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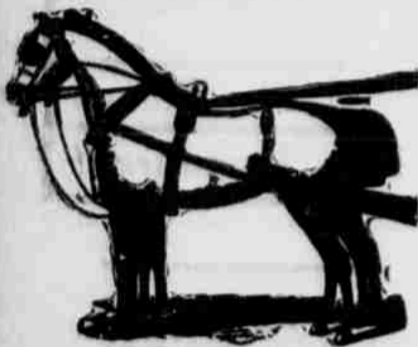


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N. Berkeley

AN UNFIT SPORT

PROMINENT ESSAYIST CONDEMNS GAME OF FOOTBALL.

Compares it to Gladiatorial Contests of Rome—Twenty-two Men Killed by it in the Year 1902.

The following stinging arraignment of football, as a sport, was written for the Cosmopolitan Magazine by Elbert Hubbard, editor of the Philistine:

In the days of gladiatorial contests in Rome men were occasionally matched to fight with beasts. Lucertius, writing on the subject, apologizes for these contests, and says: "Care is always taken to see that the man is not overmatched; the spirit of fair play must not be violated. He must have a chance for his life, otherwise the auditors will manifest their disappointment."

Finally there came a day when man was matched against man. And, in the time of Marcus Aurelius, an order was issued that deadly weapons should be taken away from the gladiators, and they should fight only with bare knuckles, with the cestus, or with clubs.

And these recognized forms of sport continued and came down to us, so that, until 25 years ago, men fought in England and America with bare knuckles, skin-tight gloves and single sticks. In the British army, soldiers still fight in a friendly way with the single-stick, with the result of an occasional broken head; and, in Scotland I have seen soldiers "belting" with their belts, and these, being loaded with a heavy buckle, make a rather formidable weapon. But is it always one man against another?

To meet the growing sentiment against brutality, laws have been passed in England forbidding all prizefights excepting where six-ounce, at least, padded gloves are used. Within two years laws have been passed in every state in America forbidding prizefights absolutely. We still have "contests" for points, but the police interfere when these degenerate into a fight.

But it is always man against man, and these men, too, must be in a degree mated. And so we have our featherweights, lightweights, welterweights and heavyweights.

Recently in Omaha, Joe Gans, a lightweight, was matched against Peter Maher, a heavyweight, for a six-round contest. The men met and fought two rounds, when the disapproval of the audience was so great that the referee had to end the fight. The schoolboy maxim, "Take somebody of your size," is pretty good ethics, after all.

During the year 1902, two men in America were killed in prizefights; and, in a season of three months just past, 21 men have been killed playing football. Fifteen of these died from broken backs or broken necks. How many men have been ruptured and permanently injured in various other ways no man can say.

At Lafayette, Indiana, Thanksgiving Day, I saw the game between Purdue and Notre Dame. Five men were injured and carried from the field, their places being filled by waiting substitutes. But one of the injured men seemed to be suffering from concussion of the brain, and, although he was not insensible, he was for the time deprived of his mind. He was a maniac, and ran screaming into the scrimmage, striking at everybody, and friends had to rush in and overpower him. And the game went right along as if nothing had happened.

What became of the poor fellow I do not know, but I do know that two young men with whom I am personally acquainted are now in lunatic asylums as a result of football, and their ravings are the cries and signals of this game. If you still think that football is manly sport, you might interview the parents of these young men.

The result of the game was a draw 6 to 6. There were hundreds of women present—all were delighted. Everybody said: "What a beautiful game!" At the LaGr House, where I stopped, the visiting Notre Dame boys were cared for. I mingled with the students, and saw each of the 14 Notre Dame players who had taken part. In physique, two hours before, they were magnificent; now they were a sorry sight. Several could not walk without leaning on friends, and all were more or less bruised and battered. A physician whom they had brought with them, was in attendance. He told me the next morning that he had spent the entire night looking after his charges. And very proud was this doctor to show me that all of his boys were on hand for breakfast. But all limped, all were sore and lame, and all were dull in intellect. They had gone through a terrific ordeal, so that nature had no strength left for wit or that genial play of thought, without which a man is only a brute.

Misuse your body, and soul will flee; thought will take wing, and all fine emotions of sympathy, aspiration, hope and kindness will depart and leave the palace of your brain desolate.

I looked over those football players at breakfast the morning after the battle, and not one of them would I have hired to do anything. They were even too lame to dig in the ditch; if I had wanted some one to carry a message to All Baba, I would have called in a gamin off of the streets, rather than trust one of those bruised up, drowsy giants. And as for intellect, there was not a man among them who had mind enough to match that of a 10-year-old girl.

Of course, I know that this condition of deadness would not last—they would get rested up, and doubtless in a few days be pretty good fellows and possibly fair students. But the point I make is this: football makes no man better; makes no man more useful; helps no man to do better work.

A man may be a pretty good fellow in spite of football, but no man is more of a man because he plays football.

And now the curious part is that

all this deadly brutality is a product of our schools and colleges. Schools stand for culture; but, instead of producing culture, we get the strange paradox of an unmanly sport that would have even made the ancient Romans stand aghast.

It makes one think of the remark of Ernest Renan, who said: "You can never find God in a theological seminary."

And here is an institution standing for culture which supplies us the very acme of the other thing.

Any institution that represents actual life would never tolerate football a moment, for it interferes with, and is a hindrance and a menace to life. If you want life, and life in abundance you can never hope for it through football. A great manufacturing company at South Bend, Indiana, has a habit of encouraging games and athletic sports among its workers. I met one of the managers of this great concern last week, and we spoke of this feature of physical culture.

"Do you have a football team?" I asked.

He smiled and answered: "I hope not—our efforts, in the line of athletics, are with an eye to helping along our work. The man who plays football is good for nothing else."

"But football in moderation," I ventured.

"Can you shoot a gun with moderation?" was the rejoinder.

Would a railroad manager encourage his brakemen, firemen and engineers to engage in football? Well, hardly! He would have to hire a new lot of men at once if he did. Those football players I saw at Lafayette hadn't energy enough left after the game to safely climb the side of a box car.

The entire intent of football is violence, and that it may be scientific violence makes it no less brutal. No young man can play the game without being less of a man, and without taking on the instincts of a brute. There is a football face, just as surely as there is a prizefighter's face, and between them there is no choice. To push, shove, jostle and "tackle" become his habit of thought, his dream, and this desire of his life writes itself upon the countenance.—Elbert Hubbard.

DETERMINED TO BREAK STRIKE.

American Bridge Company Imports Men to Complete Bridge.

Pittsburg, March 21.—A determined effort is to be made by the American Bridge Company to break the strike of structural ironworkers in this city by importing non-union men. Last Monday 40 men were brought from Louisville, but the men deserted immediately upon reaching Pittsburg. Last night 47 men were brought into the city from Norfolk, Va., and 150 men, it is said, have been engaged and are on their way here.

The men who arrived last night were placed on a large houseboat, which is tied up in the Monongahela River at the company's plant. The

Advertisement for 'The Children Enjoy' featuring illustrations of children and text describing the benefits of Fig Syrup. The text emphasizes its gentle nature and effectiveness for children's health.

boat has been fitted up with bunks, dining room and kitchen, and it is proposed to house and board the men on the boat until the strike is broken. The men are to be used in completing the work on the new Wabash railroad bridge across the Monongahela River. A squad of policemen is guarding the non-union men, but everything is quiet, no move having been made by the strikers to interfere with the newcomers. Before midnight all of the non-unionists who were quartered on the houseboat at Thirty-second street, were captured by the strikers and initiated into the union. Early in the night 14 skiffs, manned by strikers, arrived at the boathouse and 29 of the new men were taken away. The officials of the company then took measures to lodge the others in a house on Ferry street. The men were brought to the foot of Ferry street by steamer, where they were met by a large crowd of strikers and were induced to desert the company. But 2 1/2 per cent of the people of Bulgaria are Moslems. Niagara is worth \$1,000,000,000 a source of electrical power.

Large advertisement for 'NICOLA COAL' by 'Western Coal and Iron Company'. It includes the company name, address (501 Bernice Building, Tacoma, Wash.), and a price of '15 Cents Per Share'. The ad describes the coal's quality and the company's financial strength, mentioning '\$2,500,000 CASH FOR THE LAND'.