

Forty years ago, let us render unto Caesar...

We publish below an extract from a speech delivered by Baron de Coubertin at an official dinner, with Lord Grey, Minister of Foreign Affairs acting as Chairman, offered by the British Government on July 24th 1908, on the occasion of the Games of the IVth Olympiad:

"Last Sunday, at a ceremony which took place in St Paul's Cathedral, in honour of the athletes competing in the Games, the Bishop of Pennsylvania expressed himself in the following appropriate terms:

THE IMPORTANT THING IN THESE COMPETITIONS IS NOT TO WIN BUT TO TAKE PART.

"Let us remember this noteworthy remark, added de Coubertin, because its far reaching influence pervades all fields of activity and constitutes even the basis of a sound and happy philosophy. He then declared :

THE IMPORTANT THING IN LIFE IS NOT THE TRIUMPH BUT THE STRUGGLE. THE ESSENTIAL THING IS NOT TO HAVE CONQUERED BUT TO HAVE FOUGHT WELL.

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The first part of this quotation which has since become historical, is therefore due to the Bishop of Pennsylvania (as de Coubertin says in his Anthology, page 170, published by Roubaud, in Aix-en-Provence in 1933, where his speech was reproduced), while the last part of the quotation is from de Coubertin himself. This will settle a matter which has been argued frequently and give an answer to the queries that have been made us on this question.

Since then, this quotation underwent several modifications. The main, thing, however, is for its meaning as originally conveyed by its promoters, to remain intact and... let us render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's.

Having acknowledged and approved the initial remarks made by the Bishop of Pennsylvania, we still consider that, taking all into account, this quotation can be attributed to Pierre de Coubertin... unless it should appear in future without any signature at all ?