



B. J. Frenkel, '15.

THE START OF A WRESTLING BOUT

★ Wrestling

A PLEA FOR THE SPORT.

C. F. MAXWELL, '14.



FEATURE that strikes an observer of Harvard's athletic life is the very slight interest shown by men in so-called minor sports. Harvard throws herself into her major sports with a hearty vigor and enthusiasm, and, we may add, success. But what are the great majority of the men doing who cannot take their places on the major teams? And what are the members of those major teams doing in the long months of winter when ice and snow forbid out-of-door recreations? These are questions that most of us will find very hard to answer. And yet they are questions that concern us deeply, as we will realize if we pause to observe what other colleges are doing in their minor athletics.

At Yale, the wrestling, swimming, and basket-ball teams rank in interest and prestige with hockey itself. Princeton has a splendidly organized system of undergraduate athletics in which the

minor sports have attained to a high degree of interest. Colleges all over the country possess first-rate teams in wrestling, gymnastics, basket-ball, swimming, all of which are well supported and marked by keen competition. Harvard offers a sad contrast to this; a fact which cannot be excused by the plea of poor facilities, however true that plea may be. For where the man is determined, the means can be found.

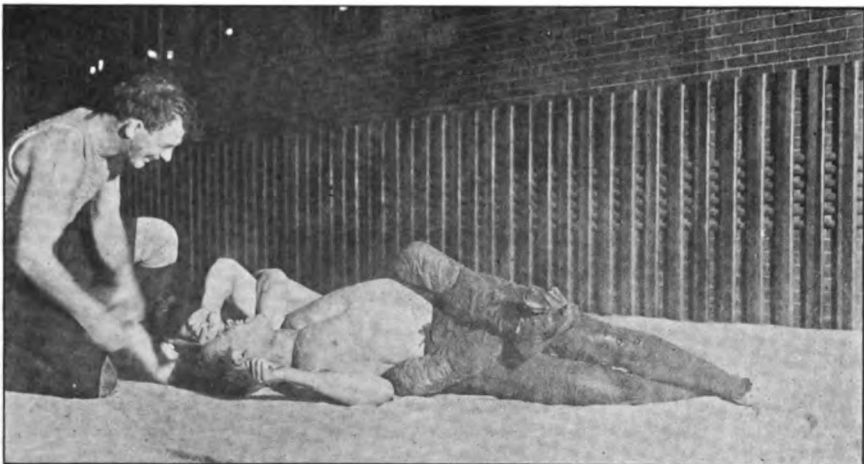
A minor sport that is most deserving of support, on the part of the athlete as well as of the non-athletic man, is wrestling. This sport has experienced a decided impetus at Harvard in the last two years; the services of an exceptionally able wrestler have been secured for coaching all comers at a very low price, and the wrestling quarters in the gymnasium have been much enlarged and improved. The two standard mats will accommodate seven pairs of wrestlers at the same time. A squad of forty

men are wrestling regularly now, but double this number could be accommodated with ease.

This compares poorly with conditions at Yale, however, where one hundred and twenty men take the floor each day, and one hundred and seventy are expected to report as the season progresses. This excellent showing seems to be due to two causes: first, the good accommodations offered to wrestlers. A large area on the main floor of the gymnasium has been set aside where four regulation mats have been placed on which at least twenty men can wrestle at the same time, and the conditions of ventilation and light are splendid, as all will realize who have seen Yale's fine gymnasium. The second cause is the fact that the value of this sport has been recognized and sought after by all types of men, including many on the football and rowing squads.

Harvard, to be sure, has not the admirable facilities for wrestling that Yale possesses. And we cannot have them

until the dream of a new gymnasium is realized. But our present facilities do not prevent us from developing a large and enthusiastic squad of wrestlers who could hold their own with any rival, a truth that will be realized if we turn to the sport as it is followed at Massachusetts Technology. Here the facilities for wrestling are far from encouraging. Only one twenty by twenty-foot mat is available, which can accommodate at most five couples. There is no coach to help men in this difficult art, and beginners have to rely on what aid they can get from members of the team. And yet a squad of one hundred and seven and forty or fifty upperclassmen reported for wrestling in this, the second, year of its existence at Tech. The squad had to be cut to sixty, owing to the small available space. This enthusiastic showing has been explained to me by the manager of the team. It is simply that the Tech student, who has little time to spare, has realized that this sport will



T. H. White, '17.

COACH ANDERSON REFEREEING BOUT
"The Body Scissors Grip."

afford him in the shortest time the maximum of fun and recreation, as well as of needed exercise.

So our mediocre showing at Harvard, where the accommodations are palatial compared with those of Tech., is due undeniably to a want of interest in wrestling among undergraduates generally. And this want of interest, in turn, is due to a failure to realize the benefits of this sport and the feeling of physical delight and exuberance that one experiences in a good bout on the mat.

Wrestling, as has already been stated, is growing steadily in popularity. But meanwhile the team, handicapped by lack of that competitive spirit which is essential to hard exertion, must go down to defeat before the better supported teams of Yale, Brown, and other colleges. Why should not wrestling receive a proportional share of the support which is now afforded exclusively to the major sport teams, and why do Harvard men continue to miss this most invigorating form of exercise?

A Comment on Wrestling

PAUL WITHINGTON, '09



IN an article on wrestling appearing elsewhere in this number of THE ILLUSTRATED, the writer makes a strong appeal for the undergraduate support of minor teams at Harvard, particularly wrestling, and the other winter sports whose headquarters are at the gymnasium.

The question is asked why it is that these sports are so poorly patronized at Harvard, whereas at many of the other colleges the active participation in the so-called minor sports rivals that of the major sports. The answer, I think, is not that Harvard men are particularly more prone than the men of other universities to place their endeavor and lend their support in those places where popularity has placed its stamp, but rather that the benefits and delights of these sports have not been brought clearly enough into their lives. If our athletic games are to be carried on only through the creation of an artificial demand, if, in order to get a sufficient number of men out to provide winning teams, the

captains and managers are to be forced to continually appeal for men through the *Crimson*; and if these men when they once turn out are to be kept out only by constant urging, then it seems to me that the real value of such games is questionable.

Now is this the case with wrestling, swimming, gymnastics, and fencing, or is there some other reason why the number of men taking part in them is less than in many of the smaller colleges? I think there is another reason. To be sure, we have not an attractive gymnasium, which means that our facilities are not as good as those at Princeton, Pennsylvania, Columbia or Yale. But, as the writer of the afore-mentioned article says, this alone is not an excuse. The real answer is that Harvard undergraduates as a whole are entirely unacquainted with the pleasure and bodily exhilaration to be had through these simpler forms of athletics. Baseball, football, track, hockey and crew, all are familiar subjects of every-day conversa-



B. J. Frenkel, '15.
BOUT BETWEEN CAPT. W. R. TYLER, '14, AND MANAGER J. S. ZINSSER, '15
"The Head Scissors Grip."

tion in the majority of our preparatory schools. It is not to be wondered, then, that they attract largely in college. Lacrosse and soccer are in the building process, but they too have a fairly large group of followers who "spread the news" throughout the undergraduate body. The minor sports, with the exception of swimming, are rarely taught in the public schools. Combine this fact with the unpopularity of the Hemenway gymnasium, and you find the answer to our question. At the colleges where the gymnasium is an attractive place for exercise, this difficulty is easily overcome. At other colleges where the gymnasium is lacking, as at Tech, we find also that the substitutes for gymnasium—that is, outdoor athletics—are limited in number, so that men turn to wrestling as a natural substitute.

Here we have to face a somewhat dif-

ficult problem. Until we have a gymnasium suited to our needs, I think it doubtful whether these minor sports will ever be as popular as they are elsewhere, but nevertheless they are sure to grow steadily in popularity, and the slow but steady growth of wrestling in the past two or three years bears this statement out. A certain amount of advertising is legitimate, too much is detrimental.

The men who have tried wrestling are enthusiastic about it, and they are spreading the news to their friends. This year we are to have meets with Brown and Yale in the Hemenway gymnasium. This offers the undergraduates their first real opportunity to see the best of intercollegiate wrestling. I, for one, hope that the experiment of holding intercollegiate wrestling meets in Cambridge will prove a success.