

SOME PLAIN TALK ON JIM THORPE'S CASE.

Philadelphia, Feb 8.—James Thorpe, the greatest all-around athlete that ever lived, stands guilty of the heinous offense of having been found out. There is nothing with which he has been charged that has not been practiced for the past 25 years at least, and the chances are will be practiced for the next 25 to come, and that, too, with the full knowledge of many of those who are supposed to foster pure amateurism and to discourage professionalism. If every athlete who has accepted, directly or indirectly, recompense for his services in so-called Simon pure athletic events were to be given the same treatment as Thorpe received, there wouldn't be enough of them left to start a crap game. It takes money to be a pure amateur, writes Frank Lough in the "Old Sports" column of the Inquirer. The greatest athlete in the world cannot live on wind, and if he has no financial resources of his own he must necessarily realize on his ability in one way or the other. In Thorpe's case summer baseball was the medium adopted. Terrible, wasn't it? No one ever heard of pure amateurs playing on summer baseball lines before, did they? Out on such hypocrisy!

If before the American team was sent to Stockholm to compete in the Olympic games the informer who ultimately caused the great Indian athlete to be placed under the ban had come forward and protested his amateurism, a mild sensation might have been caused, and the informer felicitated for his zealousness in the interest of pure amateurism. There could have been no after-discovered evidence regarding Thorpe's amateur status. Everything that was known two weeks ago must have been known a year ago, for according to report he played summer baseball for two seasons. What was the inspiration of the informer? It couldn't have been his overweening love for pure amateurism, or he would have made his squeal before Thorpe had the opportunity to show up the very pick of the athletes of the world. What could have been the inducement?

Needs Looking Into.

There is something more behind this than pure disinterestedness in the cause of amateurism, and the high muckamucks of the A. A. U., who were so prompt to visit their holy official displeasure upon Thorpe, should look into it. Fagin was an "accessory before the crime" in the case of Nancy Sykes, and the informer in this instance is just as culpable as Thorpe. If there is anything like squareness in

the conduct of the affairs of the A. A. U., this informer will be shown up, and, if it is proved he is a member of that organization, he will be incontinently fired on the ground that he failed in his duty as a "friend of the court." If he was on the level, and knew that Thorpe contemplated a violation of the sanctity of the amateur code, he would have lodged the information before the proper authorities in ample time to permit them making an investigation before the American team was sent abroad.

Probably the most remarkable thing in connection with this unfortunate affair is the difference in the tone of the newspaper comment here and abroad. Ever since the inauguration of the Olympic meets the quality of our amateurism has been under suspicion, particularly in England. Consequently, if the papers of England and the continent had seized the disclosures in the Thorpe case as a justification of their previous suspicions and construed them as proof, positive of the entire rottenness of our system of amateur athletics, there would have been no occasion for surprise. Instead of a general all-around roasting, however, the foreign critics have shown a charitableness in dealing with the episode that the papers here, as well as the officials of the A. A. U., might have emulated without casting any reflections upon their own standards of pure amateurism. In fact, some of them are inclined to think Thorpe was more sinned against than sinning, and the Swedish authorities go so far as to express the opinion that Thorpe should be permitted to retain the trophies he won.

Failure Somewhere.

Just how the A. A. U. authorities can hope to escape blameless for the imposition—assuming it was an imposition—practiced upon the Olympic officials is not clear. If they were always faithful and alert they should be prepared at any time to underwrite the amateur status of any athlete entered either in a national or international competition. And the almost indecent haste they showed to visit their official displeasure upon Thorpe only tends to emphasize their lack of capacity or system in dealing with the whole question of amateurism. It is said the propose to give the matter a thorough investigation. Fine! And while about it, they might throw the probe into themselves.

But long after the cheap skate whose information led to Thorpe's undoing and the A. A. U. officials who were so quick to act upon it are forgotten, the wonderful exploits of James Thorpe at the Olympic games in 1912 will be recalled and discussed by legions of athletes yet unborn.