

Foot-Ball in our Colleges.

REPORTS in my possession from sixty-seven institutions of learning, scattered over thirty-seven States of the Union, give much interesting information concerning the influence of foot-ball upon class standing and individual development, physical, mental, and moral. These reports originated in the discussion which arose last year as to the wisdom of permitting match games of foot-ball between the cadets of Annapolis and West Point. For them I am indebted to the courtesy of the officers of the army and navy detailed under an act of Congress to furnish military instruction to the educational institutions authorized to receive it. These gentlemen are admirably fitted to form a sound opinion as to the influence of athletic pursuits upon college training; they appreciate the importance of physical development; and they are sufficiently independent of the several institutions with which they are connected to be unbiased by local sentiment.

As a general conclusion from these reports, it would appear that foot-ball holds chief place among athletic games for its influence in developing the qualities especially required in an officer of the army or navy—qualities which it is at the same time well for every young man to cultivate. One officer says: "Foot-ball requires preservation of temper under trying circumstances, subordination of individuality to united work, prompt decision and action in the struggle, and tactical and strategical combinations for the accomplishment of the desired end by united force or systematic effort."

Foot-ball gives an outlet for the superabundant animal spirits which might otherwise find expression in the usual college pranks. It compels its devotees to keep good hours, to observe strict rules of temperance in diet and drink, to refrain from the use of tobacco, to select the most nourishing food, and to be systematic with cold baths, rubbing, and healthy exercise. It teaches, moreover, what American youth most need to learn—prompt and exact obedience to instructions. "I am on the foot-ball team" was the explanation given by an undergraduate when he was asked as to the abandonment of injurious habits, and from Harvard comes the report of one gilded youth who was permitted to remain at the college after his day of probation had passed, in view of the fact that he had joined the foot-ball team.

"So far as my observation goes," writes an officer who has done duty at three military schools, "foot-ball in no way interferes with academic work. It has rather the opposite effect, as the training exercises a restraining influence, and keeps down to steady, hard work a class of boys whose animal spirits could scarcely be held in constant check in any other way. Aside from hygienic considerations, there is mental stimulus in solving the many intricate problems that arise in playing the game, and foot-ball is eminently calculated to determine what sort of stuff a boy is made of." In harmony with this, another says: "The mind is aroused, enthusiasm is awakened, and all the players are better for it. The valuable lessons of courage and self-control, the necessity for concerted action, and the ability to stand hammering and yet keep one's head, which play at foot-ball teaches, will offset any temporary loss of study of text-books."

"The effect upon good students seems to be beneficial," reports St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland, "except perhaps for certain limited periods of time for visits. As to poor students, who do not study anyhow, they are perhaps no worse for it. Upon the whole, we find that the students who indulge in athletics are the best students, and in this respect foot-ball benefits a school. It is the opinion here that we had better discipline, better studying, better learning, and better health for athletics, and for foot-ball, which is one of the chief forms of athletics."

There is no military professor at Harvard, but through other sources we are informed that at that institution "what the young men lose in marks they more than gain in increased mental power and brightness; and it is a noticeable fact that the men devoted to athletics the past two years have stood exceptionally well in their classes. They are now obliged to maintain a certain average or be dropped from their class, and from athletics too; so that with less time at their disposal they are bound to work with diligence to keep their places. The training is strict here, and no lapses are allowed."

Yale reports that, "in the opinion of most of the professors, during the term in which foot-ball practice is active the academic work of the foot-ball teams is of little account. One gentleman—a graduate of some years back—a foot-ball player, and quite a noted tennis player, said he believed foot-ball was a great help to class standing, because it required regular habits during the training season, and many men continued them throughout the year to their manifest advantage." "Nearly every man's opinion," this correspondent adds, "is biased by his fondness for the game, and the love for athletics inherent in every strong, healthy man."

At Perdue University, Lafayette, Indiana, report says "the foot-ball men are men of prominence in the university, and are to a certain extent looked up to; and their regular lives, diet, and discipline are favorable to their own work, and their example has a favorable influence on others."

A calculation made by the professor of physical culture and hygiene at Cornell shows that the men on the intercollegiate athletic teams have a standing 1.2 per cent. better than the average of the whole college.

The general expression of opinion from the great majority of the colleges is in accord with these quotations, which are selected only because they elaborate somewhat the ideas which are more briefly expressed in most of the letters referred to.

As to physical injuries, there are reports of abundant minor mishaps,—sprains, strains, etc., some broken ribs, collar-bones, and fingers, and even noses,—but few permanent injuries are reported among the thousands of foot-ball players heard from. A California student had his neck broken, but I have heard of at least three similar accidents in the families of my friends, resulting from gymnasium practice—two in one family. At Yale one young man has sacrificed an eye to his enthusiasm for foot-ball, and at Cornell one was laid up for a year as the result of injury to his kidneys, following a blow upon the back. From two other institutions come reports of serious injuries, the nature of which is not specified. The knees seem to be the most vulnerable part, and some of the accidents suggest the necessity

for avoiding the use of hard or frozen ground in playing the game. It is doubtful whether the percentage of accidents among undergraduates would lessen were foot-ball forbidden. Nature will exact her tribute in physical injuries for her bestowal of surplus energy upon the young, and I have known one young man to break an arm three times in jumping over horse-posts. The physical dangers, such as they are, could be greatly lessened by a proper regulation of the game. It should be recognized as a part of the college curriculum, to the extent at least of encouraging every student to participate in it, grading the players according to their several abilities. It is found that systematic training reduces the risk from injuries. If foot-ball is beneficial, as would appear to be the case, the benefit should be extended to all students alike. As it is now, those who most need the exercise are debarred from it by the natural disposition to exclude all but the sturdier men. At Annapolis and West Point physical training is an essential part of the course, and it should be so in every college. It will be so when we have wholly escaped the influence of the false doctrine that the body is the instrument of Satan, and must be bound in fetters as a preliminary to intellectual and spiritual development.

William Conant Church.

American Militarism.

For what can war but endless war still breed?

—MILTON.

LIKE other agues that shake the body politic, militarism is intermittent. After our civil war a chill set in. Men had had enough soldiering for one generation. Now again a rising temperature bespeaks a strong accession of military fever. Military parades and processions are the rage; Boston school-boys want to be supplied with muskets for military drill; Congress is besieged with petitions clamoring for military or naval appropriations; an ex-ambassador avers that Columbia's only safety consists in the disbursement of our "debauching national surplus" on ironclads and big guns; importunate rival cities, each badly smitten with invasion panic, are to be appeased only by the expenditure of untold millions in forts and munitions of war. The popular cry echoes in the newspapers, and even reëchoes in the columns of THE CENTURY.

However opinions may differ as to the Christian or non-Christian character of war, it is notorious that the Church has unfailingly blessed the banners, and shared the spoils, of militarism. It ever speaks as spoke Etruria's "thirty chosen prophets" to Lars Porsena:

Go, and return in glory
To Clusium's royal dome;
And hang round Nurscia's altars
The golden shields of Rome.

Were the question of war's justifiability to be decided on the field of religious controversy, the Quaker, with Scriptural sling and stone, would find it an easy task to shatter the huge Goliath of militarism. But, keeping outside the pale of biblical polemics, militarism is not only anachronistic, but utterly opposed to the genius of America. On this continent there should be no contest between militarism and industrialism. A practical people should have not a moment's hesita-

tion in choosing between systems so radically opposed. As a matter of fact, our choice was made, and our creed formulated, by Washington in his farewell address, September 17, 1796. "Overgrown military establishments are, under any form of government, inauspicious to liberty, and are particularly hostile to republican liberty." Our national policy has been, is, and ever should be, in accordance with that declaration, a consistent policy of industrialism.

Against the proud record of its sway set a picture of the results of its opposite—militarism. An example of it is ready to hand in Russia under its present Czar. Says Nicanor, archbishop of Odessa:

Here in our own homes, here on Russian soil, conquered by Russian blood, we stand *not at the head, but at the tail; not above, but beneath all other races and peoples.*

This is what militarism has done for the most aggressive nation the world knows. Is that the development desired by Americans?

Russia may plead that "manifest destiny" requires of her this temporary sacrifice to militarism. A destiny a hundred-fold more manifest peremptorily forbids America to enter a career so degrading. War has ceased to be a needful or a beneficent factor in human development. The race is no longer to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. Brawn contends unavailingly against machine-aided brain. The more vigorous the man, the ampler the target. Cœur de Lion falls by the bullet of Bottom, the weaver. The physically fittest no longer survives, unless the synonym for fittest be scrawniest. Nor is race renewal by intermarriage any longer promoted by war. Travel and commerce are now the more effective agents. Human evolution is to be compassed far more rapidly in the future by psychical force than in the past by physical. And no people should more gladly welcome the fact than Americans; none more readily adopt a policy in harmony therewith.

Surely if there be one particular in which the New World may fulfil its mission as enlightener of the nations, it is in the avoidance of that thrice-accursed incubus of militarism under which the Old World despairingly groans. An aggressive jingoism may muster its millions under the specious pretext of home defense. America knows no aspirations for other worlds to conquer, and a course of even-handed justice will be the best and only defense needed by the republic. The spirit of the Monroe doctrine demands that this continent be kept free from the pernicious feudal system, and other old rags of European impolicy. Feudal, as an adjective, may smack of romance and chivalry; but the system of eternal feud has been, is, and will be, an unceasing curse to all Europe. Even there education has rung its knell. A heptarchy no longer divides England; a hundred petty principalities have merged in the German empire, the factions of rival states no more distract a united Italy. Education and enlightenment will widen the bonds of brotherhood, and realize Victor Hugo's vision of the United States of Europe.

Moreover, new methods are dawning on mankind. Were there no other possible means of obtaining equitable treatment than by recourse to arms, an extension of our naval and military systems might be salutary. Such, happily, is by no means the case. A method at