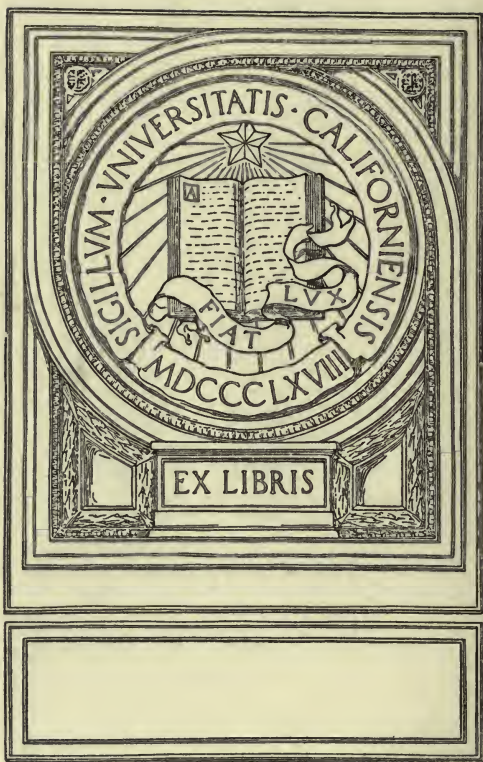


OLD BOSTON BOYS  
*and*  
THE GAMES THEY PLAYED

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JAMES D'WOLF LOVETT





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Drawn by C. D. Gibson

“ A PUTTY BALL HAS BEEN KNOWN TO PENETRATE  
THE SIDE OF A TALL HAT ”



# Old Boston Boys

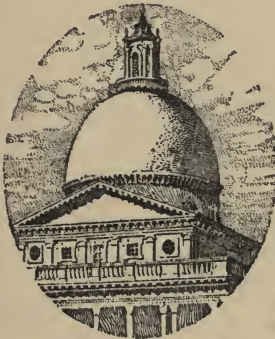
AND

## THE GAMES THEY PLAYED

BY

JAMES D'WOLF LOVETT

FULLY ILLUSTRATED



BOSTON

Privately printed at the Riverside Press

1907

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WITH PLEASANT MEMORIES OF OUR BOYHOOD  
DAYS, THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDI-  
CATED TO THE CHERISHED MEMORY OF ONE  
OF THE BEST AND FINEST TYPES  
OF OLD BOSTON BOYS,  
SAMUEL CABOT

WITHOUT WHOSE STIMULATING WORDS,  
KINDLY ADVICE AND VALUABLE COÖPERATION,  
THIS PLEASANT TASK OF AUTHORSHIP  
WOULD NEVER HAVE  
BEEN MINE

M40463



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## FOREWORD

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**I**N February, 1904, I contributed to the "Boston Evening Transcript" a short sketch about coasting, as it used to be practiced by the Boston boys forty-five years ago. Many pleasant things were said about it, which amply repaid any efforts upon my part to make it readable, and then the matter dropped out of sight; but recently it came to the notice of an old and dear friend of mine, — himself an old-time athlete, — who proposed that I should enlarge upon it and write a collection of reminiscences of our early boyhood. With his well-known generosity and enthusiasm, he proposed to give a dinner, to which should be invited a number of our friends and contemporaries, who in their day had been prominent oarsmen, cricketers, base-

ball and football players, boxers, gymnasts, etc., for the purpose of bringing to light old events which might be available for my use.

To say is to do with my friend, and this happy thought was promptly carried out. On November 29, 1904, a most delightful dinner was given at his residence on Commonwealth Avenue, to which the following named gentlemen were invited: —

Gerrit S. Miller, Horatio G. Curtis, John A. Lowell, William H. Aline, Prof. James B. Ames, Henry W. Lamb, John P. Hall, Laurence Curtis, Henry K. Bushnell, George R. Rogers, Edward N. Fenno, George A. Flagg, Dr. Robert M. Lawrence, Robert A. Boit, Robert S. Peabody. That the occasion was a complete success, and that an evening of rare enjoyment was the result, it is not necessary to say; and to the exuberant flow of reminiscent conversation which ensued I am indebted for much that may interest the old-timers in the following pages.

---

“HOW IT STRIKES A  
CONTEMPORARY”

---

I

“*Quis perscribet ipsum scriptorem?*”

**A**T the dinner mentioned in the “Foreword” the most important question before the meeting was, “Who shall chronicle the historian himself?”

It was agreed — with but one emphatic negative — that it would be impossible for our old friend to employ successfully the first person singular, because a long disuse had probably rendered him incapable of rightly spelling that important personal pronoun in all its cases and forms.

We have been immensely amused at his frantic efforts — stimulated by this stricture

upon his unconquerable modesty — to tell something of his own part in the athletics of the old days. But the agreement was explicit, in spite of his vehement opposition, that if there was not enough “ego” in the narrative, we, his less important contemporaries, should exercise the reciprocal privilege of giving our recollections of him. Now, though he has striven manfully to tell about himself, we may say, as Patrick Henry did to George Washington, when he could not be prevailed upon to make a speech after having risen to do so, “Sit down, sir, sit down. Your modesty equals your valor, and both are invincible.” We have therefore exercised a friendly compulsion in thus drawing his portrait.

It was a time of fervid enthusiasm for many athletic sports, yet there was certainly no figure that so universally and instantly caught the eye of the spectator by a quite unique grace, strength, and speed, as that of our historian. This was as true in foot-



ball as baseball, and his easy lead of even the best professionals was as marked in the gymnasium as on the Common. This supremacy was known and acknowledged by every boy on the Campus in those days, except one, who will not believe it up to the present moment. The writer well remembers Lovett's catch, without gloves, of Ames's liner, which seemed simply miraculous, and certainly remains the best, even in these days of professional gladiators, to those who saw it.

From one of his sisters comes this characteristic glimpse of our friend. On the day of this match, coming out of their house on Chestnut Street, her attention was arrested by a long-continued succession of cheers from the Common. On asking her brother Jim that evening the cause of this uproar, the only reply she could get was, "Oh, one of our fellows made a catch."

In looking back it appears to at least one of us as if our chronicler had foreseen

and taken as his model the spirit of that noble quatrain of Gelett Burgess, —

“ Not the quarry, but the Chase,  
Not the laurel, but the Race,  
Not the hazard, but the Play,  
Let me, Lord, prefer alway.”

SAMUEL CABOT.

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OLD BOSTON BOYS AND  
THE GAMES THEY PLAYED



# OLD BOSTON BOYS AND THE GAMES THEY PLAYED

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## CHAPTER I

---

**I**N deep-sea dredging many curious and unlooked-for things are brought to the surface, some of great value to the toiling scientist alone, others of interest to many; but by far the greater part of the "haul" is tossed back again into the depths, where, no doubt, it will rest undisturbed forever.

It seems to me that in some way resembling this process is the effort used in trying to recall scenes and incidents in one's life which lie buried beneath a half-century's collection of débris in memory's

store-house. Many events long forgotten are brought to light, — some of which are of value only to the searcher; much rubbish is thrown back again into lasting oblivion, while other specimens are discovered that may be found to be of interest to a few to whom they will recall distant scenes, in some of which they took an active part.

I hope I may be pardoned for holding up, for a passing glance, one find from the rubbish heap which appealed to my first boyish instincts, as I know it must have done to multitudes of other boys, before and since. This is a pair of diminutive, long-legged boots, — the first boots, — adorned with bright red tops, and upon the red field a golden eagle, rampant. These tiny boots were in a remarkable state of preservation; the tops still of a vivid and magnificent red, and the eagle, all untarnished by time, retaining his original brilliancy.



Among the most important events in a boy's life, the admission to his first "man's" school stands forth with prominence. I remember the feeling of pride and awe which accompanied me upon the morning of my *début*. It was a good school, and was kept by Mr. Franklin Phelps, who died but a few years ago, very aged, and, I believe, totally blind. He was a most worthy and estimable man, and will always be held by me, and, I am sure, by many others of his pupils, in grateful remembrance. A man of the old school, he was a born gentleman, and, while most kind-hearted, would stand no boy's nonsense, and always spoke straight to the point with the directness of a Toledo blade.

The schoolroom was on the corner of Chestnut and Charles streets, over what was then Coolidge's provision store. It had a rough, bare floor, and rudely made desks and chairs, which bore many jack-knife testimonials of former occupants.

The room was bare of ornaments or pictures of any description, save a big map hanging upon the white-plastered wall. Mr. Phelps lived on West Cedar Street, with Master Francis Gardner of the Public Latin School, and fitted boys for this latter school,—fitted them thoroughly and conscientiously.

In a little closet of a room leading off the schoolroom, he had set up a fine turning-lathe, and I can see him now with his apron of ticking, hard at work at recess, the boys watching him on rainy days. He was a skilled workman, and, besides useful knick-knacks, turned out many scholars who in after years did credit to his wise and manly example and precept.

Among my schoolmates here were Bob Lawrence, Archie Howe, Harry Hovey, Horatio and Albert S. Bigelow, Edgar Curtis, Dennie Boardman, Jim Hawley, and Fred and Charlie Lyman.

Mr. Phelps was scrupulously neat, and

gave us many a wholesome talking to about "dragging in" mud upon our shoes. He was proud of his ability to keep his own spotless, and would often hold up one for our edification, point to it and exclaim, "Look at that! not a speck upon it." I once heard him add, *sotto voce*, "I verily believe that boys would like to wallow."

The drinking water was brought from Brown and Severance's livery stable opposite, and the boy selected for this duty was counted a lucky one, as it gave him the opportunity to snatch from the tail of one of the horses a few hairs, which later were surreptitiously braided into finger rings. Some of us will recall the taste of this water after it had stood in a pail that was painted inside.

In view of the fact that boys of the present day leap with one bound, as it were, from swaddling bands into sack coats and all the appurtenances thereto, and wear full evening dress to their first party, it may be

of interest to them to know that the boys of this earlier period arrived at that dignity only after three distinct and easy stages, to wit: first, the jacket, buttoned straight up the front to the neck (with a clean white linen collar "basted" in every day); this jacket was fastened to the trousers by a row of buttons at the waist line. In the second stage the buttons were discarded and the responsibility of sustaining the trousers was assumed by suspenders, and the delicious tug of the latter on the broadening shoulders was a constant reminder of the fact that the wearer was getting on to man's estate. The third stage was the "open jacket," as it was called; this involved a starched shirt bosom and vest, and was a proud, but at first a painfully conscious, period. Thus was the way paved to the full-blown sack coat and cutaway, and the boy then was, in his own estimation, a *man*. These stages gave the boy something always to look forward to, and kept him

a boy for years, — something which was healthy and which the present youth seems to lack.

There is one product, however, of the present time which boys do not lack, and of which we were (most mercifully) deprived. This is the lethal cigarette; in those days one did not see anæmic looking lads (I had almost said infants) inhaling into their still immature lungs the poisonous smudge of burning nicotine. We must, however, plead guilty to having smoked sweet fern, tea, grapevine, and even rattan, but our lungs were reserved for what the Almighty intended them for, namely, pure air, and we got as much of it into them as we could.

Our first lessons in athletics were learned in a vacant lot, just below the school, upon Chestnut Street, where a contractor kept a large and varied assortment of lumber, ladders, etc., of all kinds and sizes, and where, at recess, we passed the time in doing "stumps."

Private schools in those days were not too plentiful, and the best were Phelps's, Sullivan's, under Park Street Church, Prescott Baker's, in Chapman Place, and Mr. Dixwell's Private Latin School, in Boylston Place.

That Boston in 1854 was a far different place from the Greater Boston of to-day, goes without saying, but it is doubtful if the youth of the present day begins to realize how very different it actually was. There was not a single business house within its limits tall enough to require an elevator, and if there had been, an elevator was no more thought of then than a telephone. Horse-cars were not in existence, steam fire-engines were things of the future, omnibuses and stages were the nearest approach to rapid transit, and the suburbs were indeed "out of town."

A line of omnibuses which ran from the corner of Beacon and Charles streets to Coolidge's Corner, in Brookline, was pop-

ular with the residents of the West End, and a trip in one was a great event for a child. I remember a weather-beaten driver of one of these omnibuses, who, upon being asked the time of starting upon the trips, invariably droned out, "Quarter a'ter, half a'ter, quarter to, and *at*," the last word causing me much perplexity until it was explained that it meant "on the even hour."

The office of Town Crier was still in use. My sympathies were aroused upon one occasion, when this official drove down West Cedar Street, stopped at the corner of Chestnut Street, just opposite my house, and, after ringing a big dinner-bell, stood up in his wagon and proceeded to read from a paper, "Child lost! four years old, wore a blue and white checked calico dress," etc., giving a minute description of the little girl. Then he started up his horse with a "g'long!" and went on to the next corner, where the performance was repeated.

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## CHAPTER II

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**T**HE games played by the boys of Chestnut and the adjacent streets are most pleasantly recalled; among which "I Spy," "The Red Lion," and "Punk" stand out prominently. This last was always popular, the only requisite being a soft ball, — not too soft, however, for obvious reasons, when it is known that the first boy holding it plugged, or "punked," the boy that suited him as a mark. A general scrimmage then ensued for the possession of the ball, and the one securing it promptly "punked" another victim selected from the rapidly scattering boys.

In the winter, when the snow was thawing, dams, some of which were quite large, holding fully two feet of water, were built



in the gutters. Part of the fun was for another gang of boys to build a second dam higher up the street, larger if possible than the first, and then by making a breach in it try to wash out the one below.

“Follow my Leader” was a game always liked by those boys who were willing to take risks; and for these there was a fine field, as the budding Back Bay district fairly bristled with pile-drivers, derricks, and houses in process of construction; in fact, every opportunity was here presented for the adventurous boy to break his own neck and the necks of his foolhardy followers. Why some of us were not killed or maimed for life in this game is to-day a mystery to me.

We used to try to get some fun out of the Public Garden, but for the greater part of the year it seemed a desolate, dreary kind of place, the “garden” part of it consisting of a single “greenhouse,” located on the Beacon Street path, near Charles

Street. Here an effort was once made by the city to provide a few amusements for the public, and several swings were set up, as well as two "fandangoes," as they were called, — long, wooden, open-framework structures, which revolved perpendicularly, with a swinging seat at each end holding perhaps four or five persons. One of these forecasts of the "Ferris Wheel" carried the victims to a height of forty or fifty feet, the other being much smaller, and made presumably for those more timid.

Thinking of our City Fathers in session considering the appropriation for a "fandango," the picture is forcibly suggested of some Hibernian member arising, as his brother alderman of "gondola" fame, in a certain Western city is said to have done, long years afterwards, and moving that "two fandangoes be ordered, a male and a female!"

The pond in the Garden was then not more than half the size of the present one,

innocent of any curbing, with an island in its centre, upon which grew a large weeping-willow tree. This pond was a popular rendezvous for skaters and a dangerous rival to the Frog Pond, but the twigs from the willow tree had a way of getting frozen into the ice, thereby causing many a "cropper" to the unwary.

Just over a low ridge of ground, which is now Arlington Street, was the "Back Bay," a sheet of water that extended from the Mill Dam to Boston Neck, and many a time have we boys struck straight across upon the ice from the corner of Arlington and Beacon streets, to where Chickering's piano factory now stands. Farther up the Bay, however, the skating was most dangerous, the tide water, rushing in and out through the two gates in the Mill Dam, which separated this water from Charles River, wearing away the ice in its course and rendering it too thin to bear a person's weight.

I was one day going up the Bay at full speed, before the wind, and suddenly found myself upon ice which undulated under me like stage waves, and the water, black as ink, could be seen swirling along underneath it. Fortunately the strip was not very wide, although it seemed a mile, as with bated breath I skimmed across it. But when once again on safe ice, I realized, with a sickly feeling, that the strip must be recrossed ; so without stopping an instant to consider the matter, I took a long flying start, threw the throttle wide open, shut my eyes, and, not daring to breathe, glided back over the death trap. The horrible, reptile-like movement of that ice, with sure death underneath it, comes back yet, and brings a creepy feeling along my spine.

Skates in those days were clumsy affairs, the front end piece curling back over the foot in a large scroll, usually ornamented with a brass acorn fixed upon its tip. A simple straight spike fitted a hole bored in

the boot heel, and the skate was held on to the boot by straps, necessarily drawn up almost to the breaking point, and crossing over the top of the foot, thus most effectually stopping all circulation and causing an excruciatingly painful coldness in that member. Compare this with the modern method, by which skates are fastened on in a twinkling by steel clamps, either upon arrival at the ice, or at leisure at home, before starting, upon an extra pair of boots to be slipped on when needed!

Jamaica Pond was, far and away, the favorite and fashionable skating ground. Here, almost any afternoon or evening when the ice was good, could be seen hundreds of skaters. Skating parties composed of Boston's élite were formed for visiting the pond, both by day and on moonlight evenings, and this custom remained popular for years. Here also was the boys' paradise for ice hockey; the boys frequently lined up fifty or more strong

on a side, and the constant "mix-ups" that occurred, in which a hundred or more hockeys were flying about in reckless confusion, gave onlookers a decided impression that "something was doing." Surely those of us now living who took part in them will feel our pulses beat a trifle quicker as we recall these hard-fought contests on old Jamaica Pond.

To go back for a moment to the Public Garden, it should be said that it was the camping ground for all visiting circuses. The Garden was surrounded by a wooden fence at that time (replaced by the present iron one in 1862); the entrance to the big tent was usually at the corner of Beacon and Charles streets, and later at the gateway about half-way along Charles Street. These circuses were small, one-ring affairs, and could be put into one of the side shows of the present circus; but the people got just as much fun out of them, and no doubt many of the clown's "brand-new

jokes " of to-day were heard there, and were not in the first flush of youth even then. A great drawing card, always, was the announcement in the papers that the elephants would bathe in the Frog Pond, at a given hour; the big beasts would wade in to the end of their chains, and, filling their trunks with water, douche themselves with enjoyment as huge as their bodies.

Probably any boy of the present day and generation, if told that fifty years ago there was neither baseball nor football (as we know them to-day); that tennis, polo, golf, lacrosse, and basket ball were unknown, besides many other athletic sports now so common, would at once ask, with surprise, not unmingled with pity, what the boys of that day did, anyway, for sport and recreation. Well, he should remember, in the first place, that it is easy to do without things of which one has never heard nor dreamed; and, in the second place, that he is to-day doing the same thing himself; for

undoubtedly some future boy will one day be commenting with like surprise and pity upon the meagreness, as it will then seem, of to-day's recreations. Sufficient unto the day are the sports thereof.

The American boy is nothing if not inventive, and anything that can be produced which will make a noise is dear to his heart. One of the earliest of such inventions which I recall was named the "locust," a harmless production, and one that no doubt paved the way for the later abomination known as the "Devil's fiddle." The locust was made of an old-fashioned, round wooden match-box, over the open end of which a piece of kid was tightly stretched; a strand or two of horse hair was then passed in and out of this improvised drum-head, and the long ends were made into a loop which ran around in a groove, with a little resin in it, made at the end of a stick. The box was then whirled around rapidly, the result being a sound which almost ex-



actly resembled the note of the insect from which it received its name.

There were many other ingenious productions that were common; not all, however, as harmless as the foregoing; but the names have passed beyond recall. The bean-blower, however, can never be forgotten by any boy who ever possessed one; not only on account of the joys which came to him through its use, but also the sorrows, which were visited upon his head and elsewhere. The bean-blower still gets in its work, but not with the same beautiful precision as it did then. It had to be used with stealth, of course, and to be hidden away in secret places from the eyes of stern parents.

Speaking of its precision recalls an incident which occurred at the time the horse-cars were introduced into Boston. There was a great protest from the good old Boston people against laying rails in the hitherto unobstructed streets. It seemed like

desecration to them, and the fight against the innovation was a warm one. The cars came, however, and the rails were laid. While a gang of laborers was engaged in the latter work in Park Square, two of the sons of one of Boston's best known physicians, determining to make it as hot as possible for the invading force, intrenched themselves behind their blinds and opened fire with such effect that every time a laborer stooped to lift a rail a stinging bean would pink him where his overalls were stretched tightest, and he would come to the perpendicular with a spring like that of a jack-knife. As smokeless powder was used, it was some time before the sharpshooters could be located; but they were, finally, and a call was made at the house, a complaint laid, apologies tendered, and a treaty of peace forthwith ratified.

As beans did not always produce the desired effect, pellets of putty were resorted to eventually, sometimes driven through

glass tubes ; but these did such deadly work with window panes and street lamps that they were speedily banished into outer darkness. A putty ball has been known to penetrate the side of a tall hat with almost the ease of a Mauser bullet.

Then there was the bow-gun, a weapon which made the owner thereof envied by those of his companions who were not fortunate enough to possess one. This was a homemade article, some of the boys producing beautiful specimens, which those less gifted eagerly purchased ; they had finely finished black walnut stocks, polished lancewood bows, strings of catgut, and delicately hung triggers. These guns would throw a buckshot most spitefully and with fair precision. When buckshot ran short, screws and other articles of hardware were used. During the reign of this weapon, feline mortality ran high, and the wail of the widow and orphan was heard upon rear sheds and fences. But the bow-gun

multiplied too rapidly, and pet cats disappeared with too great frequency, and so it, too, was rigorously stamped out of existence.

The game of hockey was deservedly popular, and, as then practiced, was no child's play. Sides would be formed on the Parade Ground of the Common, and contests would be waged almost daily. Hockeys, too, were a homemade article, few being found for sale in the shops. The sticks, usually hickory, were cut in the suburbs, steamed or soaked in boiling water until the end was pliable, and then bent to the required curve and tied with stout cord until perfectly dry. Some were then wound with copper wire at the point of contact with the ground, and no better hockey has ever been made since.

The hockey also proved a convenient weapon when needed, as it often was if the "South Enders" proved troublesome. And this brings us to the famous South and

West end scrimmages. Scrimmages, do I say? Aye! fights; battles; indeed it could be called a war; nothing less, for it raged for years, — winter and summer. In winter the war was somewhat less deadly, as snowballs were the only ammunition at hand; but in summer stones, half bricks, any old thing, were used; and then, look out, boys! For a time, when the Boylston Street end of the Parade Ground was being filled in, hundreds of loads of oyster shells were dumped there, which proved most formidable missiles, and razors were indeed “flying through the air.” They were extremely difficult to dodge, owing to their swallow-like flight and seeming ability to turn sharp corners, so that many were the ugly wounds they inflicted, as they cut like knives. In these battles, bodies of skirmishers would be sent around by devious ways to attack in the rear, and charges would be made at intervals, when either the West Enders would be routed and sent flying up Spruce

Street for reinforcements from the "Hill," or else the South Enders would beat a quick retreat through Carver Street or Park Square.

At this time it was quite perilous for any boy known to be connected with either side to walk through a street in the enemy's district, and boys were not unfrequently pretty roughly handled while thus innocently passing on their way. I recall a case which occurred upon the Common one morning when I was there before breakfast for an early run. A West End negro, well known to me, met a South Ender, each, no doubt, carrying a well-balanced chip upon his shoulder, and some grudge to be settled. Lurid conversation ensued. Each recommended a warm climate for the other's health, and picked flaws in his ancestry, until the representative from the South End volunteered the advice that the other should keep out of Carver Street or he might get "pasted." The negro re-

plied, "You might get pasted, yourself, and right here and now;" and with that he let fly a stone which he had been holding in his hand and struck the other fairly in the forehead. The fellow dropped as limp as a piece of chain, the blood flowing in a stream. I was thoroughly frightened, and to avoid connection with a murder, as I fully thought it to be, got away as fast as possible. The negro ran another way, and I never heard the sequel. I think he died years ago, but I frequently see his brother upon the street, and always wonder if he ever knew what happened that morning.

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## CHAPTER III

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**T**HERE was a large vacant lot on West Cedar Street, between Mt. Vernon and Pinckney streets, the ground of which, at its farther end, was a good bit higher than that bordering upon the street. Here was a fine position for building a snow fort, which we often did, and then scouts would be sent out to provoke an assault by the negroes in Revere Street. One or two well directed snowballs would stir up the hornets' nest, and then the scouts would beat a hasty retreat to the "works," and the fun would begin.

It must be confessed, however, that if the enemy got too numerous, and capitulation seemed imminent, the friendly back



gate of one of the Louisburg Square houses was available, it being the residence of one of our boys, and through this we retreated to safety with as much dignity as the circumstances would permit.

We had the art of making snowballs down pretty fine, as the saying goes, and in a very few seconds one could be turned out as round as an orange, particularly if the snow was a trifle damp. If a fight was anticipated for the next day, a large stock of snowballs was made the afternoon before and carefully left to freeze over night, and if one of these struck an adversary, he did not have to be told of the fact. Any one who has been hit by a cold snowball, upon a cold ear, upon a cold day, will at once recall the sensation and remember that instead of his feeling the cold, the thought instantly occurred that something red-hot had happened to him.

To test our skill in throwing, we used to draw a ring around us with a hockey

or any other implement handy, and then, standing stationary, throw the ball as high as we could, straight into the air, and see if it would fall back within the circle. Some of us could do it nearly every time. There was a boy named John Faulkner, who lived on West Cedar Street, who could throw a snowball as swiftly and as accurately as any boy I ever saw, and I hope that if he is living this tribute to his boyish skill will come to his notice and awaken pleasant remembrances. He was a valuable hand in a fight, and the enemy sought cover when he opened fire.

The Italians who used to vend plaster casts of Apollo, Venus, etc., carried upon a long wooden tray, resting upon the head, and who used to cry "Eemo-gees!" were sometimes marks for snowballic skill; but they were unfair targets, as no chance for retaliation was afforded the victim; he had to lower his tray with great deliberation and care in order to see what damage had

been done, and when this had been accomplished the boy was probably out of sight two blocks away.

When defending a fort, the best shots were given the places of honor, and snowballs were made and passed to them by the lesser lights. These picked men generally held in their left hands a bit of flat stick which was used as a shield, upon which the enemy's snowballs were received, thus enabling them to stand upright to their work with far more effect than if they had been kept dodging and ducking behind the ramparts. These sticks also discouraged opponents from rushing the fort, as they were then turned into weapons of defense and used with great effect upon any part of the enemy attempting to scale the breastworks.

Of course the winter sport *par excellence* was coasting, and those Boston boys whose boyhood was at the zenith in the fifties include coasting, as it was then practiced,

among the lost arts. If any of the youngsters of to-day are inclined to laugh at this statement, let any one of them, athlete though he may be, take a running start of from three to ten yards at full speed with the sled following at the end of its cord, and when sufficient impetus has been acquired, throw it ahead, letting the line fall along the seat, at the same time launching his body, curved bow-wise, forward through the air, alighting breast first, with no apparent effort, jar, or retardment of speed as softly as a falling snowflake, upon the flying sled as it shoots underneath. This would be called a pretty, acrobatic feat to-day, but was too common then to attract special notice. That's the difference.

All coasting in those days was racing, pure and simple. Prominent sleds were as well known among the boys as race horses and yachts are to-day, and on any Saturday afternoon hundreds of spectators might

be seen hedging in the "Long Coast," which ran from the corner of Park and Beacon streets to the West Street entrance and as much farther along Tremont Street Mall as one's impetus would carry him. A squad of coasters would be bunched together at the top of this coast, holding their sleds like dogs in leash, waiting for some "crack" to lead off. As he straightened himself and started on his run with the cry of "Lullah!" to clear the way, it was the signal for all to follow, and one after another would string out from the bunch after him, in rapid succession, each keen to pass as many of those ahead as possible, the lesser lights being careful not to start until the "heavyweights" had sped on their way.

The walk back uphill was made interesting by discussing the merits, faults, lines, etc., of the noted sleds, and if, as often happened, invidious comparisons were made between a "South End" and

a "West End" sled, a lively and not altogether unwelcome scrap, then and there, was usually the logical outcome.

Sleds (the first-class ones) were made with much care and skill, and cost proportionately. Natural black walnut was a favorite material, finished either with a fine dead polish or a bright surface, varnished with as much care as a coach; the name, if it bore one, was usually a fine specimen of lettering in gold or bright colors. The model was carefully planned, and the lines were graceful and a delight to the eye of a connoisseur. Black enameled leather, bordered by gold or silver headed tacks, made a popular seat, and the "irons," as they were called, were made of the best "silver steel," whatever that meant. They were kept burnished like glass, with constant care and fine emery and oil, and a streak of ashes or a bare spot was avoided as a yacht steers clear of rocks.

The amount of "spring" given to the

irons was also a matter of moment, and a nice gradation of the same was thought to have influence on the speed; it certainly added greatly to one's bodily comfort.

"Let's see your irons" was a common request, and the owner thus honored would jerk his sled up on its hind legs, so to speak, wipe off the steel with mitten or handkerchief, and show off the bright surface with much pride.

The most popular coasts were the "Long Coast" already mentioned, the Joy Street coast, Beacon Street Mall, and the "Big" or "Flagstaff" Hill, the flagstaff standing on the spot now graced by the Soldiers' Monument. The hill was much higher than it is now, the ground around it having been raised in recent years. Many of the boys will recall the evenings spent on Mount Vernon and Chestnut streets and Branch Avenue, — the latter then known as "Kitchen" Street.

Fancy a laughing, shouting crowd, in

these days of police surveillance, coasting down public streets until eleven o'clock at night! But the Civil War came and changed many things, coasting among the rest. Most of the laughing, careless crowd enlisted at the first note of the country's call, and their boyhood came to a sudden end as the sound of drum and fife stirred all hearts to sterner things. Some came back, but many, alas, stayed behind with the great silent army, and it is for us who are left to keep their memories green until we too are enlisted in the same ranks.

It will, I am sure, be of interest to many who remember those days, to see once more the old familiar names of a few of the crack sleds of Boston at that period, and to have recalled to their minds who the owners of them were.

Wivern . . . . .	Bob Clark
Raven . . . . .	Arthur Clark
Brenda . . . . .	Dan Sargent
Charlotte . . . . .	Alfred Greenough



Comet . . . . .	Frank Wells
Southern Cross . . . . .	Frank Lawrence
Eagle . . . . .	Jim Lovett
Arrow . . . . .	John Muliken
Wild Pigeon . . . . .	Ned Kendall
Tom Heyer . . . . .	Jack Carroll
Titania . . . . .	Nate Appleton
Multum in Parvo . . . . .	Frank Peabody
Cave Adsum . . . . .	Ned Amory
Dancing Feather . . . . .	Charlie Greenough
Flying Childers . . . . .	Frank Wildes
Juniata . . . . .	Horace Bumstead
Trustee . . . . .	Charlie Chamberlin
Santiago . . . . .	Dick Robins
Whiz! . . . . .	Will Freeman
Flirt . . . . .	Horace Freeman
Scud . . . . .	Eben Dale
Flying Cloud . . . . .	Billy Fay
Cygnets . . . . .	Jim Chadwick
Alma . . . . .	Fred Crowninshield
Tuscaloosa . . . . .	Horatio Curtis
Viking . . . . .	Edgar Curtis
Moby Dick . . . . .	Henry Alline

Of course there were many sleds equally fine which bore no name; prominent among this latter class should be men-

tioned the one owned by Tom Edmands and also one which was made and owned by Charlie Lovett, both of them beautiful in grace, workmanship, and finish. There was one sled, named the "Edith," which always appealed to me as being more nearly perfect than any that I can remember. I cannot recall the owner's name, but I fear that whenever I saw this sled the tenth commandment was handled pretty roughly.

Steering a first-class sled in those days was not accomplished by sticking out one's leg and digging gullies in the snow with the toe of the boot. Heaven forbid! Those who owned crack sleds knew how to handle and get all the speed possible out of them, and would no more have retarded the speed by employing the above method than a yachtsman would think of steering his boat by towing a spar overboard. The correct form for a coaster who knew the game was to lie on the sled with head well down, feet

firmly crossed and knees flexed as far over the back as possible, both hands resting easily upon the same runner near its point; the steering was done by "pulling her head 'round" in the desired direction, by little short jerks of the runner upon which the hands rested.

Dan Sargent conceived the idea of steering by holding out in front of his sled a second one of diminutive proportions. This, however, could only be done on a steep coast, where no running start was necessary. I saw him try it several times, but it was never adopted. The first step to the "double runner" was two sleds hitched together tandem, and then the long connecting board quickly followed.

Street coasting was dangerous and resulted in accidents of all kinds, especially where the coast was intersected by another street. A big, heavy negro was one day coasting down Mt. Vernon Street on glare ice, and just before he reached Charles

Street a sledge drawn by one horse moving at a walk came into sight. The coaster had no time to think or swerve from his course, and with lightning speed shot under the horse's belly without touching a hoof. It was a close shave.

Usually a boy stood at such a place to signal to those about to start, when the coast was clear. I remember a boy going down the "Long Coast" with one leg stuck out for a rudder, as I have mentioned above, when another sled, overtaking him, struck the projection, whirling him around so that he faced up hill, and the next sled struck him full in the face, making sad work.

A funny incident occurred one morning upon the Joy Street coast. A colored washerwoman, weighing some two hundred pounds, was ponderously and laboriously picking her way down the icy path, carrying upon her head a large bundle of laundered clothes. She was so absorbed in



FIRST LIEUT. DANIEL SARGENT  
24th Mass. Vol. Infantry



her efforts to maintain her footing that she failed to hear, or else did not understand, the cry of "Lullah!" behind her. At all events, she kept stolidly upon her way, and the coaster, rattling down behind, kept upon his, perforce, being held to the coast by the ruts and going too fast to turn out. Of course the inevitable happened, and the colored lady, first lifted with startling abruptness, was then, fortunately for her, seated astride the back of the frightened boy, who continued on down the coast faster than ever, owing to the added weight. When she collected her senses, and found herself neither killed nor wounded, she fell to berating the poor lad with a wonderful flow of language, at the same time pounding and whacking him about his ears and shoulders during the remainder of the trip. The gentleman who told me of this contretemps added with a laugh that he would not have minded it quite so much if she had only landed "side saddle."

But enough of old-time coasting. We old boys who knew it then, and loved the sport, will still think that it should be classed among the lost arts.



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## CHAPTER IV

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**I**N the spring, as soon as the frost was out of the ground, many games stood waiting for us. Probably to the boys of to-day "marbles" sounds rather weak, and "Go and play marbles" is a phrase which one often hears hurled at the head of some unsuccessful competitor in field sports. It is true that it cannot be classed among athletics, but it was a much more serious business then than it is to-day, and was played with a good deal of skill. To shoot an "alley" with force and precision, "knuckling down," that is, with the knuckles resting upon the ground, is not so easy and requires much practice.

A boy's stock of marbles was usually carried in a bag with a running string, and

consisted of "Alleys," "Jaspers," "Chinees," "Pewees," "Agates," "Bulls' Eyes," and several other kinds. A special marble was kept for long shots, which might perhaps have been six feet, and it was remarkable how many times a small marble would be struck at this distance, with only the snap of the thumb.

I wonder if Mr. Rogers, a most courteous and dignified gentleman, whom I often see, remembers his skill at this sport! He was as expert as any boy of whom I can think. He, among many others, used to run a "bank," as we called it, — which consisted of a strip of wood, perhaps twelve or fifteen inches long, with six or eight little arches cut in it, each somewhat wider than a marble, and numbered from one up. This row of arches was held upright upon the ground, and the marksman, a few feet away, would shoot his marble with the object of entering one of the arches; if he succeeded, he was given the

number of marbles which corresponded with the number over the arch, while, if he failed, the marble was appropriated by the banker.

Then there was "ring taw" and "three holes," and lots of other names which have been forgotten. These games were good fun, and kept boys out of doors as well as out of mischief.

Kite-flying had and always will have a fascination for boys. Few "grown-ups," however, give it any attention at the present day, except in the interest of science. Formerly many gentlemen used to make kites for their children, and meet upon the Common to fly them. The late Dr. Nathaniel B. Shurtleff, once mayor of Boston, the writer's father, and several others made fine kites. Dr. Shurtleff was very skillful in making Chinese kites; I remember several which resembled owls, with large, blinking eyes, and which were most effective in the air. My father once made

a bow-kite seven feet high, a piece of rattan forming the bow. It had a "pull" which would have delighted the heart of a politician; one afternoon I was allowed to hold the cross-bar to which the string was attached, but I did not hold it long, as, although I dug both heels into the ground, it drew me along with the utmost ease. Stout gloves were required in letting out and pulling in the string of this kite.

Many gentlemen used to fish for perch, flounders, and eels off "Perch Rocks," as they were called. These rocks were the commencement of the wall bordering upon Charles River, back of the Beacon Street houses, and extended at that time perhaps an eighth of a mile out from River Street, several hundred yards beyond where the filling had been done. Here the gentlemen would meet and spend a pleasant afternoon, and right glad was I when taken along and allowed to hold a line. Once I grew tired, waiting for the bite which did

not come; so, fastening my line, I wandered off to the stone-cutters' sheds near by, to watch the men at their work. Upon coming back and taking hold of my line, I was surprised and delighted to feel that there was a monster upon the hook. I commenced to haul in the line with shouts of triumph, and as the prize rose to the surface I gazed into the leg of an old rubber boot that one of the party had attached. As he afterwards salved my wounded dignity with a bright dime, which looked big to a boy in those days, the wound quickly healed.

Tops, of course, had their innings, and some of the older boys used to get theirs turned to order, from hard, fancy woods, such as *lignum vitæ*, rose, box, tulip, leopard, and many other woods. These had long and sharp steel spikes fixed in them, with which we would try to split each other's tops while spinning. Since then I have never seen boys, playing at this sport,

throw the tops with their utmost strength, as we used to do.

Stilting, too, was a fad for a time, and some got to be quite expert at the game, hopping upon one stilt and shouldering the other. We would in this fashion have jousts, necessarily short-lived, handling the unused stilt as a lance. Games of tag, too, were played upon stilts, and in fact we got to feel pretty much at home upon them.

“Tip-cat” was also a popular game. One occasionally sees it played to-day, but not to the extent that it was then. Not content with small soft wood cats, two or three inches in length, we made them of a section of broom handle and about six or eight inches long, using the remainder of the handle for the cat-stick. With the three strokes which were allowed in this game, I have seen a cat of the latter kind sent from the Spruce Street path on the Common over the Public Garden fence. Charlie Troupe, who was a fine player at

the old "Massachusetts" game of baseball, made these three strokes; they held the record, and I very much doubt if any cat has ever jumped as far since.

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## CHAPTER V

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**T**HERE was a startling announcement in the papers one morning to the effect that an ancient cave had been discovered upon the Common. Many people went to see it, I among the number; and there, sure enough, near the Boylston Street end of the Parade Ground, a sort of canvas covering had been erected over a good-sized excavation into which people were entering by means of a rudely made stairway. I forget whether or not a small admission fee was charged (probably there was, or I should have gone in); but anyway, those who came out looked a little sheepish, at the same time urging others to go in and get their money's worth of the mysterious. Of course it soon dawned



upon everybody that it was April 1; this, however, did not deter them from going in just the same, to see what the joke was like, and all seemed to enjoy it; probably the originators reaped quite a little harvest.

There was one spot in Boston which will never fade from the memories of those who knew it. This was "Braman's Baths" at the foot of Chestnut Street. In the fifties there was a competitor in "Morey's Baths," but these latter were discontinued, if I remember aright, some time before the Civil War. Braman's was a notable institution, and possessed attractions for a boy that can hardly be overestimated. It was, in the first place the only bath-house in tide water in Boston. It consisted of a series of low wooden buildings built on piles, and was redolent of a strong odor of salt water, with which it seemed to be saturated, like no other place I have ever known, except perhaps the moss-covered piles under a

bridge ; and even more than these, it seemed to have a distinct quality of salty smell all its own.

Long, curious passageways and gang-planks led finally to the swimming basin, which was anchored in the river. There was a fee charged of course, for baths, and some of us were the possessors of season tickets, entitling the holders thereof to one bath per diem ; but if we wanted two, it was a cold day for us when we could n't get them in one way or another known only to boys. Rainy days offered no obstacles, and even a hail storm which I well recall, in which we felt as though being tattooed upon every exposed part of our bodies at once, could not keep us from the water. There was an outside row of dressing-rooms upon a platform, from which one could enter the river itself ; but only expert swimmers were allowed there. In the fall, these bathing houses were towed up the river and grounded for the winter upon the

flats. Apart from the bathing, "Braman's" was certainly a most fascinating place. In vacation time we would congregate early, and literally spend the day there, with only an interim for a hurried dinner.

There were two or three big rafts, where boats were to let, the rowboats tied to them and the sailboats anchored off a short distance. Many boats of all kinds were owned by private persons and were kept either in their own boat-houses, or in club-houses along with a number of others.

Although these recreations—swimming, rowing, and sailing—are so common today, it must be borne in mind that, at this period of which I am writing, this was the only rendezvous of the kind in Boston. It was here that, on regatta days, all the rowing celebrities congregated, and here such men as Josh Ward, the Biglin Brothers, Hammill, Walter Brown, and many others were revealed to us. Merely to catch a glimpse of them I have squirmed between

the legs of a crowd and all but crawled over their heads ; but these were state occasions and occurred, alas, like angels' visits.

Yes, "Braman's" was a unique collection of queer buildings, and as different from the cut-and-dried public baths of to-day as fragrant country lanes are from the city streets. Such a place would be impossible nowadays. There was within its depths a well-remembered lunch counter, past which it was difficult for a hungry boy (and when were we not hungry?) to pass without a business transaction. Boys, do you remember those black mince "slugs," the turnovers, the hard-tack which we used to soak in the swimming basin and eat while bathing, the spruce beer, and the apple "dough bats"? The exterior of these last was of a beautiful doughnut brown, and they contained in some part of their depths a trace more or less of apple sauce, like the ring in a cake ; one never knew when the

prize would be reached, but if it was there we never failed to reach it, and the wonder of it is that all these things tasted so good.

From the raft of the Beacon or Union Club a small party of us used, in the early sixties, to row almost daily either up to the Harvard Boat-house or else down, under the bridges, to the harbor. Usually the party was composed of two, three, or four, as the case might be, of the following named: Bill and Tom Blaikie, John Tyler, Ned Clark, John Hall, Billy Sanguilly, Frank Jackson, and myself. Sometimes Bob, Fred, or Sam Frothingham was of the party. Who of us who knew the last named will ever forget him or cease to regret his sad death? Handsome of face, with broad shoulders, deep chest, small waist, narrow hips, and a big, kind heart, he was a rare combination of manly beauty, strength, and grace. I cannot pass him by without this slight tribute to a dear old friend.

Upon our way home from these pulls we would usually stop for a swim, either at "Horseshoe Point" or at "Sugar Loaf." Bill Blaikie at that time used always to row bareheaded, declaring that the Almighty knew the correct headgear for a man and gave it to him accordingly. The rest of us, however, lacked sufficient faith in this theory to brave the risk of sun-stroke. Blaikie, by the way, could at that time, with his hands alone, lift a dead weight of sixteen hundred pounds. This, for a man not over twenty years of age, was surely a gigantic feat. He did it repeatedly at the old Tremont Gymnasium. Later on he was a power in the Harvard 'Varsity boat, and the crew of which he rowed stroke was never beaten. The other members of this celebrated crew were Bob Peabody, Ned Fenno, A. P. Loring, Ned Wilkinson, and Charlie McBurney. In action, with bronzed bodies, capped with crimson, plying that piston-rod stroke, this six was a sight to remember!





Chas. H. McBurney (bow)    A. P. Loring    R. S. Peabody    Edw. N. Fenno    E. T. Wilkinson    Wm. Blaikie (stroke)

HARVARD VARSITY CREW, 1866





R. S. Peabody (3)  
E. T. Wilkinson (5)



C. McBurney (bow)  
A. P. Loring (2)



Wm. Blaikie (stroke)  
E. N. Fenno (4)



HARVARD VARSITY CREW, 1866



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## CHAPTER VI

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**I**N the late fifties Boston could boast of having some of the best oarsmen in the country, amateurs though they might be. As a single sculler, "Bob" Clark (lately chairman of the Boston Police Board) was unapproachable. Upon June 22, 1859, in his shell *L'Espérance*, he made the time of 13.52 over a two-mile course, one mile out and return, against Tom Doyle and Eben Harrington; the former finishing in 14.42½ and the latter in 15.50. This time of Clark's held the record for sixteen years! He literally played with all comers. In one of his races he came in so far ahead of his opponents that the spectators would not believe that he had turned the stake-

boat, until all doubts were set at rest by the other participants in the race and by the judge who was stationed at that point.

The old Volant crew was also well-nigh invincible, and was made up of such metal as Robert H. Stevenson and his brother Thomas (afterwards that magnificent soldier, Brigadier-General Thomas G. Stevenson), Robert F. and Arthur Clark, John Putnam, and Robert M. Pratt. In chronicling the prowess of this splendid crew, of which Boston was so proud, I cannot do better than to give verbatim the following report of their race with the Huron, as it appeared in "Ballou's Pictorial" for June 20, 1857, along with a sketch of the finish, referred to therein.

"BOAT RACE ON CHARLES RIVER."

"The exciting scene depicted on this page, by our artist, Mr. Hill, who made the drawing expressly for us, is the con-



ROBERT F. CLARK



clusion of the race between the club boats, Huron and Volant, which took place on the 16th ult., in presence of a large concourse of spectators. The locality is faithfully represented. The houses in the background of the picture are the fine ones recently built on Western Avenue; in front and to the left, are Braman's baths and boat-houses. From the baths, a line was drawn to the judges' boat, to form a starting point for the race; the Volant is represented as having crossed it, and the Huron coming up. In the foreground is the judges' boat; beyond the Volant is one of the boats of the Union Club; and the gentleman pulling the extremely narrow one is Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, the poet, who is very partial to this manly exercise, for which no city in the world has such facilities as Boston, the fine expanse of Charles River being unimpeded by navigation and the dangers incident to the passage of steamers. Our sketch,

through the kindness of Mr. Braman, was made from the judges' boat.

“Of the two boats engaged in this spirited race, the Huron is owned by a club of Harvard College students, and the Volant is well known as the champion of the Charles River Association. The race was not for money, but a set of colors was to be given by the loser to the winner in the generous contest. The race was to be pulled over the usual three-mile course on Charles River, the boats to be governed by ordinary rules, to start from the judges' line at half-past four, to round the stake at the upper end, pulling starboard oars. Both crews had been thoroughly and severely trained and came to the line in most excellent condition. The following are the names and positions of the crews, as reported in the 'Traveller:': Volant—Stroke, R. H. Stevenson, No. 2, A. H. Clark, No. 3, J. C. Putnam, No. 4, R. Pratt, No. 5, R. F. Clark, No. 6, T. G. Steven-







VOLANT AND HURON  
O. W. Holmes,



AT RACE, JUNE 16, 1857  
left, in wherry





son ; Huron — Stroke, S. B. Parkman, No. 2, C. F. Walcott, No. 3, W. H. Elliot, No. 4, W. G. Goldsmith, No. 5, A. E. B. Agassiz, No. 6, J. J. Storrow. Mr. Grenville T. W. Braman acted as judge for the Volant, and Mr. Alfred Whitman, Jr., for the Huron.

“At quarter-past four the gun was fired, the boats disappeared under their houses for a moment, and in another minute came out — the crews stripped and ready for the race. The Volants wore scarlet caps, white, close-fitting body shirts, and dark trousers ; the Hurons, white flat caps, with red band, white shirts, and white trousers. Both crews looked admirably. The judges were between the boats, able to see that they were even and to direct their movements with much greater facility than is possible from a boat moored at the end of the line. The word was given by Mr. Whitman, and the boats started at 4 h. 37 min. 30 sec. The Volant led. She had gained a length

at the end of the first eighth of a mile, and throughout the race pulled steadily ahead of her rival, at no time losing any part of her advantage. Off the lower breakwater, on the up-stretch, there were two lengths of clear water between the boats. The distance of the Volants increased to three or four at the upper breakwater — they were at least five ahead after rounding the stake, and on the home-stretch gained in about the same proportion, coming in with a lead of ten or eleven lengths. Both boats having started at 4 h. 37 min. 30 sec. returned as follows: Volant, 4 h. 58 min. 30 sec. — time, 21 min.; Huron, 4 h. 59 min. 8 sec. — time, 21 min. 38 sec.; difference in favor of the Volant, 38 sec. The time is good; better, the 'Traveller' says, than any amateur six-oar has made in public on this course. Neither boat, however, came down to its practice time. The Huron has been round in 20 min. 50 sec.; and it is said the Volant has accomplished it

in 19 min. 52 sec., which, if correct, is very much better than anything recorded. This sport was witnessed with much interest by the spectators.”<sup>1</sup>

Besides the Volant, there were the Fort Hill Boy, Maid of Erin, Robert Emmet, Shamrock, Sterling, Bunker Hill, and others — most of them manned by hardy longshoremen, all fine athletes, some of whom were nearly always to be found in the 17th of June and 4th of July regattas, and they always gave a good account of themselves. I give a few brief sketches of some of these old races, which were taken from the files of the Boston “Herald” and “Transcript.”

Upon July 4, 1856, in the single-scutt race, Daw, in the Brooklyn Boy, beat Tom Daly in the Stephen Roberts, by a small margin, and on the same day the Robert Emmet was beaten by the Harvard manned by Parkman, Crowninshield, El-

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, p. 211.

liott, Erving, Walcott, Ropes, and Goldsmith. In 1857, July 4, the Harvard beat Fort Hill Boy, Robert Emmet, Shamrock, Bunker Hill, and Sterling in 19.22. In the single sculls, Bob Clark, in the Blackbird, took things easily and beat Tom Doyle and two or three others by several lengths, in 14.54. Doyle rowed the D. E. Poland. The prizes were awarded by Mr. Charles F. Shimmin — he and the two Stevenson brothers being the judges.

June 19, 1858, on the Charles River, in the second annual Beacon Regatta, the Harvards once more beat the Fort Hill Boy, their rival of the previous year, in a three-mile race, in 19.22, — the latter coming in second, two minutes behind them.

The Fort Hill Boy's crew of 'longshoremen, being now thoroughly disgruntled by these repeated defeats by those whom they termed "Beacon Street swells," determined to arrange a race with them that should effectually show the difference between





Alex. E. R. Agassiz (bow)  
Charles W. Elliot



J. H. Wales  
Caspar Crowninshield



James H. Ellison  
Benj. W. Crowninshield (stroke)



HARVARD 'VARSITY CREW, 1858



brawn and brains, and put these "lady's pets" in their proper place in boat-racing. Accordingly they challenged the Harvards to row a *six-mile* race (twice over the usual three-mile course). The Harvards, nothing daunted, accepted the challenge with the responsiveness of a gamecock, and upon July 5 again showed their heels to the Irish crew in 40.25, beating them by nearly a minute and a half.<sup>1</sup>

The time made by these oarsmen has since been beaten, mainly owing to improvements in boat construction and to the valuable addition of the sliding seat, which was then unknown. Race horses have been improved since the 2.40 days, by careful breeding, and in this era of the pneumatic sulky the old records are laughed at; but no improvement has been made, or can be made, on the splendid athletes and watermen of the old days of which I write.

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, p. 213.

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## CHAPTER VII

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**D**URING this period I was, of course, a mere lad; but in the early sixties, through the experience which I have related I grew to know Charles River thoroughly, in its every nook and corner, from Braman's to the Harvard boat-house, and loved it well. I often used to start off alone on pulls, and the mere drifting along with lazy strokes, feeling as free as a bird in air, was an un-mixed delight, never to be forgotten.

In rowing around to Boston Harbor there was a railroad bridge, which at high tide nearly touched the water, and was at such times a ticklish place to pass in a boat. John Tyler, one of the best oarsmen of his day (in the sixties), was once work-





ing his way under the bridge at full flood tide and got jammed in some way just as a train came roaring along, barely three feet above his head. He could only lie down and await the issue, — and he used to tell of the trying experience through which he passed as the train thundered above him, while hot ashes came sifting down upon him and his boat. He never tried it again except when there was plenty of space to row quickly beneath this bridge.

A pleasant remembrance of this time is a fast little green dory, owned by Ned Holmes, youngest son of Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes; for in it he and I made many delightful trips to all points of the Charles as well as Boston Harbor. Young Holmes was a delightful companion, and I am sure that Dr. Fred Sturgis will recall the "green dory," as we called it, with as much pleasure as I do, for he rowed in it as often as I.

In the winter Charles River afforded plenty of sport in duck shooting, and spearing for eels through the ice, for those who were hardy enough to brave the cold. My brother is the only one whom I can recall who used to "lay out" for ducks, night after night, upon the ice. He had built himself a skiff with iron rods laid along the bottom, to act as runners; and with the aid of these he would proceed from one "pond hole" to another. The skiff was disguised with hay and pieces of eel grass and ice, so that it resembled a mass of floating débris, of which the ducks had no mistrust. He would quietly slide his skiff into a pond hole, and, if a flock of ducks was there, feeding at low tide, lie upon his back, sculling noiselessly over his shoulder until within range, and he seldom failed to bring home a good bag in the morning.

He used to tell of an amusing incident which occurred one morning before it was fairly light, while he was upon his way



home. He was close in to the Mill Dam and saw three or four laborers walking to their work. Thinking to see how they would take it, he lay back in the boat until they were opposite, and then, when they were looking his way, suddenly sat up in what must have appeared to them a floating coffin, and, stretching out his arms, gave a loud and sepulchral yawn. The men were confounded and then panic-stricken, and with the cry of "Begod, it's a monk!" incontinently fled. As my brother had on a nearly white overcoat, trimmed with white fur, the effect in the dim light may have warranted their belief that something supernatural was happening.

When the old hand engines went out of business, a lot of fun went with them. I "ran" with Cataract No. 4, it being incumbent upon every boy to run with and "blow" for the engine in his district; and a boy without a "tub," as they were called

in the vernacular, was like a man without a country. There was Mazeppa No. 1, Perkins No. 2, Eagle No. 3, Cataract No. 4, Extinguisher No. 5, Melville No. 6, Tiger No. 7, Boston No. 8, Maverick No. 9, Dunbar No. 10, Barnicoat No. 11, Tremont No. 12, and two or three more.

Number Four's house stood on piles over Charles River directly opposite the foot of Mt. Vernon Street. It was built of wood, but has since been replaced by a brick structure, turned around into line with the rest of the buildings on Mt. Vernon Street and occupied by Steamer No. 10.

There was great rivalry between certain engine companies, and this party feeling was, of course, communicated to the boys residing in the rival districts. "What tub do yer blow for?" when sprung upon one by a strange boy, who looked as though he were "spoiling for a fight," was a hail to be answered with great circumspection and diplomacy. Prevarication was deemed jus-

tifiable if the one asked this straight-from-the-shoulder question was a smaller boy. If the latter knew what tub the questioner himself favored, it was plain sailing, and a little of the aforesaid prevarication covered a multitude of troubles; but if this important fact were unknown, aye, there was the rub! Then was the time to exercise *finesse*, remembering that a soft answer turneth away wrath: to temporize, or squarely aver that you did n't "blow" for any tub, and so avoid issue. But, on the other hand, if one felt a little "scrappy" himself and thought he had a good fighting chance, then the flag was boldly flaunted and he waded in.

The engine companies themselves in going to a fire were bound to get there, if possible, before a rival, so as to get the first stream started; if they met, — well, one of them had to give way, and oftentimes this involved some pretty free fighting. The motto in these cases seemed to be, "Let

the old thing burn, if it will, but you don't get there before we do."

Sometimes, by way of diversion, an engine would try to "wash" a rival, — that is, endeavor to pump water into her faster than her boys could pump it out, and if this were effected, and she were overflowed, great was the rejoicing thereat. But if, on the other hand, the receiving engine's boys could pump off the water faster than it came in, so that the hose could be heard to suck air, then the victory lay with them and was duly heralded abroad.

It certainly was exciting to see two or more rival engine companies pitted against one another upon the Common, to decide which could throw a stream the farthest. Judges were selected and the crews would "man the brakes" and at a given signal fall to, the water being drawn from the Frog Pond. A captain would stand on the top of his machine and exhort his men to "break their lazy backs." "Don't go to

sleep, men," he would roar, and, working himself into a frenzy, with his arms gesticulating wildly, and waving aloft his speaking trumpet, he would swear that they were a set of "stiffs." "For God's sake, my bully boys, work as if you were alive." "That's the stuff, now, my beauties; don't let her strike" (meaning the shoulder of the piston upon the chamber in which it played). "Shake it out of her, now; one, two; one, two; now you've got it! Oh, just *one* foot further, if you love me!" And so he would keep it going until the time was up and a verdict was rendered. Yes, lots of fun went out when the steamers came in.

The engine was drawn by a long rope manned by the firemen, and any boy who could get a hand on that rope felt that he had won his spurs. After a fire the men, upon returning to the engine house, usually had a long table set out with a lunch of crackers and cheese,—or at least it was

so at Cataract's house, and as I knew Alex. Towne, one of the best men of the company, I often got in and partook of the feast.

Towne was the strongest man on the team, and could, standing with his back to the engine, lift her hind wheels clear of the ground. I do not know how many pounds this represented, but he was the only one who could do it.

The loyalty of the fire laddies to their engine is well illustrated by the legend which was told of one of them who was dying, and whose last request was, "When I die, cut off me ears and bury 'em under de engine house, so that I can hear de old mashine rattle as she rolls out."

Charlie Chamberlin, then living on Charles Street, had a miniature engine, the exact counterpart of a full grown "tub," with which we had lots of fun. Among its crew were George Mifflin, Fred Crowninshield, George Johnson, myself, and others.

It was made of copper and stood about three and one half feet from the ground to the brakes, which were five feet long. It held about a barrel of water and would throw a good fifty-foot stream. It had actually seen service at fires before its advent into our neighborhood. It bore the name of "Hydrant No. 4." Charlie tells a good joke on himself in connection with it. Its original color was red, with gilt lines; but the company, thinking it would look better blue, voted to repaint it, and the order was forthwith given; before it was completed, however, the crew for some reason disbanded, leaving the owner to foot the bill and to stand, barring the cannibalism, in the position of Gilbert's "Elderly Naval Man," who, it will be remembered, recited "in a singular minor key,"

"Oh, I am a cook and the captain bold,  
And the mate of the Nancy Brig,  
And a bo'sun tight, and a midshipmite,  
And the crew of the captain's gig."

I understand that this engine is still in good working order; but, alas! Pegasus, with bound wings, stands harnessed to the plow! This "fiery" engine, instead of being borne as a conqueror to subdue flames, now plays the modest rôle of a garden pump, and its owner may expect any day to see it soar away to heaven.



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## CHAPTER VIII

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**I**N the late fifties the game of cricket tried hard to get a foothold in Boston and several clubs were formed, among which were the "Bostons," the "Bay States," "Star and Thistle," "Young Bostons," "Mount Vernon," and a few others. I belonged to the "Young Bostons," which numbered among its first eleven Collins Warren, George Mifflin, Horatio Curtis, Phil. Mason (afterwards killed in battle), Charlie and Jim Jackson, Frank Higginson, Nathan Appleton, Frank Loring, Harry Sturgis, and myself.

I was very enthusiastic over this game, and if it had even held its own, should no doubt have remained loyal to it; but the Common was an impossible place for

cricket, the hard baked ground making a good wicket or bowling crease out of the question ; and the Bostons, procuring grounds in East Cambridge, while the remaining clubs gradually disbanded, I with others drifted into baseball. From that time until about 1885, when I joined the Longwood Cricket Club, I hardly had a cricket bat in my hands. I played with the latter organization about ten years and then retired ; at that time an honorary membership was conferred upon me, which I prize highly.

Upon the East Cambridge cricket ground, in the year 1863, appeared for the first time on Massachusetts soil a lad sixteen years of age, who came on from New York, with the St. George Cricket Club, to play against the Bostons. He was called " Little Georgie," and proved himself well able to hold a position upon this then crack eleven, and gave undoubted promise of the fine player and genial



D. Wright   Unknown   Unknown   Vanderlip   Vincent   Betts  
 Van Buren   Taylor   Geo. Wright   Ford   Pomeroy   Haughton   Kendall   Ayers

ST GEORGE CRICKET ELEVEN AND SUBSTITUTES, HOBOKEN, N. J., 1861



friend which he afterwards turned out to be, both upon the cricket and the baseball field. All old-timers will at once recognize in this rough outline the boy who in later years ripened into the deservedly popular and brilliant all-round athlete, George Wright. Wright still has hosts of friends, and as long as he played baseball was the acknowledged "king" of the diamond. Age being, as somebody has said, simply a "quality of the mind," he is still a young man and sets us all a good example by his continued practice of outdoor sports. May he live long to enjoy them!

Somehow American soil is not congenial for cricket — more 's the pity! as it is one of the finest and noblest of all outdoor sports; it is a gentleman's game from start to finish, and brings forth and into play the best sporting instincts of which a man is possessed. Philadelphia has clung to it tenaciously and has produced players who lose nothing in comparison with our Eng-

lish cousins ; but even there it seems to be losing its grip. It seems as if the lean years were upon it, and its days were numbered.

There is no doubt that the length of time required for a full two innings match (frequently two days) is a serious handicap for it in this country, and is at variance with the American temperament. The office boy can occasionally get a few hours off in the afternoon to see a baseball game, with the "grandmother's funeral" plea ; but obviously this could not be worked two days running, for a cricket match.

Several of the Bay State Eleven eventually joined the Bostons, thereby greatly strengthening the latter. Among the best of these were Henry Alline, Bill Joslin, Tom Blanchard, Moses Mellen, and John Barron. Alline was a fine thrower, a sure catch, and a tower of strength in the field. Joslin also was a crack fielder, and had a way of running in to meet a batted

grounder, picking it up with one hand and throwing it to the wicket without stopping, which always called forth applause. The mere presence of these two men in the field served to discourage batsmen from attempting runs which might otherwise have been made without difficulty. They both afterwards played upon the Lowell Baseball Nine.

Blanchard was a fearless batter, and seldom if ever wore leg guards or batting gloves. This was doubtless a mistake upon his part, as, unconsciously, part of an unprotected batter's attention must be given to avoiding personal injury; whereas a man feeling moderately secure against bodily hurt can "wade in" to his limit. Mellen was a fine batter, could drive with great force, and was a good, all-round clean hitter. He too played with the Lowells at one time, catching for the second nine. John Barron was left-handed and would to-day be called a "South paw" batter.

He bowled an exceedingly puzzling ball to play, as most left-handed bowlers do.

I think that all of these last named were graduates of the old Phillips School, then located at the corner of Pinckney and Anderson streets, — which, by the way, turned out many good players at all kinds of sports. Ward 6 used to vote in this old schoolhouse, and political meetings were sometimes held in it. It was here that I once heard our great War Governor, John A. Andrew, speak, not long before his election. I did not know at the time who John A. Andrew was, but I remember how his clean-cut, crisp, and blood-stirring eloquence moved everybody to wild applause. Once after that, during the Civil War, I heard him again; but this time it was a dinner conversation between him and the late John M. Forbes, at the latter's house in Milton, where I and a few other young fellows were present as friends of his son Malcolm. I well recall how fascinating



the talk was between these two brilliant men.

In October of 1860, Gerrit S. Miller, or "Gat" as his multitude of friends love to call him, came on from Peterboro', N. Y., to enter the private Latin school of Mr. E. S. Dixwell; he was at once hailed as a most valuable addition to our boy world, and has continued valuable to all of us for forty-five years. Mr. Dixwell's school, founded in 1851, was located in Boylston Place, in a house which he built specially for it, and was recognized as the finest private school in Boston. Boys were here fitted for college, and any graduate who bore Mr. Dixwell's hall-mark was sufficiently guaranteed without further question.

At the time that Miller entered this school it had a fine football team, upon which he at once took a prominent place. In that same fall they played against the Boston Public Latin School and beat them,

with a team composed of Walter Hunnewell, "Bunty" Bradford, Bill Goddard, Charlie Rand, Jim Chadwick, Bob Newell, Lawrence Tucker, Charlie McBurney, Bob Peabody; Tom Dwight, Pat Jackson, Alfred Greenough, and three others.

In the fall of 1861 they played another match game with the Latin School; but this time the latter played with a team picked from the first and second classes. It was a memorable game and worthy of special mention, in that it was the most stubbornly fought match that ever took place upon the Common in those days, and also the longest ever played anywhere, so far as my knowledge goes.

I have said that the Latin School team was composed of first and second class boys, and this is true with but one exception. Although I belonged to the third class, my playing was deemed sufficiently good to warrant its being utilized upon this occasion, as our full strength was needed

to meet Dixwell's game fighters. Upon our team there were Tom and Bill Blaikie, Jim Bodge, Sam Frothingham and his brother Donald, Sumner Paine, Tom Nelson, Ned Fenno, Jack Oviatt, Ned Clark, and myself, while upon the eleven opposing us were Charlie McBurney, Ned. Arnold, Bob Peabody, Tom Dwight, John Duff, Bob Boit, Fred Shattuck, Frank Peabody, Gat Miller, Cliff Watson, and Bob Lawrence.

Usually matches were decided by the best two games out of three; but in this instance our opponents, reasoning that though we averaged heavier and older boys, they were the better trained, and might eventually wear us down if the contest were a long one, proposed that it should be best three out of five; to which luckily for us we consented, since it resulted in their undoing, as will be seen.

The goals were Beacon Street Mall upon one side, and the path leading from Flag-

staff Hill to Charles Street upon the other. There was quite a wind blowing, and Dixwell's boys, winning the toss, chose the side with the wind, thus giving us the kick-off. In this game they started in like young tigers and did us up in fifteen minutes. In the next game we woke up a bit, but although we had the wind to help us, it took forty minutes to land the ball past their goal. This evened things up as far as games went, but it could be seen at a glance that we were being outplayed.

In the third game we managed to stand them off five minutes longer than in the first; but they finally "warmed" us again, this time requiring twenty minutes to do the trick. Right here was where their undoing came in; for if the match had been two out of three, they would have had us beaten then and there; but we have all had, I take it, more or less experience with that short but potent "if."

We started in at once upon the fourth



Gerrit S. Miller

R. Clifford Watson



John P. Hall



James D'Wolf Lovett



game, and though we again had the wind to contend with, after a protracted struggle of forty-five minutes we gained the coveted goal. The match now stood two all, and every belt was drawn up another hole; for the tug of war was on, and the wind having died down, we were upon an equal footing. The fifth and deciding game was at once called, and I cannot do better than to quote the late lamented Cliff Watson's entertaining version of it forty years afterwards at a reunion dinner (several of which he gave at the Union Club to four of us veterans, Gat Miller, Jim Ames, John Hall, and myself), relating how Jim Lovett loafed around with his hands in his pockets, during the first four games, and then, when everybody else was used up, finally woke up and finished the game, after forty-seven minutes, by kicking the winning goal, thus ending the match and justifying the selection of a third class player.

Right here let me say that the cherished

memory of Cliff Watson will always be a delight and a joy to everybody who knew him. He was at all times loyal to the friends of his ante-collegiate days, and nothing delighted him more than to gather them around him and to fight over again the old battles lost and won, of our boyhood days. *Vale, old friend, vale!*

In this match, for two hours and forty-seven minutes we were engaged in constant action except when the ball went out of bounds, and then it was at once brought back and put into play again. One game followed another in rapid succession, with no opportunity for a rest and a rub-down between times, so that the test was one of endurance as well as skill. I, personally, am sadly ignorant of the modern game of football, and will let those wiser than I comment upon and discuss its merits as compared with those of the old game, open, full of stirring episodes, and intelligible at any stage to every onlooker.



I attended a Harvard-Yale game not so many years ago, and as I sat trying to study out what was being done in one corner of the gridiron, where both teams were apparently welded into one solid mass which every few seconds would sway and heave, perhaps a foot or two, in one direction, and then, as though having changed its mind, sway and heave back again, the simile (a lame one, I admit), would occur to me of the situation in a billiard match where the skillful wielder of the cue gets the balls "jawed" in a corner. With wonderful delicacy of touch he plays the third ball upon them, back and forth, an inch at a time, click, click, back and forth, back and forth, until, after ten or fifteen minutes have been spent in this way, the spectator, while fully appreciating the manipulator's skill, yawns and frets and fidgets, and longs to see the balls break; when at last this happens, he instantly resumes his interest, and with kindling eye hails with

pleasure the beautiful round-the-table shots, and feels that he is now seeing billiards. Far be it from me to attempt to depreciate the splendid output of muscular energy displayed in the aforesaid corner of the gridiron; nor do I for a moment question the skill and strategy exercised in the planning and execution of these attacks; but somehow I felt that the balls were constantly being "jawed," and I longed to see more round-the-table shots, — in fact, "billiards."

And then the suits of armor, together with the presence of the ready surgeon and the waiting stretcher (and, for aught I know, the undertaker), made it all savor a little too strongly of the Roman amphitheatre to be compatible with what football seems intended for, namely, a healthy and invigorating pastime.

I remember once seeing some boy, I forget whom, overtake and spring upon the back of Tom Nelson, who was running

with the ball; no doubt he thought thereby to down Tom and get the ball away from him. Nelson, who, by the way, was one of the most powerful men who ever entered Harvard College, continued placidly upon his way, apparently unconscious of the other's presence, and, when he got ready, calmly shook the passenger from off his back much as a mastiff might get rid of a troublesome pup, and proceeded to kick the ball according to original intentions.

On another occasion I was chasing one of Dixwell's boys who had the ball and was a very fast runner. Finding I could not catch him, I made a flying leap of some ten or twelve feet and landed between his shoulders. The impact sent us both sprawling, but he, in falling, released the ball, and I, who was uppermost, got it and saved the situation. I sometimes see this gentleman upon the street, and wonder if he remembers the circumstance as well as I do.

When chasing an opponent Billy Sargent, a fine player, had a neat trick of ranging up alongside the other man, reaching around, grabbing hold of his farther shoulder, and by a quick jerk turning him half round, so that he suddenly found himself "facing backwards;" the impetus acquired by running did the rest, and nine times out of ten his legs would get so tangled up that he would tumble all over himself. I know all about it, for I have been there.

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## CHAPTER IX

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**I**N 1863, the Oneida Football Club was organized and composed of members of Mr. Dixwell's school and three outsiders, namely, Malcolm Forbes and John Hall from the English High, and myself, from the Public Latin School. It was a very strong club and played matches repeatedly with the Boston Public Latin School, the English High and Dorchester High schools, beating them so easily that a match was made with the combined forces of the Boston Latin and English High schools, Mac Forbes being their captain; but even this array could make no headway against us, and they did not score once. In fact, we were never beaten, and what is more remarkable, no combination ever made a single goal against us.

The word "goal" here used seems to need some explanation in view of what is now understood by that term. In the old game there were no "touchdowns" nor was the ground marked off by lines of any kind; in fact, there was no "gridiron," nothing but straight football,—and by straight football I mean that from the time of the "kick-off" there was no cessation, no "let-up" (except when the ball went out of bounds, and then it was at once brought back and put into play again), until one side or the other landed the ball over *any part* of the opponents' boundary line. When this was effected, a goal was claimed, which ended the game; so that the terms "goal" and "game" were synonymous. The difference between guarding a line the entire width of the ground and one a few feet long between the upright poles of to-day's game can readily be seen.

This champion team was made up of

Won by  
Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>.  1863.  
from

High & Latin  
Schools

RUBBER FOOTBALL

WON BY THE ONEIDA FOOTBALL CLUB

Names of team painted on the ball

Arnold, E. L.  
Boit, R. A.  
Bowditch, E.  
Brooks, W.  
Davis, F.

Hall, J.  
Lawrence, R. M.  
Lovett, J. D'W.  
Miller, G. S. (Capt.)  
Peabody, F. G.

Scudder, W. S.  
Thies, L.  
Tucker, L.  
Watson, R. C.  
Wolcott, H. F.

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the following players: Gat Miller, captain, Ned Bowditch, Ned Arnold, Bob Boit, John Hall, Frank Peabody, Winthrop Scudder, Lawrence Tucker, "Hunty" Wolcott, Cliff Watson, Bob Lawrence, Louis Thies, Walter Brooks, Frank Davis, and myself. It is needless to say that each one of the above was a very strong player in his position, and to particularize would be difficult after so many years; but I can say that on the rush line Cliff Watson, Frank Peabody, Walter Brooks, Frank Davis, and John Hall were tough propositions to run up against. Watson was a strategist, *par excellence*, and could extricate the ball from more tight places than any one else upon the team. Gat Miller was our sheet anchor as "tender out," or "full-back" as it is called to-day, and a tower of strength when the ball got past the rest of the team; the fact I have stated above, that a goal was never made against us, is sufficient testimony to his reliability, steadiness, and

skill in that most important position. Arnold was the fleetest of foot, with Boit and Tucker good seconds. Bowditch, Scudder, Lawrence, Wolcott, and Thies were ever watchful and played into each other's hands with skill and judgment.

Roger Wolcott, also a member of this club, was a boy whom we all loved and respected; ever fair and square, high-minded, honest and above-board; with the passing years these qualities deepened and strengthened and came to be recognized universally, until the people of Massachusetts gave him the highest gift in their power and made him governor. It is not for me to say how faithfully and wisely he upheld and added fresh lustre to the honor of the old Bay State. It was said of the late Jonas Chickering, the founder of the house of Chickering and Sons, that his character was like his pianos, "upright, square, and grand." Surely the same tribute can truthfully be applied to the

straightforward and beautiful life of Roger Wolcott.

In one match game Ned Arnold and one of our opponents were both running at top speed towards each other, intent only upon kicking the ball, which lay about midway between them, and apparently with that same utter contempt for personal danger which Farragut so forcibly expressed for torpedoes in Mobile Harbor. The ball was fairly struck, simultaneously, from either side, with the result that it was ripped asunder like a paper bag. The fact that Ned's opponent flinched a hair and swerved slightly was all that prevented a bad "head on" collision. As it was, however, two surprised bodies, tumbling headlong past each other for ten or fifteen feet was, fortunately, the extent of the damage.

The Common was the only playground in Boston to which we had access, and among those who congregated there daily for football, hockey, or what not, were

Henry Cabot Lodge, William Walley, Sam Cabot, Arthur Brooks, George Lyman, Charlie and Rollins Morse, George Mifflin, Cabot Russell, Sam and Gus Bradstreet, Arthur Beebe, Henry and Joe Fay, Billy Field, Lem Stanwood, "Ren" Thayer, Ned Burgess, Malcolm Greenough, Frank Manning, Frank Nicholson, Tom Motley, and a host of others.

It is a somewhat mournful pleasure to look with retrospective eye, through forty years, and see once more the familiar faces gathering upon the old Parade Ground for the afternoon's game of football. Well may we marvel to-day to see ourselves again sprinting across the grassy stretch; eyes bright with youth and health; muscles firm and each joint supple and moving like clockwork. Yes, it is undeniably a pleasure to us who survive, to know that we old fellows could and did enjoy these things; the remembrance of them will remain with us a joy forever. Is it indeed possible that

this young fellow whom we, looking backwards, see bounding with the spring of an antelope, is the gray-haired man, walking a trifle stiffly, with whom I was chatting yesterday?

What fun it was to see Arthur Beebe, with body bent close to the ground, patting the ball with his hands, this way and that, steering it clear of the ravening wolves who were pursuing and rapidly hemming him in, until, suddenly straightening himself, he deftly tossed the ball over the surrounding heads into the ready hands of an alert partner, who in his turn helped it on the way to the enemy's boundary line. Bob Peabody and Walter Hunnewell were also adepts in these tactics. Such players might be likened to the torpedo boats of a fleet, darting rapidly about and causing confusion to the enemy. Battleships were typified in powerful Tom Nelson, Frank Davis, Malcolm Forbes, Sam Bradstreet, and others. Swift cruisers and indeed all the

types of our modern vessels, except submarine craft, were represented in these football battles.

Before commencing the afternoon's games, it was the custom to place our coats, vests, etc., in a pile upon one side of the ground. Not unfrequently strangers of a predatory turn of mind would be seen showing undue curiosity about the collection of clothing, and this uncalled-for interest would demand prompt attention. Upon these occasions we usually looked to Sam Bradstreet to take the initiative, and he never failed us. Sam was a peace-loving boy like the rest of us, but at the first smell of powder he would make a bee-line for the biggest and toughest looking of the invaders, and, with an apparent zest which was lovely to see, sail in, rarely failing to bag his game and strike consternation to the hearts of the rest of the intruders, who would thereupon flee from the wrath to come and leave us in peace. I know Sam

will not mind my telling these tales out of school, for we were all proud of him; and then, he did it all with such abounding good nature!

Pat Jackson was very effective in taking a "free kick," that is, with no one to interfere with him. He sent the ball a long distance, and in the act of kicking used to clear the ground with both feet.

Sam Cabot was a tough customer to run foul of, and whoever he tackled might as well give it up first as last, for when he set his grip it "stayed put" until he thought proper to release his victim.

"Lurking," known to-day as being "off side," was considered by fair-minded boys as an offense not to be countenanced for a moment, even if the boy guilty of it was on one's own side. It was a trick very rarely resorted to in those days, in which a boy tried to sneak around in among the enemy and wait for his own side to kick the ball his way, when his chances for

getting it past the opponent's full-back were much increased. Our law was to "keep moving towards the ball," wherever it might be.

Ned Burgess, who in later life became the world renowned yacht designer, was a very agile player and always seemed to be in the right place. This agility he kept up all through his too short life, as is testified by his famous handspring upon the deck of his boat after each victory.

The Parade Ground, and that part of the Common between "Flagstaff" and the smaller hill known to us as the "hollow," were the two football grounds. The latter has since been filled in, and beneath the new earth lie buried many pleasant memories of some of our happiest boyhood days.

In the early afternoons, before the football devotees had assembled, some half a dozen of us would get up impromptu jumping matches. In these contests Gat Miller



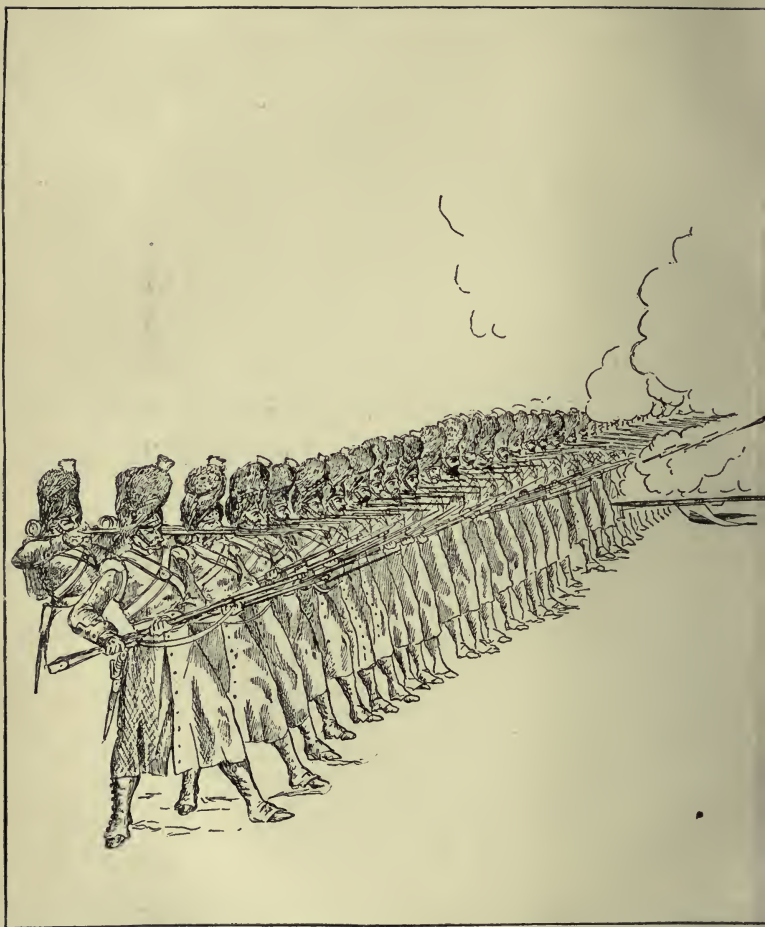
and I usually took the lead. We were very evenly matched and could cover eleven feet six inches in one standing jump with weights, and in three standing jumps a shade better than thirty-four feet. The professional jumpers of to-day will smile at these figures ; but we were only boys of seventeen or eighteen years of age, and could no doubt have done better if we had taken to it seriously.

Speaking of jumping reminds me that so far as I have ever known, Horatio Curtis and myself were the only two boys who could vault over the Common fence. It was not alone the height that made the feat difficult, but the pointed iron pickets, which presented a formidable obstacle, owing to the danger involved, besides the difficulty of getting a firm hold upon them. Later, when in Harvard College, Curtis was a crack oarsman and pulled stroke for the 1864 'Varsity crew.

The ability to vault this fence served

me a good turn one afternoon when some home-coming regiment was encamped upon the Parade Ground, and gained for me the coveted admission inside the lines. I was standing upon Charles Street, outside the fence, and the imperturbable policeman, to whom I had made several touching appeals to be allowed to pass within the lines, remained obdurate. A final effort, however, on my part, elicited from him the information that he had received "sthric ordthers to prevint anywan from climbin' the fince, but," he added with withering sarcasm, "if you can squaze yoursilf through the bars or fly over thim, come on in and divil a word 'll I say." The last word was still vibrating under his moustache when I had hold of the pickets, and before he could wink landed in front of him. He looked at me for a moment in amazement, and then, "Howly Moses! me b'y, that was a grand le'p, but," reflectively, "I hope no more of thim out there has wings like





*Drawn, at the age of 14, by Edwin H. Blashfield*



CC... .. CC... .. CC... .. CC... ..

CC... .. CC... .. CC... .. CC... .. CC... ..

that, or I'll lose me job!" (I stood close beside the old fence the other day, at the same spot, and it is my firm conviction that it has grown at least two feet since I was a boy.)

One afternoon, while some of us were throwing a ball, striving to carom on the golden one which tipped the flagstaff on the big hill, it got lodged upon the cradle, perhaps fifty or sixty feet from the ground, whereupon John Hall coolly went to work in a business-like way and with the help of the halliards mounted to the ball's resting place and rescued it, amidst the cheers of those looking on. I often afterwards looked at the old flagstaff and wondered how he ever managed to get up there and how many of the rest of us could have accomplished the feat without its having proved to be a case of "from the cradle to the grave."

Among our contemporaries were, of course, many boys who, lacking the incli-

nation to join in the rough sports, sought recreation through gentler channels. Among friends of this class I recall the names of many who have achieved fame and won recognition as being leaders in their chosen pursuits.

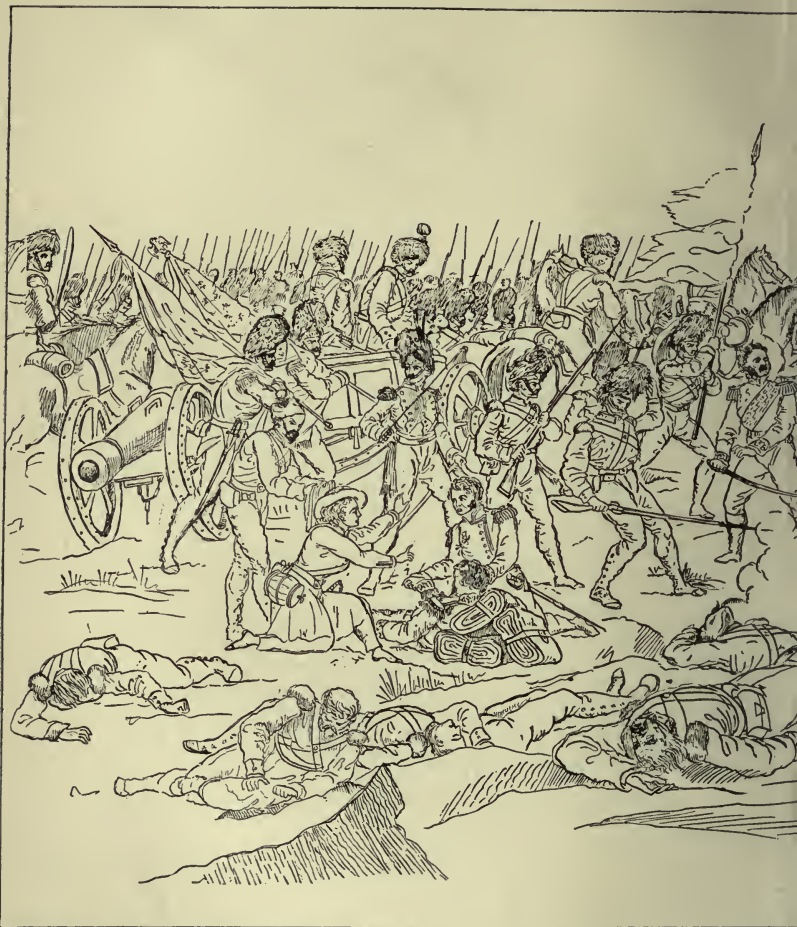
Prominent among them stands the name of Edwin Howland Blashfield, an artist of international reputation, who attended the Latin School during the Civil War and who won the admiration of his schoolmates as well as stirred their patriotism by producing innumerable charming little war sketches which he distributed among the boys with reckless generosity.

One of his classmates of that period writes of him as follows: "My wonder at Blashfield's achievements in drawing in the old Latin School days is even now a very distinct recollection.

"I can see as clearly as if it were yesterday his vividly earnest and intellectual face bent over his drawing, and used to marvel

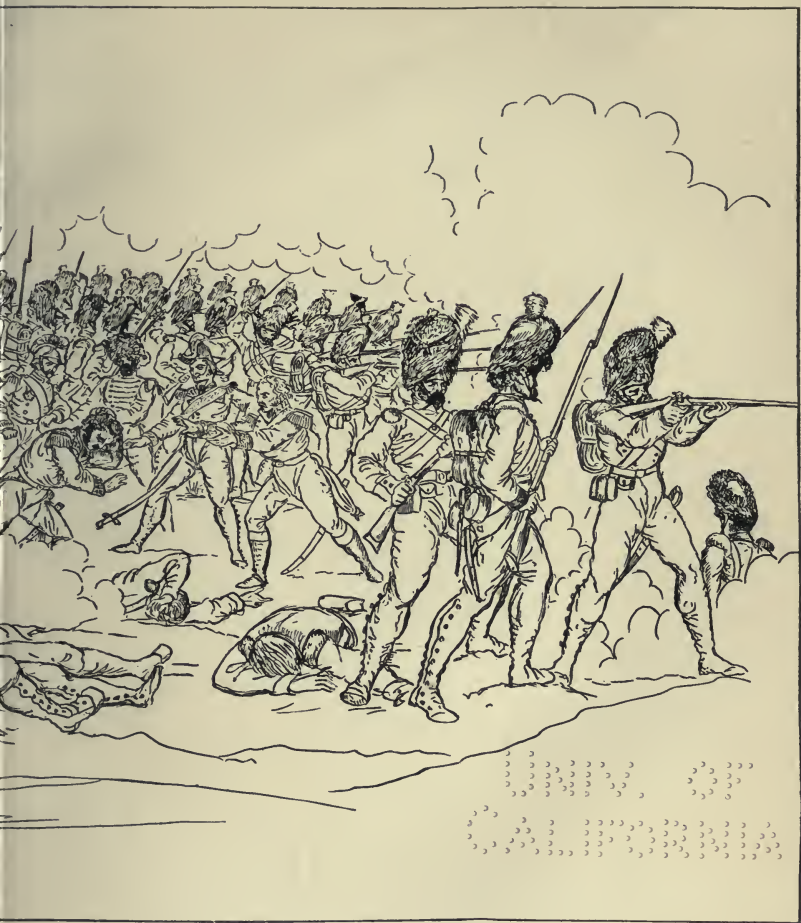






*Drawn, at the age of 14, by Edwin H. Blashfield*

LANNES



VANCE



daily at recess at the lifelike sketches of war scenes which this kindly magician turned out to feed the rather truculent patriotism of his fourteen-year-old classmates. The only examples that I have been able to get were of the same period, and inspired by the ever-present Civil War, but were fancy sketches of Napoleonic conflicts. They are very remarkable for a boy of fourteen."

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## CHAPTER X

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**S**TEWART'S Gymnasium was one of Boston's institutions and flourished in the fifties. Stewart was a colored man and had been a clever boxer in his day, but a crippled hand spoiled his effectiveness as a fighter. Nevertheless, he still donned the gloves and gave lessons. The gymnasium was in old Boylston Hall, and possessed great attractions. Here Francis Gardner, Master of the Boston Latin School, used to take almost daily exercise. I can see him, powerful and active as a cat, in undershirt and duck trousers, performing feats upon the horizontal bar, parallel bars, and vaulting horse, easily out doing much younger men, perhaps with not much grace, but with a

splendid rugged vigor which it was a pleasure to see.

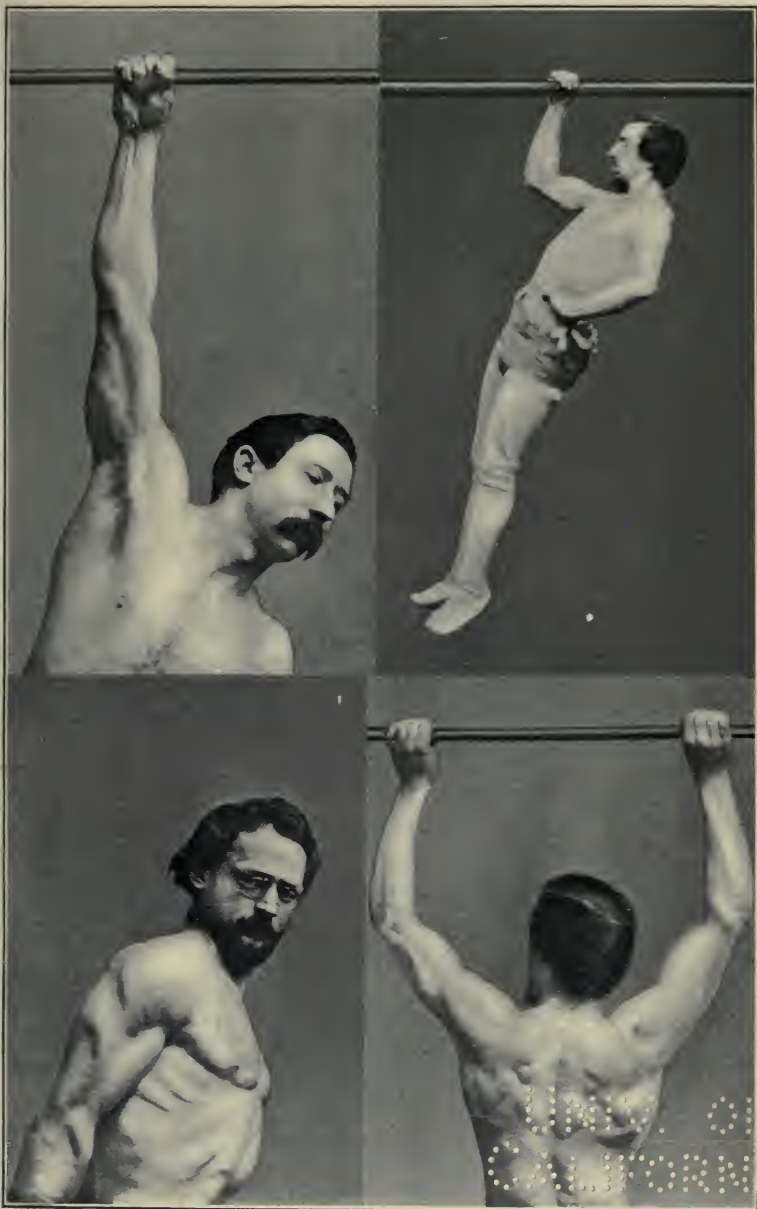
There was a big five-hundred-pound weight near the door which seemed to stand there for the purpose of enticing unwary patrons to come and burst a blood-vessel in vain attempts to lift it from the floor. This, although often tugged and strained at, was seldom raised.

Some dissatisfaction with the management of the gymnasium having arisen, a half-dozen of the most prominent gymnasts, among whom were Henry K. Bushnell, John C. Doldt, and "Tread" Kimball, withdrew and were instrumental in establishing a new and finely equipped gymnasium in Eliot Hall, upon the corner of Eliot and Tremont streets. It was called the Tremont Gymnasium and was owned by Mr. George H. Bacon. It was formally opened on September 1, 1859, with John C. Doldt as manager and instructor. It continued to flourish until 1872, when it was bought,

together with all its apparatus, by the Young Men's Christian Association.

It was here that many of the boys previously mentioned in this volume obtained their first lessons in physical culture, which later on stood some of those who went to college in good stead, and no doubt was of material assistance in gaining for them a seat in the 'Varsity boat or a place upon the ball team. The janitor of this gymnasium was kindly old John Coulighan, whom we all pleasantly remember. The best performers were Henry K. Bushnell and John Doldt, who were both gymnasts of a high order; indeed, Bushnell's giant swing and his front and back horizontals are not surpassed by any one upon the stage to-day. Doldt was superb in the flying rings, and could reach the high ceiling in three or four swings. His one arm back horizontal is well remembered also by all who ever saw it. The late Dr. Rimmer considered Bushnell's back to be the best developed he





Doldt's one-arm hold  
Kendrick's arm development

Bushnell's half-arm hold  
Bushnell's back development

A GROUP OF GYMNASTS



had ever seen, and made repeated sketches of it.

Oliver Coe was a fine athlete, and his pectoral muscles were something wonderful. Kimball was good, too, as were also John Alden and John Parker, the latter afterwards developing into a fine oarsman. Butts was the strong man of the gymnasium, and was truly Herculean. He used to swing an Indian club nearly as big and heavy as himself. Sam Austin's "pull up" with one arm was the fairest and squarest possible. His one hundred and eighty pounds, hanging from his fully extended arm, would slowly start, with no suggestion of a jerk, and with no apparent effort rise until his chin was well above his hand. I forget how many times he could do this feat. He did it with either arm alike. Then there were Alfred and Henry Whitman (both fine oarsmen), Otis Howland, Everett Julio, H. P. Plummer, George Goss, George Procter, Billy Fisk, Mort

Kennedy, Doctor Codman, Lee Streeter, Billy Spring, Dan Crowley, Harry Bryant, Charles Dilloway, the Snow brothers, Charles French, John Shea, Tom Kendrick, and many more. Nearly all of these were older than we were and shone as stars at the exhibitions.

Doldt afterwards became a professional athlete, and, with George Mansfield as partner, traveled with various companies. He was universally liked, being quiet, gentlemanly, and unassuming. In later life he was instructor in a Providence, R. I., gymnasium, and died not many years ago. The genial Joe Mudge succeeded him as instructor. Doldt was also a good boxer, and, although somewhat short of stature and reach, "got there" just the same. He taught several of us the "manly art."

I suppose nearly all who went there remember Jim Hill, who also taught boxing. He was a powerfully built man, and was a





Standing — Gelston Whittemore    Lee Streeter    Geo. D. Goss  
Conrad I., Rosemere                    Wm. K. Spring  
Horace B. Plummer    John M. Kennedy                    Otis N. Howland    John F. Kimball

A TREMONT GYMNASIUM GROUP



Wm. K. Spring      Gelston Whittemore      Henry K. Bushnell      John T. Kirball  
 John M. Kennedy      Geo. D. Goss      Horace B. Plummer  
 Conrad L. Rosemere      Lee Streeter      Otis N. Howland  
 A TREMONT GYMNASIUM GROUP (Caricature)





policeman upon the Fort Hill beat, — then about the toughest part of the city. He was inclined to be a bit boastful of what he could do with the gloves, and one day some of us got him to have a friendly bout with John Hall, one of the Oneida football team. Now John, although but a lad of about eighteen, was the best natural boxer I have ever seen, and in later years, ripened by practice with the best amateurs and such professionals as Godfrey and others, was undoubtedly as good as any, if not the best, amateur boxer in Boston. He never knew the word fear, no matter who faced him. As I have said, he was only a lad at this time, while Hill was a man, and a good one at that ; but John was possessed of a few points which Hill lacked, — a long reach, great hitting power, and a head that never got rattled. The consequence was that he “landed” at will, and Hill was much crestfallen. The whole affair was, however, perfectly friendly on both sides, and

the promoters of the little scheme were delighted at John's victory.

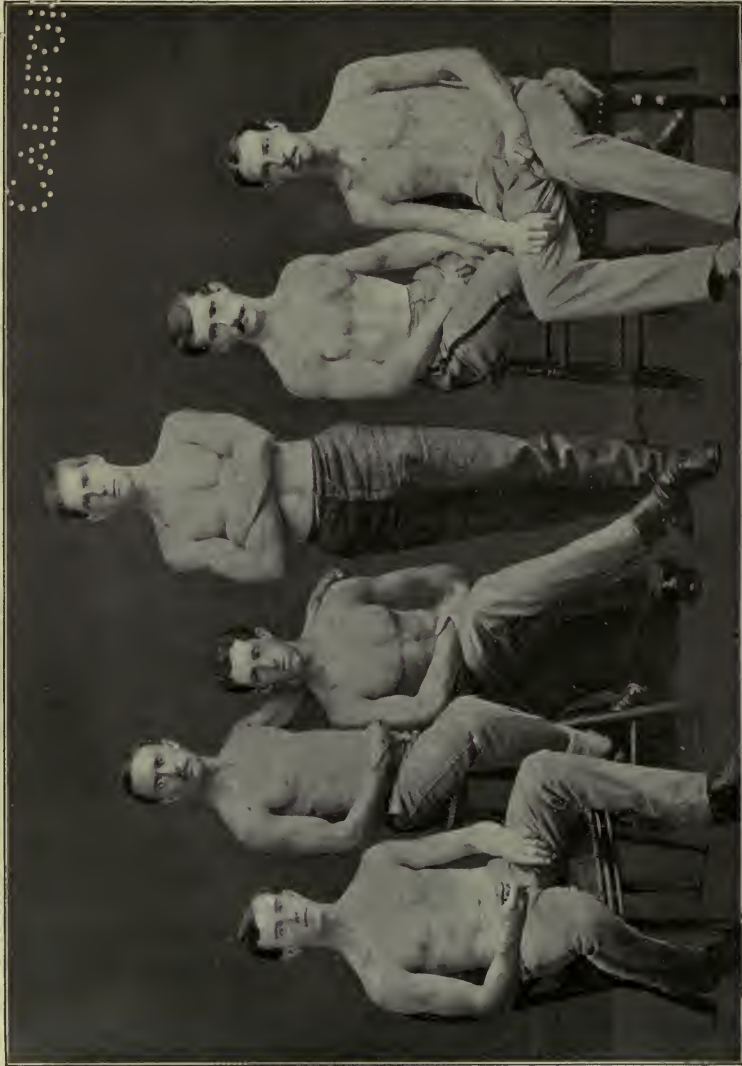
Poor Jim Hill's end was a sad one. In one of his many rough experiences with the Fort Hill toughs, he was so hard pressed that he had recourse to his revolver and had the misfortune to shoot an innocent bystander, for which accident he was dismissed from the force. He never recovered from the blow, took to drink, and died a complete wreck.

Ned Fenno was another fine boxer, and made a name for himself while at Harvard. Malcolm Forbes was a splendid exponent of the art, being a very quick and powerful hitter. Joe Fay, too, was among the best, as well as being a noted oarsman. In 1869 he pulled bow in the Harvard international crew that rowed Oxford on the Thames.<sup>1</sup>

But the sport has changed since the days of which I write, and the tactics and present mode of boxing would render it extremely doubtful if the straight-from-the-

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, p. 218.





R. C. Watson  
G. W. Holdrege  
J. W. McBurney  
W. H. Simmons  
W. W. Richards  
A. P. Loring

HARVARD VARSITY CREW, 1868



A. P. Loring  
A. Burnham W. H. Simmons  
J. S. Fay  
F. O. Lyman

THE HARVARD-OXFORD CREW, 1869

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shoulder hitting of a man like John C. Heenan or Tom Sayers would prevail to-day against the shifty, swinging blows, half hooks, vicious jabs, lightning-like attacks and retreats of such men, for instance, as Britt, " Battling " Nelson, and a score of others, to say nothing of Fitzsimmons, who in his prime could no doubt have put the finish to any of the old fighters of the forties, fifties, or sixties in less than fifteen rounds ; whereas we read of old-time battles frequently lasting over one hundred rounds, both in this country and in England. The longest battle upon record consisted of two hundred and seventy-six rounds !

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## CHAPTER XI

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**T**HE Tremont Gymnasium was often visited by the Hanlon Brothers when performing in Boston, and William, the imitator of the French Leotard in the great triple trapeze act which Hanlon called by the wonderful name "Zampillaerostation," was looked upon by us as more than an ordinary mortal.

Tom Hanlon was the most powerful of the brothers and was truly a wonder in his line of business. His skill as a gymnast is well shown by the following example. He dropped into the office of the gymnasium one afternoon and Doldt told him that he had just received a new horizontal bar and added, "Come out, Tom, and see what



you think of it," and they accordingly went into the hall to inspect it.

Hanlon, who by the way, had not removed his overcoat, jumped up, caught hold and tested it with his weight several times and said it had a good spring and was a fine bar. He then grasped it again, with his *palms towards him*, and gently and apparently with no exertion drew himself up until his arms were at full length above the bar; the marvel of this feat lying in the fact that his full weight during the greater part of the time occupied in its execution was supported entirely by his thumbs.

There was an Englishman who used to attend the gymnasium for a while, very strong in the wrists, with a strange symbol tattooed upon his upper arm. He one day explained to us, in reply to questioning, that he had hunted big game in Africa; belonged to a hunting club there and that a certain mark was put upon each member

as a means of identification in case of death in the jungle. It may be supposed that this did not tend to diminish our interest in him, and I have often wondered if he ever returned to Africa, and was finally identified by the very mark upon which we had gazed.

Dr. Winship, whom many will remember as a wonderful lifter of heavy weights with a shoulder harness, opened a gymnasium on Washington Street, next door to the Boston Theatre, which, after the Tremont Gymnasium had closed its doors, several of us attended.

Dr. Winship seemed to take a fancy to me, perhaps because I could beat him at vaulting and taught him a few little tricks which he had never seen.

He was one of the very few men who could pull himself up to his chin by one little finger. It is a wonderful feat, and the record is six times in succession. He could do it, however, but once, and had to do it



Mudge Austin



Julio Taylor Bushnell Heard McDuff Mullen  
Kimball Coe Mudge Blanchard



Roberts Streeter Unknown Kendrick Dean  
Spring Bacon Plummer Dr. Codmah

GYMNASTS AT TREMONT GYMNASIUM





every day, as a skip of a day made it harder to do next time.

When his little finger, hooked on to a strap, commenced to stretch and straighten with his dead weight upon it, it always seemed as if the tendons must give way; but he did it without much apparent effort.

He carried the heavy weight system, however, to extremes, and died a comparatively young man. As we all know now, this system of exercising is dead wrong, and will probably never again come into vogue, except with professional strong men, or with those working for some particular record in that line.

Dr. Winship invented a dumb-bell which could be graduated from twenty pounds up to one hundred and four, one of which I owned for years.

During these days the Civil War was in full swing, and although boys' sports, together with the various amusements of the day, went on much as usual, still there was

a minor chord running through it all, which would not down until the glorious tidings came from Appomattox.

The Common presented scenes which will never be repeated, thank God! Here were encamped regiments passing through Boston *en route* for the front, and it was a joy, which still comes back with a thrill, to get through the lines, which I always did, and mingle with the soldiers, collect six or eight canteens at a time, take them to the drinking fountain at the corner of Charles and Beacon streets, and fill them for their owners.

The famous Ellsworth Zouaves gave an exhibition here one afternoon of their wonderful lightning drill, and a short time afterwards came the news of Ellsworth's tragic death in Alexandria, while in the act of lowering a Confederate flag.

At another time two gigantic soldiers in a Maine regiment gave what they called the "bear dance." It was irresistibly funny

to see these big fellows drop upon all fours and approach each other, with growls and grotesque antics, until, rising upon their hind legs, they embraced in the death hug and finally rolled over and over, each well-nigh exhausted.

Later on, however, the scene was changed, and instead of the outgoing, full regiments leaving us amid cheers, waving handkerchiefs, and stirring military music, behold the home-coming of the veteran remnants of the same, with stern, bronzed faces and carrying the same dear old flags, some tattered into ribbons, with here and there but a shattered staff where one had hung, but borne more proudly because of their having been consecrated by heroes' blood in defense of the Union.

Upon these occasions the cheers would again roll forth, but with quavers and sobs in them; and eyes were filled with tears as the thinned ranks filed past.

It was a wonderful time for an American

boy in a Northern city, far removed from the scenes of actual carnage, to have lived through. May it be the last!

Recruiting tents were erected on the Common; one in particular I remember upon the big hill, where crowds listened to ringing speeches made by any one who felt moved by the spirit to do so. Many spoke who had just returned from the front, and enlistments usually followed such speakers in rapid succession; one young fellow, a little the worse for wear, declared that he 'd enlist if he were a "paralyzed corpse," amid cheers and shouts of laughter. Oh, yes, there was lots of fun mingled with it, too.

One man from the front, while exhorting others to enlist, mentioned the fact that he had been on the fighting line and had been wounded, but that he did n't mind little things like that and was going back for more. Some one in the crowd sang out, "Where's your wound?" where-



upon he retorted, "Come inside the tent, *dubious* Thomas, and I'll show it to you!" The crowd laughed at his doubtful adjective, and he continued his exhortation without further interruption.

Among our own comrades who died that the old Flag might live, three names stand out prominently in my memory: "Hunty" Wolcott, brother of our late governor, and Will Freeman, who were both stricken with disease and were sent home invalided, but to die; and Cabot Russell, who, though of quiet and modest bearing, which made him seem better fitted for peace than for war, was nevertheless made of the same heroic stuff as were Stevenson, Shaw, Bartlett, Cushing, Merriam, and a host of others. Russell fell in the gallant charge upon Fort Wagner. Aye, hats off, boys, to such names as these!

Any boy who saw a military funeral in those days will never forget it. The scene comes back to me of the funeral proces-

sion of Colonel Fletcher Webster, of the Twelfth Massachusetts.

The band, with muffled drums, was playing the "Dead March" in "Saul;" the colonel's horse, with trappings, was led by his colored servant; the flag, furled, was draped with black; and the slow tread of the soldiers, with reversed arms, was all inexpressibly pathetic, and I crept into a doorway and silently wept.

Many evenings were spent by hundreds of families in scraping lint for the hospitals — "lint bees" they might be called, as friends were invited to help, refreshments were served, etc. At these meetings mittens for the soldiers were also made with a place for the forefinger, thus allowing it freedom in pulling the trigger.

The Public Latin School presented a flag to Company D of the Twelfth Massachusetts, which was commanded by gallant Captain Nathaniel B. Shurtleff, Jr., himself an old Latin School boy, and while this

regiment was stationed at Fort Warren we pupils went down to attend the presentation. The speech was made by Arthur Brooks, brother of the late Bishop Brooks, and we had been drilled in singing a song for the occasion, the words of which were composed by a son of Mr. Capen, afterwards principal of the Latin School. They went to the tune of "Yankee Doodle," and the first few lines, which are all I can recall, ran as follows:—

"Still first, as long and long ago,  
 Let Massachusetts muster,  
 Give her the post right next the foe;  
 Be sure that you can trust her."

To those of us who had near relatives in the army, the war seemed of course a much sterner reality than to those who had not.

My brother enlisted twice, and during his absence each day's news from the front seemed to have, as it were, some family

connection about it, or direct, personal message.

True it is that times of peace can only be appreciated at their full value by those who know, by personal experience, what a long, heart-breaking war means.

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## CHAPTER XII

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**I**T seems to be the natural instinct of a boy, as soon as he finds the use of his arms, to want to "bat" something, accompanied by the desire to see the object thus batted give some evidence of having been affected by it, either in the exclamation of Nurse, as he lands his dimpled boxing glove upon her physiognomy, or, if the object be an inanimate one, to see it recoil before his prowess. This latter is naturally a ball of some kind, and is patiently brought back that he may repeat the operation *ad infinitum*.

As soon as he can toddle alone he pursues and kicks the ball from place to place, or strikes it with his hand, stick, or what not, thus developing the incipient stages

of football or baseball, until his efforts gradually increasing through the coming years, finally culminate upon the "gridiron" or "diamond." This natural affinity between bat and ball is as old as the human race.

The affinity between "bats" of a different nature and "high balls" will not be touched upon, though it might be noted that this relaxation also sometimes culminates in the gridiron, the bars, however, assuming a perpendicular, instead of a horizontal position.

Games in which a ball was used are of very ancient origin, as we know; but when, where, and by whom first played is beyond our ken. Homer, in the *Odyssey*, mentions the Phæacian damsels as playing ball to the sound of music; and later, Shakespeare speaks of the games of "base" and "rounders." This latter some authorities claim to be a direct ancestor of our present game of baseball, while others differ from this opinion. Mr. A. G. Spaulding disclaims

the rounders ancestry, and thinks that the game as now played was evolved from what was known as "two old cats, three old cats," etc.

That veteran and "father" of our national game, Mr. Henry Chadwick, in a treatise upon the subject, published in 1868, holds to the opinion that "rounders" was changed to "town ball," and that this later on was again changed into our old Massachusetts game, the change consisting mainly in the fact that the ball was increased in size and weight and thrown to the batter instead of being pitched or tossed; and that this latter was in turn converted into the "New York" or National game as we know it to-day.

In view of the fact that when we could not get hands enough for the Massachusetts game we used to content ourselves with two, three, or four old cats, as the case might be, and counted the latter as merely a makeshift instead of a distinct game by

itself, it seems to me that each of them contributed something towards the game as played to-day, instead of either one being the direct parent of it.

However, whatever the origin of our National game may have been, it is to-day a good, healthy recreation, calling for recruits who must be sound mentally and physically, and therefore a game making for the good of our young men, and, together with other outdoor sports sprung up since its adoption, it has effectually freed us Americans from the reproach that used to be cast upon us by our English relatives, of being a nation given only to seeking the almighty dollar.

Moreover, the game has come to stay, and while, doubtless, still capable of many improvements, it will increase in popularity as time goes on, rather than fall off, as cricket has, in this country.

The first regularly organized club to play the Massachusetts game in New



England was the "Olympics" of Boston, in 1854. In 1855 the "Elm Trees" took root, and in 1857 the "Green Mountains" and "Hancocks" saw the light.

The last named was a junior club for which Sam Bradstreet caught and I threw. We played many matches with other junior clubs from the suburbs but were never defeated. Bradstreet was a fine catcher and could almost pick a ball off the striker's bat. I used to throw a swift ball about where he signaled for it, and the battery was counted a good one. The ball had a small buckshot in its centre and was covered with buckskin or chamois leather.

Instead of throwing to the baseman, to cut off a runner, as is now done, the ball was thrown directly at the runner himself: a moving object, however, is not so easy to hit and many misses were made as well as bull's-eyes. I remember once seeing Harry Forbush of the Olympics in a hard-fought game with a Holliston club, which was one

of the best in the State, following up a base runner, but a little afraid to throw at him for fear of a miss, the man being ready to "duck at the flash," so he feinted and the man dropped like lightning upon his stomach, whereupon Harry, who was now nearly over him, grinned with triumph and let him have it as tight as he could throw. The fellow squirmed a little, but nothing could be said. The close rivalry between the clubs no doubt put a little unnecessary ginger into Forbush's arm; but that was the game.

Four stout stakes driven into the ground, leaving about five feet out, were used as bases. In one of the Hancocks' games a runner was playing well off the first base and I, instead of throwing to Bradstreet, changed the direction a little and struck the unsuspecting runner full in the stomach. It did not hurt him much, but the surprise and dismay upon his face at thus suddenly finding himself put out caused

much laughter. It was a risky shot, but the game was a close one and I took the chances.

Fred Nazro, Bert Bradish, Jack Oviatt, and Gus Bradstreet also played on this team.

As there were no foul balls in this game, some of the players had a knack of shortening up their bat, — that is, grasping it near the middle, — and by a quick turn of the wrist striking the ball, as it passed them, in the same direction in which it was thrown, thus avoiding the fielders and giving the striker a good start on his bases. This mode of striking, however, led to lots of trouble for the catcher, who sometimes got a bad blow from the bat as it was swung back; and it moreover led to bad blood between rival teams, as there is no doubt that catchers were sometimes intentionally disabled in this way.

A purse was usually played for by the senior clubs, which naturally encouraged

any sharp practice of this kind. This mode of back striking was carried so far that bats not more than twelve or fifteen inches long and with a flat surface were used, and instead of making any attempt to strike with it, this bat was merely held at a sharp angle and the ball allowed to glance off it, over the catcher's head.

The back of a hairbrush would have served this kind of batter's purpose equally well, and afterwards might and should have been vigorously applied to him, in the good old-fashioned way.

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## CHAPTER XIII

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**T**O go back a little way, let me say, not as a matter of interest to anybody, but simply as a means of connecting the events in the career of a mature ball player with the circumstances which led up to them, that my first attempts at this game were made with the leg of a chair and a quilted ball which my father made for me.

The ready-made ball of those days, for sale, was either a mushy, pulpy-feeling thing, with a soft cotton string quilting over it which wore out in a few days; or else a rubber one, solid or hollow, as one preferred; but all equally unfit for batting purposes.

The balls which my father taught me to

make were of tightly wound yarn, with a bit of rubber at the core, quilted with good, tough twine, and would last a long time; and when needed new jackets could be put upon them.

Thus equipped I used to whack the ball about in my back yard, until I felt the need of a real bat; but bats could not be bought then as they are now — hundreds to choose from, of all shapes and sizes.

Clubs had them made to order, and boys had to do likewise or make them themselves. There were no shops carrying "athletic goods," and bats were not often enough called for to be carried in stock by anybody.

This being the case, my father again came to the rescue, as he always did, God bless him! and made me a little bat of black walnut. I can see it now; it had a round handle for about a foot and was then gradually widened out into two flat sides, being perhaps an inch and a half thick. I

describe it thus minutely simply because I can see it so plainly and thought so much of it.

He took me onto the Common with him one afternoon to see how it would work and it was a great success. Once a boy stole it from me, and I ran after him, crying, until a man rescued it and made me happy again.

Like all the other boys I saw, I used to toss up the ball and then swing the bat around my head, describing a great circle, and perhaps connect with the former once in five or six times.

I puzzled my head trying to find a better way to do this and finally hit upon the plan of drawing the bat back in a straight line, instead of round in a circle, and by this method I could soon strike the ball nearly every time.

I once saw Charlie Troupe bat a solid rubber "peach" ball, as they were called, straight up into the air, where it went so

high that I could scarcely believe my eyes. Several of us who saw him do it laughed in a silly sort of wonder at the length of time it remained up there. It really was a most remarkable stroke and I have never seen a ball knocked so "sky high" since.

I have sometimes thought that it might prove rather interesting to *time* balls knocked up in this way, in order to test a batter's powers in this direction.

Well, the little black walnut bat at last went the way of all bats, and broke; but by this time I had outgrown it and wanted one like the others in use, — that is, round and not square, — so I got a carpenter to make me one out of spruce, according to my directions; it was good enough for a boy of my age, and stood all the strength that I could put into it.

At this time a lot of the mechanics, firemen, etc., of the West End occasionally used to meet on the Common for a game among themselves, and would let me take a hand;



but I could not strike a thrown ball with any great success and so they would toss them to "young Jimmy," as they called me. I did not, however, distinguish myself in spite of this leniency, and they would laugh to see me cut stripes in the atmosphere. I suppose that I did sometimes make a hit, but I can't recall one. However, I enjoyed the fun and kept at it and a little later got in with some older boys who, though not a regularly organized club, used to congregate almost every day, choose sides, and take in any boy who might want to play, if the sides were not already filled.

With these boys I was put upon my mettle and improved rapidly. I was naturally a good thrower for a short distance, and my "batting eye" grew to be pretty accurate, so that I soon came to be chosen among the first.

The mode of choosing sides was about as follows: one of the two captains would

sharply toss a bat, held in a perpendicular position, to the other, who would catch it wherever he could. The one who tossed it would then place one of his hands above and touching that of the other, and so on, alternately, until the knob on the end was reached, when the last one would endeavor, by digging his thumb and finger nails down inside the other's grip, to get such a hold upon it as would enable him to swing the bat three times around his head. Failing to do this, the other had his first choice of the players for his side, and then the choosing proceeded alternately and rapidly.

The reader will, no doubt, wonder why a coin was not "flipped" up and the first choice decided in a jiffy. Well, it was a boy's way of deciding; and it afforded some sort of fun, mingled with a mild excitement, as the two neared the top of the bat, to watch the last one try to get a hold upon the rounded knob and with clenched teeth swing the bat around his head.

Boys are queer animals, anyway. The proverbial old maid is not a circumstance to him as I knew him fifty years ago. He had to do things in just such a way and at just such a time. Each game had its specially appointed season. Kite flying was not allowed to infringe upon top spinning, nor could the latter be continued when marbles came on deck, and so on.

Old maid, indeed!

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## CHAPTER XIV

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**I**N 1857 the Hancock Club was started, as I have related ; and in that same year the New York game got the thin edge of its wedge into New England.

Mr. E. G. Saltzman, a member of the Gotham Club of New York, for which he played second base, came to Boston in this year, and feeling the lack of his favorite pastime, set to work to form a club and teach the members the mysteries of this latest form of the game. It was uphill work, however, as the Massachusetts game was in full blast, and new-fangled ideas were looked upon with that coy conservatism which came over from England and landed upon a Rock down Plymouth way some years previously.

Mr. Saltzman, however, was a "stayer," and he had a good article; the consequence being that the Tri-Mountain Club was formed that fall and had the honor of being the first organization in New England under the new rules.

The next city to follow the Tri-Mountain's lead was Portland, Maine, where the Portland Club was formed in 1858 and in the fall of that same year visited Boston to try its newly fledged strength against its yearling rival. This of course was the first match ever played in New England under the new rules, and took place on the Common.

The Portlands won by the score of 47 to 42. This match was attended by many ball players, local and otherwise, who were curious to see what the new thing was like, and who looked on with a dignified toleration befitting those who "guessed" that the old game was good enough for them.

But some who came to scoff remained

to pray. It was evident that this new type was "catching" and that many present were in that condition when they are said to "take things." There were points about the new game which appealed to them.

The pitching, instead of swift throwing, looked easy to hit, and the pitcher stood off so far, and then there was no danger of getting plugged with the ball while running bases; and the ball was so lively and could be batted so far! Yes, decidedly, there were points about this new game which pleased many who had never played ball before, and who thought that they would like to try it; so the reports spread until they reached Springfield, and there, the next spring, 1858, the Pioneer Club was formed, and also the Atwater of Westfield, the Nonotuck and Union of Northampton, as well as two or three others. The first-mentioned two were the leading clubs in Western Massachusetts, and, later on, played some fine games.

In 1859 the Bowdoin Club was formed in Boston with the intention of playing ball in the good old Massachusetts way; but, just for the fun of the thing, they tried the new rules to see how they worked and, behold! the whole nine proved to be in the receptive condition above alluded to, and were promptly infected with the new germ, so that the New York game was adopted forthwith, and their conversion was of great assistance to the cause, as they were one of the leading clubs in New England until 1863, when they disbanded.

They played but one game in this, their first season, which was with the Tri-Mountains, beating them 32 to 26.

As it will interest some of the old-timers to know who played in this game, the names are herewith given: The Bowdoin Club was John Lowell, catcher; Archibald, pitcher; Albert Crosby, first base; Sawyer, second base; Crowley, third base; Harry Gill, short-stop; Gardner, right field;

Leach, centre field; and Harry Forbush, left field.

Tri-Mountains: Ben Guild, catcher; Saltzman, pitcher; Dinsmore, first base; Coe, second base; Bigelow, third base; Arnold, short-stop; Chandler, right field; Fletcher, left field; Lyons, centre field.

This is not intended in any way to be a history of baseball in New England; I am only striving to give some of the more salient features of its progress amongst us which came under my own observation, and to relate a few of my own personal experiences and those of the club with which I played. Consequently, the Lowell Club will of necessity stand out prominently in the following pages, which fact I trust will be pardoned by the reader.

The return game between the Tri-Mountains and Bowdoins was played on the Common September 22, 1860, when the latter again won, 36 to 19.

In 1861 the Civil War cloud burst and



many baseball plans were disarranged thereby, some of the players enlisting upon the first call for troops; and during the war's progress upwards of fifty members of Boston clubs were to be found in Uncle Sam's ranks.

Before this time many of us boys had been allowed occasionally to take a hand in the Tri-Mountains' or Bowdoins' games, and were found to be ready converts to the new style of playing, our previous training, of course, proving of great service to us.

Our aptness was quickly recognized by the seniors, and one evening Mr. Horace Chandler, one of the Bowdoins, and son of the late Hon. Peleg W. Chandler, called at my house and said that he did so at the request of John Lowell, who, with himself and others, thought it most desirable that a junior club be formed, as the material promised well, etc., etc.

The result was that I and several others

went at once to work and procured enough names without any difficulty. In fact, nobody, as far as I can remember, refused.

We held the first meeting at John A. Lowell's office, then on the corner of Summer and Washington streets, over Shreve, Crump & Low's jewelry store, and elected the following officers: President, George G. Richards; Vice-President, Samuel Bradstreet, Jr.; Secretary, George S. B. Sullivan; Treasurer, William French; Directors, Marsh P. Stafford, George B. Wilder, and J. D'W. Lovett.

The club was named in honor of Mr. Lowell, then President of the Bowdoins, and who had most kindly encouraged us in every way. The Bowdoins gave us a good send-off by voting us a full set of implements, and we went at it with a will. This was in March, 1861, and by the next October we tried our wings in a game with the Medford Club at Medford. There was a good-sized crowd to see our maiden



J. D'W. Lovett

W. H. Alline  
S. Adams

G. S. Miller (Capt.)

W. B. Joslin  
R. C. Watson

G. B. Wilder

A. Crosby

F. H. Sumner

LOWELL BASEBALL NINE, 1865



effort, as we had lots of friends who anticipated for us a fair chance to win from the senior club.

The result was entirely satisfactory to us, we winning, 17 to 10; and as some of our old friends may like to know what was said of us in our first match, I take the liberty of quoting from the report as it appeared in the paper next day.

“On the 16th inst. a very exciting match of baseball between the Lowell Club of Boston and the Medford Club of Medford was played on the grounds of the latter. This being the *début* of the Lowells (which, by the way, is a junior club), called out quite a concourse of the friends of both parties. Miller’s pitching on the Lowell side was swift and to the mark, and the way he generalled the game does good credit to himself and his club. Wilder, as catcher, was very effective and marked his play by some difficult catches of foul balls; one in particular, a left-hand catch on the

fly. Lovett's short was brilliant throughout, he not missing a single stop or throw to the bases, and his backing up of the bases was a specimen of good fielding. Adams held with vice-like grip every ball that was passed to him. Joslin's second was well attended to, as was also the third. In the outfield some tall fielding was done by Hawes and Richards; Fuller, as is quite unusual, not having anything to do, owing to Miller's swift pitching.

"Of the Medfords, Rapp, as short, although the position was new to him, did good execution; Clark pitched in a steady manner and watched the bases well. Banker<sup>1</sup> is a cool player and his score of no outs and three runs looked well for his side. Burbank played his second in good shape, but was very unfortunate at the bat. Another season the senior clubs will have to look out for their laurels,

<sup>1</sup> He afterwards played first base upon the Class of '66 team at Harvard.

for such fielding as was shown by the Lowells seldom occurs."

Thus were we fairly launched upon a career which continued for nearly twelve years.

In looking back over this period it seems evident to me that it would have been for the best interests of the club to have disbanded either in the spring or fall of 1869, when it was at its best; for, although we afterwards won games occasionally, still, as I shall later on endeavor to show, for good and sufficient reasons and through no fault of ours, '70, '71, and '72 were regrettable years to the original members and their friends, and would much better have been forestalled by non-existence of the club.

The season of 1862 opened with bright prospects for us, and in June we played our second match, this time with the Bowdoin, who beat us 23 to 14.

On July 10 the Excelsiors of New York

arrived in Boston. They were in their prime at this time, and, being the first New York club to visit Boston, created much excitement. Their nine consisted of Young, Russell, Pearsall, Polhemus, Brainard, Flanley, Creighton, Cook, and Leggett. Ball players from all parts of New England came to see them play, and our eyes were opened to many things.

They beat the Bowdoins 41 to 15. Much good-natured chaff was passed back and forth between John Lowell and Joe Leggett in this game, which made fun for everybody. Once when the latter was at the bat, he motioned to John, who was then playing centre field, to go back a little further; John backed off about ten feet, upon which Leggett sung out, "A little further, still, John," and the latter, laughing, backed away another ten feet, whereupon Leggett struck a ball and sent it flying over John's head for a home run, amidst shouts of laughter from the crowd.



It was certainly a privilege to have seen Jim Creighton pitch and Joe Leggett catch him. Creighton was at this time but sixteen years old! And yet nobody had ever approached him in speed and accuracy of delivery. He was equally popular in cricket and baseball. He died at the age of twenty one years, mourned by the entire athletic community. He went through an entire season without making a single out,—a feat nobody has ever accomplished before or since, to my knowledge. The Excelsiors erected a fine monument to his memory, and he is to-day spoken of as the “lamented Creighton.”

Creighton had a great influence upon my success as a pitcher. I noted him very carefully and found that his speed was not due to mere physical strength, but that this latter was supplemented by a very long arm and a peculiar wrist movement, very quick and “snappy” — so much so that he was accused of underhand throwing, as I

was, afterwards; and I have only to say that if a throw can be accomplished with a perfectly rigid elbow-joint, then he and I were both guilty; but a throw was never proven and neither of us was ever ruled out.

However, as I have said, I studied his style very carefully and acquired as well as I could (a very poor copy, by the way) his effective wrist movement. Later on, when the rules compelled the pitcher to deliver the ball with both feet planted firmly upon the ground, I found this movement of great assistance in getting a good pace on the ball.

On the next day, July 11, 1862, the Excelsiors played a picked nine, composed of four Tri-Mountains — Chandler, Saltzman, Troupe, and Arnold — and five Lowells, — Miller, Wilder, Joslin, Adams, and myself. We were beaten 39 to 13.

In this game Joslin's playing at left field was mentioned as a "feature of the game;"

and Chandler, Miller, and I had the honor of making a home run apiece off Creighton.

Moses E. Chandler, mentioned here, has always been a lover of clean and healthy sport. In 1867 he presented to the New England Baseball Association a beautiful silver-mounted bat made of six pieces of wood, each of which possessed historic value.

Mr. Chandler had also the distinction of being the first ball player in New England who, when running the bases, made a "dive" for one of them. This happened in 1859 in Portland, Maine, in a match between the Tri-Mountains and Portlands, and the feat fairly astonished the natives, who at first roared with laughter; *but Chandler scored the run*, and they then woke up to the fact that a large, new, and valuable "wrinkle" had been handed out to them.

About this time we lent our aid to the Class of '66 in organizing the first club at Harvard under the New York rules.

We helped them lay out their grounds on Cambridge Common, near the Washington Elm, and several of us used frequently to go out and teach them what we knew of the game.

The prime movers in starting this game at Harvard were George Flagg, Frank Wright, Arthur Hunnewell, Tom Nelson, Eugene Greenleaf, Frank Harris, now the well-known veteran Medical Examiner, Ned Sprague, George Parker, Putnam Abercrombie, Charlie Fiske, and others.

Thus was the pioneer Baseball Club of Harvard College duly organized, and a little later on the Nine appeared in a uniform of gray flannel, with a large Old English "H" worked in magenta upon the front of the shirt. It was a very neat and attractive suit; but why a *magenta* "H" instead of the time-honored crimson?

This query involves an interesting bit of College history, which seems to be but little known to-day, and it will interest many



N. S. Smith  
G. A. Flagg

G. G. Willard  
R. G. Shaw

A. Hunnewell

J. B. Ames (Capt.)

H. P. Parker

E. E. Sprague

C. F. McKim

HARVARD BASEBALL NINE, 1867



to read the following graphic account of how the substitution came about, written for the "Harvard Bulletin" by the late Frank Wright, captain and pitcher of this Nine. Wright says:—

I take pleasure in giving you a bit of ancient history regarding the change in the colors of Harvard from crimson to magenta, the history of which has never been written.

We have all heard that Rome was saved by the cackling of geese, but few, only the very select few who were honored by the ministration of Dr. Peabody during the middle 60's, know that the Harvard colors were changed from crimson to magenta by an obscure Boston seamstress, and that magenta remained the color of Harvard for eight years.

The change of the Harvard color is interwoven with the origin of baseball at Harvard, and I must account for them both in the same breath.

One afternoon in March of 1863 a classmate of mine, during Professor Lane's Latin recitation, passed a slip of paper to me asking if I would help him in starting a baseball club. We had

talked of this before, and I adopted the suggestion and wrote upon a slip of paper and passed it round, asking the fellows to meet in Flagg's room in Stoughton at eight that evening and form a baseball club. After the recitation the hint was given out to men of other divisions, and the result was that the room was well-filled at the appointed hour. An organization was effected without much delay, and the question of the kind of baseball was discussed. A majority of the fellows wished to form a club to play Massachusetts baseball, which was then in vogue, a game slightly improved upon town ball, which was an improvement upon the old English game of rounders, but a few of us who hailed from New York state carried the meeting in favor of the new game, then called the "Brooklyn" game.

A committee of two was appointed, consisting of George A. Flagg and myself, to arrange the preliminaries and to suggest a uniform. Flagg and I went to Boston the following day, and under the guidance of John A. Lowell, the president of the Lowell Baseball Club of Boston, went to Hovey's in Summer Street to select cloth for a uniform. At that time all the base-



ball clubs wore a fierce, fireman-like uniform of red or blue flannel shirts with any kind of trousers and a gaudy leather belt. We decided to try some quiet color and selected a gray French flannel, to be trimmed with crimson, with a crimson "H" to be embroidered upon the shirt front. We bought flannel enough for one shirt, and it was decided that I was "to bell the cat" and have the first shirt made for me. Mr. Lowell steered me to a seamstress in Essex Street, who made uniforms for his club, and she took the order for a shirt to be embroidered with an old English "H" in crimson. When the shirt was sent to me a note came from the seamstress that she had taken the liberty to embroider my "H" in magenta instead of crimson, as magenta was much more fashionable and much prettier than crimson. I was of course disgusted, but the shirt was there and the magenta "H" looked fine. I called a meeting of the club and appeared in my outfit.

Every one liked the shirt and the color, and it was decided to adopt it. The crew could wear crimson if they liked, but the baseball color should be magenta.

A nine was selected, uniforms were made, and we played a game with the old Tri-Mountain Club of Boston, which resulted in an easy win for us. We then arranged a match with the Brown University Club and went to Providence for the game and won easily. Our success attracted the attention of the college, our girl friends began to wear our magenta colors, and by the time the boat-races were on at Worcester, magenta was talked of as the Harvard color. In those days the crew rowed in the "buff," but with crimson silk handkerchiefs about their heads. When Horatio Curtis of '65 and his crew appeared on Lake Quinsigamond with magenta handkerchiefs, magenta as Harvard's color was established.

FRANK WRIGHT, '66.

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## CHAPTER XV

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**I**N 1863 there was a little more activity among the clubs, but the war kept down anything like a furor. The Bowdoins disbanded in this year, having been foremost among the New England clubs for four years and sustaining but two defeats,— by the Pioneers of Springfield and the Excelsiors.

On May 29 we beat the Tri-Mountains by the score of 37 to 1, and, to use the words of a report of the game next day, “we doubt the ability of either club to do the like again.” (This score was duplicated by the Eckfords in 1868 against the Uniques.)

In 1864 John A. Lowell, with his well-known generosity, public spirit, and kindly

intentions, presented a silver ball to be played for, thinking that by this means a greater number of crack clubs would be brought together in friendly rivalry and thus the best interests of the game would be greatly advanced.

This no doubt is as it ought to have been and would have been under normal conditions; but unforeseen circumstances arose which led to contentions; and the end sought for by the donor was frustrated, and in 1867 it was deemed advisable to withdraw the trophy from the field.

The records of seventeen match games were beautifully engraved upon this ball, and it should undoubtedly have been preserved in some museum; but instead, it was injudiciously voted by the Committee of the Association that it should *be destroyed*, which vote was forthwith carried into effect.

On July 9 of this year, before the silver ball had appeared, we played our first match

with the Harvards (Class of '66 team), defeating them 55 to 25. This game was won by heavy batting, Miller, Alline, and I each making one out and eight runs. The report of the game gives Joslin the credit of making "the most beautiful one hand catch at left field which we have ever witnessed," and adds, "it does one good to see such fielders as Joslin and Alline play."

On September 27, 1864, the first game for the silver ball was played by the Tri-Mountains and the Osceolas of Portland, Maine, the former winning by the score of 53 to 18, and on October 4 we won it from the Tri-Mountains, 33 to 18.

On October 18 the Hampshires of Northampton came to Boston to "lift" the silver ball; but, like more recent attempts to "lift" things, it proved a bit too heavy for them, and we retained it after a game of 83 to 10. The next year, 1865, on July 15, the Harvards, wanting to have a finger in the championship pie, came for us with

such good effect that the ball took a horse-car for Cambridge that evening amid great rejoicings. This, our first real defeat, coming just before our departure for a New York trip, was a little discomposing; but no doubt it was good medicine and taught us that there were "others." So we took the dose and lay low until after the College vacation, hoping for better luck next time. On July 18 we started for New York to play the Resolutes, Atlantics, and Excelsiors.

The Resolutes beat us 33 to 14. The Atlantics, helped by a stupid decision of the umpire, which cost us thirteen runs, beat us 45 to 17, and the Excelsiors made 39 to our 31.

I quote from an account of this last game, which shows that the Lowells made a pretty good impression in spite of the scores against them: —

"The batting in the last four innings on both sides was really excellent; indeed, no

better has been seen on the grounds this season. Jewell (of the Excelsiors) obtained two home runs in one inning, by splendid hits to long field, and Fletcher, Brainard, and Flanley also marked their batting by similar runs. Lovett, of the Lowells, also secured two home runs, his score being the best on either side, in any of the three games, by six runs, no outs, besides being left three times on bases, he making his base by his hits no less than nine times. In batting, in the whole series of games Lovett is first, Miller second, and Joslin third. In fly catching, out of 33 catches Alline took 8, taking the lead, Lovett 7, Lowell 5, Joslin 5, Wilder 3, and G. Miller, Adams, and Sumner 2 each. G. Miller deserves warm praise for his fine play in his position (pitcher), and seemed as fresh at the conclusion of the game as on the first day's play. Lovett is certainly a splendid player and gives great promise of rivaling the very best short-stops.

Lowell's catching was first-class in every respect. Adams is an A1 player at first base, and Sumner a very effective man for second base; and three finer outfielders than Joslin, Alline, and Wilder, the two former especially, it would be difficult to obtain outside of our very strongest clubs."

Favorable comment was also made in the report upon our "deportment!" and in this respect we were held up as an example to all other clubs, at which we all, no doubt, blushed with pleasure and becoming modesty.

Physically, also, they sized us up pretty accurately, describing us as "exceedingly young and light-built men, their average ages being 19, and their average weight only reaching 130 pounds."

In the Atlantic game John Lowell brought down the house by stealing a base on "Dicky" Pearce, who was catching. Pearce had a habit of leisurely rolling the

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ball back to the pitcher; John had just made his first base and at once "caught on" to this trick of Pearce's, so as soon as the latter started to roll the ball, away went John, safely reaching second, amidst much laughter and applause.

This trip was memorable in that it brought us in contact with the late Mortimer Rogers, who met us upon our arrival at the station, and instantly won the esteem, friendship, and regard of us all. This feeling deepened and strengthened as years went by. Eventually he played with the Lowells, and later still made Boston his home.

As an outfielder, Mort. was ahead of his time, and to-day there is no player who can run in to a swiftly batted liner and pick it up within six inches of the ground better than he could; and those players who can do it at all to-day are not any too numerous. Long, high hits, which are caught with one hand, or taken over the shoulder,

the fielder running with the ball, are more showy and appeal to the "gallery;" but every real player knows that the true test of a fielder lies in his ability to take the low flies while running into them at full speed.

And here just a word about the up-to-date outfielding where a padded contrivance, like a huge mitten, is worn upon one hand. These mittens measure about ten inches in length and the same in breadth, with a hollow in the palm wherein the ball fits like a "baby in a basket."

What credit is there in catching a ball in such a trap? True, it protects the fingers of a high-priced player, and he must exercise judgment in timing the ball and getting under it; but there all skill ceases.

I have seen an outfielder jump into the air and stop a ball with this invention which he could not possibly have touched with his bare hand, thereby just as surely robbing the batter of a fairly earned two

or three base hit, perhaps a home run, as if he had held up a plank and intercepted the ball with it.

There is no more call for this mitten in the outfield to-day than there was forty years ago, as balls are batted there no oftener, no harder, and no farther. The average bare hand covers an area of some thirty-one or thirty-two square inches, whereas this mitten covers one hundred! And the thumb, clear to its tip, is connected with the body of the mitten by a gore-shaped web or membrane, like that in a duck's foot, so that the ball cannot possibly be forced through this opening. *O tempora, O mores!*

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## CHAPTER XVI

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**O**N September 25, 1865, we played the Atlantics of New York, then champions of America, on Boston Common. They had not been defeated for two years, and therefore attracted a very large crowd, as may be supposed.

We gave them a pretty good game, but they beat us 30 to 10. The famous Joe Start, of first base fame, played on this team, and also Frank Norton, the finest catcher of his day. Thirty-nine years after this game, during which interval we had not met, a rather stout, full-whiskered, gray-haired man of about — well, never mind the age — called at my office and greeted me with, "Hello, Jim." I looked him over and had to acknowledge that he had the

drop on me. He laughed and wondered if I remembered Frank Norton and I thought of the graceful, brilliant young fellow as I had last seen him. I think he was fully as surprised as I was at the changes which time had wrought upon its victims.

The next day the Tri-Mountains were beaten by the Atlantics, 107 to 16; and on the 27th the Harvards engaged them and came off with a score of 22 to the Atlantics' 58. This game of ours with the Atlantics was a memorable one, it being the last in which our captain, pitcher, and all-round most reliable man, Gat Miller, made his appearance upon the Lowell team for several years.

He had entered Harvard College, and in the natural course of events would have played with them against us in the game for the championship, which was to take place in five days, on September 30; but Gat was "true blue" and would not resign as a Lowell man and consequently could

not play against his old nine; and it should be said, on the other hand, that he was equally loyal to his college, and never would play with us against it.

He was so popular with both parties that he was unanimously invited to umpire this game, and although it was a trying position, he fulfilled the duties to the perfect satisfaction of both sides. We had, of course, for some time been anticipating Miller's leaving us, and I had been at work practicing to fill his position as well as I could.

I had never before pitched in a match game, and I think that the rest of the team, and our friends generally, had many large-sized misgivings about the as yet untried man in so important a game; but I felt eager to get into it and see what I could do, and the result after all was not so bad, as we beat them 40 to 37. This gave us the championship once more; but our possession of it was short-lived, as the

Harvards, with their indomitable gameness, wanting to winter the silver ball in Cambridge if possible, asked for one more game.

In the mean time I was disabled and was unable to play. Jim Burton, however, took my place and no doubt batted better than I should have done, his score being one out and five runs. The college boys, however, struck a batting streak and knocked out 73 runs to our 37.

There occurred in this game a most remarkable hit made by Tom Nelson, which is to-day often referred to as "Nelson's great strike."

There was a high west wind blowing during the game and Tom caught the ball square on the nose with the full swing of his great strength and away it soared, truly, upon the wings of the wind. Over the Flagstaff hill it flew and bounded down the other side, in the direction of West Street. There are numerous legends extant as to where it was finally picked up.

One was that it was stopped while trying to get through West Street gate. Another, that it went down West Street, bounced aboard a passing horse-car and went out to the Norfolk House.

As I was confined at home, I do not know anything about it, but anyway Nelson wandered around the bases, and then "waited patiently about until it did appear," and often laughed about it in after years.

Speaking of long strikes reminds me of one which I once made where the ball was never heard from afterwards. It gives one a queer sensation to bat a ball up into the air and never see it again, yet that is what happened upon this occasion. I was batting up to the boys one afternoon, and the ball, when thrown back to me, rolled on to Beacon Street Mall. I picked it up and batted it from there. It went straight up into the thickly leaved trees. I do not remember hearing it make any sound, and never saw it again. Whether it wedged





THOMAS NELSON



itself into a fork, plumped into a hole, or imbedded itself in a limb, like the cannon-ball in the old Brattle Street Church, I cannot say.

Another afternoon, while I was again batting to the outfield, Mr. Francis Gardner, Master of the Public Latin School, came along the Spruce Street path and stood watching me a while. Presently, he approached and said, "Lovett, I hear that you can put a ball about where you like; can you send it down to Hawes" (pointing to Henry Hawes, down in the long field), "so that he won't have to move out of his tracks for it?"

Now, if Mr. Gardner had asked me to give him a list of the twenty-six prepositions (or was it a hundred and twenty-six?) followed by the accusative, I should probably have balked; but I was now on my own quarter-deck and so answered with brazen assurance that I thought I could.

"Let her go, then," he said, and I accord-

ingly let her go, and knew, the instant the ball left the bat, that it was going true.

Sure enough, Henry never moved an inch and took it about breast high, upon which Mr. Gardner chuckled once or twice to himself and went on his way without another word.

That Mr. Gardner was a rugged, stern man is well known, but that he was possessed of a most kind heart and gentle ways when occasion called for them is not so generally recognized.

At recess one day he called up and was questioning a very frail and delicate looking fellow, named Loring, about a lesson in which he had failed badly. Under Mr. Gardner's stern eye he completely broke down, and throwing his arms about the strong man's neck, hid his face upon his shoulder and sobbed passionately.

The really sweet and tender way in which Mr. Gardner comforted that little fellow, the gentleness with which he stroked the

little head with his big hand, and finally brought back the smiles to his face, was a revelation to those of us who were present.

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## CHAPTER XVII

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**M**ARCH 26, 1866, the Lowells leased a club-room on the corner of West and Mason streets, and for five or six years enjoyed it, summer and winter. Curiously enough, over one of the windows of these rooms was a carved "L," and "1861," the date of our organization.

We had two fine pianists in Ned Harlow and Jim Hovey, a vocal quartette was formed, dancing parties were given, and the Lowell Club was at its zenith.

I am sure that Clude Belches will agree with me when I state that the rendering of the "Larboard Watch," by two prominent members has never been duplicated.

John Lowell's inimitable character



W. H. Alline  
 G. B. Wilder  
 J. D'W. Lovett (Capt.)  
 C. L. Fuller  
 J. Lowell  
 W. C. Page  
 W. B. Joslin  
 A. Crosby  
 F. H. Sumner

LOWELL BASEBALL NINE, 1866





sketches, together with songs and stories, were always a source of pleasure, and, what with boxing and social enjoyments of all kinds, the winter months sped rapidly in those far-off days.

On June 2, 1866, we met the Flyaways of East Boston, and for four hours ran around the bases, making one hundred and twenty-one runs to fourteen. We went to Portland on July 4 and played the Eons, whom we beat 33 to 23, upon a park a mile or so outside the city limits. While playing we could see that there was a good-sized fire raging in the city, and when we returned thither found ourselves in the midst of the "big Portland fire."

We had intended returning home that evening, but stayed and worked nearly all night in assisting to save the jewelry stock of Messrs. Lowell & Senter, who very handsomely acknowledged our efforts in the newspapers.

On July 14 we again tackled Harvard

for the championship, and once more won it, this time by the score of 37 to 27.<sup>1</sup>

In this game it seemed as if the "fickle goddess," a little disturbed in her mind for having so heartlessly abandoned us in the last one (73 to 37), had thought the matter over and concluded to square herself with the Lowell boys. Accordingly, she graciously lent us her aid, which resulted in our winning by the above score; and she, also thinking, no doubt, that it was but fair that Nelson's great strike in that game should be offset by something similar in this one, decreed that one of the Lowells should make a catch to keep the strike company. That Her Royal Fickleness booked me for this honor was doubtless due to the fact that my position as

<sup>1</sup> It is curious to note in how many of the Lowell-Harvard matches the total score on one side or the other was either a multiple of seven, or else a number in which the figure seven appeared; thus, 28 appears five times; 37, four times; 27, three times; 14, 17, 21, and 73, once each.

pitcher being nearest the batter, possessed possibilities which the other positions lacked. Be that as it may, Ames was at the bat and I pitched him a ball which he struck with such force that, before any eye in the crowd could mark its flight, it had returned to my hand as the latter was in the act of swinging back after delivery, and was caught without requiring any extraneous movement upon my part to indicate the fact, so that not a soul excepting Ames and myself knew what had become of it. This circumstance, however, did not occur to me until after I had stood a moment or two, expecting to hear the Lowell yell. But not a sound came; and then instantly it dawned upon me that nobody knew that I had caught the ball. My position was a peculiar one, and I do not know how long the deception could have been sustained; but I had to do something, so I tossed the ball into the air, whereupon everybody at once "caught on," and the yell came.

Indeed, tiny, faint echoes of this applause have filtered down through the forty intervening years, and I am, to-day, often asked questions about this catch by persons who are utter strangers to me. I have actually been asked, "Did you see it coming?" "Did you know you had caught it?" "Wasn't your first impulse to dodge it?" etc., etc.

I am giving this matter much more space and prominence than it deserves; but I have been asked to set forth the incident as it really occurred, as many people saw and remember it, and it has been suggested that they might be interested in hearing the facts at first hand. I will only add, simply as a matter of record, that upon four later occasions, I repeated this catch, but in none of these latter was the velocity approached with which Ames drove the ball at me.

It has always been a feather in the Lowell cap to have had Ames (now Dean



Drawn by C. D. Gibson

THERE WERE "FANS" IN THOSE DAYS



of the Harvard Law School), upon its nine for about a year before he entered college, as his ability as captain of the 'Varsity team, his coolness and good judgment at critical moments, his ever alert fielding as second baseman, and his superior batting placed him easily in the front rank of ball players.

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## CHAPTER XVIII

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**O**N July 25, 1866, in a match with the Phillips Academy nine, from Andover, we had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of that model catcher and universal favorite, the late Archie Bush.

Later on he entered Harvard and succeeded George Flagg, whose fine, plucky catching and brilliant base running made him famous during the four years in which he wore the gray and magenta.

We won this game only after a sharp fight, by the score of 32 to 20.

Like all winners we had lots of friends at this time, from the street gamins up to the "Chairman of the Committee on Commons and Squares," who very kindly issued





E. Bowditch    N. S. Smith    F. Rawle    A. McC. Bush  
G. G. Willard    R. G. Shaw    J. B. Ames (Capt.)    A. Hummewell    E. E. Sprague

HARVARD BASEBALL NINE, 1868



to us a permit for two or three consecutive years, granting to us the "use of the grounds on which they usually play, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays, in the afternoon, on the Common, to the exclusion of others." They also detailed a squad of policemen to guard the ropes during match games. These policemen were all good Lowell partisans, as the following incident will show.

Just before game was called with the Phillips Academy nine, a friend of mine overheard two men, evidently strangers who had come to Boston to see the game, discussing the probable result, one saying that he "guessed the Lowells would get beaten this time all right," when a policeman who stood within earshot of the remark instantly turned, gave him a withering look of scorn, and quietly said, "You talk like a damn fool."

It was while this game was in progress that Fred Nazro, ever loyal and true, lost

a good hat but gained a halo in exchange, which metaphorically speaking, he has worn ever since.

It was like this. At the end of the fifth innings the Academy boys stood 18 to our 16 and were playing a winning game. In the sixth, we made a rally, knocked out ten runs and gave them a goose egg, and at this point the non-playing boys went wild. Fred, who was frantically waving aloft his hat, all unconscious of the damage that was being wrought, finally shook the crown free from the rim and continued to wave this accidentally created halo, not noticing anything wrong, until it slipped down over his head when he tried to put his hat on.

We played two more games that fall for the championship: one, on September 15, with the King Phillips of East Abington, which we won by 75 to 17, and the other on September 29, with the Granites of Holliston, which we also won by 47 to 11.





Alline    Joslin    Lowell    Page    Fuller  
Burton    Crosby    Gardner    Sumner    Lovett (Capt.)    Wilder



Lovett (Capt.) Jewell  
Hawes  
Newton  
Joslin Sumner  
Rogers  
Alline  
Bradbury



Dennison King  
Perkins  
Rice  
Lang  
Lang  
Simmons  
Appleton

LOWELL BASEBALL CLUB AND "ROOTERS"







In the King Phillip match Sumner carried off the honors in fielding, the report of the game describing his play at second base as "the best he ever made and the best we recollect ever having seen in that position, not even excepting Crane" (of the champion Atlantics).

In the Granite match Mort. Rogers made his first appearance upon the Lowell nine, and proved to be a most valuable acquisition to our outfield, he playing centre.

In the spring of 1867 the Harvard boys, thinking no doubt that the silver ball was growing dull from too long exposure to the Boston east winds, and that it needed a change of air, determined to take it a few miles further inland, if possible, and "brighten it up a bit," and, incidentally, polish off the Lowells at the same time.

Accordingly they sent us an invitation to play a series of match games, "best two out of three," for the championship. This was something new, as heretofore one

game had decided the question, thereby saving much valuable time. We therefore notified them of our acceptance of their challenge, and also expressed our preference that, if agreeable to them, one game should settle the matter. To this they replied that the conditions were agreeable (as to the time, place, etc.), but that they preferred that the terms should be best two out of three, as originally proposed. Not caring to prolong the question, we acquiesced and at once made arrangements for the series, the first of which was played May 15, on the Common, where we won by a score of 37 to 28.

The second game was played on May 24, on Jarvis' Field, Cambridge; this time the Harvards winning by 32 to 26.

The third and deciding game was played on a potato patch (I wish I could call it a ball ground), in Medford, where we were again beaten, this time by the score of 39 to 28. In this game Bob Shaw of the Har-





James D'Wolf Lovett





wards gave us a touch of his quality at first base, which one rarely sees equaled and never excelled by either amateur or professional. He made five fly catches and assisted in disposing of fifteen base runners, thus being instrumental in capturing twenty of the twenty-seven outs, and without an error!

On June 17 the celebrated Athletics of Philadelphia visited Boston, and on that date defeated the Eons of Portland, on the Common, 88 to 22. The next day the Harvards gave them a splendid game, but were beaten by a score of 22 to 10, the Athletics winning only by their heavy batting. The fielding of Harvard was fully equal to that of their powerful opponents, if not better.

The next day we played the Philadelphians, and a sort of "dry rot" seemed to take possession of the entire Lowell nine. We played like beginners and allowed them to pile up 53 runs to our 5, in five

innings, when a most welcome thunder-shower put an end to the fun (?).

It seems evident that the Golden Rule was not intended to be prominent in athletic contests, where each participant is endeavoring to the utmost of his ability to do unto the other fellow just what he would not have the other fellow do unto him; and if A beats B, it seems to be the natural thing for B, failing to get back at A, to desire to take it out of C, if he can.

It is therefore tolerably certain that, if the Golden Rule ever comes to be universally applied, contests of all kinds must cease naturally, as the stronger will refrain from beating the weaker, the weaker cannot beat the stronger, and the result will be "nil."

As the above rule, however, is at present limited in its workings, and as the Lowells were smarting somewhat from their landslide with the Athletics, and being actuated by the praiseworthy desire to "take it out"



of somebody else, if possible, they accepted with pleasure the kind invitation of the Rockinghams of Portsmouth, N. H., to visit them. The Lowells went to Portsmouth, met with a hearty reception, and relieved their feelings by prancing around the bases one hundred and seven times.

The U. S. Navy was represented in this match by Lieutenant Harmony, then on duty at the Portsmouth Navy Yard, and he fully sustained the reputation which the U. S. naval officers have established of being "jolly good fellows," for he was the life of the game. Here's hoping that his voyage through life has been a calm and prosperous one.

The green curtain was rung down on the silver ball in September, 1867, after we had lost it to the Tri-Mountains in a series of three games, we winning the first one 20 to 16, and they the other two, 40 to 35 and 42 to 22. In the second of these games we once more had the pleasure of

having Gat Miller on the team, in his old position as pitcher; and once again and for the last time did we have his valuable and ever-welcome assistance on October 4, 1867, when we had the honor of being the first New England club that ever defeated a prominent New York team. This was the Excelsiors of Brooklyn, the same who paid us a visit in July, 1862; but they no longer had a Creighton and Leggett to pitch and catch for them, the former having died and the latter having given up playing. Still they had the then famous Cummings for pitcher.<sup>1</sup> We beat them 29 to 21, and on the 7th the Harvards repeated our performance, only "more so," making 18 to the Excelsiors' 6.

After a few preliminary games in the spring of 1868, we started on June 9 for a tour through some of the New England cities in an attempt to be "neighborly." The programme was somewhat marred by rainy days, and several games had to be

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, p. 224.

omitted; but it was a most enjoyable outing nevertheless.

Fitchburg was our first point, where on the 19th we beat the Rollstones, 50 to 14. Two days were then lost on account of rain, after which in New Haven on the 13th we ran up against the Yales for the first time. This was a memorable game for us, in that it was the only one of ten innings we ever played. At the end of the ninth the score stood twelve all, and we went in to do or die. I led off at the bat and went out ignominiously at first; but luckily there were better men who followed me, and Joslin, Rogers, Sumner, and Jewell worked their passage around the bases, thus again giving us a lead with which the Yale boys were unable to cope, they making but one run, the final score standing 16 to 13.

Games of more than nine innings were comparatively rare in those days, and some of the boys who accompanied us

upon this trip nearly died of heart failure during the last innings.

We stayed at New Haven until the next evening, when we left for Hartford, where, on the 15th, we played the Charter Oaks, beating them 61 to 12.

Rain prevented our game with the Oceanics of New London, which was booked for the 16th, so we left that afternoon for Providence, where on the 17th of June we crossed swords with Brown University, on the Dexter Training Ground. This was to have been the "wind-up" to our trip, amid red fire, tom-toms, and the rejoicings of a large party of friends who came down from Boston to join in our apotheosis, but somehow we slipped a cog and the programme on the Training Ground got twisted, the Browns making 22 runs to our 19, instead of the other way about as was intended.

Frank Herreshoff, one of the most famous athletes who ever went to Brown



# LOWELL BASE BALL CLUB



## Season of 1868





University, pitched against us in this game. He is a brother of Nat Herreshoff, the famous yacht designer. He and I were old friends, and I am glad to say he is still living and prosperous.

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## CHAPTER XIX

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**T**HIS ending to our trip took the sharp edge off the pleasures of home-coming, and we laid it up against Brown for a year, when, on the 17th of June, 1869, we went back and balanced accounts, making 40 to their 13, and then felt better.

I do not know if the present amateur clubs make these friendly tours, as was the custom in ante-professional days; but during the years when the championship of New England was held by either the Harvards or Lowells, we were treated royally wherever we went and enjoyed all the pleasures and glory that can be derived from ball playing. Private houses were open to us, balls were given in our honor,



and even cigars were named for us. What more could heart desire?

The silver ball being out of the way, a series of friendly games, best two out of three, was now arranged for between the Harvards and Lowells, and on July 4, 1868, the Magenta and Lowell Blue again locked horns. We won, 23 to 20, and the second game was played on July 21, the Harvards winning by a close margin, 28 to our 27. A remarkable feature of the first of these two games was that each of the Harvard boys made just three outs. Up to that time this was, I believe, unprecedented.

The third game was never played, it being postponed until after the college vacation and then dropped as another series was arranged for instead.

These friendly bouts with Harvard were always enjoyable, as we were evenly matched; the college boys were at all times courteous and manly opponents, and both teams played upon the dead level,

and for every ounce of which they were capable. Every scintilla of the feeling which had been engendered in the struggles for the silver ball, and then only by partisans and not participated in by the players themselves, had been buried and replaced by a healthy, virile rivalry, such as merely stimulated without intoxicating.

On October 3, 1868, we played the first game of the new series, which was won by Harvard, 27 to 24, and on the 9th we returned the compliment, winning by 33 to 30. In this game I made my top score, consisting of no outs and eight runs, earned first base six times, made seventeen bases, three clean home runs, and one three-base hit. I have always been a bit proud of this score against such a nine as the Harvards, and thus herald it forth with such brazen effrontery. I once made a score of no outs, fifteen runs, and one home run, in a match with the Andersons of Lynn, but this score is left lying around loose, while the former

is kept wrapped up in a piece of pink tissue paper, so to speak. In the third game of this series the Harvards again beat us, 28 to 15, thus closing the season of 1868.

In the spring of 1869 the Common was plowed up, and, being thus deprived of all chance to practice, it was right at this point, or at least in the fall, that the Lowells should have disbanded and gracefully stepped down and out while yet they could have done so with a long string of victories and but comparatively few defeats for a record. (In the last six years we had played ninety-nine games and won seventy.)

It is seldom that baseball has figured in politics, but in December, 1869, through fear of being permanently deprived of the use of the Common as a playground, the ball players of Boston decided to take a hand in the political game and do what they could to help elect a mayor and aldermen known to be favorably disposed to-

wards athletic sports and who were also willing to grant the use of the Common as a playground as it had been heretofore. Accordingly, on Saturday evening, December 11, three days before election, a hastily called meeting was held, and on Monday, the 13th, the following notice of it appeared in the "Boston Herald:" —

"BASEBALLISTS IN COUNCIL. NOMINATION  
OF A TICKET FOR ALDERMEN.

"A meeting of gentlemen interested in baseball and other outdoor athletic sports was held Saturday evening, December 11, in the Lowell Baseball Club rooms to organize for the municipal election. Mr. John A. Lowell presided. A committee was appointed at a previous meeting to nominate candidates for Aldermen, and reported the following statement, which was adopted.

"To correct a misunderstanding which appears to exist as to the object of this

movement, it becomes necessary to state that the design is to foster not the game of baseball and its interests alone, but outdoor sports in general as an important means of promoting the physical training of our youth and consequently the public health. The Common has been taken and nothing left in its place, and the main object is to select men who will grant our youth some spot for recreation. Beyond this, it has no object or aim, political or otherwise.' After perfecting the organization of rallying committees for each ward the meeting adjourned."

The baseball tickets were distinguished by a large red ball printed at the top and bore the names of aldermanic candidates which had been carefully selected from both Republicans and Democrats. In spite of the short time at their disposal, for organization, printing, etc., the "Red ball ticket," as it was known, was hustled

through, and upon the 14th, duly appeared at the several polling places, where they were distributed by enthusiastic volunteers who explained to the voters the reasons for their existence.

The idea "took," a large number of these ballots were cast, and there is no reason to doubt their influence upon the election. At all events, the lower end of the Common was assigned to the boys the following spring, and Mayor Shurtleff, who was reëlected, personally thanked Mr. Lowell, and through him the committee, for their efforts.

In May the Mutuals of New York took a trip to Boston and played the Tri-Mountains, whom they defeated 69 to 17. Then they played with the Harvards, beating them 43 to 11, and wound up with the Lowells, who made 21 to the Mutuals' 26, in an eight innings game. The paper next day said, "The Lowells acquitted themselves nobly in this game with the Mutuals.

They outfielded the Mutuals, as these themselves acknowledged, and batted in a manner that reminded one of old times. With practice they may yet regain their old position as the foremost club of New England." But we could *not* get the requisite practice, and old times *do not* come back again.

Business was now the real and serious thing in life for all of us, and neither baseball nor any other game requiring skill, mental or physical, can be won upon past reputation. This lack of a practice ground affected the Tri-Mountains as seriously as it did the Lowells, and was sufficient excuse for their defeats, as well as ours, by country clubs, which a year earlier would have been victories.

On June 10 of this year Boston was visited by the renowned Cincinnati "Red Stockings," who were then upon their phenomenally successful tour. They traveled from ocean to ocean; played sixty-

three games with the strongest clubs in the country and won sixty-three straight victories.

As this trip of the "Red Stockings" has never been equaled by any professional baseball nine, and probably never will be, ball players will be interested to see a few of its statistics.

They traveled 11,877 miles, played to about 200,000 spectators, and made 2677 runs against their opponents' 637. They made 3323 clean base hits and 169 home runs.

In running the bases, the players traveled 222 miles. This celebrated nine was composed of George Wright, short-stop; Harry Wright, centre field; Douglas Allison, catcher; Fred Waterman, third base; Charlie Gould, first base; Andy Leonard, left field; Calvin McVey, right field; Charlie Sweasy, second base; and Asa Brainard, pitcher.

George Wright led the batting, with a





GEORGE WRIGHT



total of 339 runs, 304 base hits, a grand total of 614 bases and 49 clean home runs. He assisted 179 times and made 82 fly catches out of 86 chances, thus making good his title to "King."

The Lowells ran up against this formidable aggregation on June 10 on the lower end of the Parade Ground and scored 9 runs to the "Reds'" 29. Being laid up with a sprained ankle, I had to forego the pleasure of playing against this champion team.

On the 11th they beat the Tri-Mountains, 40 to 12, and on the 12th made 30 to the Harvards' 11.

Very rarely, if ever, during the next two years, did the Lowells play a match with their full nine in the field, the vacancies being filled by inferior men; and with no practice between matches, the result was inevitable. The club lost ground, enthusiasm waned, many influential members withdrew to give all their attention to

the Boston Club (professional), then just forming, and in short the end of amateur baseball playing in Boston was near at hand.

Protracted death struggles make neither a pleasing picture nor an agreeable subject upon which to write, and I do not care to parade those of the Lowell Baseball Club. Suffice it to say that for two seasons it somehow lingered on in a state of atrophy, during which many games were presented as gifts to clubs who, a little earlier, might have had to whistle for them.

The end came on December 12, 1873, when a few of us around a dining-table at the Parker House held a coroner's inquest, rendered a verdict of death from unavoidable causes, wound up its few remaining affairs, and the once famous Lowell Club was no more. *Requiescat in pace!*

Both the Tri-Mountains and Lowells had good stuff in them, and with the same

opportunities for practice which were enjoyed by college nines need have feared no amateur club of New England for some time longer. Probably any promising ball player of to-day, of say eighteen years of age, has attained a proficiency equal to that with which we left off at twenty-five, he being born into the atmosphere of the national game, weaned and brought up on it.

In closing these gleanings of past years, which it has been a pleasure to collect and present to those who care to read them, I should be remiss if I neglected to mention the valuable services of George B. Appleton, for many years scorer for the Lowells. He accompanied us upon nearly all our trips, and in victory or defeat was always genial, optimistic, and light-hearted, — qualities which have won for him so many friends through life.

It is rather a curious fact, and one to which I called attention a few years ago,

that the surnames of nineteen Lowells who, first and last, played upon the first nine, were composed of six letters. Following is a list of them : —

Alline, Arnold, Briggs, Burton, Conant, Crosby, Fuller, Jewell, Joslin, Lovett, Lowell, Mellen, Miller, Newton, Rogers, Sumner, Watson, Wilder, and Wright.

By way of apology for the frequent use, in the preceding pages, of the “ first person singular, tall and perpendicular,” as Thackeray once put it, I can only say that it seemed to be unavoidable in a collection of reminiscences, and I hope that it will be indulgently overlooked.

A miserly person, when asked why he deprived himself of all luxuries for the sake of hoarding up his money for others to spend after his death, replied, “ If they enjoy spending my money one half as much as I have enjoyed saving it, they are welcome to it.”

And so I close this little volume with

the thought that if any reader enjoys the trifles contained in it one half as much as I have enjoyed collecting them for him, I shall be well satisfied.





## APPENDIX



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## NOTES

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### PAGE 61

IN an admirably written article in the "Harvard Magazine" for June, 1858, which appeared shortly after this race, urging the imperative necessity for stricter training among the college oarsmen, the Volant crew is held up as an example in this direction; and the self-complacency of the Huron boys, fostered by a recent victory over Yale, and also at Springfield and in the Fourth of July regatta on Charles River, is sat upon vigorously and no doubt with good results. The writer says that through these successive victories "their exultation was raised to its height." "But," he goes on to say, "we hear strange things about the prowess of the Volant Club; and so a match is brought about. We hear that the townsmen are in training, and doing well; we smile complacently and say, 'Very good,—as good as can be expected,'—

and eagerly double our bets. Reports of extraordinary trial speed reach us; we do not waver, but think with undiminished confidence of that long stroke which is destined to tell in the third mile, when they are exhausted by their rapid rowing, and — we lose our money. The evidence of our eyes is hardly enough to convince us of our defeat. . . . We have been assured by two members that in no one instance did the Volant crew deviate from the rules of training. . . . It is a mistake to suppose they beat the Hurons by their weight; it was their severe, conscientious training; their stern determination to win when it must have been agony to one of their number to row, and finally, their scrupulous attention to details, however trifling, that gave them the victory.”

The above extract from the “Harvard Magazine” is certainly a well deserved tribute to the iron will and grim determination of these old-time athletes, who, in the days when professional coaches were unknown, training tables unheard of, and the stimulus of enormous pecuniary receipts was entirely lacking, could thus conscientiously and systematically train themselves to

such a degree of perfection. And all for what? Purely and simply for the love of clean, wholesome sport and generous rivalry. Surely it is up to the young men in this day of tainted athleticism to lay the lesson of this singleness of purpose well to heart and not entirely lose sight of the fact that there is an ethical as well as a brutal side to field and water sports.

## PAGE 63

This 1858 Fourth of July regatta was the longest race ever pulled in any Harvard College boat, and it is of more than common interest to know who the men were who could row a grueling, six-mile race, under a July sun, without a mishap. Following are the names, weights, etc., of this famous old crew:—

Benj. W. Crowninshield (stroke)	156 lbs.	Class of '58
Caspar Crowninshield	154	" " " '60
Charles W. Eliot	138	" " " '53
James H. Ellison	141	" " " '59
J. H. Wales	136½	" " " '61
Alex. E. R. Agassiz (bow)	142	" " " '55

The Harvard was the first *shell* ever owned by the College Navy and was but forty feet long,

the shortest of the eight contesting boats, — which fact no doubt cut the time of turning the stake boats by some valuable seconds.

The time made by the four leading boats was as follows: Harvard, 40.25; Fort Hill Boy, 41.44; Lexington, 42.30; Stirling, 43.04.

The generous rivalry in athletic sports in those far-away days, compared with the cutthroat competition of the present time, is well illustrated by the fact that the Harvards, after the race, magnanimously added \$25 of their \$100 prize to the Fort Hill Boy's second prize of \$50 — thus making an even division of the money.

The finish of this race was close by the Union Club House at Braman's, so that the victorious crew was still three miles from home, but they at once started up the Charles and upon their arrival were greeted — not by the martial strains of a brass band and the frenzied cheers of a howling mass of partisans intoxicated with joy over the victory, as would be the case to-day, but by one solitary professor, the late Frederic Dan Huntington, Bishop of Central New York; and instead of being tenderly lifted from the boat in which they had done such Spartan work, and

carried aloft in triumph, they were compelled to go up a rope, hand over hand, to the floor of the boathouse, the dignity of a raft still being a thing of the future.

Three of this splendid, time-honored crew are still living, one, a star of the first magnitude in the world of science, and another the honored head of the university for which they fought so valiantly. The other three members lived until within a few years.

The unswerving faith of the backers of the Fort Hill Boy up to the time of the pistol-shot announcing the start, and their consternation a little later at seeing the despised "Fops" sweep grandly over the line as the other pistol-shot rang out, telling of their victory, is humorously told by the Rev. William R. Huntington, Class of '59 (now rector of Grace Church, New York), in two songs, — the first supposed to have been sung before and the second after the race. They appeared in the "Harvard Magazine" for July, 1858, and are as follows: —

## FIRST SONG

MICHAEL TO PATRICK

(Air, Paddy O'Rafferty.)

Arrah, me Patsy ! jist look at the College boat :  
 Niver afore did ye see so much knowledge float.  
 Shure it 's a shame that their arms is n't bigger now,  
 For it is muscle, not brains, that will figure now.

(*Chorus*) O ye b'ys, ye fops, ye lady pets,  
 Twinty to wan, and our word that we pay  
 the bets.

Only step here and obsarve the dhroll make of her.  
 Shavin 's and wire is the notion ye take of her.  
 Round as a pratie, and sharp as a pick, is she,  
 But niver a match in a race for the Mickies she.

(*Chorus*) O ye b'ys, ye fops, ye lady pets,  
 Twinty to wan, and our word that we pay  
 the bets.

Twig the spoon oars what they pull her, me jewel,  
 with !

Why don't they keep them to ate their oat-gruel with ?  
 Wooden spoons shure is no sign of good luck at all ;  
 Silver we 'll have, when the prize we have took it all.



(*Chorus*) O ye b'ys, ye fops, ye lady pets,  
Twinty to wan, and our word that we pay  
the bets.

## SECOND SONG

PATRICK TO MICHAEL

(Air, Lillebullero.)

Look ! look ! will ye, Mike,  
Ye ne'er saw the like :  
These childer have waxed us through and through.  
The studints is here,  
But, bad 'cess ! it is clear  
We'll wait awhile now for the Irish crew.

(*Chorus*) Har-r-var'd ! Har-r-var'd ! O ye spalpeens !  
Have n't ye scattered my wages like  
smoke ?

I can't pay a quarter  
The bets that I oughter.  
Divil fly off wid yer wondherful stroke.

Jist hark to the yells  
Of thim Beacon Street swells,  
And see, over yonder, the cambric wave ;  
While Micky there stands,  
A-wringin' his hands,  
And Biddy is wipin' her eyes on her slave.

(*Chorus*) Har-r-ward ! Har-r-ward ! O ye spalpeens !  
Have n't ye scattered my wages like  
smoke ?

I can't pay a quarter  
The bets that I oughter.  
Divil fly off wid yer wondherful stroke.

Let 's scuttle our boats :  
Nary one of them floats  
But looks kind o' shamed about the bows ;  
And oh ! may the crews  
In future refuse  
To meddle with race-boats, and stick to their scows.

(*Chorus*) Har-r-ward ! Har-r-ward ! O ye spalpeens !  
Have n't ye scattered my wages like  
smoke ?

I can't pay a quarter  
The bets that I oughter.  
Divil fly off wid yer wondherful stroke.

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The international four-oar race between the Harvards and Oxfords which was rowed on the Thames, over a course measuring four miles, three furlongs, on August 27, 1869, will long be remembered upon both sides of the big pond. It

was the initial race between English and American universities and was a superb exhibition of American pluck and endurance in the face of unfamiliar conditions and surroundings as well as of illness, which called forth enthusiastic praise from the generous sporting spirit of the English people, and it was estimated that at least a million spectators witnessed the event.

The Harvards, being most desirous of meeting the English crew, yielded all disputed points and met them literally upon their own terms by agreeing to row a straight-away, four-oar race, with a coxswain (an officer which had not been known at Harvard for years), and over the Oxford's usual course on the Thames, from Putney to Mortlake. The race was rowed up stream with the tide, which runs about four miles an hour. The river, between the two points named, is very crooked, nearly S-shaped, full of eddies and shoals, crossed by three arched bridges, and in some places obstructed by piles. This course had been the scene of no less than twenty contests between Oxford and Cambridge, and of course was perfectly familiar to the Englishmen.

The four Harvards originally picked for this race were Alden P. Loring, bow, George Bass, 3, Sylvester W. Rice, 2, William H. Simmons, stroke, and Arthur Burnham, coxswain. They sailed for Europe July 10, arriving after a ten days' passage and about five weeks before the date set for the race. The London Rowing Club tendered them every civility and made them honorary members. Two American and three English boats had been built for and tried by them, but finally, three days before the race, an American boatbuilder, Elliott, who had brought over the knees and draughts of a new boat, completed one which was preferred to all the others and forthwith adopted. About two weeks before the event the crew was changed and the following men rowed in the race : Joseph S. Fay, Jr., bow, F. O. Lyman, 3, William H. Simmons, 2, Alden P. Loring, stroke, and Arthur Burnham, coxswain. Their average weight was 150 pounds against their opponents'  $156\frac{4}{5}$  pounds.

The English crew were : S. D. Darbshire, stroke, J. C. Tinne, A. C. Yarborough, F. Wilan, and J. H. Hall, coxswain.

They were eight wonderful oarsmen, the flower

of two great universities, and were bound to give a good account of themselves.

This great race is now ancient history, but it is well to recall to later generations the gallant fight which these Harvard boys made against a crew picked from the eight men who had won nine straight victories for the dark blue of Oxford. They were all veterans at the oar and considered the finest four which ever rowed on the Thames. Most unfortunately two of the Harvards were overtrained and stale several days before the race ; but in spite of all obstacles and drawbacks they were game to the core and rowed a grand race, and although beaten, all honor is due to the boys who went three thousand miles from home to do battle for their university.

The time made by the Oxfords was 22.41½, and the Harvards followed in 22.47½. The referee was Thomas Hughes, of "Tom Brown" fame.

The great lesson learned from this race was the absolute necessity for a "coach," *a man whose word is law in the boat and out of the boat*. Such a man, if competent, is of untold comfort to a training crew in managing all the

thousand and one little details that worry a captain and take the edge off that keenness which is so all-important for him to carry into the race. In the science of boating the services of a "coach" have long been recognized as indispensable. Had this lesson been learned by Harvard before going to England, — who knows? perhaps a different tale would have been told.

It has been shown in the preceding pages how, by mere chance, magenta was made the Harvard color and remained so for eight years, and it may interest those not cognizant of the fact to learn that in 1858, owing to a somewhat similar circumstance, the college color escaped being blue by a very close margin.

To quote freely from the "Harvard Book," published in 1875, to which I am indebted for many points in the foregoing English race, it came about in this way: When the first 'Varsity crew was organized in 1856, the uniform was a white shirt with a cap copied from that of the St. John Union Club, white with scarlet band and no visor. The 'Varsity crew of 1858 found, however, that handkerchiefs were a convenient sort of head gear and decided to adopt them.

After a short discussion as to color, blue was selected. (Fancy a Harvard crew sporting BLUE handkerchiefs!)

The stroke-oar who went to Boston to purchase them could find none, however, and as a substitute procured six Chinese red silk handkerchiefs. This red was nearly a crimson, and this remained the college color until the magenta episode in 1866. On May 6, 1875, crimson was formally adopted as the college color.

The first six-oar shell built in America was ordered and owned by four Harvard students. It was built by McKay in 1858, and to the boating men of that time was as great a curiosity as the Monitor was to naval men in 1862.

With this shell came also spoon oars, which were then seen for the first time upon the Charles. In the spring of 1858 the first two races in this shell were won with such ease (one being with the Fort Hill Boy which is mentioned elsewhere) that lap-streaks were henceforth useless for racing, and the fight between the Merimac and the wooden frigates was not more decisive.

Sliding seats were first introduced at Harvard

by the crew of 1872 (used first in a university race by Yale in 1870). Their use met with much opposition by the old oarsmen, but it was found by careful trials that better time could be made with them though they were of the rudest sort — flat boards  $4 \times 12$  inches, with grooved box-wood runners sliding on steel rods. There was nothing to regulate the length of the slide or to keep the seats from jumping off the runners. This crew was also the first for several years that sat "hard up," that is, the men rowing port oars sitting close against the starboard side of the boat and *vice versa*.

Thus was the present perfection of the science of boating slowly evolved until it is now difficult to see in what direction further improvement can be made.

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Arthur Cummings, here alluded to, is justly famous in baseball history, not for the *discovery* of the curve described by a ball in its flight through the air, but for being the first one who saw that it could be broken and driven to harness and who made practical use of it in his pitching.



This happened, as near as I can find out, in 1871. Of course the knowing ones at once got busy and vigorously disputed the curve and pronounced it to be an impossibility as they had formerly demonstrated scientifically—on paper—that an iron ship could not float. The fact that a ball, in long-distance throwing, describes a very decided curve, had been well known for years to baseball players and cricketers, but it was never thought of as possessing any practical advantages until Cummings showed them.

Other pitchers, earlier than this, notably J. Cheever Goodwin of the Harvard nine, in 1870, had come dangerously near the truth, but the time for the advent of the curve was not then ripe. Goodwin developed great speed for the old underhand pitching days, and also a now undeniable up-curve; but this last was quite without intent on his part, and escaped recognition. He and Archie Bush, Harvard's greatest catcher, formed a most powerful battery which achieved great success.

To the minds of many of us old-timers Archie Bush was one of the greatest catchers whom the game has ever seen. As he stood erect, close

behind the batter, in an easy, graceful pose, gloveless, maskless, fearless, to those of us who remember him, he made a picture of what the ideal ballplayer should be.

To-day the curve, in its various forms, is the chief stock in trade of all pitchers, and is too common to excite special comment.

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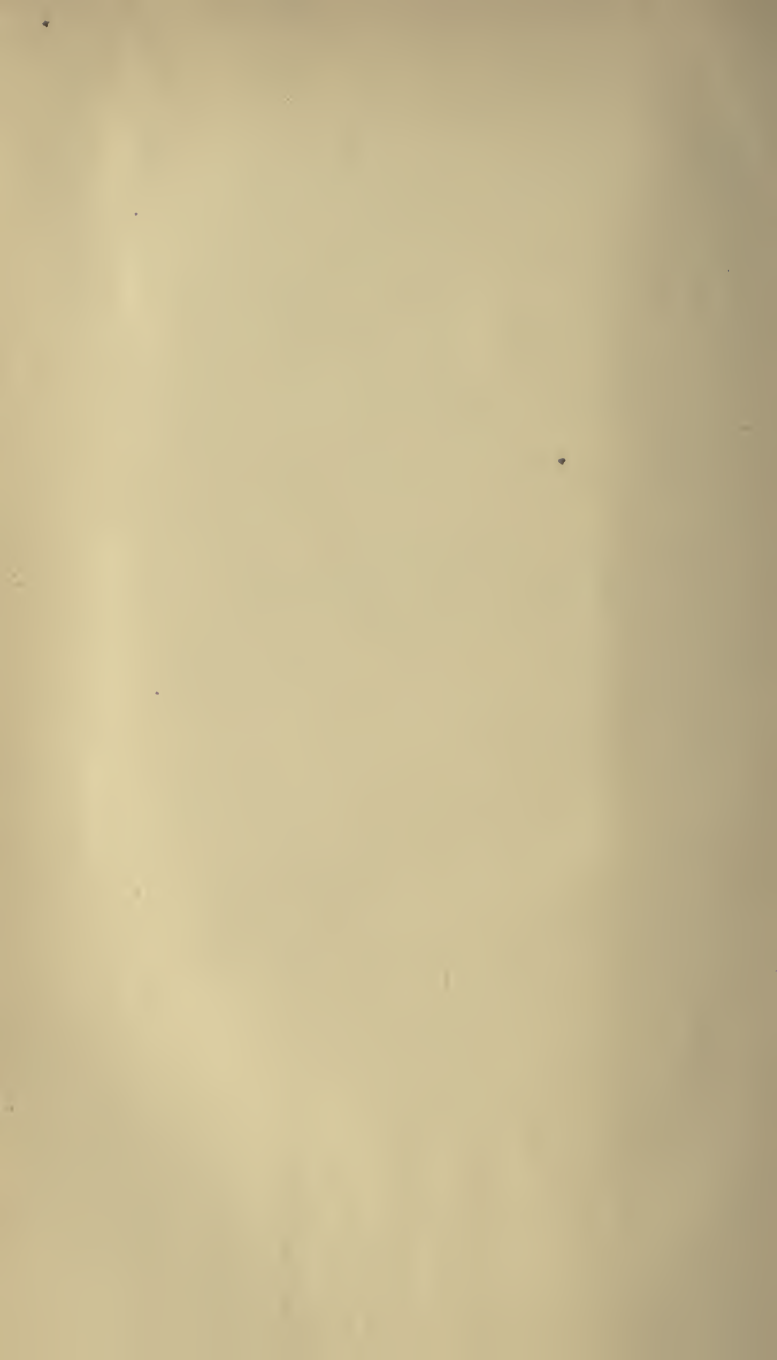
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**The Riverside Press**

*Electrotyped and printed by H. O. Houghton & Co.*

*Cambridge, Mass., U. S. A.*









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