

if the glimmer of a gold medal or a silver cup increases his desire to touch the goal.

Of course there is a prejudice, confined for the most part to overfond mothers and timorous maiden aunts, against the athletic club as a physical educator. Mr. Wilkie Collins's *Man and Wife*, with its shocking picture of the breaking down of Mr. Geoffrey Delamayne, has frightened many excellent old ladies, and they are likewise troubled with visions of brutal trainers and unmanly associates—"strange gentlemen" like those who disturbed the peace of the Countess, *nee* Kilmansegg, and who were

"in the fancy line; And they fancied spirits instead of wine; And they called her lap-dog Venus."

So far as the athletic-club system of New York is concerned, this is a groundless prejudice indeed. Now and then, perhaps, vaulting ambition gets a fall, or a sprain, or a strain; but a young man is likelier to be a sound young man, morally and physically, in a club than he is out of it. Physical training is, in a negative way, moral exercise. The man who is in training must needs keep early hours, be wary of the flowing bowl, and generally lead a sober and temperate life. He is under the charge of a professional trainer, who will see that he does not overwork himself. The collective eye of the club is on him. It watches him to note his special capacity, to find out what he can do best. Then he is encouraged to judicious endeavor. If he undertakes to represent his club at the general games, it is of importance to every member that he shall be in the best condition to sustain its honor. His associates are young men of from eighteen to twenty-five, with a few old veterans, who give a leaven of solid wisdom to the crude mass of youthful enthusiasm. These young men are clerks, lawyers, and the like; the majority of them Americans; the others principally Germans and Irish of the better sort.

No, the young men need come to no harm in this company; and he may choose for himself among what class or clan of amateur athletics he will take his chosen form of exercise. The list is large enough.

At the top should stand, by right of seniority, the New York Athletic Club. Organized in 1868, it is now a gray-headed Nestor among the younger generation of clubs. It has laid down its laurels on the banks of Harlem Creek, and leaves its juniors to fight for medals, cups, and championships. There is an atmosphere of quiet and exclusive respectability about its neat, well-arranged club-house and spacious grounds on the Mott Haven side of the Harlem. It seems altogether too comfortable and conservative a club ever to have been the radical pioneer of amateur athletics, with traditions of poor little games, ill attended, and wholly despised and neglected by conservative and slothful New-Yorkers. But Mr. W. B. Curtis and Mr. H. E. Buermeyer, the founders of the club, are on hand to-day to tell the tale of the old days in the little patch of ground on this side of the river, still active members of the club, and familiar figures at all athletic meetings.

The N. Y. A. C. originates most of the laws which bind the National Association of Amateur Athletes of America, a mighty league which holds its legislative and executive sessions at the spring games, on the first Wednesday in May. It will cost the young man who is properly introduced ten dollars for an admission fee and twenty-five dollars for yearly dues to become a member of this club, and for this he will soon be able to invite his friends to the handsomest club-house and one of the best gymnasiums in the country; these, moreover, are to be within the city limits.

The New York represents Sybaris among the clubs of the city, and the Manhattan may be called Sparta. The Manhattan Club pits an active present against an honored past. It was organized in November, 1877, and got to work early in the following year with just a score of members. It has now about 175, and the number increases with a healthy growth.

The Manhattan holds the championship emblem, and it does more than any other organization to keep the Athletic ball rolling. It has two "grounds"—one place at Fifty-sixth Street and Eighth Avenue, and another on the same thoroughfare, exactly one mile and a half to the north, at Eighty-sixth Street. The latter is, or will be when it is finished, the largest and best of its sort. It covers a whole block, has space for base-ball, foot-ball, lacrosse, and lawn tennis, a quarter-mile track for running and bicycling, and a shady, airy grand stand, where the lasses may sit at the games and watch their favored lads in the red-diamond-decked suits of white. If you are seeking luxury and recreation only, you should join the New York. If you want exercise for health's sake, or fame as runner, a vaulter, or a heaver of heavy weights, the Manhattan is your club, for the Manhattans are an ambitious lot. They have heaped up a majority score of individual championships, and their native land is too small to contain their ambition. They send teams to try the muscles of the hardy Kanucks, and they sent the famous Myers to England to drown the roar of the British lion in the whoop of the American eagle. To cover the expenses of this patriotic venture they got up a series of games at the Madison Square Garden, where Charles Rowell gave for their benefit an exhibition of the style of running which gave him for years the title of "the unconquered."

And by-the-way, Alcides Urban, if you think that a huge frame is necessary to a good athlete, it were well for you to look at those two men. Mr. L. E. Myers's weight varies from one hun-

dred and ten to one hundred and twenty pounds, and the "great" Rowell is a little fellow of Napoleonic build, with nothing big about him save his legs.

"Ow much do you think my chest measures?" he asked of me.

"About forty inches, I suppose, when you are in training."

"Thirty-five inches," said the champion. He was the champion then.

And as to Myers, the champion "sprint," or short distance runner, he is a walking—nay, a running—plea for amateur athletics, and he will deliver a little sermon on the subject if you choose to seek him, lounging of a summer evening about the vast grounds at Eighty-sixth Street and Eighth Avenue.

Oh no, Alcides, this isn't at all what your dear aunt Cassandra thinks of when she hears the word "athlete"—the prize-fighting, race-selling, bullying, swaggering "professional." This is a good-looking, gentlemanly young skeleton of twenty five. His eyes, his teeth, his smile, are bright; his skin—the costume gives great opportunities for observation—is bright and brown. Finger and thumb of a "7 cadet's" glove would girt his slender angle; but you notice that all his bones are light; that his hand is small, his instep high; that he carries himself gracefully; that his muscles play supple, clean, and quick under his thin skin. This is fine stock, not feeble. This is your amateur athlete.

"Yes," he says, with a smile, "it's very exasperating. There are people who will persist in classing amateur athletes with professionals. They ask me if I can outrun Rowell!"

If Mr. Myers were to run one hundred yards in a public race with Mr. Rowell, Mr. Myers might put himself out of amateurdom forever.

"They can't understand that money makes all the difference between the two classes. These professionals make a business of sport. But there is nothing mercenary in an amateur's ambition. He values his medals and cups not for the gold or silver in them, but for the achievements which they represent. We try to make our clubs fit for gentlemen, and I think we succeed. We are thoroughly democratic; we don't care for a man's wealth or social position, but we exact of him decent and courteous behavior and unquestionable character. Why, we have all sorts of people in this club—mostly clerks and young business men, but everybody else, too—lawyers, doctors, journalists, brokers—I don't know. They all seem to get along well together."

"All great athletes? Oh no. Many join the club only for their health—to get a bit of exercise. Awkward for them coming among trained men! No, indeed. Why, the old hands encourage them—help them on—give them advice. We want to make everything pleasant here, naturally."

"Yes, I was always fond of sport, and as a child I danced a good deal. That, I think, limbered up my legs. Besides, I've got these; they are muscles, and they help me to run."

And he exhibits a pair of abnormal trunk handles, one on each hip, bulging out his running breeches.

"No, sir, no one else has 'em. That's the only pair in the world. Well, when I began as an amateur, I was in very bad health, apparently in the first stages of consumption. No one thought I would live. I was broken down, sickly, weak. But I had made up my mind that there was only one way to get back health—through exercise. So I ran and jumped and parred and put the shot, though for a while the least exertion made me very sick, and—well, here I am. Pretty sound for a man who was at death's door a few years ago, eh? Not much consumption here!"

And he inflates a healthy chest, small, but sound.

"Exercise now? Well, fifteen minutes a day would cover all the time I spend in active exercise. I just come up here, on pleasant summer evenings, and amuse myself running or throwing weights with the rest of the boys, and when I am tired I stop."

"Training? I never trained but twice, and both times disagreed with me. I eat and drink just as any reasonable man should, avoiding simply what is unwholesome—what one knows to be bad for him. I don't deny myself anything good, so long as it doesn't hurt me. But I don't smoke—and you oughtn't to either."

Mr. H. G. Crickmore is the great "Kiik" of the sporting world. "I know more about horses than about humans," he said to me the other day; "but I have watched those boys. I think they would do well to go in for easy, steady, long-distant running rather than for sprinting and that sort of violent exercise. But they are doing a great work, as all men are who try to build up the body, to increase their physical strength, and to raise the general standard of health. It is a work that will show in their children and in their grandchildren—in a race of healthier and stronger men and women."

And your choice lies not only between two athletic clubs. There are fear small and active associations in this city, which exist at present mainly to produce good runners and walkers for the championship games, but which may, with accessions to their membership, increase the scope of their efforts. The American Athletic Club is a homeless group of athletic nomads, who hire the grounds of other clubs for practice and for exhibition, until such time as their treasury may warrant the lease of suitable lots and the erection of the necessary buildings. The A. A. C. is generally regarded as an offshoot of

the Young Men's Christian Association Gymnasium, and is principally remarkable as having brought to the front young G. D. Baird, a walker who gives promise of great things, if he doesn't walk his short legs off within the next two or three years.

The Pastime A. C. has cool grounds at Sixty-sixth Street and the East River. Among its members are Lambrecht, the champion heaver of the heavy hammer and putter of the ponderous weight; Conolly, the champion heavy-weight boxer; and Mr. Nason, to whom his colleagues proudly point as the "champion sack-racer of the world."

The Gramercy is practically a running club, and its chief glory is in its fine runner, Golden. This club has no grounds. It scarcely needs them. The whole, the boundless continent is its. In winter the members take easy runs up along the Hudson River—to Peekskill, for instance.

The hero and president of the West Side Athletic Club is William Meek, champion long distance walker. The club has the grounds of the old Scottish-American Club on Fifty-fourth Street, between Eighth and Ninth avenues. The initiation fee, dues, and assessments in these four clubs are very light indeed. It must be a lean pocket that cannot meet them.

But there are many who are good New-Yorkers at heart, but for whom New York is only a base of financial supplies. These live in the suburbs of the great city, whose boundary line ought to be drawn from, say Yonkers, through Westchester, County, sweeping around through Long Island to Coney Island, around again, embracing Staten Island, through New Jersey to its starting-place. That is really New York, and these her suburban residents are not shut out from the athletic advantages of those who dwell within the walls. Do you live in Yonkers? at Fordham? at New Rochelle? at Mount Vernon? The New York Club's grounds and all the boat-houses of the Harlem are within your reach.

Do you inhabit that fair island that lies like the dot below the crooked exclamation-point of Manhattan, far to the south? Well, you have the Staten Island Athletic Club, with some two hundred and fifty apostles of the knee-breeched cultus. They have a boat-house—and boats in it, too—at New Brighton, and track and base-ball grounds at West Brighton. They have swallowed up the old Hesper and Neptune rowing clubs, and they yearn for aquatic renown.

Long Island, if you live in Brooklyn or Williamsburg, can give you the privileges of the W. A. C.—a most promising and plucky organization, six years old, with more than two hundred members. They have a commodious camping-ground at the corner of Wythe Avenue and Penn Street, Brooklyn, E. D. They have an originally constructed track, tipped outside up, like a railroad curve. They also have a gymnasium and a "crack" trainer, Jack McMasters, and their games are getting to be considered great "events."

If Fate has sent you to New Jersey, you may join the Elizabeth A. C., which is one year younger than the Williamsburg, and has about the same number of active members, who rejoice in a club-house with billiard-tables and bowling-alleys, in a good track and grand stand, and in being also members of the American Athletic Base-ball Association.

But it may be, Alcides Urban, that you prefer to cultivate the one little muscular talent which nature has allotted you, caring naught for sports in general. Well, you can do it without going out of the suburbs.

Do you row? And are you unwilling or unable to pay \$100 or \$120 for a shell wherein to paddle in selfish solitude? You can join, for twenty-five dollars admission fee and twenty dollars annual dues, the New York Rowing Club, where there are more than a hundred other young men just of your way of thinking, who have the freedom of a well-fitted-up boat-house just above the elevated railroad bridge on the Harlem. This is a veteran club that nowadays feels more inclined for play than for work; but there were days when its name was great among the racers, and the young oarsmen of to-day find that some of the old "New-Yorkers" are the best "coaches" to be had.

If this does not suit you, you may take your choice between the Nassau and the Atlanta. If you are in bondage to learning at Columbia, you will join the college boat club; if you are a budding broker on Broad Street, you may sit on the sliding seats of the Stock Exchange Rowing Club's shells. Or you may be a Metropolitan or a Dauntless; if you live near Bergen Point, an Argonaut; if near Yonkers, one of the Palisades; if on Staten Island, a member of the S. I. R. C.

Perhaps a great yearning has seized upon you to enlarge your biceps after some other fashion. The Scottish-American will teach you to put the shot and to throw the hammer.

Perhaps you have read "The Canoe and the Flying Proa," and wish to test for yourself the relative virtues of the "Rob Roy," the "Shadow," the "Nautilus," and the "Herald." There is a New York Canoe Club at Staten Island, and a Knickerbocker Canoe Club at Eighty-sixth Street and the North River, and another club at Bayonne, "over in Jersey;" and likewise there is the Flushing C. C., of Long Island, and you will be afforded every possible opportunity for accustoming yourself to the sudden dampness that succeeds a capsize fit before you go on your summer vacation trip, canoeing it all the way to Lake George and back.

Roughly, a canoe costs \$100, and it is a good and, except for predestined idiots, a safe investment. It is faster than a row-boat, and less

cranky, the seat being below the surface of the water. It tempts to exercise and travel in watery paths of pleasantness and peace. The American Canoe Association is enthusiastic enough to support a handsome little monthly, published by Brentano Brothers, New York, and called *The American Canoeist*. From its pages he who would canoe may learn how to go about to accomplish his end.

Mr. J. R. Flannery is the good genius of lacrosse in this region, and he is well seconded by Messrs. Erastus Wiman and Hermann Oelrichs; but lacrosse has had in New York a spasmodic sort of career, living, dying, and being resuscitated over and over again for the last fifteen years. It requires grounds that can not be had within the city lines. Yet it is a fine game—a sort of shinney raised to the 7th, or what we used to call, when we were boys, "gool," I suppose we meant goal, or golf. In '82 six clubs fought for the U. S. N. A. L. C. Association Cup, given by Mr. Oelrichs. These were the New York, the Princeton, the Harvard, the Yale, the New York University, and the Bloomfield, New Jersey. There are but two clubs now in the city, the N. Y., and the N. Y. U. C.; and one in Brooklyn, the Adelpic. Lacrosse is earnestly recommended to the unattached athlete.

Tennis perchance suits your errant fancy. It is, indeed, a pretty game, but leads to a lax taste in the way of bats. Well, if you can buy a flannel shirt, a pair of rubber-soled shoes, and a racket, and are able to pay some ridiculously low dues and assessments, you may readily gratify your whim. Tennis is the cuckoo of games. It is ever squatting in some alien nest. It has a building all to itself at 212 West Forty-first Street, where the pioneers and the strictly feminine *bonnets rouges* play; and yet it confiscates the militia armories and the assembly halls; and you may find it hanging on the skirts of archery, base-ball, cricket, and general athletic clubs all through the suburbs. The new Manhattan grounds are to have some wonderful courts. The St. George's Cricket Club, of New York, has twenty grass courts on its grounds at Hoboken, the Staten Island C. and B. C. has twelve, and there are some more in Prospect Park, Brooklyn. There are nine well-established tennis clubs in New Jersey (some of them adjuncts of base-ball, cricket, or archery clubs), two in Brooklyn, one on Staten Island, and one at Hastings—particular Hastings-upon-Hudson, which is over truly British. Old clubs die and new ones are formed all the time, yet it would be fairly safe to hazard the estimate of fifteen hundred club players in New York and her tributary towns. The champion tennis-players are Mr. R. D. Sears and Dr. James Dwight, both of Bolton.

Among these poisers of the airy racket I have not counted the members of the Racquet Club—a mighty organization, dwelling in a frowning castle on the corner of Twenty-sixth Street and Sixth Avenue; a bachelor palace within, well known to rich and luxurious young New Yorkers.

If you wish to be a bicyeler, Alcides; if you are not afraid of being held on outcast from society because you put on neat knee-breeches and a polo cap, and straddle that wiry wheel which the "average citizen," not daring to mount, doth much deride and ridicule; if you wish to enjoy a ride where you have the combined joy in strength and speed of horse and rider; if you wish to spin over the fine roads of New Jersey, or up the smooth Boulevard to Yonkers, or along the Pelham road, passing on a spurt the truly British turn-outs of the Coaching Club; if you desire wiry legs, good digestion, and sound sleep o' nights—you may join the band of wheelmen, who are forbidden to travel in the mazy ways of Central Park because an occasional horse has shown an antipathy to knickerbockers and rubber tires. Hoias, it is well known, never shy at locomotives, hoaps of brick, circus posters, bands of music, or red parasols.

There is room in the world for the bicycle outside of Central Park, Alcides, and you may learn to ride to-day much more easily and peacefully than did the poor pioneers of the sport three years ago, when the wheel was a new thing in New York ways, and the dogs were set upon it, while the populace jeered. In those days you had to learn for yourself, but nowadays you may go to Mr. Elliot Mason's school in Thirty-fourth Street, where one of the Masons, sticking closer than a brother, will hold you on to your machine until you are its master. Then you may hire a bicycle there, or at Fifty-ninth street and Fifth Avenue, and practice on the road till such time as you feel that you may wisely invest ninety or a hundred dollars in a "Special Columbia," or from twenty to fifty more in an imported "Humber," or a native "Expert." The English machines have held the top of the market until recently, but it is getting to be pretty well understood that the American bicycles are more durable and better adapted to our heavy country roads. And when you are the owner of a "bi," you may enroll your name on the list of the New York, the Manhattan, the Mercury, the Ixion, the Citizen's, or the Lenox club; or, if you are a Brooklynite, you have your choice between the Brooklyn Bicycle Club, or the King's County Wheelmen, of Williamsburg.

Do you yacht?—in the grammar of the day. There are the Brooklyn, the New York, the Seawanhaka, and the Larchmont yacht clubs.

Is cricket your delight, and do you long to hear the English tourist within the gates of the club ground cry, "Well played, sir!"? You may bat under the gonfalon of the St. George, at Hoboken, the Staten-Islanders, or the Man-