

UN DISCOURS DE LORD DESBOROUGH

Le 26 novembre dernier, dans le grand hall de l'hôtel Cecil à Londres, s'est tenu le banquet inaugural des travaux de l'Exposition franco-anglaise de 1908. Il y avait 250 convives réunis sous la présidence du duc d'Argyll. Parmi eux se trouvaient l'ambassadeur de France, le duc de Marlborough, les lords Welby, Egerton, Howe, Stradbroke, Monkswell, Montagu, Biddulph, etc..., les sénateurs français Emile Dupont, Saint-Germain, Mascuraud, les membres du Comité International pour l'Angleterre Lord Desborough, Sir Howard Vincent et le Rev^d de Courcy Laffan. Au dessert, Lord Desborough a prononcé le discours suivant qui a été accueilli par plusieurs salves d'applaudissements :

« Your Grace, your Excellency and gentlemen

To respond to the toast of Sport in connection with this Exhibition is a great honour and it is a toast to which I feel myself unable to do fitting justice. I know of no country which has made greater strides in every branch of sport than has France during the last ten years. In shooting, swimming, bicycling, rowing, foot ball, lawn tennis and many other pastimes they are forcing their way to the front if they are not there already. In motoring, whether on the surface of the earth, below the level of the sea or in the uncertain realms of air, they have lead the way. As swordsmen and I speak from experience, they come, they see, they conquer. But the genius of France does not look upon this modern revival of athleticism from the sporting side alone. She is striving and striving successfully to give it its true place in the progress of the world. This was the spirit which animated the baron Pierre de Coubertin in his untiring efforts to establish again a cycle of Olympic games which should do for the civilized world at the present time what the Olympic games of old did for the scattered and frequently hostile communities of Greece. It is significant to note in this assembly that the revival of the Olympic games was primarily due to the imagination and pertinacy of a Frenchman and it is also significant to note that this same imagination and pertinacy secured, at the great congress held this year in Paris, the inclusion of art, literature and Education as component parts

of the great olympic movement. In responding for sport, in connection with the Franco-british Exhibition, I cannot but feel that sport in its finest and best sense may play a great part in it. The year 1908 in which this Exhibition will be opened is the year in which the celebration of the International Olympic games started in 1896 at Athens and held subsequently at Paris and Saint Louis in America next falls due. It has come to the lot of this country to undertake them. Great Britain is not unknown in the athletic world; the idea of these great olympic games is due to France and so I cannot conceive anything more fitting than that the fourth Olympic games should be held in intimate connection with this great Franco-british Exhibition. It would give an international touch to the Exhibition, it would extend the bounds of friendship wider still. One of the many objets of the Olympic revival is to get the youth, the athletic youth of the various countries meeting in friendly rivalry to know each other better and appreciate each other more. May this be the result of the next great olympiad held on an occasion designed to commemorate a feeling of friendship between two great neighbouring countries.

LE SPORT ET LA BEAUTÉ PLASTIQUE

Le travail qu'on va lire a été présenté par M. Max d'Ollone à la conférence de la Comédie Française. Nous terminons par là la série des communications faites à cette occasion et dont nos lecteurs ont apprécié l'intérêt et la variété.

Un lien logique et puissant — la beauté plastique — unissait chez les Grecs la « gymnastique » aux arts et tous les arts entre eux.

Leur gymnase ne formait pas seulement de merveilleux athlètes sachant, par la grâce et la noblesse de leurs mouvements, produire cette beauté dont étaient empreints les Jeux Olympiques et qui inspirait les Phidias et les Pindare; il formait aussi les acteurs, les danseurs et les mimes et faisait de chaque citoyen un homme apte à saisir la beauté des lignes et des harmonieuses proportions, dans la vie et dans l'art.