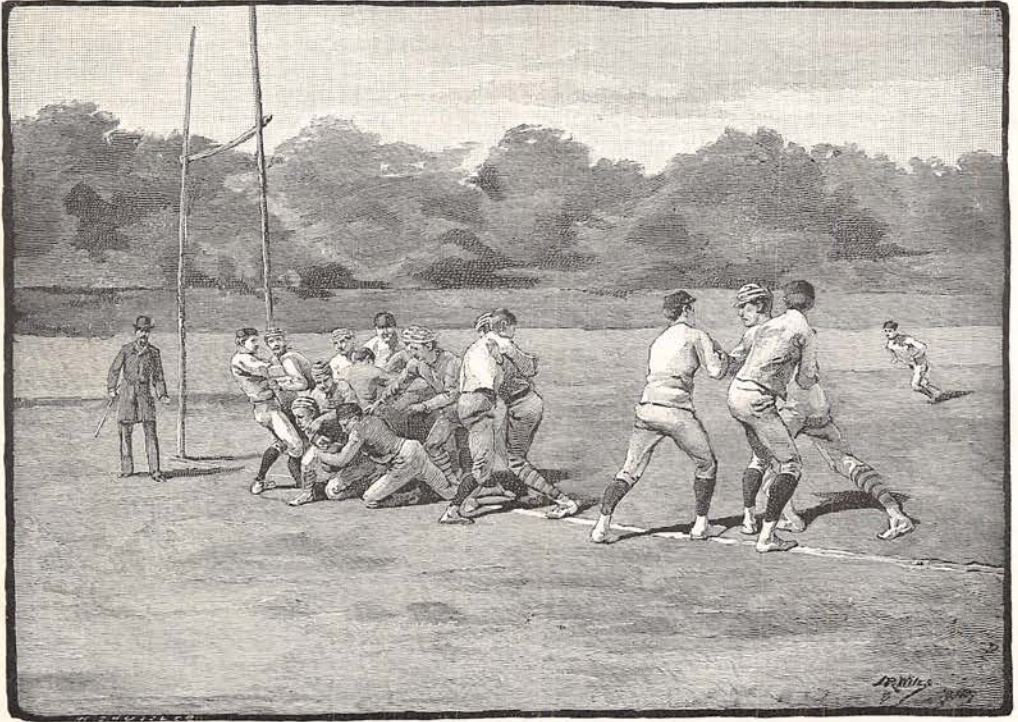


## THE AMERICAN GAME OF FOOT-BALL.



A TOUCH-DOWN.

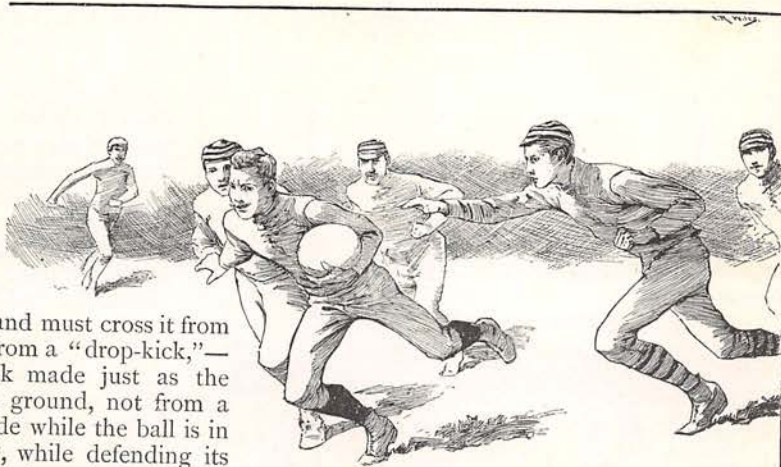


HOWEVER odd the title of this article may seem, its implications are correct and legitimate. The undergraduates of American colleges, taking the so-called Rugby game of foot-ball, have developed it into a game differing in many of its phases from any of its English prototypes. There were already differences in the game in its primitive home. Kicking the ball was, of course, common to all; but there was, further, the so-called Rugby game, whose leading feature, speaking roughly, was that the player might run with the ball; there was the Association game, in which, speaking as roughly, the player might "charge," that is, run against, an opponent and might not run with the ball; and there were a dozen other variants of the game. The peculiar feature of the Rugby game was the "scrummage," of which more will be said farther on; and American players, working out the scrummage into a new form, have

changed the possibilities of the game very greatly, and have made it, in addition to its individual opportunities for the exhibition of skill, one of the most scientific of outdoor games in its "team-playing," or management of the entire side as one body. It would be impossible, within the limits of this article, to enter into a technical explanation of the finer points of this team-play, or to give a minute statement of the rules of the game; all that can be hoped for is to give him who witnesses the American game some general knowledge of it, so that he may follow it with intelligence and enjoyment.

On entering the ground and securing his post of observation, the spectator will see before him a field 330 feet long and 160 feet wide. The shorter line is the "goal-line." Across the field, at intervals of five yards, are white lines parallel to the goal-lines; these are meant to guide the umpire in the imposition of penalties for fouls, off-side playing, or delaying the game, the penalty being commonly a loss of five yards by the side which

is in fault. In the middle of each goal-line is the "goal," two upright posts  $18\frac{1}{2}$  feet apart with a cross-bar 10 feet from the ground. In order to score a goal, the ball must pass between the uprights and over the cross-bar, and must cross it from a "place-kick," or from a "drop-kick,"—that is, from a kick made just as the ball is leaving the ground, not from a "punt," a kick made while the ball is in the air. Each side, while defending its own goal, necessarily faces the goal of its opponents, and its object is to advance the ball, by running with it or by kicking it, toward its opponents' goal-line, to plant the ball on the ground on the other side of the opponents' goal-line, which constitutes a "touch-down" and scores four points in the game, and to kick the ball over the cross-bar of the opponents' goal or force the opponents to make a "safety" touch-down in their own territory. When a touch-down is made, the successful



RUNNING WITH THE BALL.

side takes the ball any distance it wishes straight out into the field, its opponents remaining behind their goal-line until the ball is kicked. One man, lying on the ground, holds the ball in proper position; another, when the ball is dropped to the ground, kicks it; if the ball goes over the cross-bar, it counts two points in addition to the four points for the touch-down, and, if the goal is missed, it counts nothing. A touch-down and a successful goal thus count together six points; a goal kicked from the field, without a previous touch-down, counts five points; and a "safety" touch-down counts two points against the side which makes it.

The feature in this process of advancing the ball which is most difficult for even the practiced eye to follow, and which will probably always remain a profound mystery to the unskillful, is the prohibition of "off-side playing." The general principle, however, is not difficult of comprehension: it is merely that no player has legal rights when he is between the ball and his opponents' goal; he is then "off-side" until the ball has touched an opponent, or one of his own side carries the ball ahead of him or runs in front of him, having touched the ball while behind him. So long as he is "off-side," a player must not interfere with the ball or with his opponents. The players of both sides are so continually on- and off-side that it is hardly possible to follow the process. A line of men comes charging down the field: the ball is kicked back over their heads, and they are all technically off-side. In an instant the ball is kicked back again, and they are all on-side again and entitled to play, since the ball has touched one of their opponents. The shifting is often so rapid and constant that the men themselves almost come to forget the prohibition until one of them happens to play

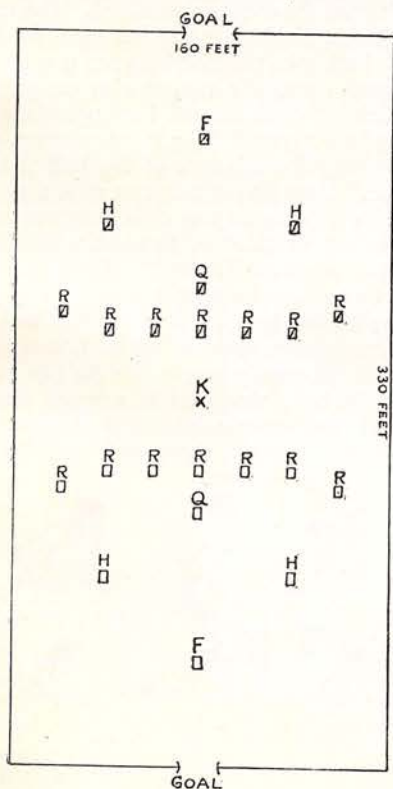
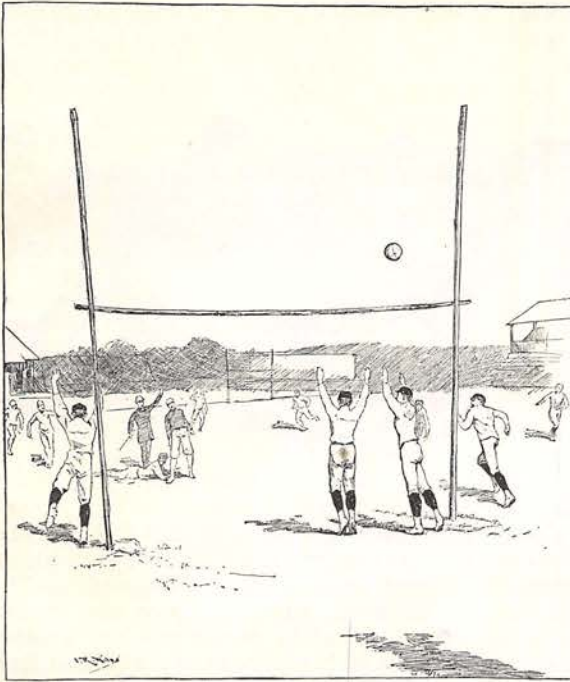


DIAGRAM OF THE FIELD.



A GOAL.

at a moment when he is off-side, and then the imposition of a penalty, the loss of five yards by his side, recalls him to a sense of the rules of the game.

"Passing" the ball, or throwing it from one to another, is another feature of the game. Hardly any combination of team-playing and individual skill is more noteworthy than the sight of a first-rate team carrying the ball down the field, each player taking his turn in running with the ball, and, when hard pressed, passing it over the head of an opponent to one of his own side, more fortunately situated, who carries it farther. Considering that the egg-shape of the ball makes it the concentrated essence of irregularity, that only the most skillful player can even hazard a guess at the direction which it will take after a bound, and that an error of but an inch in the direction of a

throw may carry the ball a dozen feet away from the place at which it was aimed, one may be pardoned for admiring the certainty with which individuals and teams make each point of play and combine them all into an organized system. Passing has also its phase of off-side playing. A "pass forward" is not allowed, and is a foul; the ball must be thrown straight across the field, parallel to the goal-line, or in any direction back of that line.

Hitherto we have been looking at the game only from the standpoint of the side which is advancing the ball. It is not to be supposed that its opponents are idly watching the ball's progress: it is their object to check the advance of the ball, and to retort by advancing it in their turn and toward their objective point,—the opposite goal. One way of doing this is by a "fair-catch," or, in base-ball language, a "fly-catch," of a kick or throw from an opponent, provided he who catches the ball makes a mark with his heel while catching, and does not move from it until the catch is admitted. The mark is then the dividing point between the two teams; both take position between it and their own goals; and the player who caught the ball kicks it back toward the opposite goal, usually by a "punt." The more common way of checking the advance of the ball is by a "tackle." Any player may run with the ball. While he is doing so, any opponent may seize him and cry "Held!" or throw him and hold him until he cries "Down!" If the tackle is made by seizing the runner above the shoulders or below the hips, it is a "foul tackle," and penalties are imposed for it. If it is a fair tackle, it effectually blocks the further progress of the ball; the game is stopped for the moment; and some means must exist for putting the ball into play again and resuming the



A FAIR-CATCH.



A FOUL TACKLE, LOW.

game. This brings us to the peculiar feature of the American game, the "scrimmage."

In the English game, the scrimmage consists in placing the ball on the ground, after which both sides crowd around it and kick indiscriminately and furiously until the ball emerges and is carried off by one of the players. The game had hardly been introduced into America when the new players saw that the English scrimmage was altogether illogical; it was certain that one or more of the players would be off-side during the process. A new form of the scrimmage was developed at once. The enforcement of the rule against off-side playing, together with the natural desire of the players to get as near as possible to the opposite goal, led to the arrangement of the two sides in parallel lines, neither being ahead of the ball; and this was the origin of "lining-up" at the beginning of the American scrimmage. The ball is placed on the ground; side A, which has the ball, forms in a line, no player being allowed to get ahead of the ball, that is, to be off-side; side B forms in a parallel line as near as convenient to the line of side A; the player in the center of A's line, the "center rush," kicks the ball backward, or "snaps it back," to the quarter-back, who "passes" it to another player; and the ball is "in play" again, side B trying to break through in pursuit of it, and side A trying to prevent this by getting into the way, any holding or striking being absolutely forbidden. The bulk of the game is thus made up of occasional kicks and free catches, and a great deal of running with the ball, tackles, and consequent scrimmages. When the ball goes outside of the side-lines, it is put into play again in much the same way as in the scrimmage. The two sides "line up" at right angles with the side-

line; a member of side A, which has the ball, standing astride the side-line, either throws the ball straight in, over the heads of the players, or, more commonly, bounds it backward to one of his own side, and the ball is in play.

The introduction of the American form of the scrimmage has quite changed the character of the game. It soon forced a reduction of the numbers engaged, from fifteen on a side to eleven, which has since been the rule. Every subsequent development of the game has made it more scientific and more difficult to play with the highest success. The game has, in fact, become a miniature game of strategy, and can best be comprehended by comparing the football-field to a battle-field, limited by the side-lines, and the respective sides to two armies, managed on military principles by the captains. Four arms of the foot-ball service have been developed, as the spectator may see on watching two teams lining-up at the beginning of a game, or at the beginning of a scrimmage. Across the field stretch the foot-ball infantry, the "rush-line," or "rushers." They are the seven heavy men of the team, but must also be agile, very fair runners, and quick in tackling. Their most powerful player is usually in the middle of the line, and is commonly known as the "center-rush": he snaps the ball back in the scrimmage. The two players on the ends of the line, the "end-rushes," stand slightly back of the main line,—in more military language, "the wings are slightly refused,"—in order to tackle any player who may succeed in passing the main line at those points. Behind the "center-rush," generally, plays the "quarter-back," answering very much to the quartermaster's department: he takes the ball from the "center-rush," in the scrimmage, and serves it out to the players back of him, who are to do the running.



A FOUL TACKLE, HIGH.



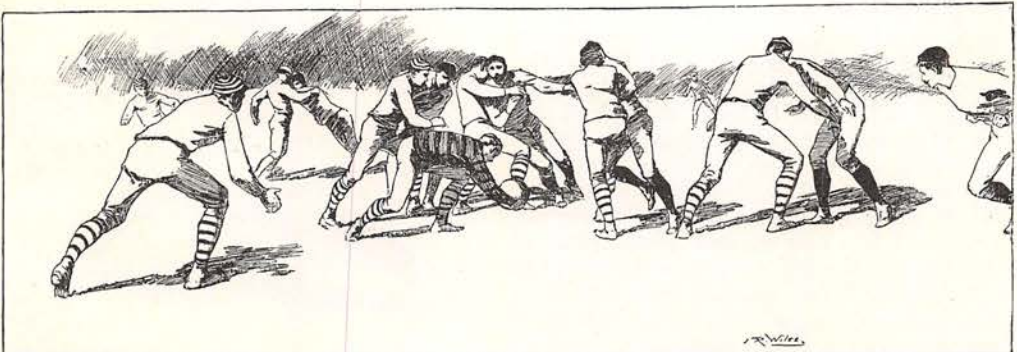
A FAIR TACKLE.

He is usually smaller than the rushers, but must be uncommonly active and clear-headed, capable of meeting very hard usage, and of occasionally making points regularly belonging to any of the other departments of the team. The Princeton and Yale quarter-backs of the past two years, Hodge and Beecher, playing quite different types of the game, are probably the best of those who have ever held the position. Behind the quarter-back, and covering the two sides of the field, are the "half-backs," the cavalry of the team. They are the runners *par excellence*: all must be runners, but these more than any of the others. They are the ones to whom the quarter-back usually passes the ball at the beginning of a scrimmage, and the one to whom it is passed either makes a straightforward dash for an opening in the enemy's line made for him by his own rush-line, or, more commonly, flanks the opposing line, having due regard to the side-lines of the field, and endeavors to carry the ball as far as possible into the enemy's territory before he is tackled and "downed." The most brilliant playing is done by the half-backs. They must be strong not only in running, but in dodging;

and it is not uncommon to see a first-rate half-back carry the ball almost or quite the full length of the field, dodging one opponent here and another there, thrown headlong again and again, but up and away before the tackle can be completed, and finally score a touch-down, while the heavier rushers, who have grasped at him and missed him, toil panting and disgusted after him in hopes of another opportunity. Farthest to the rear, and at first in front of his own goal, is the eleventh player, the "full-back." He constitutes the artillery of the team. He is to relieve a too-great pressure on his team by an opportune punt over the heads of the line, while his rushers follow the ball down the field, ready to tackle any opponent who secures the ball, cause a "down," and thus transfer the struggle to the enemy's territory.

One who gets the full force of the military nature of the American game of foot-ball will have comparatively little difficulty in following intelligently the real course of the game, even though he be quite ignorant of many of the more minute points, of the difference between a "kick-off" and a "kick-out," between a "punt-on" and a "punt-out," or between a "kick-over" and a "touch-down." He will see the real beauty of the team-play, and the individual play, skillful as it may be, will pale before it. He will be able to appreciate the real strategy with which the opposing captains handle the respective arms of their service, pitting cavalry against infantry here, scattering cavalry by infantry there, or using the artillery to search out the weak points of the opposing team by long punts into their territory. The "noise of the captains and the shouting" will take on a new significance to him, and he will no longer wonder that the American undergraduate takes such an intense interest in his own game of foot-ball.

Individual playing is done mainly by the half-backs, as has been said, and their work is that which usually brings their college's



QUARTER-BACK TAKING THE BALL.

undergraduates nearest to a state of semi-delirious enthusiasm. The best example was the game of 1885 between Princeton and Yale. Watkinson, one of the Yale half-backs, excelled in punting and in the accuracy of his drop-kicks; Lamar, one of the Princeton half-backs, and the finest player whom his college has ever put into that position, excelled in running and more especially in dodging.

to defeat; he might then, perhaps, even sympathize with the Princeton man who, when the ball was brought out for the kick at goal, covered his eyes with his hands, saying faintly to those around him, "Fellows, tell me when it's over!"

Feats like "Lamar's run" are of course the exhilarating element of the game; the solid beef and pudding, which wins a series of



THE SCRIMMAGE. HALF-BACK TAKING THE BALL.

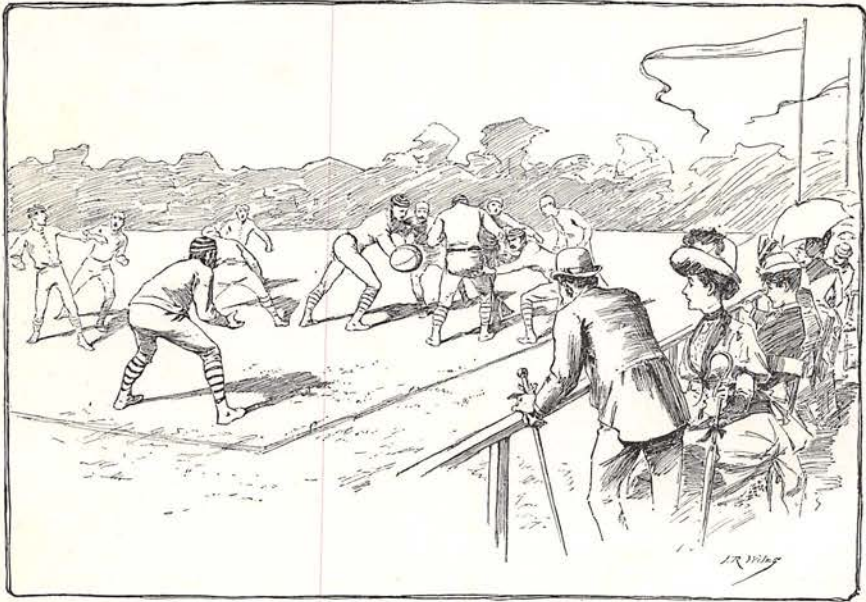
Toward the end of the first half of the game, and after half a dozen misses, Watkinson at last sent the ball flying over Princeton's goal by a drop-kick from the field, scoring five points. For the rest of the game, the two evenly matched teams struggled desperately, Princeton to score something, Yale to prevent it; and, when less than ten minutes' playing-time remained, Yale was still successful and the score was 5 to 0 in her favor. In an instant, the whole aspect of affairs was changed. One of Watkinson's long punts crossed the field diagonally, throwing the Yale line out of alignment for the moment. Lamar caught the ball while running at full speed, and went like a flash between two of the Yale rushers, entrapped one of the half-backs into missing tackle, and dodged another; and lo! the whole field was before him, without an opponent between him and the much-longed-for Yale goal. A touch-down and a goal followed; and the team which seemed assured of the game but a moment before had lost it by a score of 6 to 5. He who "cannot understand the popularity of foot-ball" should have been there to witness the frantic excitement, the cheers, the embracings, and the general delirium of those spectators who were but a moment ago resigned

games, is the team-playing; and the development of this is in the handling of the infantry, the rush-line. A good half-back of five or six years ago could, with the necessary physical characteristics, play almost as good a game now; but the rush-line of to-day would completely outwit and reduce to nullity the strongest rush-lines of the past. "Rush-line tricks" are the leading feature of the modern form of the game; against an unskilled team they are deadly, and score touch-downs and goals with bewildering rapidity. Instead of passing the ball from a scrimmage to a half-back, the quarter-back will hold it for an instant until one or another of his rush-line takes it from him and charges with it. But the clock-work precision with which the whole matter is managed, the manner in which every other player of the rush-line supports the one who has the ball and does just the work necessary to help him break the opposing rush-line, show that nothing has been left to chance. Such "rush-line tricks" are possible only through perfectly organized team-play, and an ingenious system of signals. The spectator, during the scrimmage, can hear an almost constant flow of conversation from the captain to his men, exhortations to "play hard," or "put

the ball through," or apparently superfluous information on every kind of subject connected with the game. He is really managing his team, telling them to whom the ball is to be passed next by the quarter-back and what players are to do special pieces of work connected with the play. Every sentence has its pregnant word, conventionalized to mean to the players something quite different from the meaning which the opponents will probably attach to it; and the whole system, carefully memorized and practiced for weeks, enables the captain to keep his team well in hand throughout the game. Each team has its pet system of signaling, which it fondly imagines to be undiscoverable; while the first few minutes of a "great" game are spent in studying the signals of the opposing team, to see whether they have been changed since the last season.

Under its new form, the game has taken a high place in the affections of the American

no other form of exercise. Every spectator knows that the players are in the acme of physical condition, and that they are able and more than willing to strain every muscle to the breaking point rather than allow their rivals to outscore them. Every student as well as every player knows that the playing of the team, rather than its success, will go far to measure the college's reputation for every physical characteristic which goes to make up a man, and for those psychological traits which have so great a weight on the exhibition of mere physical powers. Wesleyan and Pennsylvania have a pride in showing how well their teams can play. Harvard, though unfortunate for the last few years, has put her mark too high in the past to be willing to fall below it. Yale wants three championships at least. Princeton having no Medical School or Law School from which to draw graduate players, has a pride in showing that her undergraduates can fill the lack. College feeling, in its



OUT OF BOUNDS — PUTTING BALL INTO PLAY.

undergraduate. In the three colleges in which it is played most successfully, Yale, Harvard, and Princeton, the undergraduates would probably give up base-ball a trifle more willingly than foot-ball. There is enough in the game to stir one's pulses. The training has been a long period of self-surrender and of self-denial, and it has enabled the players to show courage, constancy, an intelligent willingness to meet and defeat physical dangers, and an ability to think connectedly in the presence of physical dangers, to an extent offered by

most intense form, permeates the whole season, and is not confined to a twenty minutes' dash for victory or a tedious procession. Yet one who played the game in the past, and likes it not a whit the less in the present, must feel regret in seeing the general disposition to consider the game one which is objectionable as a game for students who are gentlemen. The criticisms upon it have run in two general lines, though they have branched out into many different phases. They are, first, the innate roughness of the game, and

the likelihood of severe accident, or even death, from it; and, second, its tendency to degenerate into brutality and personal combat, from the personal contact between the players, which is an inevitable feature of it.

The first point has its true and its false side. The game is as safe as any outdoor game can well be, provided it is played with the careful preparation and training which are the rule in the larger colleges; it is a dangerous and unfit game when men undertake to play it without such preparation and training. In the season of last year, two fatal accidents were reported; both occurred in colleges which were attempting to play the game as it is played by the leading teams, without any of the preparation which they find an essential. The writer, who has been in the habit of attending the regular games of the college with which he is connected, has felt under obligations to be equally consistent in attending the daily practice games of the men, in order to watch the preliminary training; and he must confess to a great respect for the good sense and good management of the undergraduates who have the matter in charge. The "University team" is selected provisionally; it is pitted daily against a second, or "scrub," team of somewhat larger numbers; both teams are kept under careful training and supervision; the playing is made short and as gentle as possible at first, until the men begin to become "hard"; the playing is then gradually lengthened and made more severe, as the men become able to endure it; and, by the time the season comes to its last game, the players are able to endure with impunity treatment which would be dangerous to men who are "soft," or out of condition. After the first few weeks are over, and serious playing has begun, men who have not yet played are not encouraged, or, in extreme cases, even allowed, to play on the "scrub" team; the managers think it inadvisable to run any risks. The players are not only brought to a point of physical condition which makes it a pleasure to watch them; they are taught how to fall, when a fall is inevitable, in such a way as to retain control of the ball without hazarding a broken bone or a dislocation. When the closing games come on, the player can take what seems to the spectator a frightful fall not only without a bruise, but so skillfully that it is regularly necessary for his opponent to "hold him down" lest he rebound and take to his

heels again. The preliminary practice games can hardly be more severe elsewhere than at Princeton; and yet the writer has never seen a serious accident occur there. An accident may occur, of course, and will give no warn-

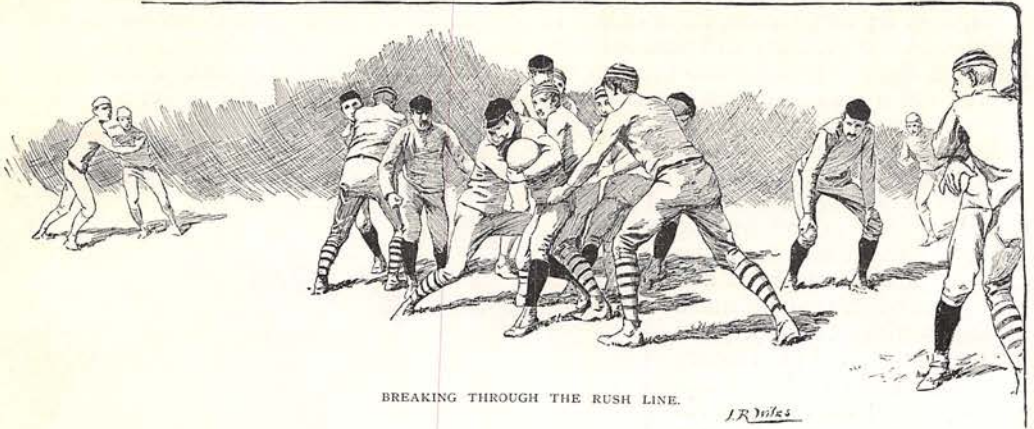


DROPPING ON THE BALL.

ing of its coming, but its coming has been put as far as possible out of the range of probability. But if men in other colleges wish to play foot-ball, as should be the case, they must not ignore the systematic course of preparation, take the final playing of a well-trained team as a model, and attempt to imitate it. It is from such folly that the recurring accidents in foot-ball come. With good physical condition in the players, the requisite training, and suitable grounds, the game is not only one of the best of outdoor sports, but one of the safest.

The asserted tendency of the game to degenerate into personal combat is at least as serious a question; and it has much the same answer. The writer's observation has led him to believe that, in nine cases out of ten, a general tendency to indulge in striking with the fist is the result of conscious inferiority. When a team finds itself constantly outwitted by the team-play of its opponents, it is apt to become exasperated and to be tempted into striking; while the captain who is managing his team as a whole would be annoyed and interfered with by a disposition on the part of any of his men to abandon their functions in his plans and turn to a personal assault on the opponents. From this point of view, the natural development of the game into team-playing is itself a corrective to any tendency to blows; a successful team can no longer afford to indulge in individual combat. The belief is confirmed by the testimony of players. They say that difficulties of this sort come only in the minor games; and that, in the





BREAKING THROUGH THE RUSH LINE.

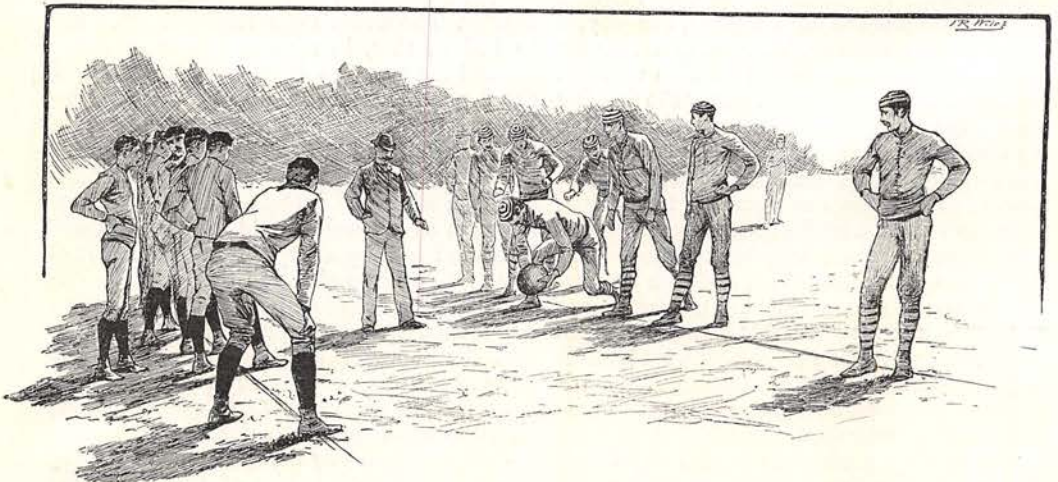
J.R. Wilson

games with the stronger teams, toward the end of the season, where the teams are played strictly as units, the tendency to strike is very far less and may generally be disregarded.

An influence of a somewhat higher moral nature is the fact that the intensity of the later competition has made every prominent football player known to his rivals in other colleges. They canvass all his characteristics, his methods of play, and their fair or foul character. He knows that he is to meet them in after life, and is to leave a reputation among his contemporaries, not only in his own college, but in other colleges. He is not over-anxious to make that reputation one for foul dealing, ugly temper, and brutality; and the natural results of this better acquaintance are telling more for good every year. Still, it must always be admitted that the game offers more provocatives to a naturally bad temper than any other outdoor sport. The credit of those who learn to undergo such discipline and to con-

trol their tempers under such provocatives should be the greater; but an artificial restriction may be of service even to them. Until this season every umpire has been much restrained from inflicting the penalties prescribed by the rules, from the fact that the undergraduates of the injured college would ascribe a defeat to him. It is for this reason that the effort has been made, with the concurrence of the undergraduates themselves, to transfer the appointment of such umpires to a graduate committee, so that they will be removed from all sense of responsibility to the undergraduates.

Even in past years, very far the most of the striking has been quite imaginary. The player who has the ball is permitted to thrust off any one who attempts to tackle him; but such "warding-off" must be done with the open hand only. The reporter or spectator who sees a stalwart player running down the field, one arm holding the foot-ball,



LINING UP.

while the other is moving with the rapidity of a steam-engine's piston toward and from an opponent, asks no further testimony than "that of his senses" that this is another scandalous case of "slugging," as striking has come to be called. If he should look a little closer, he would see that the "striker's" hand was open and the fingers up, so as to make any real striking impossible. Again, at the beginning of a scrimmage, the proximity of the two lines gives an appearance of constant striking. One team is on a line with the ball; the other is parallel to the first, at such distance as pleases it. Theoretically each side has a right to be on a line with the ball, so that the line between the two sides ought to be geometrical, or imaginary. In practice, however, only the side which has the ball can play on an exact line with it, but the other side naturally presses as close as possible to the theoretical dividing line. Until the ball is snapped back, the side which has the ball is continually thrusting its opponents back, but the action is precisely the same as in "warding-off." In either case, the spectator who wishes to know whether there is real striking or not must watch *the hand*, and not the motion of the arm, or he may do extreme injustice to young men who are undergoing successfully a severe trial of temper, and overcoming temptations which most of the spectators could not endure, and who deserve credit for it.

The real evil of the game is the betting. It is not true that the number of those who bet is large; and it is true that it is far more the graduates than the undergraduates who bet; but it must be admitted that the fact of the betting is demoralizing, both to those who bet and to the team. It is said by some that a college should not concern itself with the question whether men bet on intercollegiate games or not. It is the name of the college which brings the spectators, and the opportunities for and temptations to betting; and the writer must admit the right of the college to stop the use of its name for any such purpose. He would not be understood, however, as wishing to see the college exercise this right, and thus lose the great benefits of intercollegiate athletics. He would far prefer to ground an appeal to the undergraduates to put down betting on the purely material side of the good of the game,—partly from the fact that, if the game becomes a mere medium for betting, it will be a public nuisance, and ought to be suppressed; and partly from its effects on the team and its playing.

It is not the fault of the college periodicals that there is any betting among undergraduates; their influence has been cast strongly and persistently against the whole vicious system.

Their editors are usually among the most judicious of the undergraduates, and they know the dangers which surround the game at present, and have been persistent in warning students against this particular evil of the game. It is to their influence that we have most reason to look with hope for a development of right feeling on this point among undergraduates; and it is only from undergraduates that any strong influence can be brought to bear upon graduates.

Three colleges, Princeton, Yale, and Harvard, are the leading foot-ball institutions at present. With them, the whole foot-ball season, from the beginning of the college year until Thanksgiving Day, is crowded with foot-ball games,—the intercollegiate matches, class games, games between eating and other clubs and between societies. The man who does not "kick" to some extent in the course of the season is quite an exception. Every man in college is, or considers himself, a competent critic of the captain's methods; and every step in the training of the team and the development of its style of play for the season is watched with the keenest scrutiny, and, in its turn, has its influence on the minor games. All this is the chief argument for intercollegiate athletics, in that they oust for the time the "forbidden and abhorrent forces" which are always lying in wait for the recreations of college students, and carry the interest off into the direction of healthy, outdoor sports. From this point of view, no game can claim a higher place than the American game of foot-ball. Not every man can own a shell; and the percentage of cost per man to the healthy results of a boat-race would startle any one who should attempt to figure it up. But any twenty-two men who can combine to own a foot-ball, and to procure a place in which to play, have a whole season of sound and attractive exercise in this one "bag of wind." Let them once become interested in the game, and their spare time goes to it; they will have none left for demoralizing amusements. Cases of serious discipline are more rare during the foot-ball season than in any other part of the college year; and, so far as the writer's observation has gone, the most strenuous supporters of the game among college faculties are those who have most to do with college discipline.

But how about those who spend more time in such amusements than they can really spare? This question is asked more often than any other; and those who ask it do not seem to recognize the injustice to the modern college faculties which is implied in it. The development of the American college is not in a direction which makes the implications

of the question possible. It is less possible every year for a man to waste his time, and yet remain in college. The increase of numbers alone has made the process of "weeding out" incompetent or lazy men in freshman year more of a possibility, and more of a feature in college life; and the influence of this process lasts throughout the course. The "high-class man" who gets on a football team is thereby compelled to organize his time more carefully, to cut off every other drain upon it, and to give spare time to nothing else; the man of less ability is compelled to follow a course as nearly parallel as his ingenuity will enable him to take; and the effects are somewhat like those which high taxation often has on a people, in bringing out more work than would be the case without it. The organization of athletics has a parallel effect. The undergraduate managers of a successful foot-ball team now form a strong organization, which watches the course of promising players with a care which a college professor is not always in a position to give; and it will go to almost any lengths of pressure upon a player rather than allow him to forfeit his place in college through waste of time. The hopelessly athletic student thus gets less mercy every year; and the influences which college athletic organizations bring to bear upon such students, the ingenious expedients by which they extort study from men who do not incline to study, are among the most instructive features of college life, to those who know of them. They fail again and again, of course; but they do a work to which any other agency is incompetent.

The game has found little favor at the South, but almost every Northern college now plays it more or less. The Intercollegiate Foot Ball Association, founded in 1876, consists of the three colleges named above, Wesleyan University, and the University of Pennsylvania. Each team plays one game with each of the other four teams during the season, the last game falling to the two teams which stood highest during the previous season. For the past few years these two teams have regularly been those of Yale and Princeton; and these two are to be the contestants this year. This is always the great game of

the year; the two teams come to it, usually, with an unbroken record of victories over all their other opponents; and the result of the game is to decide the championship for the coming year.

No prudent man will ever venture into the question of the past championship records of the two leading opponents. The championship rules of the Association have been so loose and unsystematic, and have offered so many opportunities for disputes, that the newspaper statements of the championships of past years are quite worthless. Most of the opportunities for dispute seem now to have been covered, and it is to be hoped that the present year will see a clear and undisputed victory for one side or for the other.

It would be far easier to write a "vivid" description of this final game than of all the boat-races that ever were rowed; the excitement is more prolonged; the ups and downs of the game are constant and never to be foreseen; and the points of individual and team playing are vastly more numerous, more perceptible, and more easily apprehended. The enormous crowd, the coaches filled with men and horns, the masses and shades of color among the spectators, the perpetual roar of cheers, including the peculiar slogans of almost all the Eastern colleges, combine to make up a spectacle such as no other intercollegiate game can offer; while the instant response of the spectators to every shifting phase of the play shows that a very large number of them have enjoyed the advantage of a good foot-ball training in the past. But, to him who really likes the game, and who understands its possible influence on the development of Americans, the excitement, the cheers, the blowing of horns, and the ebb and flow of the game, count for little. There is, instead of them, a feeling of thankfulness for the antecedent process of which all this is only a symptom, and a moving force for the coming year; a satisfaction in knowing that this outdoor game is doing for our college-bred men, in a more peaceful way, what the experiences of war did for so many of their predecessors in 1861-65, in its inculcation of the lesson that bad temper is an element quite foreign to open, manly contest.

*Alexander Johnston.*

