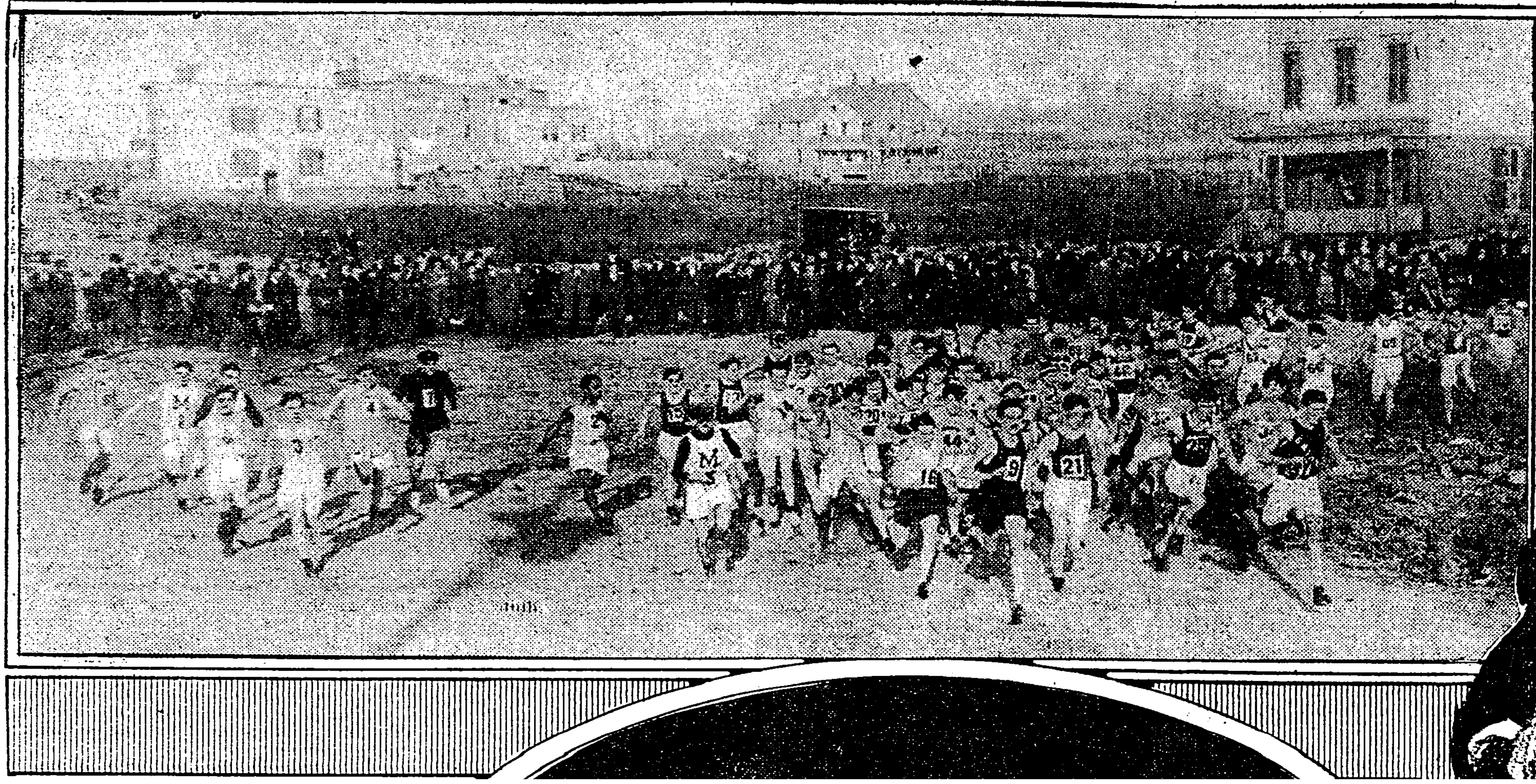


THE AMERICAN FATHER IS MAKING MOLLYCODDLES OF BOYS

James E. Sullivan, President of the Amateur Athletic Union, Arraigns the Modern Parent and Suggests Remedies for Physical Development of Children.

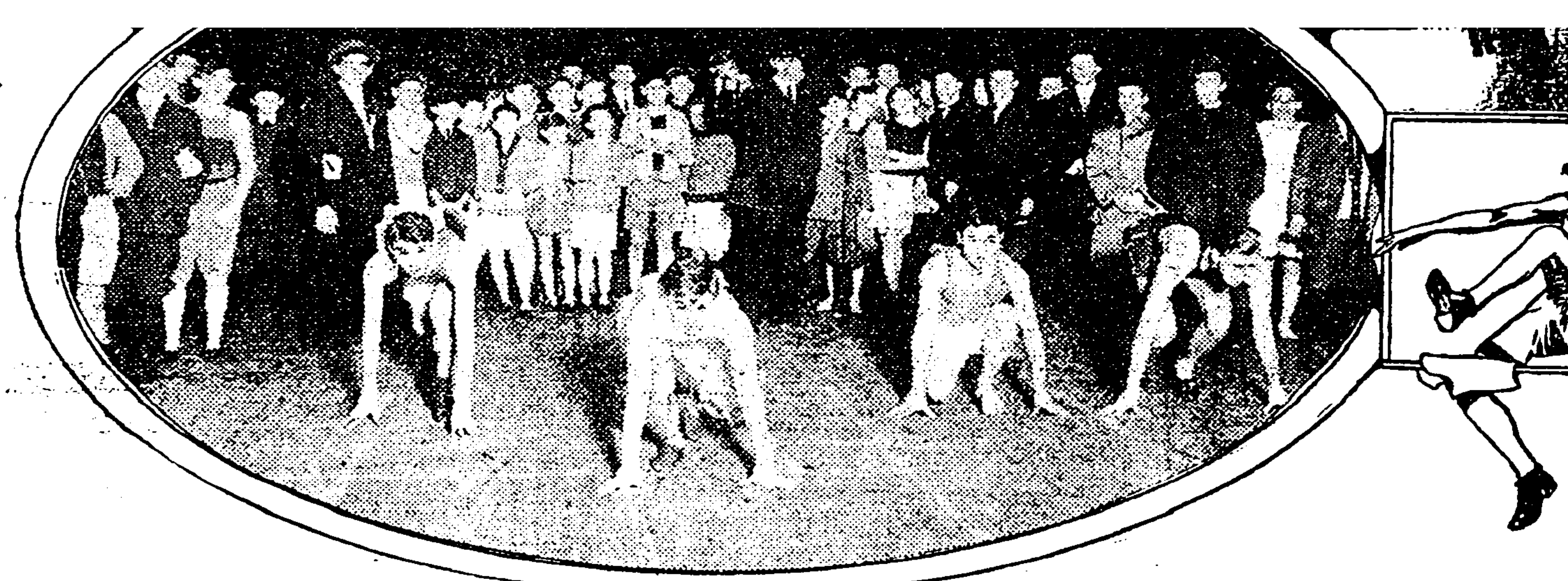


A Marathon Race of Boys.

By EDWARD MARSHALL.

JAMES EDWARD SULLIVAN.

THE man who talks about athletics in the following columns is now an editor and publisher, a member of the New York Board of Education, and a member of the Playground Commission of New York, as well as a consulting expert in such matters for all sections of the country; but his own athletic career was long and honored. It began in 1877, and in 1880 he was the holder of an all-around championship. He has officiated in American track and field games for twenty-five years, and has been President, since 1906, of the Amateur Athletic Union of the United States. He was an assistant American director at the Olympic games held in Paris in 1900; was director of the Buffalo Exposition athletic department in 1901, chief of the department of physical culture at the St. Louis Exposition in 1904, secretary of the American committee at the Olympic Games at Athens, Greece, in 1906, honorary director of athletics at the Jamestown Exposition in 1907, and member of the American committee of the London Olympic games in 1908, and was one of the organizers of the Public Schools Athletic League. He was given the Olympic Medal at St. Louis in 1904, the Golden Cross of the Knights of the Royal Order of the Saviour in Greece in 1906, and has had other honors since that time. He is secretary of athletic sports the whole world over.



An Indoor Dash.

without enthusiasm, and, very likely, even with annoyance. I'm going to say a thing which will be criticized. The English slim lad, though he gets a beating now and then, also gets, from time to time, when 'father's' sober, some encouragement and interest, and, very likely, gets more actual benefit out of that, sometimes from a fatherhood than does the average American boy from the indifferent, uninterested, oil-for-heaven's-sake-go-away-and-stop-bothering-me position which his non-brutal but uninterested father gives him.

"You never see the American father with his boy unless necessity insists. The English and the German, the French and the Italian, the Russian, and, I have no doubt, the Chinese father, like their son's society. And all of them are nearer right than the American, for not only is it a fine thing for a boy to have his father's sympathy, advice, and company, but it is just as fine a thing for father, and his helpful and improving, to have their sons associate with them. We have, in our efforts to provide a chance for the American boy, continually felt the steady, steady backward thrust of this indifference upon the part of fathers. It has been one of our greatest handicaps.

Mothers Not Blameless.

"Nor are the mothers wholly blameless. In this regard, at least, the English mother, like the German, the French, the Italian, the Russian, and the Chinese mother, is better than the American. The average American mother, I am sometimes forced to think, gives nothing much real thought but, if she be a poor woman, household matters—and the dressmaker (I use the singular because she's a poor woman); and, if she be a rich woman, just the dressmakers. (Observe that I omit 'household affairs' and put the 's' of a plurality of 'dressmaker'.)"

"The average mother of the average American city schoolboy objects, openly or through that tolerance which is almost as discouraging as disapproval, to her boy's athletics, and, more especially, to her girl's athletics, as urged upon them by the new movement in the schools. They say that in their day such things were not done and were not necessary, which is true. But changes in this country are so swift that they are almost dizzying, and conditions now are very different from those the mothers knew when they were girls.

"When a mother makes objection to the plans the school authorities have formulated to keep her daughter in good health, complaining that such things were not considered necessary to girls' welfare in her time, she should be instantly reminded that 'her time' has passed, never to return, and that the new time which has come is very different.

"The recreations which the mother enjoyed in and which made her strong are not open to the schoolgirl of to-day in the large cities. The girl must have play in order to keep healthy, for the only muscular effort her life calls for or permits must be put forth in play. That was not true a half or even a quarter of a century ago. The girl must have her exercise and her amusement, and the mother who considers that the things the public schools are doing to provide these are absurd or wasteful runs the risk of forcing her daughter to turn to some amusement which is far, far less desirable.

What Girls Should and Should Not Do

"Of course, I have always been opposed to, and am on record against, the idea of the schoolgirl's entrance into competitive athletics. The girl's athletic exercises must be taken in her own school building, in her own neighborhood, among her own every-day companions. For exhibition teams to be organized among the boys is not always such a bad idea, but such plans must not be introduced among the girls.

"We must rigorously discourage in the

public schools the development of the show-girl and the expert athletic girl who competes in public for prizes. We must carefully see to it that while our school work in athletics builds up bodies it does not, at the same time, tear down character.

"But, more the less, the attitude of the American mother who objects to the school exercises for her girls, who objects to the natural development of the young animal in her boys, is as greatly to be deplored as is that of the American father who takes no interest in his boy's sports—those sports which, mentally as well as physically, are, in the modern conditions which surround his life, of quite as great importance to him as the acquisition of extensive knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic.

Another Way to Use School Buildings.

"The best proposition which has been advanced for a long time, not only for New York but for many if not all of our larger cities, was made by Egerton L. Winthrop, Jr. He advised the use of all our school buildings in afternoons and evenings as playgrounds. I mean the actual buildings, not alone the yards.

"In the afternoons, he said, they should be open to the children, and in the evenings open to the young men and women of the neighborhood who had been at work all day. This would provide what is wholly lacking now in American city life, a free place for recreation for the young from 7 to 10 each evening, where, under proper discipline and order, they could get their recreation and social intercourse, which conditions of modern city life now utterly refuse them or grant them only through the mediums of the dangerous dance halls, the often undesirable nickel theatre, the ever perilous street stroll, or the frequently unfortunate evening visits to the city parks, where loneliness so frequently results in undesirable acquaintances.

Such use of school buildings should be of course under the supervision of proper instructors, who would maintain careful discipline and order, and all that the city would have to do would be to pay the salaries of such instructors.

Our Army Athletically Rotten.

"We have neglected training all along the line. Our army, for example, which, as I am talking, is camped along the Mexican frontier, is, athletically, absolutely rotten. I am glad to have the chance to say this. I once took the matter up with Mr. Roosevelt while he was in the Presidential chair with, and on the suggestion of, Mr. Caspar Whitney. I suggested to the President the formation of an association for the right control of athletics in the forces of the United States; that the country be mapped into divisions and subdivided into districts, and that each man be forced to take a certain amount of general athletic training every day of his life, be compelled to become an expert in such exercises as he now is in the manual of the drill. Then our soldiers would be in a condition to stand the strain, for instance, of a forced march when it happened to be necessary.

"Lack of physical training was one of the things primarily responsible for our enormous soldier death rate during the Spanish war. It killed far, far more men than Spanish bullets did.

"A Department of Physical Training should be at once established in our army, and the lack of such a department will be felt, I have no doubt, even in the organization which, as we are talking, is gathered on the Mexican frontier.

"The American, between 25 and 30, is the best man, physically, in the world, and if we take care of him, exercise him properly, and feed him properly he can go on all the forced marches which the most arduous service would require—but



James E. Sullivan, President of the A. A. U.



A Schoolboy Athlete.

"Then there is no cause whatever for complaint about the athletic situation?"

"The desire to win, sometimes," he said, "forces the American boy to do things in his sport that he would not do in the field. The desire to break away from right control is often one of these in the athletic field. There must be governing bodies and they must make rules. Infractions of these rules must certainly be brought before them for adjudication and for punishment, if necessary. There is the evil which most threatens us.

The Athlete Who 'Gets Something.'

"There are people in this country who seem to try to make the boys believe that they should 'get something' for their work in the athletic sports. A Harvard paper recently remarked upon this subject. I cannot quote exactly, but this was what the article, in substance, meant. Some one had asked the question: 'Why should we not allow athletes to compete for money prizes, as long as we offer money prizes in competitive examinations in the educational branches?' 'The answer was, and it well covered it: 'As it may appear to undergraduates the college authorities persist in regarding a student's studies as his profession, and a student's athletics as his pastime. They urge him to be a professional at work and an amateur at play.'

"In a nutshell that disposed of that idea.

"We have professionalism in sport. Some, to disguise it, call it semi-professionalism. There is, really, no such thing. A man is amateur or not. One or the other. If professionalism creeps into our schools corruption will creep in, bad blood will enter, there will be those who will endeavor to be kept at schools without expense, and those who wish to keep them thus because they are athletically expert. Then the father, if he is a wise man, will tell his children, and is justified in telling them: 'You cannot go to that school, or that college, because the boys there are a bunch of sports; their ideas of honor and dishonor are not the sort I want you to acquire.'

"But that sport has not been ruined here is proof that it has not been crooked for nothing will kill sport as quickly as will crookedness. When professional sport gets crooked people won't pay money to see it; when amateur sport gets crooked the best men will keep clear of it. There is always danger that it may, and that danger is what we must most unceasingly keep watch against.

Professionalism in the Schools.

"Here was the situation in the New York schools. Other schools will do well to avoid a like one. There was too great a desire to win, no matter what, among the boys themselves, and the teachers and the principals were as bad and very likely worse than the boys were, because they would not back us up for clean sport. In order to secure victories they took in outside boys with records.

"The old-time college trouble over again, you see. Some of these schoolboys were actually professionals. We tried fourteen of them, and found twelve to be ineligible. I am Chairman of the Games Committee of the Public Schools League, but the principals resented our whole action. They said that I was dictatorial and tried to rule them with an iron rod.

"Well, that was what they needed—ruling with an iron rod.

"You see, either through their ignorance or through direct intention they were furnishing bad practices among the boys. There lies a danger to school sports, but there also lies an even greater danger to the boys themselves. Such practices will not only kill the sport, but will teach the boys that crooked methods sometimes win and sometimes are connived at by the very men set up to teach them morals and right living as well as reading, writing, and arithmetic.

"This illustrates the situation elsewhere. They tried to blame the trainers. College heads, when charges have been brought, have always tried to blame the trainers. But I have always found that when a trainer takes a college job he gets instructions from the men in charge and ceases of natural anxiety to hold that job, follows those instructions.

"If the faculties wish to play fair, he helps them; if they are willing to wink at crooked things, he thinks they like them, and the crooked things creep in. I never knew a school or college that wished to have clean sport whose sport was not entirely clean. The standard of honor in the athletic fraternity is at least as high as that of the educational fraternity. But the school boards are waking up. The old-fashioned stupid body is everywhere giving place to groups of brainy and progressive men. Such men see the value of athletics.

Wonderful Work of Athletics.

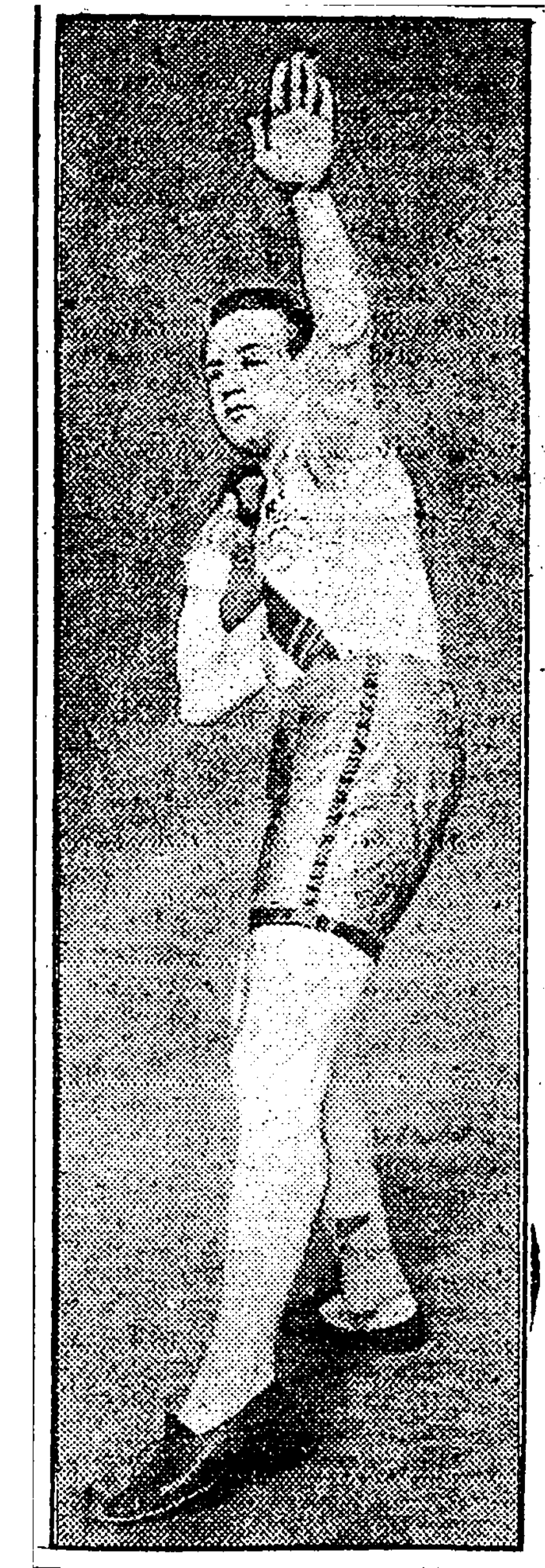
"The Public Schools Athletic League has done much for New York in helping schools turn out good citizens.

"It has broken up the old-time 'corner-gang' and driven out the 3-cent pool-rooms. It is stopping cigarette smoking gradually. In the City of New York we are providing recreation for 500,000 boys and girls, which leaves 100,000 only unprovided for. A few years since they all were unprovided for.

"Gen. Wingate, President of the Public Schools Athletic League, has opened up the armories and schoolhouses for our children to play in, and the school yards too, to open to them after hours.

"We are trying hard to keep them off the streets and give them games to play in which there are real victories. Such games are better than street-corner fights. All this applies to girls as well as boys, and the system preserves their health, preserves their beauty, and preserves their happiness of course.

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Putting the Shot.

These things are not done. Regular army men should be systematically trained—first day, one mile, second day, two miles,

and the third day, one mile prior to each meal.

"Each man should be forced to wrestle and to box. It would give the men a lot of fun, too, and would make the army really attractive to recruits. A man who cannot box and wrestle, walk and run, is not fit to be a soldier of this country as an officer or an enlisted man. We want non-specialists, we want no army champions, but we do want a champion army, and it would be so easy and so cheap to get it that to go without it seems a crime.

Importance of Sports Recognized.

"It has at last been granted by educational and other scientific men, that sports mean much to our future citizenship. The relation of athletics to the minds and morals, as well as to the bodies, of the Nation's boys and girls has been a thorough overhauling. There are still the non-progressives who decry all sports, and just now they are loudly heard, but they are falling from the earth. Progressive educators, whether they be college faculties, school boards, Sunday school superintendents, or army officers, agree now. I believe, that good, hard muscles, properly acquired, will help right principles and brain development.

"Still, there are those people who seem to-day, to be more often heard than ever, who groan that school athletics weaken the boys physically in the end, enlarge their hearts, or make their valves weak, or overstrain the youngsters so that they will suffer from it in their after lives. I have an answer here at hand for that. Out of the twenty-five officials of the games of the New York Athletic Club in 1879, all famous athletes in their day, only three have died to date.

"And athletics for the girls are just as good as are athletics for the boys. Let me say this while I think of it, and say it with what emphasis I can. The athletic father, married to the athletic mother, will produce better children, mentally as well as physically—and morally as well as mentally."

HARMONICA ARTIST WHO TOURED WITH JENNY LIND

Barnum Discovered Him in His Early Days and He Proved to be a Novelty and Made a Hit.

NO instrument from which music can be coaxed, caajoled, or beaten is more familiar than the harmonica, or mouth-organ, which has been the favorite instrument of every fellow who has no special musical ability except lung power and a good ear at some time in his early career.

But has the story ever been told of the introduction of the harmonica into public use as a professional instrument of music from which one might earn a living as well as delight his friends gratis? Whether any version has been given or not, these interesting facts probably antedate other harmonica history.

The hero of this story is the man, now living, who, as a boy of 9 years, introduced the harmonica to the professional stage.

Chris Bathman is his name—a Chattanooga by adoption—native of Switzerland, barber by profession in later years, and now well enough fixed in this world's goods to live as he may please. In a way he is a character in Chattanooga because of his wide acquaintance with people in every walk of life.

Yet doubtless it would surprise many of Chris Bathman's best friends to know that he made his start in life on the stage blowing a mouth-organ for P. T. Barnum and playing with the small orchestra that accompanied Jenny Lind in her European tours of the long ago.

Although removed many years from the scenes of those early days, Bathman possesses a retentive memory and has besides a most interesting scrapbook in which are preserved clippings from papers back yonder, among which are extracts from lectures by P. T. Barnum referring to the gifted young boy from Switzerland who traveled with him in Europe and America. Perhaps, however, it would be best to let Bathman tell his own story.

recollection now is that the performance on the mouth-organ was considered a most wonderful freak of a boy wonder.

"Barnum was not a rich man at that time. He was beginning as Manager of a concert company, and had not gone into the circus business. My remuneration, as I remember it, was my clothes and expenses, and about two dollars a week—and all that for being one of the drawing cards of the company!

"After visiting points in Europe, the Barnum company came to America, but Jenny Lind did not come with us. She had made her American tour with Barnum. We arrived in New York in 1849, which, according to a familiar Americanism, should make me a forty-niner. The concert company took on a few vaudeville features and established a museum in New York City, corner of Broadway and Ann Streets, opposite the then insignificant City Hall. I played on the stage as harmonica soloist in the museum, and assisted in the minstrel show, also doing odd jobs about the place—for there were no absolute specialists in those days.

"Soon thereafter Matt Peel, the main comedian of the Barnum Museum, organized the first minstrel troupe of note in this country, which developed into the Matt Peel and Campbell Minstrels. I went with them with my specialty. Barnum bustled, and that was the end of my experience with him. I remained with Peel until 1852, traveling with the com-

pany down the Mississippi River to New Orleans several times and playing the river towns as we went along. Then I went with a barber, York Albany, N. Y., learned the trade, enlisted in the civil war, came to Chattanooga in 1862, and have been here ever since.

It is interesting to state in this connection that during the war Bathman was a constant source of entertainment to the men and officers of the Forty-fourth New York, his harmonica being his constant companion, and he organized a minstrel company in the regiment for the purpose of scaring away the homesick spells that occasionally overcome soldiers as well as others.

While residing in Des Moines, Iowa, also, before going to Chattanooga, he organized a minstrel show known as the Timbuctoo. A programme published in Des Moines, probably in 1857, gives details of an entertainment by the Aspinwall-Lehman-Bathman troupe, and in the description of the participants refers to Chris Bathman as "the celebrated and popular harmonicaist, a native of Switzerland."

As THE TIMES representative was about to leave, Mr. Bathman turned to a shelf in the sitting room, took down a small harmonica, wiped the dust from its case, looked at the instrument fondly for a moment, and then said: "I haven't played for a long time, but maybe I can strike a tune or two." Settling himself in an easy chair, with eyes half closed, he began an old German air, and in a few moments "Richard was himself again." He played as though thinking of the day when Barnum patted him on the head and engaged him for a start in life, and tears coursed down his weather-beaten cheeks as the melody rolled from the instrument. The music he played was proper to the story he had told.