
Academic conference at the headquarters of the Belgian Olympic Committee

In our last Bulletin, we noted very briefly that His Royal Highness Prince Albert of Liège had graciously accepted the Honorary Presidency of the Belgian Olympic Committee.

Today we wish to give an account of the solemn Conference during the course of which Prince Albert was received at the seat of this national Body. This took place on the occasion of a ceremonial academic Conference, in an atmosphere of dignity, simplicity and constructive purpose. The Prince was accompanied by Mr. de Bassompierre, attaché of the Grand Marshall of the Court and by Major Thibaut de Maisières. The Prince of Liège was greeted on his arrival by Mr. Leburton, Minister of Health and Sports, Victor Boin, President of the Belgian Olympic Committee, and José Crahay, the General Secretary.

It fell to Mr. Boin to make the speech of welcome to the Prince, which he delivered in a manner in which elegant humour overlaid a theme rich in subtle nuances as well as constant interest, which, in no way, belied the reputation of Mr. Boin as a public speaker of considerable brilliancy and profundity. He recalled the circumstances in which Baron Pierre de Coubertin had brought together the elite of the athletic world in the great hall of the Sorbonne in Paris, on June 16th 1894, in order that the decision might be taken to inaugurate the Olympic Games of the modern era. With sweeping brush strokes President Boin evoked the spirit, which animates our modern Olympism, and stressed the fact 'that

friendships formed on a basis of sport are mature, solid and longlasting'. He recalled also how sport, the self imposed and habitual culture of intensive muscular exercise can and must play its part in giving to youth the wish to live life to the full.

'The forty-eight Sports Federations, which go to make the Belgian Olympic Committee', continued the speaker, 'do not aim at the production of *phenomena*, but rather at that high general standard which makes sport and open air demonstrations the most effective antidotes for juvenile delinquency...'

Having thanked Prince Albert de Liège for his gracious acceptance of the Honorary Presidency of the Belgian Olympic Committee, Mr. Victor Boin concluded thus : 'Even Princes do not escape the hard lot of man ; they too have their unhappy moments, but we hope that the Honorary President will always have the same pleasure and be imbued with the same enthusiasm as when he is among true sportsmen.'

Mr. José Crahay, General Secretary of the Belgian Olympic Committee, translated the gist of President Victor Boin's noteworthy discourse into Dutch, after which Prince Albert de Liège pledged his *humble but wholehearted* cooperation in the cause of the physical and moral education of youth.

We wish to add that Prince Albert de Liège has been elected member of the International Olympic Committee for Belgium to replace Baron de Trannoy, who resigned. That election took place at the Tokyo Session in May.