

Life At West Point.

Uncle Sam takes a great interest in developing the perfect type of the American man. West Point is Uncle Sam's principal factory, and there men are developed under conditions as rigorous as those that made the warriors of ancient Sparta the greatest fighters of their time. It is no boy's play to take a course at West Point, but when the four years of hard work is over and the cadets become officers in the army of the United States the result is worth all the trouble that it cost.

Uncle Sam is not experimenting any more, says a writer in the New York Evening World. He knows the best way to turn out men that are perfect physically and mentally. And so a comparison of Uncle Sam's methods with the free and easy athletic life of our college and club athletes is of some interest.

In the first place a boy must be strong and healthy and able to pass strict physical and mental examinations before he can get into West Point. But on entering he is only good raw material. The four-year grind brings out the best that is in him.

The moment a youngster enters the academy every moment of his time is mapped out by his superiors and he is moved about like a pawn on a chess board, with no volition of his own. He has certain kinds of work to do. If he does it well he goes on smoothly until his graduation. If he can't or will not do the work laid out for him and keep strictly to the regulations he is dropped and that's the end of it. Uncle Sam has not time to waste puttering around with unsatisfactory material—and there is always plenty of good material at the gates.

Stirring Scenes at West Point.

On arriving at West Point to make a study of the system by which the United States rears men to command its armies I felt proud that I was an American, born and bred.

In all the castled cities of Europe there is no more magnificent scene than West Point presents, perched on a hill, marvelous in the grandeur of its massive architecture, looking down upon the broad sweep of a river beside which the Rhine is a mere mill stream. On the reservation everything was busy. Everywhere candidates were doing sentry duty, pacing up and down and paying little attention to the storm or the cold sleet that was driven into their faces, as fine looking a lot of youngsters as any one could find anywhere in the world.

An officer met me and we began a trip into a strange (Dallas), Davidson's

Uncle Sam is a strict disciplinarian. One of his wards would have had a hard time getting into mischief. In the first place, the cadet is not allowed a day's leave. His family might live a mile from the reservation. For two years he could not go to make them a visit. The rule, like all of Uncle Sam's rules for his cadets, is as inflexible as cast iron.

People advocate the "simple life" for those who want health and strength. No one who has never visited West Point knows what the simple life is. West Point is the only place I've ever seen where the simple life is enforced to the last letter—it's a complex life—so complex that it's a

wonder any boy can master its intricacies.

Mas No Pocket Money.

While in West Point he is not allowed to have money in his possession. He pays his clothing and his "mess" on a credit system out of his government allowance. On the door of each room in the barracks was a printed diagram showing what must be exactly the position of each article in the room. Everything is done absolutely by rule. To get a new pair of socks, or to have a torn garment mended, the cadet must apply for permission in writing, and wait until his request is officially approved. On the table in each room was a thick book of regulations. The breaking of even the slightest of these meant demerit marks—106 demerit marks during six months, immediate expulsion from the academy. A cadet might have 104 demerit marks. Enough dust on the top shelf of his closet to mark an inspecting officer's white gloves—and out he goes.

And the daily routine is ironclad. Each cadet is "checked up" nineteen times a day. To absent or even a moment late on one of these nineteen occasions would mean demerit marks. The cadet is called out—reveille—at 5:45 a. m. Roll call is at six, every man newly shaved and fully dressed for the day. They say any cadet can shave—and there aren't ten safety razors in West Point—and dress in five minutes. After sweeping and making up their rooms they march to the mess rooms with drum corps and martial music at 6:25. Breakfast at 6:30. After that comes the day of recitations and military duties and horseback riding and gymnasium work, ending with a short, "release from quarters," during which the cadet is allowed to spend his time playing football, baseball, polo, tennis, handball or some other game, or in the gymnasium, fencing, boxing, wrestling or swimming. The cadet can make up his cot and go to bed after nine o'clock. He must be in bed by ten.

Except in the two and a half months of the summer season when the cadets are in camp on the reservation "roughing it" like real soldiers, released entirely from studies and engaged in applying their knowledge practically, they have certain prescribed forms of exercise in the gymnasium, taken in "sections" of some forty or fifty men. These exercises are compulsory. All of the athletic sports and competitions, like football, baseball and track athletics, are voluntary, and may be indulged in only during the short hour or so of liberty each day. The development of West Point's great football teams under their military studies and drills all help to develop strategy and team work. Of compulsory gymnasium work, the members of entering, or fourth class, have five hours a week—one hour daily—the men of the other three classes having three hours a week each. Of course, there is a great deal of drilling and marching, and these exercises do as much good as the work on the apparatus. Fencing, boxing, wrestling, athletics and other sports are handled in such a way as to bring out a great number of contestants, the one object being to benefit every cadet, not only a few champions and specialists.

The Japanese consul once brought a jujitsu expert to West Point to

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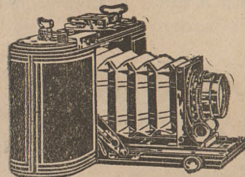
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show how superior the Japanese method was. "Show him the American method," was the whisper between the cadets. Tipton, the big linesman, was put on. He walked right at the Jap, who caught a grip on his jacket and kicked him in the stomach. This didn't fit in with Tipton's ideas of fair fighting, jujitsu or no jujitsu, and, falling on the Jap in a rage, he smashed him to the floor, caught a strangle hold and choked him until his eyes hung out. The onlookers tried to drag him off, but he held his grip until the commandant himself ordered him to let go. The Japanese jujitsu expert was rescued, barely alive, and that ended all talk of introducing the Japanese method of fighting at West Point.

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