

CHAPTER XII

VALUES IN AMERICAN COLLEGE ATHLETICS

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IN considering the values that reside in American college athletics, the authors of the present study make no claim to originality. They desire only that their conclusions be grounded in the facts of the enquiry and a devotion to the truth as they see it. Inasmuch as their concern has been less with school than with college athletics, they may be pardoned if they turn from school athletics with the summary observation that, except for commercialism in some of its local aspects, certain phases of school hygiene, and the blight that college recruiting and subsidizing have cast upon the school and its pupils, those in charge of school athletics are giving daily increased evidence of disposition and ability to deal with their problems effectually. Indeed, if the salutary changes already begun in school athletics are permitted full, sincere, and consistent development, they will in the course of, say, ten or fifteen years materially modify college athletics for the better. But it must be clearly understood that the problems of school athletics, although related intimately to those of college athletics, are not identical with them, and that many of the principles which operate successfully in the one cannot justifiably be taken over bodily into the other.

As for American college athletics, their improvement during the past thirty years has been marked. Let that improvement continue — let their physical, moral, and spiritual potentialities in the education of youth be clearly understood and sincerely acted upon, and their value in our national life will be immeasurably enhanced. If the reader ask, What is delaying this consummation? the answer, as we conceive it, is set forth toward the end of the present chapter.

In the meantime, certain features of college and university athletics must be weighed : their educational bearings, the amateur status, and the interest of the public.

I. THE EDUCATIONAL BEARINGS OF COLLEGE ATHLETICS

That college athletics bear upon the educational process few will deny. The notion that they possess inherent "educational values" and the question whether they are to-day so administered as to exert such values may be discussed quite independently of whatever conception of education may be favored. In general, modern American theory respecting the purposes of education exhibits two fairly well distinguished trends: On the one hand, there are those who believe the university, the college, and the school, to be essentially intellectual institutions that should train the habits and powers of the mind. On the other hand, the school and the college, and, indeed, parts of the university are regarded by many as socializing agencies that prepare for various aspects of life.¹ The question whether the tendency to regard the college as a socializing agency has grown from an attempt to justify uncontrolled conditions in our higher education on the basis of existing phenomena need not detain us. Either of these fundamental conceptions recognizes the importance of athletics. If training the habits and powers of the mind is to be the function of education, athletics may provide recreation and contrast and may tend to develop moral qualities of perseverance, honesty, courage, and the desirable ethical characteristics that comprise sportsmanship. If, again, education is regarded as the greatest of the socializing forces, then athletics may directly prepare for life through their physical and their moral and ethical aspects. Thus, in whatever philosophical background education be viewed, both intercollegiate and intramural athletics may contribute, either indirectly in the case of the first view or directly in the case of the second, their share to the process. The channel through which athletics make their contribution is habits, physical and psychological, moral, or social. Any commendation or condemnation of college athletics may therefore be tested by the habits that they mold in youth.

A. THE TANGIBLE ASPECTS

For the present, only two of the tangible bearings of athletics upon the American college need consideration: physical health and the effects of athletic success upon college enrollment. Other tangibles, the material and financial, are reserved for later discussion.

1. Physical Health

Chapter VII shows that the effects of athletics and athletic exercise upon the bodily condition and growth of undergraduates, in spite of some conditions that call for

¹ This second view is well particularized in Meriam and associates' *Problems of Indian Administration*, Washington, 1928, page 373. "The real goals of education are not 'reading, writing and arithmetic' . . . but sound health both mental and physical, good citizenship in the sense of an understanding participation in community life, ability to earn one's living honestly and efficiently, in a socially worthwhile vocation, comfortable and desirable home and family life, and good character. These are the real aims of education; reading, writing, numbers, geography, history, and other 'subjects' or skills are only useful to the extent that they contribute directly or indirectly to these fundamental objectives." It should be noted that athletics also may be regarded as a skill.

obvious improvement, are in the main beneficial. Both young men and young women who participate in intramural and intercollegiate athletics improve their health in a way that can be measured in anthropometric terms. College athletics have upon the nation a direct physical effect that justifies not alone their continuance but also their encouragement and further development, especially in their intramural phases.

2. Athletic Success and College Enrollment

The usual approach to discussion of the relation between athletic success and college enrollment has been somewhat like this: On the assumption that the one promotes the other, enthusiastic alumni have argued that athletic success must be secured at all costs for the sake of the college, while their critics have maintained that such a course implies a prostitution of educational ideals. This controversy is all more or less beside the point. As a matter of fact, the athletic reputation of a college or university, and especially its success at football, have little if anything to do with college registration. A successful college football or other athletic season comes too late in the school course to influence materially the choice of college by the great majority of boys, because that choice will have been made perhaps as long as four years previously. Even a succession of three or four victorious football teams appears not to be sufficient, of itself, to affect registration appreciably. The factor of material prosperity among parents exerts a far more important effect upon college enrollment, and a conviction that college or university training makes for success in life, however the term be defined, also contributes its share. There may be a trivial increase in attendance when these matters are used as "talking points" by recruiters or "boosters" in "selling" the college to expert athletes. An influx of such matriculates, eager for concessions at every turn, exerts upon the quality of intellectual work in any college a markedly deleterious effect.

3. The Educational Bearings of Physical Training

An institution that sets for its purpose the training of habits and powers of the mind does not entirely serve those ideals if it admits to its curriculum courses in football playing, coaching, and other phases of college athletics, or if it grants toward the degree credits in physical training awarded for participation in intercollegiate contests. On the other hand, the institution that regards itself as primarily a socializing agency will welcome the thorough training of the body as one of its essential functions. Numbers of American colleges and universities have taken up a position somewhere between these two views, and included intercollegiate athletics, occasional lectures in "hygiene," some intramural athletics (often all too perfunctory), a minimum of corrective exercises, and sometimes medical attention in a "Department of Physical Education." As in the spread of the term "university" in the United States, the adoption of the term "physical education" has been largely a process of imitation in

terminology. Only at a minority of institutions where "physical education" has been widely advertised have the meaning of the term and the component factors that justify it been sincerely weighed and thoroughly effectuated. Very few institutions have recalled that in American college life athletic sports and pastimes long antedate physical training or physical education as represented in an organized body of knowledge.

B. THE INTANGIBLES

President Eliot, who was once erroneously regarded as opponent of our college athletics but who in reality stood among their friendliest critics, gave testimony in his Annual Report for 1892-93 to their intangible values:

Athletic sports [he wrote] have infused into boys and young men a greater respect for bodily excellence and a desire to attain it; they have supplied a new and effective motive for resisting all sins which weaken or corrupt the body; they have quickened admiration for such manly qualities as courage, fortitude, and presence of mind in emergencies and under difficulties; they have cultivated in a few the habit of command, and in many the habit of quick obedience and intelligent subordination; and finally they have set before young men prizes and distinctions which are uncontaminated by any commercial value, and which no one can win who does not possess much patience, perseverance, and self-control in addition to rare bodily endowments.

In the thirty-five years that have passed since these words were written the intangible values which President Eliot so well appreciated have in some aspects become more scientifically understood, but by no one have they been more justly set forth. In the past, popular reasoning concerning them has run somewhat in this way: College athletics, especially football, and other body-contact games, *inculcate* in participants such desirable qualities as courage, perseverance, initiative, uprightness, coöperation, and honesty. Thereby they contribute very essentially to the popular welfare, because these estimable qualities, once established in youth, persist into manhood as habits and thus benefit society and its members. Upon these notions modern psychology and moral science have cast much doubt. For the moment it will repay us to summarize very briefly a few of the sounder tenets concerning these matters.

Such moral qualities as courage, initiative, and the group of characteristics included in the term "sportsmanship" are probably not *inculcated* by athletics at all. If through inheritance a young man or woman possesses them in whatever degree, athletic contests and games may effectually exercise them and through use strengthen them. The most that can be justifiably claimed is that athletics tend to develop in participants certain moral qualities that are already present. The medium through which this development may be accomplished is habits. No amount of athletic participation will create qualities that are inherently lacking. But the earlier in the school life of the pupil the attempt

is made, not too ostentatiously, to emphasize the active qualities of sportsmanship and to make them habitual in his experience, the better for school and college athletics, and indeed for all forms of sport.

The question whether the moral qualities developed by athletics persist in the affairs of daily life is somewhat more complicated, principally because it involves what is technically known as "carry-over" or "spread of training." Summarily, the hypothesis may be stated as probable, that the moral qualities developed by athletics are carried over into the affairs of daily life when the conditions underlying both athletics and daily life are similar, and furthermore, that the extent of the "carry-over" is in large measure determined by the degree of that similarity. Further than this in claiming advantages for college athletics it is at present unwise to go.²

1. Socializing Values

For our purposes the term "socializing values" designates those influences or forces which enable men and women to take their places worthily among their fellows. Obviously, such values will affect life in college more immediately than life after graduation.

a. *In School and College*

Assuredly, "coming out for the team" has assisted in overcoming shyness, developing self-confidence, and widening the acquaintanceship of numbers of undergraduates. In the well-administered college or university athletics beneficially fill many leisure hours. At institutions where undue attention is devoted to games and contests, emphasis upon some of these forces may narrow rather than widen social contacts. Unfortunately, the relative emphasis placed by college opinion upon the various branches of athletics does not in any way correspond with their comparative use in student leisure.³ Moreover, athletics contribute little to an appreciation of the past, whether in history, art, or literature, with the possible exception of Greek civilization.

And yet so important a part of college life have athletics become that it is not unfair to regard student activities as composed of athletics on the one hand, and all other non-academic activities, musical, dramatic, intellectual, on the other. A reflection of this situation is discernible in college discipline. In the "emotional intemperance of the football season" certain psychologists discern serious dangers that point toward

² Cf. The extreme view in opposition is represented by the following sentences: "Those who claim moral training for sports make the mistake of assuming that character traits are acquired by going through the motions." "The conclusion that there is a transfer of moral qualities from athletics to life situations is entirely hypothetical, and especially if the life situations are different from those of the game." Edwards, Artman, and Fisher, *Undergraduates*, 1928, pages 147, 148, quoting a psychologist in a men's college.

³ "Of the activities which had been learned in physical education and used in leisure time by more than 50 students, swimming had the highest percentage of use in present leisure. Hiking, tennis, dancing, baseball, and volleyball follow in the order named with basketball having the smallest percentage of use in students' leisure." Ethel Julia Sexman, *Students' Use in Leisure Time of Activities Learned in Physical Education in State Teachers' Colleges*, New York, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1926 (Contributions to education, No. 217).

crowd hysteria. Again, the body to which the disciplinary powers of the college are usually delegated is charged also with instruction and with the guidance of non-athletic activities such as dramatic and musical interests, and social events; yet only in rare instances does a glee club, a dramatic club, a college magazine or newspaper, or even a fraternity chapter test the disciplinary powers of a faculty or a dean as an athletic organization tests them.

Were there no signs of a changing perspective among American undergraduates regarding the place of athletics in college life the prospect would be gloomy. Fortunately, many indications point to a growing feeling at perhaps a dozen Eastern institutions that athletics are far from the most important feature of college days. If, as is most probable, this feeling spreads to other universities and colleges, and if it betokens a genuine reappreciation of the place of sport in undergraduate affairs, and not a shrinking from physical or moral competition, the effect upon American education will be most salutary.⁴

b. After Graduation

It is to be regretted that the good results of college sport in life after graduation are not more numerous and widespread. One explanation is that intercollegiate competition has been so hotly encouraged as to rob general athletics of much of their interest.

Nevertheless, some of the advantageous effects of college sport in later life are worthy of note. First, if there is good reason to believe that schoolboy athletics tend to decrease such crimes as larceny, burglary, embezzlement, assault, manslaughter, and murder, there is no less reason to believe in similar powers for college sports.

Secondly, habits of athletic participation may guide the wise use of leisure. On the one hand, the knowledge of games acquired in undergraduate days can be applied to later life for the benefit of psychological health. On the other, the enjoyment of the spectators at any athletic contest is increased if their appreciation is founded in experience. The college that encourages extravagance or a discernibly wrong emphasis in its athletics is not fulfilling its functions as an institution of higher education, regardless of the point of view adopted in educational theory.

Thirdly, the loyalty that motivates participation in college athletics is a source at once of strength and of weakness. Among undergraduates its strength lies in its driving power, which, when exerted by a group, forms a body of campus opinion which is practically irresistible. Among alumni its principal weakness lies in the fact that loyalty — albeit perhaps mistaken loyalty — may stand in the way of essential changes or improvements in the college. This conservative and conserving power among graduates, which is a matter not of reason but of emotion coupled with memory, has in the

⁴It is highly significant that the list of "objectives" for intercollegiate athletics adopted by athletic directors of the (Mid-Western) Intercollegiate Conference on May 27, 1927, places fun among the secondary "objectives" of intercollegiate competition. The brief code derived therefrom does not mention fun at all.

past upon occasion stood in the way of bettering certain practices that are harming both sport and education. The college loyalty that the best ideals of sportsmanship enhance looks constantly to the service of the college in all things that work together for good.

2. Anti-Social Influences

We turn now to those influences in college athletics, which, if the theory of the spread of training is accepted, work to impair the relationship of men and women to their fellows.

Both in management and conduct and in the technique of play college athletics of the present day exhibit phases of dishonesty, deceit, chicanery, and other undesirable qualities. Perhaps this is to be expected in view of long-standing abuses in which some present-day alumni participated as undergraduates. But a contention that most of these qualities are the results of the machinations of older persons and that they are not now initiated by undergraduates fails to take into account numerous representative cases cited in Chapter X. The fact is that the subsidized college athlete of to-day connives at disreputable and shameful practices for the sake of material returns and for honors falsely achieved. Arguments in support of such practices are specious, calculated to mislead, and fundamentally insincere. Viewed in the light of common honesty, this fabric of organized deceit constitutes the darkest single blot upon American college sport.

If it be argued that the desirable social effects of participation in college athletics persist into afterlife, it is just as probable that their evil effects also persist. The matter does not lend itself to statistical proof, but on the basis of moral analogy, a knowledge of the charms of material comforts easily won, and even a rudimentary appreciation of human fallibility under temptation, it is more than probable. Under just what conditions of life a business man will be dishonest who in undergraduate days was subsidized to play football and yet passed himself off as an amateur, it is impossible to state; but the fact that his earlier deceit was successful over a period of years is to be reckoned with in accounting for his adult character and acts. Such a man, of course, may not go to prison. But we are concerned with those undiscovered acts which may not reach the stage of criminality, yet nevertheless bulk large in the welfare of society and the relations of a man to his fellows.

If, then, we deplore the actions of those young men who under the guise of sportsmen profit by the dishonesty that recruiting and subsidizing involve, we must condemn utterly the activities of those older persons, be they alumni, townsmen, or college officers, who recruit and subsidize athletes, corrupt young habits under the guise of charity, and imperil private morals to the detriment of society. They stand among the secret enemies of the social order.

3. Preparation for Success in Life

The notion that athletics "prepare for life" is, of course, based upon the theory of the spread of training and the persistence of habits. As we have noted, this theory depends for its validity upon an assumed similarity between athletic competition and modern life. Even when this notion is accepted, together with the concomitant notion that life is very like a team game, present-day college athletics may exert both advantageous and deleterious effects upon individuals, and through them upon the groups of individuals that we call society.

We lack objective evidence to show that success in athletics is an index to success in life after graduation. On the other hand, recent studies tend to demonstrate that a high quality of intellectual accomplishment in college has relationship to later success, however that term be defined. Accordingly, it is probable that the qualities of character that give rise to what we understand as success in life have developed less from the pursuit of college athletics than from the best academic achievement.⁵ From such a working hypothesis it follows directly that college athletics should be so conducted as to exercise as many as possible of the desirable social qualities, — honesty, sincerity, persistence, thoughtfulness of others, coöperation, initiative, modesty, self-control, and the rest — that may contribute to the welfare of society; that they should assist and by no means interfere with intellectual pursuits, success in which gives earnest of later achievement; and that they should be shorn of anti-socializing tendencies. Although this ideal may never be completely fulfilled, it can be served far more sincerely than it has been up to the present time by the American college.

4. Morals and a Few Ethical Considerations

The line between the social and the moral values of college athletics is not sharply drawn. We set forth at this point a series of ethical and moral considerations, some of which have been touched upon but not emphasized in preceding pages.

From observations made during the enquiry it appears that the most vigorous attempts at direct inculcation of precepts — what we are accustomed to regard as "moral education" — exist at denominational colleges and universities. Notably, exacting instruction in such matters is given at the Catholic colleges. But, so far as could be ascertained, in no institution, Protestant or Catholic, are the moral precepts, instructions, and exercises of the lecture room carried into the open air of the playing field, or the moral practices of the playing field related by conscious effort to other phases of college life. As a result, the theoretical and the practical aspects of direct moral education in many American colleges lie far asunder. It is not unlikely that the

⁵ It is likely that the reason for the War Department's preference of athletes as promising officer-material rests upon two facts: First, athletes are athletes because of personal qualities which conduce both to athletic and to military success and are developed, but not inculcated, by athletics. The similarities between "combative" athletics and war were emphasized many years ago by the late Walter Camp. Secondly, athletes possess physical strength and endurance above those of non-athletes.

details of scholastic, or, indeed, any other systematic philosophy, might be brought the more nearly home to the affairs of everyday life by reference to that portion of undergraduate life which is associated with the playing field and the stadium.

Testimony from a number of deans and other administrative officers is to the effect that problems of college discipline tend to be less acute when larger proportions of undergraduates participate in athletics. The same opinion has been expressed by many masters in English public schools. In the course of the enquiry there were studied several instances in which non-participating partisans, who accompany teams on comparatively long trips, indulged in misconduct that varied from tipsiness to downright immorality. It seems reasonable to believe that such misconduct, being fairly common in college towns, passes without much comment unless its uproariousness reaches the ears of disciplinary officers, but that, publicly indulged and paraded in less accustomed communities and in railroad trains, it becomes rightly a subject of sharp condemnation. In respect of university discipline, it is entirely possible that the present generation of college men and women possess, on the whole, more self-control and better manners than their predecessors. In any event, it is impossible, in considering breaches that attend upon athletic contests, to know whether they are chargeable more to athletics than to standards of daily life in the American community.

Previously in the study the statement was made that betting and gambling upon athletics touched the American undergraduate only occasionally. Possibly for this reason the more egregious examples appear to be especially reprehensible. Intersectional contests of all kinds, however, provide a fruitful field for the professional gambler and his familiars. Furthermore, it is likely that the number of college men who bet is materially increased through the mistaken loyalty that intersectional contests call forth. The efforts of the (Mid-Western) Intercollegiate Conference to eliminate betting among undergraduates have been fruitful, and the report of the Committee of the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools upon Athletics, in 1922, has also done much good in this particular.

Among the most distasteful aspects of that violent partisanship which overrides all ethical decency stands the tendency, too often abetted by newspaper writers, to protest, sometimes forcibly, the decisions of referees and umpires. The punishment of a Canadian football player who struck an official, life suspension from the game, is severe but justified. The efforts of those football officials who have discussed with alumni the problems of their duties on the field have tended to reduce, through an appeal to sportsmanship, the dissatisfaction with the earnest efforts of almost any referee or umpire that had grown astoundingly during the past fifteen years. Over a like period, says a much respected football official, the quality of sportsmanship displayed in intercollegiate contests has much improved. Players foul less and behave better. Coaches, too, are becoming better sportsmen. It is perhaps too much to hope that the manners

of a crowd of spectators, numbers of whom possess little appreciation of the seemly, should be reformed completely forthwith. Perhaps, however, when members of the college family preponderate as spectators at intercollegiate contests the situation will be less offensive.

In short, respecting the ethical and moral considerations involved in certain phases of college athletics, the dilution of partisanship and intensity of rivalry that a more widespread participation in athletics at American colleges can bring, will in time work its changes in both active participants and spectators. Here, as elsewhere, the problem is to perpetuate the advantages that flow from college athletics and to eliminate as many as possible of the disadvantages.

C. SUMMARY: ATHLETICS IN EDUCATION

The boasted "educational values" of athletics as they exist to-day in the American college leave much to be desired. The educational advantages that flow from inter-college contests are principally by-products. Those which result from intramural athletics are neither so strong nor so widespread as they could and should be made. It is true that, in spite of comparatively high incidence of fatalities and injuries, athletics tend to confer much physical benefit upon participants. On the other hand, however strong may be the conviction that they inculcate or increase in young men courage, initiative, and other moral qualities, this remains to be scientifically established. More than a decade ago it was pointed out that excessive desire for victory has deprived us of one of the most important educational advantages of athletics, since coaching from the side-lines removes from the players the essential quality of initiative. The precision of play engendered by modern American coaching methods in practically all branches of athletics becomes a habit which exerts itself to shape conduct when conditions arise in games or in life similar to those that have been experienced in preparation. The amount of independent or individual thinking on the part of a college athlete which modern methods of athletic coaching, and in many instances supervision in management, induce is minimal. If the theory be adopted that education consists in the pupil's experiencing a series of situations as similar as possible to those he will encounter in after-school life, the notion that our college athletics are "educational" falls miserably to pieces. Tested by this standard, physical education, to the extent that it includes many branches of intercollegiate athletics, has little value. Much the same is true with reference to those intramural sports in which interest and participation are grounded in compulsion to obtain credits for the degree.

The educational problem of the future for the improvement of American college athletics is, therefore, upon the improving groundwork of school athletics to set up methods of coaching, management, and participation in which young men and young

women may be accustomed to the making of decisions and in which a mental appreciation of problems replaces the present almost automatic reactions to stimuli applied under a comparatively hard and fast series of conditions. The problems of moral education implied are of still wider extent, but they come down at last to an exemplification of sportsmanlike qualities, especially those which begin and end in sincerity and honesty. These ends can be secured through a series of carefully graduated steps, which, although they must be appreciated and guided by older persons, need not and should not be vaunted. Beginning with the college freshman, the entire athletic activity of the college should be so reframed as progressively to increase the amount of responsibility for athletics and their conduct that the group of undergraduates sustain, this burden being lightened for individuals by spreading it over increased numbers, until at the end of the senior year the undergraduate shall have derived every possible benefit, in body, mind, and character, that college sport can yield. In devising such a program, the service of undergraduates of good judgment should be enlisted; in its execution their good-will and interest are obviously a *sine qua non*.

II. THE AMATEUR STATUS IN COLLEGE ATHLETICS

At no other point in the whole field of college athletics is honesty so severely tested as it is in connection with the convention of amateurism. The reason can be readily comprehended. Those who have sought to uphold the status of the amateur in the United States have proceeded, consciously or unconsciously, upon the notion that the man who plays a game for fun, or for the love of it, or for sport's sake, is in some way advantaged over the man who makes a living at it. Certainly the advantage cannot pertain to skill, for the general run of professional athletes tend to be far more expert at their sports than the general run of amateurs. Nor has either group a proprietary claim upon the exemplification of sportsmanship. The root of all difficulties with the amateur status touches the desires of certain athletes to retain the prestige that amateurism confers and at the same time to reap the monetary or material rewards of professionalism. The results in college athletics and probably in other forms of competition have included equivocation, false statements concerning eligibility, and other forms of dishonesty, which are to be numbered among the fruits of commercialism.

The values that argue for the preservation of the amateur status in American college athletics bear, first, upon the educational process, whatever its fundamental purpose, and secondly, upon the individual undergraduate. It must be kept in mind that amateurism is a convention. Furthermore, it is a social convention, in that it affects not alone the individual but also his relationships to his fellows, both participants and non-participants.

A. AMATEURISM AND THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

It is important that the doctrine of amateurism in college athletics be preserved, whether the college is regarded as an intellectual agency or as a socializing agency.

1. In an Intellectual Agency

The direct bearing of amateurism and of its antithesis, professionalism, upon American higher education was set forth a few years ago by a committee of the faculty of Purdue University :

The average individual does not appreciate the real evil of professionalism in college athletics. He sees nothing inherently wrong in the acceptance of money for playing, any more than in accepting compensation for any other kind of legitimate performance. Why, then, should faculties make so much noise about it? The fact is, that mere playing for compensation is not, in itself, wrong, but the admission to the university of students who are financed because of their athletic prowess and because of their ability to round out winning athletic teams, cannot do otherwise than result in disaster to our educational program and to its standards of scholarship.

Particular instances in which athletes have been subsidized or otherwise professionalized to the detriment of the intellectual aims of a college or university will recur to many readers. The presence of a man whose prime interest in college is dependent upon payment for his athletic services delays and reduces academic instruction to his intellectual level and speed, both in the classroom and in every other phase of college work. It invokes concessions at entrance and at every point at which an academic requirement is set. It leads in the direction of special privilege in tests and examinations, the relaxation of standards of grading in class and in written work, the granting of special opportunities to repair academic standing when it is injured by the close attention to athletic practice that subsidies entail, and much excusing from the obligation to meet academic appointments promptly and sincerely. It disunifies the student body and soon brings other undergraduates to feel that efforts to fulfil the intellectual purposes of the institution avail nothing if men are to be supported merely for the sake of winning games. No other force so completely vitiates the intellectual aims of an institution and each of its members.

All this would be true if professionalism were practiced frankly and openly. Where, however, its practice is concealed, an even deadlier blow is struck at spiritual values.

2. In a Socializing Agency

If the American college be regarded as a socializing agency, the effects of professionalism, open or covert, in its sports are even more deleterious. Contravention of the amateur status in college sport strikes at the root of educational democracy.

The term "educational democracy" stands in need of definition. For present pur-

poses, it denotes that characteristic of our educational process which vouchsafes to each and sundry equal opportunity to develop his habits and powers, of the mind, the body, or the spirit, in accordance with his capacities. The effect of importing subsidized or professionalized athletes into any institution seriously impairs not alone the incentive but also the privilege of every other student to develop to the full his interests and powers, intellectual, spiritual, or physical. If college athletics have the socializing values that are attributed to them, then the infraction of the amateur convention usually gives to the man who possesses athletic talent that he develops with a view to financial return, an advantage over his less skilful fellows which, because of the desirability of victory, destroys at one blow that democracy of the playing field and the river which is rightly numbered among the most precious merits of college sport.

From the point of view of American ideals in physical education, professionalism is an even more serious evil. Now, amateurism, as Professor Hetherington pointed out twenty years ago, "aims to conserve the natural rights of the many as against the privileges of the few." Thus, the convention of amateurism represents a guarantee on the part of the American college that every undergraduate shall have his fair and equal chance to develop his physical powers for the honor of his fellows, his own self-satisfaction, and the good of the nation. This guarantee any form of professionalism in a college or a school tends to destroy.

The stock arguments of those who would countenance defiance of the amateur convention in college athletics are as follows: A man with musical talent is permitted without comment to represent his college on a glee club and at the same time to sing for pay in a church; or another person may edit a college periodical and sell as many stories as he can to magazines. Why, then, should not an athlete represent his college and simultaneously be compensated for this or any other athletic success if his skill be sufficient? Is he not suffering from unfavorable discrimination if he is not permitted thus to capitalize his talent?

The answer, for present purposes, is soon made. In college life such pursuits as singing, acting, public speaking, debating, and writing make up a general group of undergraduate activities that are directly related to the arts. The "skills" upon which expertness in them depends are primarily mental or emotional; physical skill enters only as a part of the mechanics of expression. These pursuits, in their more competitive development, afford tests of even temper and self-control, but such tests are in general not sudden or violent; in other words, they offer opportunity for a degree of reflection which may considerably delay and modify the reaction to any stimulus.

On the other hand, such pursuits as football, baseball, tennis, golf, and rifle-shooting belong to a special group of undergraduate activities that collectively are termed sport. Sport involves the larger muscles of the human body and their coördination, almost always in violent exertion. Its "skills" are primarily physical; mental and emotional

"skills" are present, but they vary between sports. Sport in general implies the overcoming of opposition or an obstacle — physical, mental, moral — which is immediate. The resulting contest is carried on under certain conventions. Through the relation of these conventions to the desire to excel, sport tests the good temper and chivalry of its participants. These tests, which involve the control of reactions, and our primal inheritance of admiration for physical prowess, give rise to much of the aura with which sport is surrounded.

The conventions of sport are of two kinds: One sort — rules, written or otherwise established — pertains to the conditions under which contests take place. Appropriate rules are as essential to a general activity as to a sport, if competition is present. The second set of conventions, some of which are expressed in rules, penetrate deeper into the essential nature of sport; they are extended to the general activities only by a process of analogy. These conventions reflect the conflict between certain primal, inherited characteristics on the one hand, and certain traditions of social behavior on the other, — the moral struggle between force and the uses to which, with the sanction of our civilization, it may and should be put.

The difference between representing a college in athletic competition and representing it on a glee club is the difference between sport and some other form of diversion.

The amateur convention is thus a social convention, — that is, a convention that the present order of society maintains for its own good. Against the maintenance of the amateur convention in college sport, the most powerful argument is that it does not work. But no human convention operates to perfection. The reason amateurism does not work perfectly inheres, not in its essential qualities or disadvantages, but in the very human weakness of those who would justify through victory the means whereby victory is sometimes achieved. An athlete has every personal right to professionalize himself so long as he deceives no one concerning his status.

The proposal that the amateur convention in college sport be abolished, is a counsel of defeat. Such a step is far from justified by present conditions. The abolition of the amateur code, — assuming for the moment that it could be abolished, — not only would destroy the best that is now gained from college sport, but would bring with it a new set of evils that would be infinitely worse than any that now obtain.

The solution of the problem is a wider and more conscientious adherence to the convention. It has already been noted that if all who iniquitously recruit, subsidize, and otherwise debauch college athletes would expend a fraction of such efforts upon honestly and conscientiously upholding the amateur status, the ethical aspects of our college athletics that are summarized in the term "sportsmanship" would largely care for themselves. So long as there is personal honor among undergraduates, alumni, and all others who are interested in college sport, the honest preservation of the amateur status will be respected and its impairment will be deprecated.

B. THE AMATEUR STATUS AND THE INDIVIDUAL UNDERGRADUATE

The difficulty with the prevalent attitude toward violators of the amateur rule in college sport, through subsidies given or accepted, by summer baseball, or otherwise, is that to many alumni, faculty members, and undergraduates violations have apparently little consequence.⁶ Yet evasion of the amateur rule is comparable in dishonesty with any other infraction of the moral code that does not involve the property right. For example, it presents many parallels with cribbing; the type of man who looks lightly upon cribbing tends to look lightly also upon violation of the amateur status. The greatest disservice that can be done a youth is teaching him that dishonesty is desirable. The effect upon his own morals is likely to prove irreparable. The effect upon his fellow-undergraduates will spread the corruption, especially by engendering a desire to profit by similar deceptions. Those who tempt young men to barter their honesty for the supposed advantages of a college course, dishonestly achieved, are the Fagins of American sport and of American higher education.

III. THE PUBLIC AND COLLEGE ATHLETICS

That portion of the American public which is without college interests or affiliations naturally regards college athletics solely from the point of view of popular amusement. The diverting and spectacular elements are paramount.

Surely an interest in clean, hard-played games conducted in the open air is to be preferred above addiction to any of the thousand and one forms of indoor entertainment that compete for popular favor. On the other hand, there is much to be regretted in the proprietary influence over college athletics that the general public of to-day is permitted to exert. In sacrificing many phases of the guidance of college athletics to popular whim, those charged with their conduct are subserving two forces that are unjustifiable from any point of view in education: commercialism, and the special privileges of small groups of alumni. Much of the distortion of the popular attitude toward the college has flowed from the fact that intercollegiate contests appear to be almost the only phase of college life that is regarded as news.

Very few of the beneficial results of the public's interest in college athletics could have been achieved under a policy that restricted attendance at college contests to the college family. It is true that a physical benefit to children and young men is traceable to their emulation of athletic heroes. Nearly thirty years ago Professor Sheldon pointed out that college "games have diffused a greater desire for bodily excellence, and a greater admiration for such manly qualities as courage and fortitude among the

⁶ Note, for example, the words of a writer, a college graduate, in the *New York Sun*, on June 26, 1928. "Many condemn [a certain athlete] because of these things, but such condemnation seems unfounded. He has hurdled the shibboleths of amateurism and capitalized on his track ability about as successfully as any professional. But he has stayed within the literal interpretation of the rules, and that's all that the solons of amateur athletics demand." The metaphor needs no commentary.

schoolboys of the country." Granting all of this, there still remains the fact that the physical and other benefits that accrue to the spectators at intercollegiate contests are inferior in number and in force to those that are gained from the active participation in outdoor pastimes to which well-conducted intramural school and college athletics contribute, both quantitatively and qualitatively, through the formation of habits of physical activity. In view of such considerations a university must experience considerable difficulty in justifying in the name of education or valid public service the commercialization of intercollegiate athletics that exploits undergraduate loyalty and athletic skill, however much amusement it may afford the general public.

In the course of time, habits of athletic participation sufficiently diffused among our population may well restore to the nation some of the beneficial forces that lapsed with our loss of pioneer conditions. As for the individual, except for a sustainment of interest in sports, it is doubtful if occupying a stadium seat for three hours of the most delectable of autumn afternoons affords anyone physical or moral benefits that compare to those which accrue even from eighteen holes of very bad golf on a public course or from a two-hour walk through city streets. The advantages of vicarious participation in intercollegiate athletics have been greatly overemphasized.

IV. THE CAUSES OF THE PRESENT DEFECTS IN AMERICAN COLLEGE ATHLETICS

The fundamental causes of the defects of American college athletics are two: commercialism, and a negligent attitude toward the educational opportunity for which the college exists. To one, and generally to both, of these inter-acting causes, every shortcoming of college sport can be traced. Both may be abated, even if neither, in view of the imperfectibility of human nature, can ever be absolutely eliminated.

A. COMMERCIALISM

We have defined commercialism as that condition which exists when the monetary and material returns from sport are more highly valued than the returns in play, recreation, and bodily and moral well-being. Through the medium of self-interest it affects every person whom it touches: college officers, teachers, undergraduates, and alumni, the press, and the public. Because some of its results are desirable, as many other material things are desirable, it is frequently argued that commercialism can be beneficent as well as harmful. This argument neglects the influence of time, which in its passage withers the beneficent aspects of commercialism into evils that are the more difficult to eradicate because of the depth of their roots.

Commercialism has made possible the erection of fine academic buildings and the increase of equipment from the profits of college athletics, but those profits have been gained because colleges have permitted the youths entrusted to their care to be openly

exploited. At such colleges and universities the primary emphasis has been transferred from the things of the spirit or the mind to the material.

In general, university trustees are relatively innocent of commercialism by formal or tacit delegation of their responsibilities. Yet they have profited by it; the task of finding money for new equipment and buildings has been lightened. As for members of faculties, commercialism has added to their numbers through providing from athletic profits a part of the salaries of certain teachers. Rising gate receipts have brought them enlarged facilities. But the college teacher finds also that commercialism has complicated the instructional task through the admission of the unfit, the lowering of academic standards for the sake of gain, and the pressure exerted from various sources at a great number of points not to be "unfair" to athletes. Through commercialism the coach or director of physical education has received very great increases in salary, luxurious trappings, and sometimes the means and the opportunity to attract and subsidize athletes of unusual skill.

Commercialism has added to the amusement of alumni, but it has corrupted the moral fibre of not a few of them through its temptations to recruit and subsidize. It has deprived the college of the loyalties of some of her sons, whose encouragement and devotion she most needs. Although it has given to graduates stadiums of which to be proud and to boast, these gains would appear less gratifying in a less distorted scheme of values. It has given the general public more seats at football games, but it has impaired their attitude toward sports at some points, even while improving it at others. For newspaper men its results have provided inexhaustible "copy" and augmented profits and salaries.

It is the undergraduates who have suffered most and will continue most to suffer from commercialism and its results. True, the commercial policy has provided medical attention and hospitalization for injured athletes, but far fewer injuries would have resulted from uncommercialized games. It has rendered attendance at contests held on alien fields for the sake of profits, expensive and sometimes impossible. It has provided increased seating space for home games, and in some instances has added to the playing space available to all undergraduates, although usually increases of playing space are used for the benefit of participants in intercollegiate athletics. At some colleges, it has alienated the sympathies of considerable numbers of undergraduates, not alone from intercollegiate athletics but — what is more important — from intramural athletics; and it has impaired loyalties that would have been most precious to any institution. Commercialism motivates the recruiting and subsidizing of players, and the commercial attitude has enabled many young men to acquire college educations at the cost of honesty and sincerity. More than any other force, it has tended to distort the values of college life and to increase its emphasis upon the material and the monetary. Indeed, at no point in the educational process has commercialism in college

athletics wrought more mischief than in its effect upon the American undergraduate. And the distressing fact is that the college, the Fostering Mother, has permitted and even encouraged it to do these things in the name of education.

The argument that commercialism in college athletics is merely a reflection of the commercialism of modern life is specious. It is not the affair of the college or the university to reflect modern life. If the university is to be a socializing agency worthy of the name, it must endeavor to ameliorate the conditions of existence, spiritual as well as physical, and to train the men and women who shall lead the nations out of the bondage of those conditions. To neither of these missions does commercialism in college athletics soundly contribute.

B. NEGLIGENCE RESPECTING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

At a time when higher education in the United States is being much scrutinized, it is fitting that enquiry should be directed as well at its informal as at its formal aspects. In an agency primarily intellectual, athletics may take their place among the devices of informal education and recreation. In a socializing agency, the functions of athletics become more formal and more closely associated with the activities of the curriculum. But if at their best they are to be made to contribute indirectly or directly to the education of youth, their essential nature as sport must be preserved.

Occasionally a college president has attempted to improve athletics at his own institution. In certain cases failure has resulted because fellow presidents, for various reasons, have refused coöperation or have coöperated only in limited measure, or because pressure from alumni, townsmen, or friends of the college has grown too great to be resisted. Such presidents have been beaten at the game largely because they have tried, or have had, to play it single-handed.

The country over, college athletics present few isolated conditions or temptations. They are grounded in fundamental characteristics of young men and women, which, once recognized with clear vision, afford a basis for determining the place of athletics in the educational procedure. What that place may be depends upon the educational aims that the college sets for itself under the guidance of its officers.

We turn now to three respects in which the college has been negligent in its relating of athletics to college education. To characterize them thus implies no lack of discussion or theory; it does imply a certain poverty of lasting good results from action, ascribable principally to the workings of commercialism.

1. The Lack of Intellectual Challenge

It has been recently pointed out that a fundamental defect in the American college is its lack of intellectual challenge to the young and alert mind. If this is true respecting its academic aspects, it is doubly true of college athletics as they are at present con-

ducted. Their governance has been delivered utterly into the hands of older persons, whose decisions are made with little reference to the benefits that the reasoning processes involved might confer upon younger minds. Most intercollegiate contests entail little independence of judgment on the part of players, whether in preparation or in actual participation. At every turn, our college athletics are mechanized into automatism, and our athletes and managers are puppets pulled by older hands. What intellectual challenge intercollegiate sport might afford has given way before the forces of commercialism. Fortunately for the future, intramural athletics have not succumbed to the deadening touch; but they are even now dependent for their existence upon the profits from intercollegiate football. If the spiritual and intellectual challenge of intramural sport can in time rejuvenate intercollegiate athletics, no man should withhold his hand from the task.

2. Control through Formula; Imitation

The problems of college athletics, like other problems in human relationships, are not to be completely solved by formula, however much they may be temporarily changed. As in the case of single branches of competitive athletics, standards and rules form the conventions of sport, and so long as sport exists, it will have its conventions. But conventions are not formulas. It is often assumed that if college athletics, as distinct from school athletics, are to contribute to education, they must be controlled (that is, restricted and curbed) through the direct action of faculties. This formula has failed at two points: If, on the one hand, it means delivering college athletics into the hands of men whose chief professional interest and means of livelihood they are, the result is not to check but to propagate commercialism. If, on the other hand, academic teachers on college faculties are placed in control, such men, being specialists, only in comparatively rare instances can and do give to the governance of college athletics that concentrated attention and devotion which they bestow upon their chosen fields of teaching and scholarship. Probably more than any other single factor, the operation of faculty control, even at its best, has tended to deprive the undergraduate of that opportunity of maturing under progressively increasing responsibility which an enlightened policy of guidance affords.

Imitation in the control of college athletics has wrought an equal havoc. To assume that the athletic policies and regulations that appear to work well at one university or in one section of the land can without modification be taken over successfully into another is fallacious. A clear understanding of the functions of athletics in their relation to the educational process, however that process be conceived, a sincere and uniform recognition of the principles of human conduct that athletics involve, and an honorable adherence to the spirit as well as the letter of the conventions of sport, have wrought vastly beneficial changes in college athletics wherever they have been effect-

ated with due reference to specific phases of local sentiment. The solution of the problem of control is not imitation but adaption, not repression but guidance by college presidents, deans, teachers, directors of physical education, or alumni who understand the implications of the term "sport," whose generosity prompts the gift of many hours without compensation, and whose honesty is beyond self-interest or commercialism.

3. Morals and Conduct

In the field of conduct and morals, vociferous proponents of college athletics have claimed for participants far greater benefits than athletics can probably ever yield, and, in attempting to evaluate these supposed benefits, have hailed the shadow as the substance. The workings of commercialism have almost obliterated the non-material aspects of athletics. And yet such qualities as loyalty, self-reliance, modesty, co-operation, self-sacrifice, courage, and, above all, honesty, can be more readily and directly cultivated through the activities and habits of the playing field than in almost any other phase of college life. What, therefore, is needed is not one set of moral and ethical standards for sports and games, and another for all other phases of college life, but a single set of standards so sincerely valued that by taking thought they can be made operative in life's every aspect. The transfer or spread of training implied is as much the affair of the academic teacher as of the coach or the director of physical education. It must begin with a diminished emphasis upon the material benefits of college athletics and a sincere resolution to substitute other and more lasting values for those that now are prized.

CONCLUSION

The prime needs of our college athletics are two, — one particular and one general. The first is a change of values in a field that is sodden with the commercial and the material and the vested interests that these forces have created. Commercialism in college athletics must be diminished and college sport must rise to a point where it is esteemed primarily and sincerely for the opportunities it affords to mature youth under responsibility, to exercise at once the body and the mind, and to foster habits both of bodily health and of those high qualities of character which, until they are revealed in action, we accept on faith.

The second need is more fundamental. The American college must renew within itself the force that will challenge the best intellectual capabilities of the undergraduate. Happily, this task is now engaging the attention of numerous college officers and teachers. Better still, the fact is becoming recognized that the granting of opportunity for the fulfillment of intellectual promise need not impair the socializing qualities of college sport. It is not necessary to "include athletics in the curriculum" of the under-

graduate or to legislate out of them their life and spirit in order to extract what educational values they promise in terms of courage, independent thinking, coöperation, initiative, habits of bodily activity, and, above all, honesty in dealings between man and man. Whichever conception of the function of the American college, intellectual or socializing agency, be adopted, let only the chosen ideal be followed with sincerity and clear vision, and in the course of years our college sport will largely take care of itself.