

GAME OF FITNESS

with Dr Carl Diem

The timely distance from the festivities of the-XIV Olympic Games of our era allows the more essential of events to be set off more clearly than would have been possible during the overwhelming symphony of the festivities in London.

The strengthening of the Olympic idea was most marked since 1936. In spite of all the terrible happenings, by which this period was filled, the number of participating nations was increased by ten (to 59), that is to say ten new peoples have joined the ensign of occidental culture. Ten more peoples consider themselves the guardians of the Olympic flame, the youth of ten more nations belongs to the universal community of sport and during the Olympic Games sees the highest festival of sporting idealism and that all civilized nations belong to each other.

But sport has also grown mentally. The game and the deportment becomes more and more united. They just are from one school, the modern sporting school. The methods of this school are common property of such high efficacy against which purely natural talents cannot compete. They appeared less than formerly in the lists of the winners ; successful instead were the types of decathlon com-

petitors, that is to say athletes with a general training compared with those who are talented only one-sidedly. One noticed for instance such athletically trained men also amongst the most successful swimmers compared with those who knew how to be victorious up to then thanks to their « swimmer-figure ». Also the difference between the races begins to disappear and this signifies something decisive, the true fulfilment of the Olympic idea that sport is the means of working out the *all humane*.

But still more important appears to be a second event : More than ever before, this time the older competitors were victorious. This does not say that the younger ones were not there. When looking over the a Official Report » just published the open faces of young people of both sexes in the prime of life are looking at you, the 19 years old d'Orionla, the French foil fencer, Wright, the English middle-weight boxer, Dreyer, of the same age, the South African light-weight boxer, just as old and the wonderful youth, the 17 years old Matthias, the American decathlon competitor just to mention a few. They are in their young years the representatives of their generation who have taken the Olympic flame from their predecessors, in order to hand it over to future generations. But there were really extraordinary many mentioned in the lists of winners or present with successful results of an Olympic standard who also set the flame on fire at the previous or even still earlier Olympic Games and who still are in their full vigour. They are headed by the 40 years old Englishman Finlay, who took the Olympic oath in the name of the athletes of the world. He lost his chance for the final of the 110 m. hurdles by a fall, but he proved himself to be equal to the best of the world in a race requiring all youthful jumping ability. Side by side with him the Swede Lidman must be mentioned, who in 1936 finished the 110 m. hurdles in 14,4 seconds as fourth and twelve years later in 14,3 seconds as sixth. There were several such veterans in the short and long distance runs. In the 400 m. run the Englishman Roberts and the South African Shore were successful competitors of 1936 and they were as good as

BIBLIOGRAPHIE

Un magnifique ouvrage richement illustré vient de paraître aux « Editions Heinzmann », à Zurich. Intitulé « Les Jeux de la XIVe Olympiade de St-Moritz et de Londres 1948 », ce livre existe en deux langues, soit une édition française et l'autre allemande. Prix Fr. s. 53.- A notre avis, cet ouvrage est le meilleur qui ait paru jusqu'à ce jour sur les derniers Jeux. Parmi les préfaces et introductions, signalons celles signées de M. Celio, Président de la Confédération suisse en 1948, de M. J.-S. Edström, Président du C. I. O., de M. Marcel Henninger, Président du Comité olympique suisse et de M. Fritz Erb, membre du C. O. S.