

Why is England Declining in Sports?



Once a Leader She has only one Athletic Champion Left.

Once proud mistress of the world of sport, England stands in danger of losing her position as a country without an athletic champion, unless her fortunes change.

Repeatedly attacked of late by athletic scalp-hunters she has lost her pre-eminence in tennis, in which both her male and female champions were beaten by Americans; in golf she has been eclipsed by France; in sculling by the crew from Belgium; in football by New Zealand and South Africa.

Shattered cruelly has been her prestige in sprinting, hammer throwing and weight putting; in motor racing she has fallen far behind, and when one of her horses wins on the course an American jockey is sure to be on its back.

One of England's leading periodicals, Punch, has printed a cartoon of a youthful marble shooter as "Our Only Remaining Champion."

This is hardly fair to England, however, for in one line of athletics, cricket, she still leads, and Alfred Shrubbs, an Englishman, remains the world's greatest long-distance runner.

That is all, or a miserable remnant of past glory.

An interesting question now is whether the loss of athletic prestige is due to a decline in English physique, or to some other cause.

In cricket, at least, it would seem as though England ought to remain supreme. Long the most popular game in her domain, it has been participated in by all classes, and the village cricket match, inclusive, wholesome and sportsmanlike, is omnipresent.

Yet even the harmless pre-eminence so long enjoyed in this sport seems in danger of being dissipated.

With "deceivers" fully as skillful as any on the "right little side," Australia now arises to proclaim herself the cricket champion of the future.

Already she has scored many minor victories over various English counties, over college teams, like those of Cambridge and Oxford, and even over professional players, and has failed to overcome "all England" in a crucial test.

And if Australia doesn't finally beat off the palm, there is an ambitious aggregation in South Africa which has been surprising the world of late in its cricket work, and it, too, is after the scalp of John Bull.

To a single cricket player, Blythe, has been accorded the credit of keeping "all England" at the top in the last games that have been recently played, and should his powerful arm fail, or a stronger than he arise in one of the opposing elevens, woe to England.

One of the deadliest strokes that English pride has received in recent years was the vanquishment of her strongest rowers by the Belgians in the competition for the Grand Challenge Cup at Henley.

The whole nation has been aroused over the loss.

Whatever the cause, it has been admitted that England's failure to defend her old-time championships cannot but reflect on the empire at large.

In trying to determine why the Belgians have beaten the English at Henley, the British sporting experts attributed various reasons.

For instance, it was said that Eng-

lishmen had coached the Belgians, but those who made the argument failed to say why Englishmen under English coaches on their own waters should not have been superior.

The great sculling authority, Steve Fairbairn, said the victory was due, in the main, to the Belgians' superior leg work and smarter grip of the water, but denied that the English rowers had physically deteriorated.

As a tennis player Eustace H. Miles long held the English banner aloft. Naturally, British spectators were greatly disappointed when, last May, he was beaten by a scion of one of America's leading houses, Jay Gould the second.

And even at that young Gould declared that the match was not so hard as he had expected it to be; that he had played much harder games with non-champions.

It was a great match, however. Twice during the game Gould suffered from cramp in the wrist, but after a few moments' rest and massage treatment he was able to resume play.

This indeed some British experts say that the greater nerve displayed by Americans is responsible for their carrying off so many championships.

And not alone in male athletes in America is this trait noticeable. In tennis, more than anything else was what won for Miss May Sutton, a California girl, the title of woman lawn tennis champion of the world last July, a title which had once been wrested from her by an English woman, Miss Kate Douglas.

In the last game Miss Douglas, who became Mrs. Chambers, displayed admirable skill, but was clearly outdone in pluck. The game was played at Wimbledon, near London.

Even the British spectators could not help giving the American girl a rousing ovation, and the band struck up "See the Conquering Hero Comes."

In a speech Miss Sutton said:

"I have won twice, but mean to try for a third victory."

The same quality of nerve distinguishes Miss Georgiana Bishop of Pennsylvania, who two years ago, clearly demonstrated her superiority over the world as a woman golf player. Miss Lottie Ford, an English woman, had enjoyed this distinction.

Long ago England ceased to compete for big honors in the boxing ring. She has, indeed, produced no great prize fighter since Charlie Mitchell was beaten by John L. Sullivan.

This, however, caused her no annoyance. Prize fighting, the Englishman would quite rightly remind you, has ceased to be considered a genteel sport in England, the lords and dukes have withheld their encouragement from it, and as a natural consequence no victories in this line have been recorded.

In the matter of yachting there is also a good reason. There can be no denying the superiority in sportsmanship of such men as Sir Thomas Lipton and Lord Dunsraven. When a British yacht fails to score a victory in England, the cause cannot be attributed to lack of British vigor or suppleness. If degeneracy there be, it must be on the part of the yachting crew, when ingenuity may have much to do with winning a race, or the designer of the boat.

Nor are victories over British race horses, as when Richard Croker's Orby

recently won the English Derby, to be attributed to failure in British physique. The most that has been said along this line is that the American jockeys are more resourceful and daring than their British opponents.

In shot putting and hammer throwing England has for years laid no claims to superiority, although she finds a morsel of consolation in the thought that the champions in those lines are Irishmen, so near to her own shores. But Americans reply that such men as Flanagan have accepted America as the land of their adoption and have developed their great strength on this side of the water.

In running England has retained but one light, but he is big enough to maintain her prestige. Alfred Shrubbs, has indeed, been referred to as late as England's "lonely champion."

Only a few days ago he came to America and found the best distance runners on this side say prey.

At the Cavan men's games, at Celtic park, New York, he easily beat Frank Kennedy, of Boston, the American champion, in a three-mile race, and at the end of the race Kennedy said:

"I have had enough. I will never try it again. No man living in my opinion, can make Shrubbs run his fastest."

Although cycling long since degenerated in interest in England, it was not until after such men as Arthur Zimmerman and Frank Kramer, both Americans, had demonstrated that even such a fast cyclist as J. S. Beatty, the English amateur champion, stood no show at all.

Arnold Masse's winning the open golf championship of the world from England recently was another black eye.

Scores of letters are being printed in the British press in which the writers castigate the British youth of the present day, and editorialists by thoughtful English journalists indicate an opinion that the failure of the modern youth in athletics threatens dire harm to the nation.

Does it mean that British physique is degenerating?

Perhaps the opinion of the captain of the New Zealand team that beat England's football champions last year may be elucidating.

"It follows," said he, "that in a young country, where there is so much to be done and so much less prodding of what has been done, there is a much smaller percentage of men engaged in clerical positions and other indoor occupations than in a country like England. This means greater physical strength."

Again, an English authority has pointed out that the law of probability would account for the loss of a number of championships—an open

golf championship once in ten years, a test match once in seven, the chess race at Henley once in twelve, and so on.

The odds against the recurrence of such a "coincidence" as that of the last season, he urges, are very great.

In shot putting and hammer throwing Americans are undoubtedly accounted for by the fact that in America, the athletic specialties, while in England he generalizes, and that in American colleges high salaried trainers and coaches are engaged, while in English colleges none at all are hired.

Again, it is confessed that the English athlete is hampered by traditional conventions. His methods tend to become stereotyped, he is apt to prefer the elegancies of customary "form" to effectiveness.

Englishmen admit that American athletes, with their open minds and development of initiative, have taught them such things as these: That the jockey's weight should be scientifically bestowed; that a boxing bout may be terminated by two or three varieties of knockout blows; that several inches may be added to a jumper's record by twisting his body in mid-air; that a foot or two may be gained in a short race by starting from a crouching position, instead of standing up; that training for sprints and hurdles is half the battle; that tricks at "service" mean much in tennis—these and many other athletic notions which the slower-going English mind never thought of.

In England the sporting atmosphere has not suffered. You can almost anywhere see in different parts of the country a dozen men attending by 20,000 to 30,000 people, while our meagre men in America attended by 10,000 people. No man living in my opinion, can make Shrubbs run his fastest."

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same conditions as men and may give private lectures in clinical hospitals and be appointed assistants by the professors. Dr. Edin Richter, who is forty years of age, is the first lecturer on Roumanian philology, and is among those whose persistency and talent have won this wider way for women.

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The Boarding-House Mistress.

Remember when the tea is weak, And when you criticize, The flavor of the butterine, And filling of the pie, The mistress of a boarding-house Has troubles of her own, And if she had her way, no doubt Would rather live alone.

Just think of what a dreary place the world of ours would be, if on the homeless host of us She chanced to turn the key, We'd have to tent beneath the stars Or in an alley dream, And prolegated breakfast food For once would reign supreme.

The history of the bill is interesting because it throws some light upon the manner in which these subjects were dealt with half a century ago. A certain duke, who had wide conservative influence, had contracted an alliance with a deceased wife's sister, and it was of vital importance that that alliance should be made legal. The chancellor of the day, the great Lord Lyndhurst, was then approached by the duke, who was all powerful in his time, the famous Duke of Wellington, for he was personally interested that this marriage should be placed beyond all legal doubt and beyond all ecclesiastical censure. The church was shaking off Erastianism; the Oxford movement had already begun. Lord Lyndhurst, however, was unaware of those conditions, and framed a bill legalizing all such unions already contracted or to be contracted; but when this bill was placed before the bishops he found that there was a deep-rooted feeling against it.

"Well, never mind," Lord Lyndhurst is reported to have said, "if it cannot be made good let it be made bad; I care not how it is." Consequently all such marriages were made illegal for the future, thus legalizing those that had been already solemnized. The duke obtained his wishes and the matter rested for a time, but the agitation has been perennial, and since 1851 almost every year some measure has been introduced and rejected.

Women in Austria have achieved a victory. The minister of public instruction has at last declared that from the present time girls and women may enter the university on the

FAR REACHING RESULTS.

Marriage With a Deceased Wife's Sister.

By Lady Henry Somerset.

London, Sept. 25.—The passing of the bill dealing with marriage with a deceased wife's sister, will have far-reaching results, probably wider than any foreseen by those who take a surface view of the matter. For the first time both houses of parliament have passed an act in direct contravention of the church law. For seventy years this matter has been fought, and now at last such marriages have been legalized.

It has been stated that the present marriage law in England is an anomaly, because such marriages are legal in the Channel Islands, which form a part of our country, and in Canada and Australia; but, on the other hand, the Anglican church is not by law established either in Canada or Australia, consequently the church is free to take her own view on this matter, and such marriages, though recognized by the state, need not necessarily be recognized by the church. But in England the matter is different, the church and the state have been united, and the state is now asking the church to make a radical alteration of its bidding, in the canon law. The result, however, is to place the church and the state at distinct variance. The bishop of London writes that no clergy are called upon to solemnize such marriages, or to lend their churches for the purpose. Many of the laity have, the bishop says, written to him to ask what they ought to do as to sending away their sisters-in-law who are now bringing up their children, and how they are to be brought into new relations which make their remaining in the houses of their brothers-in-law difficult and inadvisable. The bishop replies that the church protects them, because as the church does not recognize such marriages, their position is where it was before, and under this protection they may continue to be happy and beneficent arrangements by which they were able to care for their dead sister's children.

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THE MAIDEN PRINCESS.

Will Likely Seek Mate Among English Nobility.

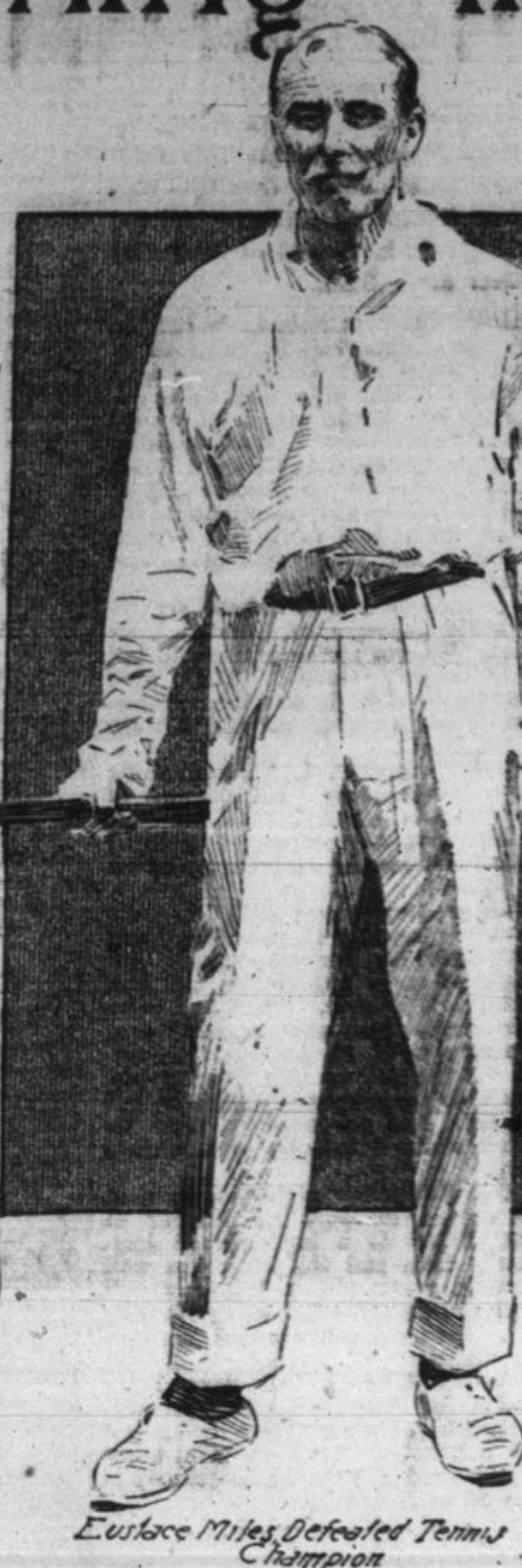
Princess Patricia of Connaught is now the only maiden princess of her age and generation of English birth and upbringing. Her royal highness is naturally an object of interest to those important people who take a state as well as a sentimental interest in the matrimonial alliances of our royal family, and the princess has been more than once betrothed, by rumor, the last occasion being that on which her forthcoming marriage to the Emperor of Russia's only brother had to be officially contradicted. It has also been whispered, of late, that the pretty royal maiden will follow the example of her first cousin, the Duchess of Fife, and seek a mate in the great English nobility, and further that in that case Wales would be her home.

Despite denials, the recurrence of this latter rumor has led many people to believe in it. For it will be remembered that the King of Spain's engagement to Princess Victoria was never solemnly publicly contradicted. Princess Patricia, whose first name, by the way, is Victoria, is the third and last child of her parents, and she was born on St. Patrick's Day in 1886 at Buckingham Palace.

Through her mother she is descended from one of Germany's greatest war lords, the powerful Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia, who, owing to the brilliancy of his locks, was nicknamed the "Red Prince." The two daughters of the Duke and Duchess of Connaught were brought up very simply, and much as were their aunts, Queen Victoria's daughters.

Great attention was paid to their accomplishments, and both Princess Margaret—who is now the future Queen of Sweden—and Princess Patricia were taught music by Signor Carlo Albanesi, the noted composer and pianist.

Moorish rebels, numbering about 3,000 men, have defeated a force of imperial troops in a battle which lasted a day and a half. The rebels cut off the heads of twenty-eight of the sultan's soldiers as trophies.



Eustace Miles Defeated Tennis Champion



Lottie Ford, England's Best Woman Golfer

Punch's View of the Athletic Situation. The only Champion left!



Alfred Shrubbs, England's Lonely Champion

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