

AMERICAN AMBITIONS

It will be the third time during the last ten years that some of the American leaders will have attempted to overthrow the olympic organization. The first time in 1900 whilst the Paris games were being held. On this occasion, the representative of the Amateur Athletic Union tried to start a movement for the purpose of upsetting the International Committee and transferring to American shores the central olympic power ; his efforts failed. But six years later the work was resumed, notwithstanding the fact that the games of 1904 had been awarded to America by the International Committee and celebrated in Saint-Louis. It was at the time of the Athens games of 1906, the first of the new Greek serie. The representative of the A. A. U. worked very hard to secure the assistance of foreign delegates ; but once more he had to give it up. What is remarkable in this war is that it broke out both times without the slightest kind of « declaration ». The members of the International Committe never knew that they were going to be attacked. On the contrary words of friendship had been sent just before the gun spoke. This may be however a mere coincidence, strange as it is.

Everybody who takes interest in sport matters and many others too have heard of the quarrel between the Amateur Athletic Union of the United States and the Amateur Athletic Association of Great Britain. Whatever people may think on both sides of the ocean with regard to the origin of the quarrel and its character, all must agree that the International Committee stands entirely outside of it. It is the business of the International Committee to decide where the next olympiad is to take place and to see that the games be properly celebrated according to the fundamental rates of their revival. But it is quite natural that those who have the trouble and pay the expenses should be allowed a certain amount of independence in the organization. Thus the international Committee was not to be made responsible for the fact that the British Olympic Council had entrusted to the Amateur Athletic Association of Great Britain the direction and supervision of Athletic sports and field events in the Games of 1908. If the

American Union found anything to blame in this, they had only to write to the International Committee pointing out the inconvenience of such a system and suggesting that a better one be adopted next time. But they did nothing of the kind. They never corresponded with the International Committee ; they simply ignored it, and in their last New-York meeting, they did appoint a committee of five american gentlemen « with power to add to its number others who need not be members of the Union or of its allied bodies, in an effort to bring together representatives of the governing bodies of amateur track and field sports of the nations of the world to the end that there be discussed and decided by such International Committee the time and place of the next international or olympic contests and the events to be decided, the rules and regulations governing such contests, the officers and officials to have charge of such contests and all other matters having to do therewith. »

This unfriendly resolution does not seem to have met with approbation in Europe nor has it created any anxiety whatever with regard to the future of the olympic games. Every one anticipates another failure of the american plan. The Paris correspondent of the New-York Tribune alluding to the coming meeting of the International Committee at Berlin under the patronage of H. I. H. the german Kronprinz and recalling how the members of the Committee were received at the Hague in 1907, when the minister of Foreign Affairs himself greeted them on behalf of the Dutch government says it seems perfectly absurd to think that a few american gentlemen will succeed in superseding such a committee simply because they had a quarrel with british athletes.

Besides, one should not fail to notice that the A. A. U. of the United states deals only with track athletics and field events thus leaving aside more than two thirds of the olympic games. It is true that M. James E. Sullivan who is at present the president of the A. A. U. tried once before to divide the games into two parts designating track athletics and field events under the name of « Olympic games proper » whilst « other sports » would comprise fencing, riding, swimming, boxing, etc... » But the International Committee immediately suppressed this classification, the general rules of the olympic games as established in 1894 being that the modern olympiads shall consist of « autant que possible toutes les formes d'exercices en usage dans le

monde actuel ». Thus equestrian and aquatic sports, fencing, boxing and wrestling, etc... count as much as field events in the olympic games.

The president of the International Olympic Committee has been asked what the committee meant to do with regard to the american action : but he answered they did not mean to do anything because the resolution passed by the A. A. U. did not leave space for a courteous discussion and besides it would be needless to discuss matters that have been settled long ago such as the classification of olympic games. Everybody ought to feel thankful for the great work accomplished by the British Olympic council and satisfied with the tremendous success of the IVth Olympiad. That the Vth Olympiad will be organized with an equal desire to do well and please all nations makes no doubt. But it is rather difficult to please all nations and such gatherings of athletes cannot go without some friction here and there. In the mean time, it may become the International Committee's business to prepare a better code of rules respecting the amateur status. One of the leading sport papers of London considering that the first step towards a solution of the question of amateurism is « to have a full and free ventilation of opinions » has started a world-wide enquiry. Every sentence written or spoken is to be later on submitted to the International Olympic committee as « the only body that is at present in a position to deal with any question affecting international sport and international sports meetings ».

This recognition of the position of the International Olympic Committee will perhaps show the officers of the A. A. U. what blunder they have been committing and lead them to understand that it is perfectly useless to try a third time what they twice have failed to do, circumstances being even far less favourable to day than they ever were before.

LA ROUTE

Jamais on ne s'était tant occupé d'elle. La voici devenue une personnalité tout à fait à la mode. Cela lui a fait du bien, ce succès