

# Athletes Among the Cops.

Many Strong Men Besides Flanagan, and Some Swift Ones, Too.

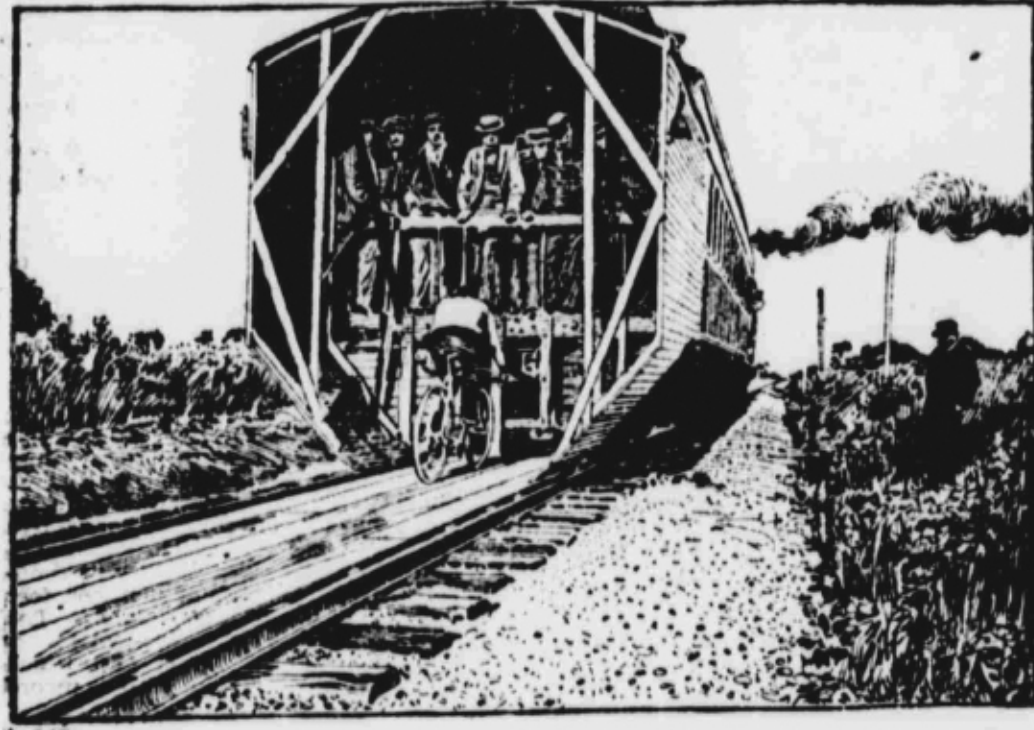
Now that John Flanagan, the hammer thrower, has put on the coat of blue and grappled the night stick, there is more talk than ever of reviving the Police Athletic Association. Most of the young men of to-day either never knew or have forgotten that there ever was such an organization, and that Billy Muldoon, the wrestler, was its bright particular star.

That ancient band of athletes was wrecked and scattered by dissension. Hard words and things that are even harder than words were flung back and forth in Glass Hall, the meeting place in Thirty-fourth street near Third avenue; something of a scandal was created by the rows that occurred,

better bestowed than when they are given to a policeman.

Flanagan, who will be the king pin of the athletic cops, is attached to the East Fifty-first street station. Long ago, before he ever thought of being a great man or a policeman, he used to tie a rope or a chain around a stone in his native Irish village and fling it as he now throws the hammer, his competitors then being the lads of the neighborhood.

The boys down at Princeton, where Flanagan used to go to teach the young idea how to heave the weights, say that when he went to the games at which he won the championship of Ireland he had never even



MURPHY RIDING HIS FAMOUS MILE.

and the Police Athletic Association died a dishonorable death.

Muldoon turned in his badge and became famous as wrestler and trainer. He has a sanitarium now, where he ministers to the fat and the indiscreet, rubs out their flabbiness and their headaches and sends them back into the world equipped to lead nobler and better lives. If they don't so isn't his fault.

The shortcomings of the old association having been forgotten, many of the cops think the time is ripe for forming a new one, and they think so all the more now that one of the world's most renowned athletes has joined the guild.

There are not many Flanagans on the



"MILE-A-MINUTE" MURPHY.

force, but there are perhaps two score of men who would be a credit to any athletic club, men who have taken part in athletic meets with the best of the strong and fleet and who have no reason to be ashamed of their records. There are blue-coats, two or three, who have in their day held the centre of the stage—Murphy, who with his bicycle earned the name of "Mile a Minute," and Albert, who plugged out more laps in the course of six days than any rider who had gone before him.

It is fair to presume that with an association formed to develop the prowess of the men and stimulate rivalry among them, many a performer of high degree, now unknown and probably himself unconscious of his talent, would come to the front.

The police force is a natural refuge for the athlete. He usually comes into championship form so young that he has not thoroughly learned any trade, and during his heyday he usually doesn't care or think about the bread and butter problem. But youth and championships are fleeting possessions. They're here to-day and gone to-morrow. And almost before he has had time to set his silver mugs and gold medals in order the world is demanding a day's work for a day's pay from your ex-champion.

For such as these the Police Department is good, and they are good for the Police Department, too. Qualities like strength and agility and pluck—for you can't be an athlete without gameness—surely are never

seen a regulation sixteen-pound hammer—which nowadays isn't a hammer at all, but a sort of ball and chain. Be that as it may, he won the championship of Ireland, and he still holds eight Irish records of one kind or another.

Then he crossed to England and cleaned up all comers in 1896, and from 1897 to the present day he has been the American champion. The world's championship is his, too, and until some one can establish a higher mark than the 171 feet 9 inches which he made on Sept. 3, 1901, at Celtic Park, his it will remain.

That throw was made from a seven-foot circle. His record of 164.1 made from a nine-foot circle also challenges the world, and his cast of 36 feet 9½ inches with the fifty-six-pound weight, done at Celtic Park on Oct. 20, 1901, is unequalled. In 1900 he won the championship of England at hammer throwing, crossed over to Paris and outdid his rivals at the Olympian games with a throw of 167.4 and then captured the championship of Canada.

There's a wonderful difference between big Flanagan and Charles J. Murphy, the Brooklyn cop who, next to Flanagan, will shed the most lustre on the athletic department of the force. There are men, who have known athletes and athletics for a many a year, who will tell you that Charlie Murphy in their estimation holds the record for nerve, and fully expect that some day the call will come in answering which Murphy will show that he is as brave an officer as he was a sportsman.

Murphy's ride behind a train on the Long Island Railroad on June 30, 1899, will be



JOHN FLANAGAN A WORLD'S CHAMPION.

remembered as long as men tell the tales of daring deeds. A swift locomotive and a passenger coach were engaged and a board track was laid between the rails on the Maywood branch. From the back of the coach a hood was built out so that Murphy, riding behind the train which was to be his pacemaker, should be sheltered from the resistance of the wind.

The measured mile was indicated by red flags at the start and finish, but of course the train and the rider got under way for a flying start before the first flag was reached. It was part of the terms of the trial that the engineer should pull out for all he was worth at the beginning of the mile, but that Murphy should not know by any sign when the actual run began.

The engineer did his part at the opening stage of the performance to perfection. When they dashed by the flag Murphy on his wheel was well within the hood, and a party of witnesses, including James E. Sullivan, as referee, stood on the back platform of the car watching him. Up and down flew his legs so rapidly that

they were just a blur of white to the on-lookers, but fast as they whirled the pedals the bicycle wasn't keeping up with the pacemaker. Inch by inch the wheel receded till Murphy was out of the hood and still dropping back.

The wind was drawing to a focus behind the train, and where its currents met a funnel-shaped cloud of dust and pebbles was rising. Some of the watchers knew that if Murphy's bicycle came in contact with that little whirlwind it would be overturned and he would almost certainly be killed, and the awful fear that was upon them was pictured in their faces.

Murphy's trainer bent low on the platform and urged him on with a quiet word just as a jockey will talk to his horse. The rider, with death almost touching him, heard the call and responded. The white legs cut the air faster and faster, the distance between the bicycle and the train grew shorter and shorter and in a few seconds Murphy was back within the enclosure and his life was saved—saved, that is, for the moment, but it was soon in peril again.

The engineer was a poor pacemaker—not that it was his fault, he hadn't been properly instructed. When he passed the second flag he shut off steam and slowed down so abruptly that Murphy came head on toward the back of the train, and once more a look of horror spread over the faces of the men on the platform.

Some of them crouched down and reached for him and how they got him even they do not know, but get him they did, and so he cheated the undertaker twice within thirty seconds.

His time for the mile was 57.04 seconds, which shows that he deserves even better than his nickname of "Mile a Minute."

That performance was given to advertise a certain make of bicycle. When it was over and the agent of the company who had managed it realized how near it had come to being a tragedy he sat down in the car and wept hysterically. It has never been repeated and never will be with the consent of those who saw it.

The other great bicycle rider of the department is Frank Albert, the six-day race winner of old. He never did a mile in a minute or anywhere near it, but he used to plug and plug, day in and day out, and cross the wire at the head of the parade in the long-distance races of ten years ago. Nowadays, when there is any cycling at the Garden Albert manages to get detailed there to keep the crowd in order, and as he watches the speedy boys of 1903 he grows reminiscent.

Michael Cogan of the Oak street station is a runner of fine antecedents and, though never a champion, his performances at distances from 100 yards to the quarter mile have placed him high in his class. They call him the "Lightning Cop." Like almost all the athletic policemen, he belongs to the Greater New York Irish Athletic Club, which has its field days at Coney Beach.

William Ryan, who reports at East Sixty-seventh street, has been a fast man, too, at the half mile and the mile, and often used to compete in races as the representative of the Xavier Athletic Club. Roundsman Martin Reagan, who guards the frontier somewhere down in Queens, Ed Struble and A. J. Kenney, should not be forgotten in any roster of the fleet-footed police, and Kenney could not only run, but was also a fine jumper.

There are several policemen besides Flanagan who have attracted attention by their knack and power at throwing the weights. James J. Pendergast of the Fifty-first street station is one of them. He came over with the party of athletes known as the Irish Invaders in 1898, and he was a mighty man with the weights and a splendid hurler.

Richard J. Sheridan hurled the discus to such good purpose at the Travers Island games of 1902 that he's the champion of the year, with a throw of 113 feet 7 inches—but that, of course, doesn't mean that his is the best record. Sheridan is a Partime A. C. man. P. J. J. Dinan, another Partime A. C. representative, is an accomplished man with the weights, an all-round athlete and a sprinter of good report. Among the other weight throwers who are recognized from their performances as men of high degree are Roundsman John McCarthy of South Brooklyn, Michael Hines and Jim McDermott, who may be seen any day in front of the Equitable Building. McDermott was a champion shot putter well nigh a quarter century ago.

Perhaps no class of athletes seems to drift more naturally to the force than the boxers, and of all the boxers who ever wore a police uniform none has become it better than Frank Sabulka of Fifth street. Time has made a long flight since 1883, when Sabulka was the champion amateur middleweight boxer, but there are men who do not yet consider themselves middle-aged who remember his fighting days with fondness. He was a club-swinger, too, and a fine trainer of other athletes.

Detective Sergeant Frank Fvanhoe was a middleweight boxer, whom it was a delight to see about the time of Sabulka's prime, and Detective Sergeant William F. Peabody was both boxer and sprinter though he never ran away.

James Pilkington, the subway contractor, was a cop in his day and in 1882 was the American champion amateur heavyweight boxer, the American champion amateur wrestler and a champion oarsman to boot.

Capt. Reilly dearly loved a fighter and wherever he commanded there were pretty sure to be two or three coppers who were handy with the gloves. When he ran the Tenderloin an actor and theatrical manager named Smith, who had formed an "Uncle Tom's Cabin" trust, and thought he could box, besides doing all these other things, went to Reilly and boasted that he could knock out any man in the squad. Reilly found an opponent for him and turned the pair loose in his own office, and great was the fall of Smith.

There are some old sports in town who think they remember that the man Capt. Reilly picked to do battle for the precinct was Charlie Kammer. And that may well have been so, for Kammer was a fast and clever man and came into middleweight championship form in 1888 and 1889.

Serret James Quirley was a wrestler in the old Muldoon days and met Muldoon, Bibby, Matsuda Sorakachi, the Jap; and other men of mark. He's on the retired list now and dwells in peace and comfort down Bensonhurst way.

There was a time when walking was held in higher esteem as a sport than it is now. Fred J. Mott, now a detective in Harlem, was one of the swiftest heel-and-toe pacers of those days. His record of 12½ seconds for seventy-five yards made in 1878 outdid all the others. Don Lehane of Fifty-first street was the winner of many prizes then and walked his mile inside of seven minutes.

Jack Lynch, the old Metropolitan pitcher—who that is getting into the vere and yellow doesn't remember Jack and the 'c's and will not be glad to hear after all these many days that he's doing nicely, thank you, as a member of the boiler-inspecting squad?

John Farnum and Clarence Martin of Fifty-first street have played good ball, too, the one in the State League and the other as shortstop at Fordham. There's a famous base-stealer in Fifty-first street, Edward M. Cassidy, a Canadian, who used to pursue the ball at Three Rivers, Montreal and other places in the Dominion.

Every man who has been named has some record and reputation in the athletic world, and undoubtedly there may be others equally worthy of passing note. When their new club is formed may the race be to the swift and the battle to the strong.