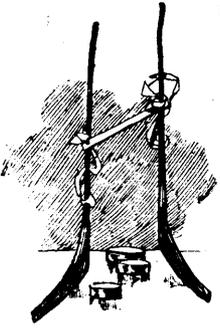


SPORTS AND PASTIMES



HOCKEY in Montreal practically opened on Wednesday night last, when the annual meeting of the Canadian Hockey Association was held in the M.A.A.A. rooms. It was the largest meeting of the association held for some time past, and it had not been in session many minutes when it was easy to discover the fact that there was going to be trouble over the manner of deciding the championship. Clubs like the Victorias and Montrealers, who do most of the playing, and who are certainly the best exponents of the game on the continent, looked for a reversal of the present method of challenging, while the Ottawa and Quebec aggregations insisted on the challenge system, which for weak clubs is useful, but which is a hardship on the stronger ones. It is all very nice in its way for Ottawa or Quebec to challenge when they get good and well ready, and the holders of the championship at the time are obliged to meet them; but a championship won in this way does not give any particular idea of the playing strength of either party. It involves the task of one or two clubs being in perfect condition all through the hockey season and ready to meet all-comers; a club may hold a championship during half-a-dozen matches,—beat all-comers, and still lose the last match to a weak team the last day of the season, when there is no possibility of recovery. Then again, supposing one club is considerably stronger than the other in the season, it will win most of the matches, if not all of them. It will be obliged to play matches with everybody who chooses to challenge, but at the same time it practically debars the weaker clubs from playing with each other, except in exhibition matches, which count for very little anyhow from a playing point of view. Under a series system every club would be obliged to meet every other club, and the greater number of games won would constitute a championship. The challenge method has not worked particularly well in the past, either in hockey or football, and the Quebec Rugby Union has decided to adopt some other method for the future, but the hockey men seem to be just a year or two younger than the rest of the country. Nobody will ever assert that Quebec and Ottawa are remarkably progressive outside of politics and the devious windings thereof, and still these clubs, helped out with a little judicious wire-pulling on the part of the Crescents, rule the roost, and, through badly judged legislation, do more injury to a healthy winter sport than they are perhaps aware of.

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When the series was working three years ago we had good hockey all through the season, and every club in the association had to play at a stated time. If I remember rightly, it was at the request of McGill, Quebec and Ottawa clubs that the series was changed to a challenge. How has it worked? McGill was not represented at the association, and is out. It withdrew its subscription when it found it could not play on the day the Collegians required, for the very simple reason that there was a little forgetfulness in the matter of paying fees. In the case of the clubs out of the city,—will somebody point out where Ottawa, and more particularly Quebec, have benefited the game under the challenge system. The *raison d'être* for a hockey club with no rink to play on may seem a little unintelligible to most people, but it goes in the outlying township when a matter of voting comes to be con-

sidered. There was one redeeming feature in the annual meeting, and that was the increased number of clubs who expressed their intention of going in for the senior championship. The Britannia Football Club will be welcome among the ranks of the hockey men, for no doubt they will work as hard on the ice as they have done on the field, and both Victoria and Montreal may have a close run for their laurels. Sherbrooke may be heard from, but it is not likely they will be dangerous; neither will Quebec or Ottawa. The Shamrocks and Crescents can hardly pull teams together fit to cope with Montreal or Victoria, and the Brits are as yet an unknown quantity. So that it looks like the old fight over again—Victoria vs. Montreal.

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How it is that nothing is heard from Toronto is more than surprising. There was quite a little hockey boom in the Queen City last year, and this would be the only city which could justifiably claim a challenge system, when the distance to travel was considered. They played pretty good hockey in Toronto last season, too, but not the sort of a game to be compared with our good teams in Montreal. A year ago I suggested that two of Montreal's best sevens should go to Toronto and give the Western folks an idea of how to play the real game. The idea, I think, would work still, and would do a lot of good, because then there would be a revival of the old time rivalry which has marked the progress of sports in which both cities were concerned, and there would be an opportunity given to study the game as played here, which, after a little practice, would enable the Torontonians to come here and not be beaten so badly as to be discouraging. Why not arrange a match for the championship of Canada, between the champions of Ontario and the champions of Quebec, after the manner of the football players? It seems to me it would need but a very small amount of negotiation, and if the newly elected council of the Hockey association would just consider the matter and make the first proposal, there would be scarcely any difficulty in coming to some satisfactory arrangement.

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The council of the Hockey Association did a little work after the general meeting, and it was decided that arrangements be made to provide a cup emblematic of the championship, and also to award seven medals to the team winning most championship matches. This latter was distinctively a move in the right direction, and went some way towards ameliorating the hardships imposed on first-class clubs by the adoption of the challenge rule. The question of barring a man who has ever played on a championship team was also decided, and a new rule made which will leave a great deal in the hands of the council. If the rule is not abused it will be a good thing for hockey generally, but it looks now as if it did not need an O'Connell to drive a coach-and-four through it. The officers elected for the coming season are:—President, J. A. Stewart; first vice-president, J. Jenkins; second vice-president, Geo. Carpenter; secretary-treasurer, J. Findlay; council, A. Laurie, Quebec; B. B. Stevenson, Britannia; J. Crathern, Victoria; R. Kelly Crescent, and H. Ash.

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The meeting of the Ontario Hockey Association early in the week should be productive of good results, and, although the old association has no control, the Ontario boys seem actuated with the right spirit. It was as hard to introduce hockey into Ontario as it was lacrosse, but things are moving in the proper direction now. With such men as the following a great deal may be hoped for. C. R. Hamilton, secretary; W. A. Kerr, J. F. Smellie, J. S. Garvin, E. C. Senkler, W. F. W. Creelman, Osgoode Hall; H. D. Warren, J. E. B. Littlejohn, Granite; Victor Armstrong, Stuart Morrison, Victoria; Lieut. Laurie, Lieut. S. Y. Baldwin, New

Fort; Messrs. C. T. Pemberton representing the Bankers' league; A. Bailantyne, Stratford; W. Wyndeyer, W. H. Lamont, Granite colts. Clubs applying for membership in the league were also present. The secretary's report showed a balance of nearly \$50 on the right side, and the following extract from the same document seems encouraging: "The outlook is most promising. I have had applications from new clubs wishing to become members, which will in due course be laid before you. The game has taken a firm hold in Ontario, and I look to see as much interest and excitement, if not more, over our championship series this winter than there has been over that of the Ontario Rugby Union this autumn." The election of officers resulted as follows:—President, Mr. A. M. Cosby, Victoria club; vice-presidents, Messrs. John Barron, Lindsay; H. D. Warren, Granite club, Toronto; secretary, Mr. J. H. Laurie, New Fort club, Toronto; treasurer, Mr. C. R. Hamilton, Victoria club, Toronto; executive committee, Messrs. V. Armstrong (Victoria), Garvin (Granite), P. D. Ross (Ottawa), W. Sweny (Royal Military College), W. A. Kerr (Osgoode Hall), J. F. Smellie (Osgoode Hall). The constitution and by-laws are to be revised, and the following gentlemen have the work on their hands: Messrs. Laurie, Kerr, Garvin, Armstrong and Smellie. The new additions to the Ontario Association consist of the Granite Colts, Galt, Toronto Bank Hockey League, Queen's Own, Stratford and Toronto Insurance and Loan clubs, the only resignation being that of the Lindsay club.

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The athletic club that ranks next to the M.A.A.A. may safely be said to be the Wanderers, of Halifax, and for the general growth of athletics the progress of the W.A.A.A. is watched with interest. The membership is not particularly large, but the members are hustlers, and at least two-thirds of them take an active interest in athletic sports, leaving only one-third to act as passive members. The annual meeting of the club was held last week, and the showing made was a particularly good one. The only sport that has at all lapsed is baseball, but when it is considered that there has been a marked improvement in other sports there is nothing to be sorry for. The prospects for the cricket men are particularly good, and visits are expected to be paid to Boston, and an exchange made with Ottawa, while the cracks of Philadelphia will likely be seen in the Garrison city. Bowling, quoits, lawn tennis, lacrosse, football and athletics generally have had an irreproachable season,—the only draw-back being that mixed-up match with the Dalhousies, about which there has been so much dispute. As this question has been decided by the Maritime Football Union there is little to be said, although the decision seems hard on the Wanderers, who, in all fairness, ought to have been allowed to play over on neutral ground. It is a new wrinkle, however, and football captains will count their teams in future.

Champagne and Oysters.

A Wiltshireman was one day called home from his work on account of his wife being taken very ill, and requiring him to send for a doctor.

The doctor arrived, and after examining the woman he turned to her husband and said:

"My good man, your wife is in a very critical condition, and the only thing you must give her to eat must be champagne and oysters."

Two days after the doctor called to see his patient, and was much surprised to hear that she was dead. Feeling curious as to the cause of her death, he turned to the man, saying:

"Did you carry out my orders as to what you gave her to eat?"

"No, sir," returned the man; "I couldn't afford to give her champagne and oysters, but I gave her what I thought would do as well; I gave her plenty of ginger-beer and wheelks."