

The broad jump and the pulling-up tests are usually held in school yards and gymnasiums, while for the dashes armories, athletic fields and sometimes streets are used. After the president of the League explained its work to the chief of police an order was issued to patrolmen not to interfere with boys who were practicing running in the streets under the oversight of their own teachers.

When chinning as a test was first introduced there were some schools where only a small part of the boys could pull themselves up even once, but during the winter of 1909 the average for the fifth grade, which made the poorest record among the five borough winners, was 7.6 times, while the city champions of the same grade averaged 11.2 times. A total of 31,711 boys competed in the standing broad jump, 14,488 in the chinning, and 7057 in the running, the latter number being small on account of the unpropitious weather which prevailed during the spring.

The trophies awarded in each borough to the winning classes in the several grades are contested for each year, but the holders are also given an engraved certificate which is their permanent property.

These two activities are the peculiar achievements of the League. The early competitive sports are pyramidal in effect, rising to an apex of a few experts who are brought into view through hewing-down contests, but the badge test and the class athletics spread as they progress. Competing against a standard instead of an individual gives everybody an opportunity to try and a boy is not obliged to defeat another boy in order to win.

Thus they develop the spirit of co-operation and lay the foundations of a greater social cohesiveness later on.

The League believes, however, that despite their disadvantages the older types of games have their uses. Experts are needed to stimulate the masses, while champions create and focus school spirit. Intensive activities naturally complement those that are extensive and in accordance with this policy the following games and sports are annually organized and promoted by the League officials:

IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Baseball	Indoor championship games
Basket ball	Outdoor championship games
Soccer football	Outdoor novice games
Swimming	*Sunday World* championship games

Except the *Sunday World* games, all of the above sports are found also in the high schools and, in addition, they have the cross country run, marksmanship competitions, relay races, and tennis.

At these meets the regular events in track and field sports are held, although hammer throwing has been omitted on account of the danger it involves. For the purpose of bringing together in competition only those who are of the same general physical ability the boys are classified by weight and allowed to enter only such events as are fixed for their respective weights. The various weight classes for elementary pupils recognized

by the League and the corresponding events in one of the games series are shown in the following table:

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS

80-pound Class
50-yard dash
Running high jump
Standing broad jump
360 yards relay race

95-pound Class
60-yard dash
Running high jump
Standing broad jump
440 yards relay race

115-pound Class
70-yard dash
8-pound shot put
Standing broad jump
440 yards relay race

Unlimited Weight Class
100-yard dash
12-pound shot put
Running high jump
880 yards relay race

To guard against any unfairness the competitors in the track and field meets are weighed in their athletic costumes on the grounds at the time the sports are held. The scales are set up in a narrow lane through which the runners have to pass to enter the track. When an 80-pound race is called the beam is set at that weight and the contestants step in turn upon the platform. If the beam does not come up the boy goes on to the track; if it does, he is diverted back into the crowd. To

save time the jumpers are not weighed until after the contests and then only those who obtained the first five places in the event are asked to step upon the scales. If a boy proves to be overweight he is disqualified and the place among the winners is given to the boy of proper weight who has made the next best mark. As a further illustration of the carefulness as to details with which the games are organized it may be mentioned that just as soon as an event is concluded and the winners determined they are given certificates which, presented at a booth on the field, enable them to receive their medals at once and return to their friends in the grandstand with the insignia shining upon their proud little chests.

In the elementary games each school is limited to a certain number of entries, and a boy is allowed to enter only one event, thus preventing over-exertion and making it possible for a greater number of individuals to take part. In these games also competitors must have received in their school work a mark of at least "B" in effort, proficiency and deportment. No high school pupil is allowed to compete in the mile run unless he has reached the age of sixteen years and six months, nor represent his school in any branch of athletics after reaching twenty-one. Strict rules regarding betting, amateur standing, participation in outside meets, length of attendance at school represented and previous matriculation in higher institutions of learning are laid down in

the League's by-laws under "Eligibility," and these are rigidly enforced.

Through the generosity of friends of the League eleven high schools have each been provided with two Krag-Jorgensen rifles and a sub-target gun machine. By means of the latter boys can practice shooting at a target without any expense, noise or risk to life, and acquire the same skill as if they were using a regular army rifle. At the present time over 1000 boys are practicing at these ranges and nearly a dozen team matches are held each year. Although the competitions in marksmanship have been carried on but a few years, according to the League's 1909 Year Book, "were the country to requisition the services of the high school boys we could provide more than a regiment trained in the use of the rifle, with three companies prepared for service as marksmen, and a company of sharpshooters."

The skill being acquired at the school ranges is well described by General Wingate in a recent report: "In the tournament which took place under the auspices of the National Rifle Association at the Sportsmen's Show in February and March, 1909, at which a number of prizes were offered by different arms companies and others interested in the subject, over 1000 boys participated—more, in fact, than the eight target ranges and the sub-target gun machines that were provided would permit. The shooting was done at 60 feet, bull's eye, one inch, counting five;

center, 3¼ inches, counting four; inner, 5¾ inches counting three. The shooting was fully equal to anything which has ever been seen in any of the National Guard competitions. In fact, the scores made by many of the competitors have never before been equalled. Thus, J. Ehrlich of the Morris High School, firing 120 shots with a possible score of 600 points, half shot standing and half prone, made 598, only missing the bull's eye twice; and the team of the Morris High School, firing 10 shots each, standing and prone, made 557 out of a possible 600."

But shooting is not the only sport in which the school boys have developed expertness. In a deciding game of the baseball tournament of 1909 a Brooklyn nine played another from Manhattan in which only two runs and one error were made, while in the other events new records are made every year.

While it is true that these games constitute a process of elimination, that they have in view finally a few individuals or a team instead of a school or a class, nevertheless their sweep at the beginning of the tournament or the championship series is wide enough to justify a consideration of their extensive character. Here are a few figures taken from General George W. Wingate's presidential address for 1909:

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN SEVERAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GAMES

Indoor championship, 878 boys from 73 schools.
Basket ball tournament, 105 teams (5 boys in each) from 65 schools.
Swimming contests, 336 boys from 36 schools.
Outdoor novice, nearly 1000 boys.
Outdoor championship, 750 boys from 57 schools.
Baseball, 106 teams representing 346 schools.
Sunday World series, 33,460 boys of 147 schools.

For the purpose of enforcing gentlemanly behavior while going to and from the games, preventing injury while traveling on the cars or boats, and keeping order at the meets a system of school police has been adopted. The boys of each of the four upper grades elect six policemen to serve for the term and these then choose lieutenants and captains who are supplied with suitable badges by the Board of Education.

The enjoyment of the meets has recently been increased by the presence of school bands. One of the directors of the League gave enough instruments for two bands and paid the services of an instructor. Membership in these organizations became so attractive they soon had long waiting lists.

The following, taken from the official handbook of the League, shows very concisely its aims in the promotion of

Athletic Courtesy

The League endeavors to foster clean sport between gentlemen. The following statements express the spirit to be sought and maintained in such sport. It is the privilege and duty of every committee and person connected with the League to embody these principles in his own actions and to earnestly advocate them before others:

(1) The rules of games are to be regarded as mutual agreements, the spirit or letter of which one should no sooner try to evade or break than one would any other agreement between gentlemen. The stealing of advantage in sport is to be regarded in the same way as stealing of any other kind.

(2) Visiting teams are to be honored guests of the home team, and all their mutual relationships are to be governed by the spirit which is understood to guide in such relationships.

(3) No action is to be taken nor course of conduct pursued which would seem ungentlemanly or dishonorable if known to one's opponent or the public.

(4) No advantages are to be sought over others except those in which the game is understood to show superiority.

(5) Officers and opponents are to be regarded and treated as honest in intention. When opponents are evidently not gentlemen, and officers manifestly dishonest or incompetent, future relationships with them may be avoided.

(6) Decisions of officials are to be abided by, even when they seem unfair.

(7) Ungentlemanly or unfair means are not to be used even when they are used by opponents.

(8) Good points in others should be appreciated and suitable recognition given.

With ideals of conduct such as these being constantly demonstrated in school gymnasium,

yard and athletic field it is not strange that outcroppings of ethically splendid acts should appear on the surface of the League's annual work. Here are a couple of instances taken from the 1909 report of the secretary, Dr. C. Ward Crampton: "P. S. 6, Manhattan, was declared the champion of the City of New York on a Saturday night, winning it by a single point from P. S. 77, Manhattan. On Monday morning the coach of P. S. 6, Manhattan, discovered that his one valued point had been obtained through the dishonesty of one of his boys who had run unfairly on the relay team. He quickly made his way to the Board of Education and laid his laurels at the feet of the Public Schools Athletic League, regretfully, but he could not hold his magnificent prize unfairly." Concerning the effect upon scholarship, this incident may also be quoted: "Many a big, vigorous boy out of sympathy with his school work is driven to his lessons by his mates so that he can become eligible to represent his school. The school paper of P. S. 30, Manhattan, Mr. Paul, principal, recently reached my hands. It contained the records of the broad jump. The champion jumper of the school was ineligible to compete, even though his jump nearly equalled the record of the city, and the boy editor stated, 'It is a pity he can't jump as well with his lessons.' I wrote the principal expressing the hope that such a good athlete might do better in his studies, and received the reply in a week or so stating that his

classmates had attended to the matter, and the boy had won his way to a high scholastic standing."

Administration

For the purpose of distributing the infinite number of tasks incidental to the conduct of games upon such a vast scale, a district athletic league is organized for each group of institutions under a district superintendent of schools. The specific functions of these sub-leagues according to constitutions prescribed for them by the parent league are as follows:

(1) Take charge of the competitions for and distributions among the schools in its district of the buttons awarded by the Public Schools Athletic League.

(2) Select the competitors who are to compete from such schools in athletic meetings of such League.

(3) Supervise and promote athletic contests in and among the schools in such districts.

(4) Assist in providing grounds, building, apparatus and other things required for the promotion of athletics and physical training among the children attending such schools.

Besides discharging these duties the board of directors also annually appoints a delegate who acts with the appointees from the other local leagues on the "Elementary Schools Game Committee." This body meets once a month and has charge of the inter-school sports. A similar

committee whose members are teachers appointed for the purpose by the principals of the high schools manages all of the athletic doings between the secondary schools. Each of these committees nominates a director of the Public Schools Athletic League.

Any misunderstandings or questions connected with the conduct of games between elementary or high schools are treated by their respective games committees, but matters of amateur standing, athletic policy and other questions involving general standards come before a "Games Committee" consisting of three directors of the Public Schools Athletic League. The present chairman of this committee, Mr. James E. Sullivan, is a well-known ex-athlete and an organizer of the Amateur Athletic Union of the United States; he has been an official in nearly all the prominent athletic meets of the past thirty years. The members of these committees perform valuable and time-consuming services, but they receive no compensation beyond the satisfaction of participating in an important and successful work.

Co-operation of School Officials

The membership of the district athletic leagues, just referred to, is regularly made up of the resident district superintendent of schools, the director of physical training, two members elected from the local school board, and two teachers selected by the superintendent. These persons,

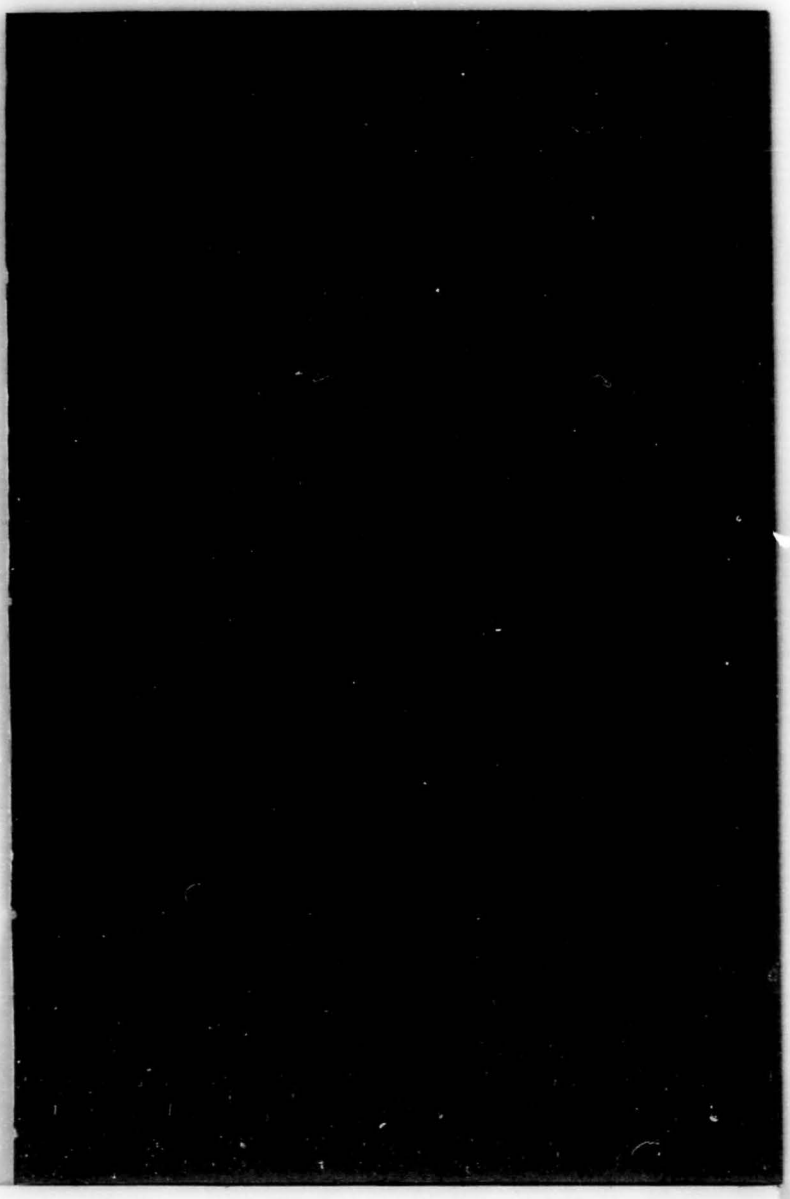
and such others as they may elect to assist them, carry on, either directly or through their officers and committees, the athletic affairs of the district. The referees, judges, scorers and other officials of the various track and field meets held for the elementary pupils are selected from among the high school instructors, while the games among the secondary students are officered by elementary teachers, thus facilitating unbiased rulings and decisions.

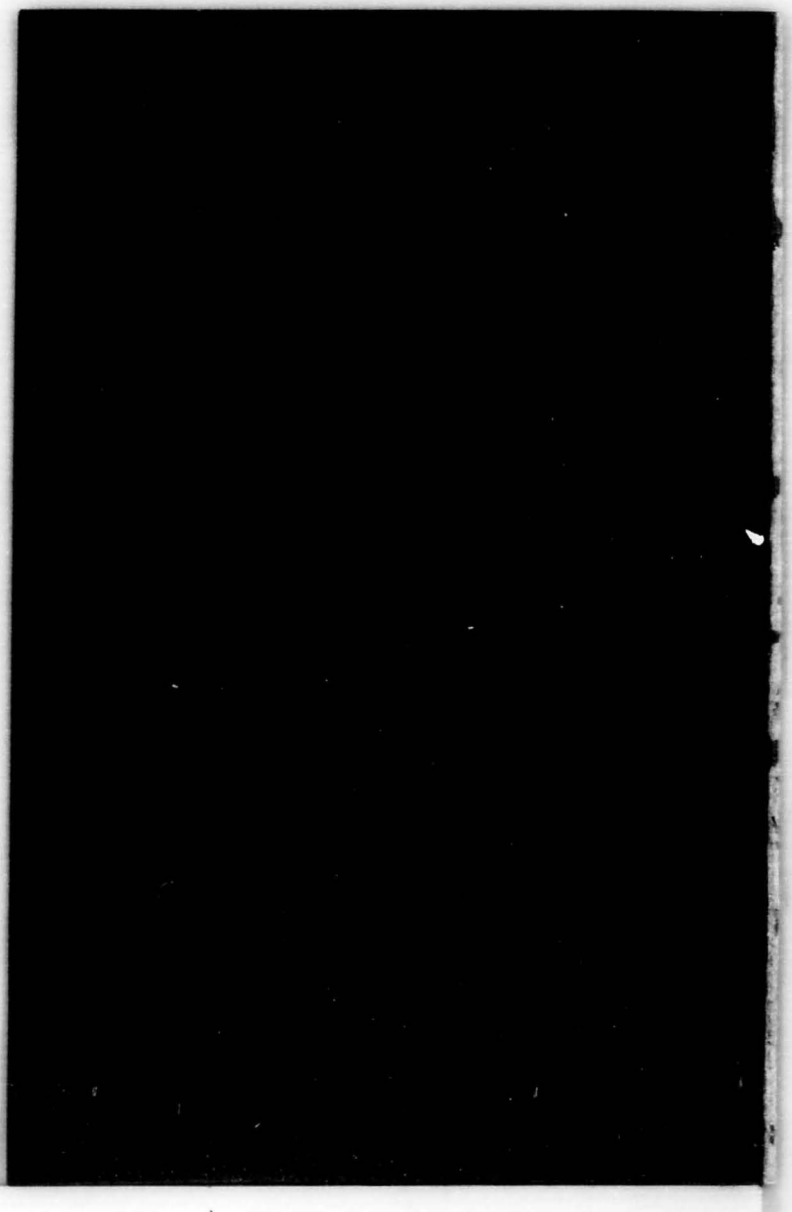
Concerning the assistance of the teachers Dr. Gulick, who acted as secretary of the parent league during his connection with the Board of Education, once wrote: "One of the prominent features, without which the League could not have succeeded at all, has been the earnest, continuous and enthusiastic support of the principals and teachers. During the past year four hundred and eleven men have contributed their services toward helping their boys in athletics, during one or more hours per week after school hours. In the large proportion of cases this has resulted in that close alliance of teacher and pupil which is difficult to secure when the only relationship is that maintained during school hours. The teachers have accompanied their boys to the meets, have encouraged them, have cheered them when victorious, and consoled them when defeated. While it is true that without the financial support of the business men of the city the League could not have been carried on at all during its early days, it

is equally true that the support of the teachers was even more important. If these men who have volunteered their services had been paid for their time at the same rate at which they are paid for their other services, it would have amounted to a contribution several times over that which was contributed in actual money by our generous-minded citizens."

While the League is not officially affiliated with the Board of Education its work nevertheless has received a very real support from the Board. The co-operation of the superintendents, principals and teachers mentioned above is recognized and approved by the Board. After the formation of the League it created three new positions and filled them with an inspector and two assistant inspectors of athletics to attend to the general organization of the sports, while the bronze buttons awarded in the athletic badge test, at first purchased with funds solicited by the League, are now provided by the Board. Recently it passed a by-law authorizing the payment of teachers who referee at the baseball, basket ball and soccer foot ball tournaments. The jumping, chinning and running events which constitute the athletic badge test and class competitions have been incorporated by the Board of Superintendents in the syllabus of physical training for the four grammar grades.

Through the efforts of the president of the League the Board of Aldermen appropriated





$500,000 for four athletic fields well distributed throughout the city which are now in use and under the control of the Board of Education. The officers of the National Guard have also given valuable assistance by granting the use of armories for tournaments and indoor sports.

Folk Dancing

One afternoon in the late spring an exhibition of after-school play was given in Public School No. 22, situated in the lower part of New York. The street outside was a seething mass of wagons, pushcarts, men, women and children. Over the shop doors were Polish, Magyar, Slovenian, Italian and Yiddish signs. In front of the school was a park playground with the familiar swings, chutes, ladders and horizontal bar, but the sun was beating down so fiercely that although classes had just been dismissed few children were playing in the grounds. The school contains a long room on the ground floor furnished only with a square piano and a couple of chairs placed at its farther end. The concrete floor and few windows with their iron gratings made the place seem cool and pleasantly dim in contrast with the heat and dazzling light of the street.

Everybody had gone home except two teachers and forty girls from the third, fourth and fifth grades who now came marching down-stairs into the room. Faces which but a few minutes before had been set and stern with the necessity of keep-

ing order now broke into smiles, while the childish spirits so long repressed began to bubble up in brightened eyes and overflow in laughter and quickened movements.

One teacher went to the piano and the other marshalled the children into an alcove at the farther end of the room. Not a sound was heard in the whole vast building above. The roar of wagons and jangle of trolley cars, softened and filtered as it were by walls and shutters, seemed to come from a far-away city. There were no lessons to get, no errands to run, no babies to mind. Tomorrow was a myth; the past never had been; only this blood-bounding moment existed. A chord was struck and then forty little forms, light as fairies and sprightly as imps, came running down the long room. Quickly they took positions in parallel ranks of five with hands on hips, their faces all turned in the same direction. The player struck up an old Swedish tune called "Reap the Flax" and the dance was on. All reach down to the left, as if to seize the grain, and then bring the hands up to the waist in the motion of reaping. This movement is repeated several times, always in time with the music, and then the figure changes. During the succeeding measures the flax is stacked, hackled, corded and twisted into a single thread, the latter being represented by a long line of girls in single file, each with hands on the shoulders of the one ahead, swaying from one side to the other as they circle around the room. In the conclud-

ing figure four of the dancers form a square while a fifth, with running steps, winds in and out of the group illustrating the movement of the shuttle in weaving the linen. Thus these children of the crowded city taste the joys of an old-world folk who had loved their simple pursuits enough to perpetuate them in melodious symbols and festive ceremonies.

But the Scandinavians were not the only people which contributed to the program. The younger girls, known as the Junior Club, next gave the Russian Dance, the dominant figure of which graphically showed the peasant reaching into a bag of seed at the left side and sowing it broadcast with an outward sweep of the right hand. The Tarantella, danced by the Senior Club with the added accompaniment of castanets and tambourines, gave a vivd impression of the vivacity and grace displayed by the Italians on their native sward, while the rapid whirlings, rocking movements and brisk heel and toe exercises of the athletic Hungarian Solo, stepped off by the same girls, suggested scenes familiar to the countryside of central Europe. Likewise the May-pole Dance, in which both clubs wound bright streamers around practicable standards to a merry tune, reflected some of the color and rhythmic beauty of time-honored English outdoor festivals. The children threw themselves into the dances with abandon and unflagging energy. In the glow of such activity, wholesome to the body and stimu-

lating to the imagination, plain features, pallid skins and ungainly shapes were all transformed, and for the time the sordid and the ugly in the lives of these young people gave way to something beautiful and good.

Interspersed with the dances were a number of games which provided spirited but friendly competitions between the two clubs, each of which had twenty members. In the first contest the Seniors were divided into two teams of ten girls each, which were lined up in single files, facing each other, but separated by the whole length of the room. Parallel with them were the two files of Juniors, Number One of each line being paired with a leader of the opposing club and facing in the same direction. "On your mark!" shouted one of the teachers. The two leaders in the western end brought their toes up to the starting-line. "Get ready!" They bent forward ready to spring. "Go!" came the signal, and two forms darted down the room towards the other halves of their respective teams where the leaders stood awaiting them. Swiftly the runners slapped the outstretched hands and then went to one side out of the way. The girls who had been touched took up the race, their part being to run and "touch-off" the Number Two's of the lines at the other end of the room. And so it went, back and forth, each runner trying to cover the distance as quickly as possible in the hope of increasing the lead of her side, or cutting down that of her opponents.

Surprising as it may seem, the Juniors, averaging a year less in age than the Seniors, gradually gained and amidst the gleeful shouts of the midgets, the last girl on their side ran the length of the room to the finish line several yards ahead of her rival. Thus ended the Shuttle Relay Race.

In the next contest, all the members of the two clubs lined up in single files behind the starting-line. At the other end of the room, opposite each line of girls, were two white circles drawn side by side upon the hard floor. In one of the circles stood three Indian clubs while the other was empty. At the signal, Number One of each line ran to the set of clubs in front of her and with one hand placed them one by one inside of the other circle. That done she ran back and touched-off Number Two, who then dashed down the room and in like manner placed the clubs back in the other circle. A Senior girl was a little hasty and one of the clubs falling down she had to go back and set it up again. This gave the Juniors the advantage and their last girl changed the positions of the clubs and crossed the starting-line just as the last of the Seniors reached the clubs, thus winning the race for her side. In the contest which followed, likewise a relay race, each line of girls had to pass overhead a large basket ball and each member carry it in turn the length of the room and back again. The Seniors were successful this time and also in the Potato Relay, which involved taking three potatoes, one at a time, out

of a waste-basket, and placing them on spots two yards apart. Number One did this, and then they were picked up again by Number Two, and so on until each girl had participated. All of the games played demanded equal physical effort and steadiness under exciting circumstances from each girl, and tended to produce a wholesome sense of mutual dependence. They required no more space than is afforded by the average school basement or yard.

Toward the middle of the hour and a half consumed by the dances and games a ripple of heightened interest expressed by turned heads showed that some one had attracted the attention of the dancers. It was Miss Elizabeth Burchenal, the young woman who as Inspector of Athletics had taught the teachers these folk dances. With her sister she had traveled through Europe visiting the festivals of the country-folk, and while she had learned their dances her companion had jotted down the music. And now these children of the transplanted peasants were being taught the steps through which their parents had shaken off the stiffness of their limbs and found forgetfulness of life's hardships.

At the close of the program Miss Burchenal inquired if there were any Hungarian girls present who knew the Czardash. The hands of two went up. In a twinkling she had seized the bigger girl by the waist and was whirling her around the room. Immediately the children scrambled

for partners and with eyes on the Inspector they began to imitate her steps. Falteringly at first, then more surely and finally with complete confidence, couple after couple made the movement their own until nearly the whole roomful was successfully tripping the intricate steps of the Hungarian national dance.

GIRLS' BRANCH OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS ATHLETIC LEAGUE

The kind of work done by this organization has been illustrated in the preceding account of the after-hours dances and games in an East Side public school. The manner in which it accomplishes its purposes is indicated in the following announcement taken from its handbook for 1909–10:

> In order to provide instruction in the events sanctioned for inter-class competitions, the Girls' Branch offers a course in dancing and athletics, free of expense, to public school teachers who will in return give one lesson per week after school to athletic clubs organized in their own schools. It will be necessary to have at least two teachers from each of the schools represented —one who can play the piano and one who can demonstrate—and not more than four.

During the past season (1909–10) 1100 teachers, representing 178 schools, attended the eleven classes in folk dancing and athletics conducted by Miss Burchenal and her six assistants in the gymnasiums of several high schools. The number of school girls instructed in turn by these teachers was over 13,000.

The competitions referred to take place between clubs of the same school only and not between individuals. To be eligible for an interclass competition every girl must have attended school for one month and have received a mark of at least "B" for the previous month in proficiency, and "A" in effort and deportment. The events include dancing, the games described above, throwing the basket ball for distance, and such other tests as may be sanctioned by the Public Schools Athletic League. In the high school competitions team games including basket ball are also used. In judging the dancing a score is made based upon (1) memory, (2) form and grace, and (3) spirit, each counting ten points. Every meet must include both dancing and games. The trophies awarded in these annual or semi-annual competitions consist of silver cups and bronze placques—the latter being the more numerous—which have been donated by members and friends of the League. They usually bear plates upon which the names of the winning classes are engraved. There is also an official League pin, shaped much like the athletic badge given to the boys, which is bestowed upon the individual members of the winning teams or classes in these competitions. During the spring meets of 1909, 2365 of these pins were awarded.

The Girls' Branch favors dancing as an exercise because it has been found that more girls can dance in the same space than can engage in either

class athletics or team games, that one teacher can instruct more pupils in dancing than in any other form of athletics, and that it affords girls more pleasure and wholesome exercise than the games or sports. At the same time the organization is very much alive to the evils which might arise from the wholesale instruction of girls in an art that is so much employed upon the stage. It therefore has forbidden individual dancing or any exhibitions at which an admission fee is asked, but folk dancing at parents' meetings and other occasions when friends of the girls are invited is allowed. To prevent the rise of social distinctions a ban has been put upon the purchase of fancy costumes, the needful appearance of homogeneity being accomplished by the use of a colored hair-ribbon, a sash, or a scarf, which may be made of cheese-cloth or some other inexpensive material. Girls are encouraged to provide themselves when possible, however, with bloomers and suitable shoes which permit more freedom in exercising. To guard against the notoriety and unwholesome excitement which inter-school competitions inevitably produce they have been forbidden. At the same time the legitimate enthusiasm attendant upon large occasions, especially those out of doors, is annually allowed free play in huge May Day festivals.

The girls' clubs in the schools of Manhattan and the Bronx gather on one Saturday morning in the year in Van Cortlandt Park, while those of

Brooklyn meet in Prospect Park. A multitude of 4000 bright-eyed children, dancing the Carrousel or winding bright streamers around fifty May-poles upon the green lawn is a sight that lingers long in the memories of the parents and friends who crowd the edges of the vast field reserved for the sports.

Besides these big meets individual schools have little outings of their own. Thus during the past summer the girls of the Washington Irving High School trooped out to one of the parks and celebrated "Midsummer Day" with a varied program of games and sports. There were torch, hurdle and chariot races, the competitors in the last event being teams of four girls, driven by a fifth, running abreast and carrying a wooden bar with reins of ribbons attached to its ends. In one of the relay races the contestants had to carry large blocks which at the finish were built into a miniature house. Besides the fixed events there were opportunities open to all to swing in rings, climb ladders and use other pieces of playground apparatus. In the course of the afternoon an address was delivered by the president of the Public Schools Athletic League. Even more significant of the effective work being performed by the Girls' Branch are the private May parties, occurring annually, when children by the thousand throng the parks and carry out complete folk dances, with and without music, to the delight of the accompanying elders and friends.

The Girls' Branch was organized under regulations prescribed by the League and is supported by membership fees and private contributions from about one hundred public-spirited women. There are no district sub-leagues, but otherwise its affairs are administered in much the same manner as those of the parent organization. It likewise has no official connection with the Department of Education, though the latter has very effectively co-operated by inserting in its course of study many of the folk dances, by permitting its inspectors of athletics to assist the organization in its work, and by taking into consideration the character of the work done by the grade teachers who conduct the girls' clubs, when promotions are made.

Not the least of the important services rendered by the Girls' Branch has been its promotion of class-room games. At an early meeting of the League one of its prominent members donated fifty dollars as a prize to be awarded for the best original game that should be capable of use in a room with fixed seats and desks, engaging fifty pupils at one time, interesting girls as advanced as those of the sixth grade, and requiring a large amount of activity from all of the participants. About fifty games were submitted and sixteen of the best of these, including the prize game "Balloon Goal," have been compiled by Miss Jessie H. Bancroft, the assistant director of physical training, and incorporated in the official handbook of the

Girls' Branch which is published by the American Sports Publishing Company.*

ATHLETICS OUTSIDE OF NEW YORK CITY

Largely influenced by the work of the organization which has just been described, school sports have been organized and placed upon a permanent footing in nearly a score of American cities. Through a resolution of the Cleveland school board "athletic events and games are constituted a regular division of the course of physical training, and shall be provided for under the supervision of the Department of Physical Training in such manner, approved by the Superintendent of Schools, as shall subserve the purpose of physical training as herein stated, and be so arranged that every public school pupil desiring to do so, may be able to participate in activities of this nature appropriate to his age and development." Regulations governing the various athletic events are also given in detail.

A few instances will serve to show some of the principal variations in the affairs and methods of the different leagues. In New Orleans, Troy and Newark (New Jersey) the girls are allowed to have inter-school competitions. In the last named city these take the form of physical training exhibitions and athletic meets, the chief events in the latter being oat bag relay, chariot, Indian club and flag relay and potato races, and a thirty-yard dash.

* 21 Warren Street, New York.

In the place of a classification by weight, such as is used in New York track and field sports, Newark has adopted one based upon age and height, as follows:

Juniors—9 to 13 years, height less than 4 feet 10 inches.

Intermediate—Under 15 years, height less than 5 feet 3½ inches.

Seniors—Under 18 years, any height.

For each of these grades there is a button test involving jumping, chinning the bar and running. A boy who comes up to one of these standards is awarded a button costing twenty-five cents; on making the second he wins a forty-five-cent button and another worth seventy-five cents if, in a subsequent year, he comes up to the third standard. In Cincinnati the athletic badge test includes throwing a basket ball with two hands from over the head, besides the three other usual events. The Troy League does not believe in giving prizes to the individual competitors, but awards trophies to the schools represented by the winners. The annual presentation of these, however, takes place at a meeting in a large hall, which is attended by parents, friends and prominent citizens. The mayor, councilmen and school officials make addresses, and the boys who have won events during the year march up to the platform to the sound of orchestral music and are decorated with ribbon badges by the president of the League.

As in New York, the organization of leagues in Cincinnati and one or two other cities has been initiated by the director of physical training. In Seattle, where the school board co-operates by employing a man who gives his whole time to the work of the League, its inception was due to the director of the local Y. M. C. A., who had been inspired by a talk on the P. S. A. L. delivered by Dr. Gulick at the St. Louis Exposition in 1903. The Y. M. C. A. also started and still takes an active part in the school athletics of Troy. In Buffalo the superintendent of education asked a committee of school principals to take up the matter of organizing an association and it was a similar body of officials that instituted the Pittsburgh Public School Boys' Athletic League. In Schenectady also the school athletics are managed by the principals, whose enthusiasm is so great that they are able to hold successful meets without the aid of constitution or by-laws, or even circulars and blanks. The business is transacted at the regular weekly meetings presided over by the superintendent. In the new Pittsburgh League pupils from the fourth to the eighth grades inclusive, who are regular in attendance and stand well in deportment and scholarship (they must average at least 65 per cent in their studies), are admitted to membership upon the payment of twenty-five cents. This fee entitles them to admission to all concerts, exhibitions and meets held by the League. The Buffalo organization, in ad-

dition to the membership fees and private contributions, receives annually $3.00 from each school belonging, while the Cincinnati association besides similar sources of support receives an annual appropriation from the school board. In Baltimore the school sports are managed by an outside body called the Public Athletic League in which the school commissioners and superintendent of schools have a voting membership. The League holds an annual athletic meet for school boys and furnishes them with instructors in physical training and sports. The Newark Board of Education has provided a twelve-acre, fully equipped athletic field worth $75,000, while in Tacoma, Washington, a magnificent stadium has been constructed for the public school boys at a cost of approximately $80,000, a large part of which was donated by business men.

Besides the athletic undertakings which have been mentioned there are throughout the country many smaller enterprises ranging in importance from the activities of a voluntary association like that at Schenectady down to the three or four ball games played each spring by the village high school boys with nines from neighboring schools. While including generally no events like those of the badge test or class athletics, they afford in differing degrees the benefits of outdoor competitions, and in many instances promise to grow into permanent and more comprehensive schemes. In no place do the socializing, character-building effects

of promoted sports show more clearly than in the rural districts, where they have already demonstrated the capacity for meeting an increasingly recognized need. In 1906, Myron T. Scudder, then principal of the New Paltz (New York) Normal School, organized the Country School Athletic League of Ulster County, which at its second annual field day and play picnic had more than 1400 children from the neighboring districts, besides 200 high and normal school students and from 1200 to 1500 adults. The expenses were met by contributions from the Granges, the county teachers' association, private individuals and the proceeds of an entertainment given by the Normal School pupils. The badge test and class athletic events of the New York P. S. A. L. were both used as a part of the League's activities but, strange as it may seem, few of the country boys could satisfy the standards of the former and it was consequently not popular, while the group athletics were generally appreciated.

Baseball tournaments, track and field sports, and folk dancing are now carried on in connection with the vacation playground work of Newark and many other cities, and these features are undoubtedly destined to have greater and greater prominence in all branches of summer work for young people. Organized school athletics have also contributed largely to a wholesome celebration of Independence Day. One of the most enjoyable parts of the "monster" Fourth of July

program carried out this year (1910) by the city of New York was that of the free games held in eighteen parks well distributed throughout the five boroughs of the municipality. At each of these centers there were track events for the members of eleven different athletic bodies, including those from the public schools, the P. S. A. L.—elementary and high school, and evening recreation centers and playgrounds. No entry fees were charged the competitors, and gold, silver and bronze medals were awarded to the first, second and third winners in each event. The existence of these organizations all in working order greatly facilitated the efforts of the public-spirited men who strove to give the young people of the city an attractive substitute for the usual internecine diversions with gunpowder.

Folk dancing takes place in the after-school recreation classes for girls which Newark and one or two other cities, like New York, are now holding in class rooms and upon the roofs of school buildings. It also forms one of the recess activities at Pensacola, to which reference has already been made.* In this city, at first, the hallways were used for the games and dances, but later a platform was built under some fine trees out in the yard and a rented piano installed at which the high school students cheerfully take their turns. Here the girls lose all thought of books in the Looby Loo, Krakiavik, Ladita and the May-pole

* See Chapter VI, page 179

or Barn dances, while out on the lawn others, under the leadership of teachers, are engaged in volley ball or some time-hallowed game that was played by their forefathers upon village greens in the old country. Meanwhile the boys, too, on their side, have good times jumping, chinning, and shot-putting, in short run contests and other outdoor events which are suited to class competitions. The enthusiasm of the teachers and the improvement in the school life which has grown out of these recess games have already been dwelt upon in a previous chapter.

The effects of systematic sports upon the school—and precisely here the conscientious teacher rightly demands that they must justify themselves—are well summed up in the words of Mr. Lee F. Hanmer who, through his service as inspector of athletics in the New York schools and his later travels for the Playground Extension Committee, has had exceptional opportunities for observation:

"In cities where this work has been organized and given a fair test school authorities are practically unanimous in saying that:

First—Class work is better.

Second—The health of the school children is improved.

Third—A wholesome school spirit is developed.

Fourth—There is less trouble about discipline owing to the closer relation and better understanding between the pupils and teachers."

References

BANCROFT, JESSIE H.: Games for the Playground, Home, School and Gymnasium. Pages 456. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1909. Price $1.50.

BISHOP, E. C.: How Should the Athletics of the Y. M. C. A. Supplement Those of the Public Schools? *Hygiene and Physical Education*, Vol. I, No. 10, page 880. F. A. Bassett Company, Springfield, Mass. Price 20 cents.

BURCHENAL, ELIZABETH: Folk Dances and Singing Games. Pages 88. G. Schirmer, New York. Price $1.50.

CLINE, EARL: The Advisability of Inter-High School Contests in Athletics. *Physical Education Review*, Vol. 15, No. 1. Page 22. American Physical Education Association, Springfield, Mass. Price 50 cents.

CRAMPTON, C. WARD: The Folk Dance Book. 4to cloth. Pages 82. The A. S. Barnes Company, New York, 1910. Price $1.50.

GULICK, LUTHER HALSEY: Folk and National Dances. Proceedings of the Second Annual Playground Congress, 1908, pages 429–439. Playground Association of America, 1 Madison Avenue, New York. Price 5 cents; $2.50 per hundred copies.

HANMER, LEE F.: Athletics in the Public Schools. Pamphlet published by Department of Child Hygiene of the Russell Sage Foundation, 1 Madison Avenue, New York. 1910. Pages 36. Price 5 cents; $2.50 per hundred copies.

JOHNSON, GEORGE E.: Education by Plays and Games. Pages 234. Ginn and Company, Boston, 1907. Price 90 cents.

LARNED, CHARLES W.: Athletics from Historical and Educational Standpoint. *Physical Education Review*, Vol. 14, No. 1, page 1. American Physical Education Association, Springfield, Mass. Price 50 cents.

MEANWELL, W. E.: The Team Game Tournament. *Hygiene and Physical Education*, Vol. I, No. 9, page 796. F. A. Bassett Company, Springfield, Mass. Price 20 cents.

NICHOLS, E. H.: Competitive Athletics. *Physical Education Review*, Vol. 14, No. 9, page 589. American Physical Education Association, Springfield, Mass. Price 50 cents.

SCUDDER, MYRON T.: Organized Play in the Country. *Charities and The Commons* for August 3, 1907. New York.

See also the reports of the Committees on Athletics for Boys and Athletics for Girls, of the Playground Association of America, 1 Madison Avenue, New York City, and the handbooks of the Public Schools Athletic Leagues of Baltimore, Md., Buffalo, N. Y., Newark, N. J., New Orleans, La., New York, N. Y., Seattle, Wash.

These will be sent free on application to the Secretaries of the leagues in the cities mentioned.

Some of the Pamphlets that can be Furnished by the Department of Child Hygiene of the Russell Sage Foundation

400 Metropolitan Tower, New York City

Athletics

50. Inter-High School Athletics. Earl Cline.
58. The Functions of College Athletics. Chancellor James R. Day.
63. The Law of Amateurism. Clark W. Hetherington.
69. History of the Administration of Inter-Collegiate Athletics in the United States. D. A. Sargent, M.D.
72. Athletics in the Public Schools. Lee F. Hanmer.

Festivals and Celebrations

53. May Day Celebrations. Miss Elizabeth Burchenal.
60. A Sane and Patriotic Fourth. Mrs. Isaac L. Rice.
68. Celebrating Independence Day. August H. Brunner.
70. Independence Day Celebrations. Gulick, Orr, Gardner and Hanmer.

Use of School Buildings

51. The Wider Use of the School Plant. Clarence A. Perry.
52. Public Lectures in School Buildings. Clarence A. Perry.
56. Vacation Schools. Clarence A. Perry.
83. The Community Used Schoolhouse. Clarence A. Perry.
85. Evening Recreation Centers. Clarence A. Perry.