

# LUDUS PRO PATRIA

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It is somewhat strange that M<sup>r</sup> Kipling's fulmination against the « flannelled fool » and the « muddied oaf » should have been published at the very time when the old Latin precept is being revived throughout continental Europe and taken up by the New World communities as well. Never since the days of Chivalry has Sport played so large a part in the preparation for war as it plays to-day. In the most military state of Europe, Germany, the emperor is continually endeavouring to promote every kind of manly exercise amongst his subjects, while the present Head of the great American Republic, President Roosevelt, is not only a notable, athlete, but made himself famous, during the Cuban war, as a brilliant leader of irregular Horse. Last year, at the first meeting of the « Northern games », in Stockholm, officers of the army were conspicuous amongst the winners of the races. Quite recently, the French alpine troops have been taught Ski-running and are said to have been wonderfully successful in their attempts. Fencing is spreading everywhere and the fact that so renowned a swordsman as Cav. Pini should have been called to Buenos-Ayres, by the Argentine government, to take charge of the military school there, is surely a significant one. During the past twenty years, Switzerland has been organizing a very powerful army, which derives its greatest efficiency from the exercises and drills daily enforced in the schools and colleges on boys and young men, whose further training as soldiers is thus made as short and easy as it can be. Manly games are gaining ground everywhere in Europe. Several French regiments have lately formed football teams and football has been officially introduced at Joinville-le Pont, the technical school that provides the French army with instructors in gymnastics. Swimming receives more and more attention every day. As to equestrian sports, even the Cossack tricks, far from being considered a useless refinement of dexterity are now largely taught outside of Russia itself. Rough riding is called upon to help in improving military horsemanship and turns out daring horsemen whom no difficulty can daunt. The Italians lead the way and their

magnificent cavalry school at Tor di Quinto, near Rome, is a model in that direction.

Thus, there is not the slightest sign anywhere that the interest in athletic exercises is flagging and, so far, M<sup>r</sup> Kipling remains alone in his condemnation of them. On the contrary, everybody can see that they are gradually losing their private character as a matter of individual recreation and becoming a national affair. The first Olympian games held in Athens, in 1896, were patronized by the King of the Hellenes and the Crown Prince, but without any direct cooperation of the Greek government. In Paris, four years later, the participation of the Republic was much more complete and almost all the officials of the games were nominated by the minister of commerce, acting as Head of the Exhibition Department. Nothing of the kind had been seen at any of the previous International exhibitions held in Paris or elsewhere. The ordinary pleasures and pastimes of the crowd do not usually arouse the interest of the authorities further than is necessary for the maintenance of public order: in the present case, the authorities have considered not only public order, but the public good and have shown much eagerness in endorsing the « Ludus pro Patria » doctrine. Indeed, the only danger from a true sportsman's point of view lies in this tendency ; for State good-will, when exaggerated, may prove more fatal to the progress of Sport than State indifference — or even than State hostility.

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## SIEGFRIED

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Les représentations de l'œuvre célèbre de Richard Wagner, à l'Opéra de Paris, ont ramené l'attention sur la physionomie du héros préféré des légendes Germaniques.

Siegfried nous appartient. Siegfried n'est pas seulement le patron des escrimeurs comme saint Hubert l'est des chasseurs ou saint Georges, des cavaliers, mais il est le type et le modèle de l'athlète en général. On chercherait vainement au sein de