

# LETTER TO UNITED IRELAND, OCTOBER 25<sup>th</sup>, 1884.

SIR – My friend Maurice Davin has spoken. I am very glad he has. Through him a leader who is spotless in the midst of the speckled has spoken. He has had very considerable experience of Irish and English athletics. His modesty, which is as well known as his big Tipperary heart and his physical and moral strength and courage, will not allow him to say that jumping and stone-throwing declined in England after he and his brother had totally eclipsed the best specimens of the English athletes at Birmingham in 1881. I can conceive no creature more contemptible than the Irishman who wishes that in every contest a man who is not an Irishman should be victorious. Under existing arrangements our athletic sports consist of contests in which Irishmen are yet far behind Englishmen. Weight-throwing, jumping, hurling, Irish football, wrestling, bowling, &c., which are national pastimes, are shoved aside to make room for foot-races and bicycle-races, at which we can be easily beaten. The latter are very good in their way; but they have to be given up at a comparatively early age, and the training and requisite machinery place them beyond the reach of the vast majority of the Irish people. Moreover, it is in the highest degree humiliating that a man could not take off his coat at such an athletic meeting as was held at Gorey, a few weeks ago, without getting boycotted at Carlow or Monasterevan by the foreign faction. I, therefore, think that, in obedience to the call of duty, I should offer my humble advice as publicly as Mr. Davin has done, in the event of a meeting being held to draft laws for the promotion and conservation of every form of Irish sport. I have had several conversations on the subject with many representative Irishmen, and they all agree that the suggestions you offered a fortnight ago should at once be acted upon. It seems to be the general feeling that a meeting should be held at Thurles on Saturday, the 1<sup>st</sup> of November. Accordingly, steps are being taken to summon by circular representative Irishmen for that place and time. May I express

a hope that that circular will be responded to by those who desire to see genuine Irish athletics revived.

Yours faithfully,  
MICHAEL CUSACK

4 Gardiner's-place, Dublin  
October 23, 1884.