

5. — The International Medical and Scientific Union of Physical Education

REPORT ON THE LABORATORY OF RESEARCH FORMED AT AMSTERDAM, 1928.

The Olympiad of Amsterdam has at last been able to institute, thanks to the Doctors assembled at St. Moritz, and thanks also to M. Buytendyk, a plan, which had long been contemplated, but so far not been carried out. An organisation of scientific and medical research has been organised, a laboratory created, which functioned at the Stadium itself, and where Doctors and Scientists of all nations were able to work side by side.

These enquiries, carried out continually during the time before the races and during the races themselves, have become of great importance. The athletes were examined in every possible way exact measurements taken: physical and anatomical points were also collected, the results of which will be published, and these will constitute for the first time a record of all anatomical points concerning the organism of athletes.

These investigations are of the greatest theoretical and practical interest and value; sporting circles should follow them and study them with the greatest attention and encourage the development of the movement. Athletics depend on a profound knowledge of the human body and its functions. All questions of fatigue, of training, should be clearly studied with all the means available at the hands of science. The architecture of the body and in particular of the skeleton is of the very greatest importance for the making of the athlete. As our knowledge increases concerning muscular formation, reactions of the nervous system, the adaptability of the respiratory organs with regard to excessive physical efforts, etc., etc., great improvements will result from rational methods of physical training.

On the other hand, in order to become really fit to take part in Olympic competitions, athletes have to undergo a system of training which is a severe strain to the human organism. In course of this training they run the risk of straining or considerably damaging some important organ, or causing some temporary debility to the athlete, followed sometimes by very serious trouble. The fact is that normal training can only be attained with the help of medical collaboration; by periodical examinations they can test the physical state of the athletes and guard against any harm en-

suing from over training. Thus, for the first time, this collaboration of science and sport has been realised at Amsterdam, all for the good of athletes, and making for progress and improved knowledge. During these tests in Amsterdam the athletes submitted themselves to examination and underwent these tests with the utmost goodwill and with a certain curiosity. However interesting the experiments may be and the results achieved, it may be said that this is only a beginning. This scientific work on sport will continue to improve. Every day there will be an increasing number of Doctors and Scientists taking an interest in this question.

Simultaneously, a Congress of Physical Education, consisting of Doctors, Scientists and Schoolmasters, was convened, and the following important questions were discussed:

1. — The influence of Sport on heart action.
2. — The unification of formularies in medical examinations of sportsmen.
3. — The part physical education should take in general education.

Various important opinions were expressed which will in due course be submitted to the different countries.

It was finally decided that the next Congress shall be held in the United States, probably at Los Angeles during the next Olympiad.

As a result of this Scientific inquiry, the Scientific and Medical International Union of Physical and Education and Sport in close relation with the various sporting organisations and in particular with the International Olympic Committee, has been founded. Doctors and men of science, who have hitherto taken so little interest in sport, have at last quite altered their opinions. It is to be hoped that the leaders of the Sporting Federations and the athletes themselves will have full confidence in the benefits to be derived from this close collaboration between Stadia and the Laboratory.

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