

Speech made by Lord Burghley at a the dinner offered by the Swedish Sport Federations to the I. O. C. and International Federations in Stockholm, June 1947.

It is indeed an honour and privilege to speak on behalf of the great International Federations, but I must confess that I do so with a good deal of trepidation. When I told my neighbour about this, he "helpfully" suggested that if I spoke in Swedish then no one would understand!

I have been told that I must not thank for the dinner as that is to be the privilege of our President, Sigfrid Edström. One thing, however, I have learnt, and that is that Sigfrid is very well able to look after himself! I am, therefore, going to ignore the instructions in so far as to say that for a successful evening you require three things : good food, good wine, and good fellowship, and these we have received in full measure this evening.

To whatever heights one may attain in life, there is, I believe, one man who always makes one feel like a small boy again, and that is "schoolmaster" of one's youth. Sigfrid has filled that position for me for many years—in fact from the moment when I endeavoured, quite unsuccessfully, to bye-pass him and warm up on the Olympic track in Paris in 1924, through the years to last year when he considered me sufficiently trained to succeed him as President of the I. A. A. F. ! I should perhaps add that Sigfrid has been a "kindly" master, although, as you know, he possesses a large stick which he uses enthusiastically on the table, but so far, I am happy to say, has not applied to my nether regions !

We, in the amateur world, and particularly in athletics, owe an immeasurable debt of gratitude to him, and I know you will approve when I tell you that I am proposing to take this occasion to make a presentation to him on behalf of the I. A. A. F. For 34 years from 1912 he guided the destiny of our Federation, and his wisdom and enthusiasm are in no small measure responsible for the great position of authority and respect which the Federation holds today.

This medal which I propose to present to him at the end of my speech, is a beautiful work of art, but

however intrinsically valuable it may be, it can never be more than a token compared to the immense debt which we owe to him, and I can but tell him that it carries with it the deepest appreciation, gratitude, and affection, not only of all in the Federation, but also the good wishes of a wide range of friends throughout amateur sport.

It is, I believe, also to his genius that we owe these meetings, inaugurated last year between the leaders of the International Federations and Executive Committee of the I. O. C. They give us a wonderful opportunity of exchanging ideas and discussing mutual problems, which must be of great value to the furthering of the best interests of amateur sports. And what a great responsibility to sport we have! Here in this room are the leaders of all the great sporting federations in the world ; and on us and our councils, and our wise judgement, the future of world amateur sport must to a great extent depend.

I have wondered sometimes on exactly where our strength really lies, and what principles we should make sure never to lose hold of to ensure the success and progress that we all desire. I think it is above all, because all in the administration of amateur sport are interested in what they "put in and not what they take out." At the same time I feel it must be a cardinal rule to us all that "we keep our ear close to the ground," that is to say, that we never forget we are in fact administering the sport for the thousands of young active competitors of the day, and although we may advise, and strongly advise, from the deep well of our experience, yet in the long run, and rightly so, in my opinion, the wishes of the youth must prevail. In the third place, may I urge that we should do all that we can to draw competitors into the administration of their sport when they retire from active competition. For not only will we thereby ensure a great fund of technical knowledge, but also we will maintain that vital confidence of the active athletes in the administrators of their sport.

I said that we had a great responsibility to sport, but surely we have too an equal one to mankind. Ours is truly a democratic way of life, our officials are voluntary, and are elected with the full support and acclaim of those interested and engaged in the sport. In this world of today, disrupted as it is in the confusion of suspicion, uncertainty, and lack of confidence, surely there is a bright beacon of light in "Amateur Sport." We deal with "cause" and not "effect," and if the hearts of men are sound, their deeds will be too.

I have been asked on occasions why we give so much of our spare time to our work in sport, and my reply is "because it is a labour of love. The highest reward which each and everyone of us aim to achieve is that in the eventide of our lives, when we come to lay down the reins of office, we can say honestly to ourselves that we have made some contribution, however small to our own sport, and to make the world a better and happier place to live in."

This thought I know is in all our hearts. The Federations are sound. They are well and truly founded. The future of amateur sport today is secure. And in far wider fields by meetings like these, with the exchange of ideas and renewal of the brightness of that vision which is before all our eyes, I believe we can and will play an ever more vital and important part in the progress of the physical and spiritual well being of mankind.