

Un dernier mot au sujet des « accessoires ». Pour de certains défiles, on fera utilement porter par les participants les engins de leurs sports : épées d'escrime, avirons, maillets, etc. . . . Mais il faut qu'alors la circonstance soit quelque peu importante et que le cortège ait quelque ampleur. D'autres accessoires d'un effet charmant sont les palmes ; enfin les torches, s'il s'agit d'une fête de nuit. Aucune fête de nuit ne devrait! avoir lieu sans défilé et en tous cas sans tableau vivant agrémentés de torches. La pyrotechnie moderne fournit des torches qui brûlent plusieurs heures sans fumée résineuse, avec beaucoup de régularité et sans faire de taches. Ces torches peuvent revenir à 0,35 ou 0,40 centimes pièce. A partir de douze torches, un effet eurythmique peut déjà être obtenu. Ne par les disposer avec trop de régularité; à espaces et à hauteurs inégales, elles feront plus d'effet en tableau vivant.

Nous terminons, on le voit; comme nous avons commencé. . . . sur des détails. Et sans doute trouvera t-on bien minuscules nombre de ces détails sur lesquels nous avons insisté. Nous renvoyons le lecteur à notre préambule et au programme que nous nous y tracions, évoquant Ruskin et son école et nous plaçant sous l'égide' de ce grand nom. Lui non plus ne dédaignait point les petits préceptes pour arriver à de grandes notions. Et sa conception de l'éducation eurythmique est celle qui nous a guidés.



The chronicle of the amateur spirit.⁽¹⁾

« Athletics, poursuit le D^r Tait Mckenzie, had now passed that point where they could serve their true purpose of providing exercise or recreation. The competition was too severe and the training too artificial and exacting. It became the monopoly of the few professionals who devoted their entire time to it, while the rest of the young men despairing of success took to the hill as spectators. The amateur could not compete with the professional. Before the close of the fifth Century the word athlete had come to denote a professional. . . In Athens the young men now deser-

(1) Voir la *Revue Olympique* de Septembre 1911

ted the palaestrae and the gymnasia for the baths and the marketplace. The winners at Olympia were drawn more and more from Thessaly and the mountains of Arcadia, the poor but sturdy countrymen finding a profitable living as the hired fighters, wrestlers and runners of kings and noblemen. The convenience and comfort of the spectators had to be more carefully considered and elaborate stadia were built at Delphi and Athens. . . . Athletics got into a deplorable condition; bribery was frequent and the sale of victory was as common as in modern professional foot racing or prize fighting. Officials could be approached and corrupted, and scarcely a century elapsed after the freedom of Greece from the Persian peril before we find a class of useless professional athletes hippodroming about the country, an unathletic nation, and a degraded sport. The desire for brutality showed in the change of the soft thongs of leather with which the boxer's hands were bound to the formidable sphaera with their cutting edges that hacked and disfigured the competitor who felt their weight. The introduction of the Pankration competition for boys was another indication of the perverted state of athletics, about 175 B. C. just as we find the same spirit showing in the recent Marathon races for boys. These two things showed that what the crowd wanted was novelty and excitement rather than simple athletic competition. The Olympic games, in fact, became more and more a great fair in which athletics was but a side show, and ranked as an attraction with the huckster, the peddler, the acrobat and the juggler. Here the poet read his verses, and the historian his history, the orators debated and the politicians intrigued ; anyone who had anything to exhibit, sell, or make known came to Olympia, for the crowds showed no signs of falling off. »

Le professeur passe ensuite à la « période romaine » et la résume brièvement; puis enjambant les siècles et se retournant vers ses contemporains, il les cingle d'une verte cravache. Quand il parle notamment du football qui représente « the highest development of sport » il trace des abus qui l'ont gangrené en Amérique ce puissant et noir tableau : « To the practical American the problem was to place the ball behind a certain line as quickly and as frequently as possible, and with an eye single to that purpose the country was scoured by partisans for trainers who would coach teams to accomplish this by fair means or foul and the deliberate beating of the law became an estimable virtue, the only sin being that taught the Spartan boys, the sin of being found out. Material had to be found and the recruiting sergeant

searched the school, farm, lumber camp and mine for men whose proportions were more weighty than their conscience and they became a privileged class whose attitude was of necessity that of the professional whose position depended on his success ». M. Tait McKenzie n'est point pessimiste pourtant et il pense que les mesures adoptées pour combattre ce péril seront efficaces mais le mal ne saurait disparaître rapidement, d'autant qu'il tient à des causes diverses : « The very specialization and study required to fit a man for a place on a good college team in football or baseball or track athletics, for that matter, is such that the mental strain of a football season leaves the highstrung college man morose, irritable or even hysterical; and now *that the field is infested by officials and the game burdened by rules so complicated* that a postgraduate course in the higher mathematics is necessary to permit one even to dispute about them intelligently, the time has surely arrived for a course of downward revision and simplification, and for the consideration of the following four maladies of amateurism all the result of intense specialization and competition. »

Le D^r Tait McKenzie approche ainsi des conclusions à tirer de son travail. Il ramène à quatre les maux dont souffre l'athlétisme et il indiquera aussi quatre remèdes propres à guérir le malade. Voici d'abord le chapitre de la maladie :

« I. The standard of performance is raised so high that the ordinary student, realizing that, he is hopelessly outclassed, gives up playing the game that he would otherwise enjoy and that should be kept within his reach.

II. The competitor is elevated and separated into a special class apart, from his fellows, requiring separate quarters, special diet and consequent privileges to make the drudgery less irksome.

III. The publicity that accompanies the contests puts them into the class of public spectacles for which spectators pay to see and so acquire certain rights over the players who become mere performers. Pressure is thus brought to bear on athletic authorities and rules committees to consider the spectator rather than the man for whom the game should be designed.

IV. The winning of the game becomes more important than the observance of the spirit of the law and the practice of fair play. It is the professional motive which is gain, replacing the amateur motive which is the thrill of the contest ».

Voici maintenant le chapitre de la thérapeutique. Il est à remarquer que M. Tait McKenzie parle en professeur d'univer-

sité, songeant avant tout à ses étudiants mais cela ne diminue pas la valeur de ses conseils. Le deuxième paragraphe excepté — lequel en Europe, d'ailleurs, n'a pas une égale signification à celle qu'il a en Amérique — les dits conseils sont à méditer par tous ceux qui peuvent quelque chose pour le bien du sport.

« I. Keep the standard of excellence down within the reach of more men by discouraging indirect, training and training under forced conditions.

II. Diminish the class distinction between athlete and student fostered by training tables and the privileges that the athlete so often claims as a right.

III. Consider the player first and not the spectator, for the spectacle should be an incident of the game rather than its sole object and its practice a pastime rather than a commercial venture.

IV. Cultivate by a campaign of education in player and spectator alike that wholesomeness of mind, that *Aidos* of which I have spoken so much, so important in our national life, to be found best in clean, honest and manly sport, that makes the sting of defeat nothing when weighed with the consciousness of having won dishonorably or by subterfuge. »

La brochure du professeur Tait Mckenzie se termine sur ces mots. Il n'en pouvait trouver de meilleurs. Ils font écho à d'autres paroles prononcées de l'autre côté de l'Océan et que notre Revue a reproduites en son temps. Il y a un mouvement, qui se dessine de toutes parts en vue de restituer dans les milieux sportifs cet idéal chevaleresque sans lequel le sport ne peut vivre. Aidons les promoteurs de ce mouvement par une inlassable propagande.



Chronique du mois.

Le succès de la traversée de la Manche à la nage a valu à William Burgess un triomphe mérité. Depuis que, le 21 août 1875, le fameux capitaine Webb qui devait plus tard trouver la mort dans les rapides du Niagara, avait accompli cet extraordinaire exploit, bien des tentatives furent osées dont aucune n'aboutit. Webb avait nagé d'Angleterre en France durant