

About the age limit of the members of the I. O. C.

We have received following letter:

« I have read the Article of our Swiss Colleagues on the age question with interest, but I confess also with some alarm. As I see it, whatever happens we must not consider that our chief « *raison d'être* » is to be a pleasant club where the elder members remain until the end of their lives calls them from us. Equally although at times we have to act as an Olympic Senate, this is very far from being the main cause for our existence. Surely, above all, we are the spearhead of the Olympic Movement. It was not by a passive position on a Senate that Baron de Coubertin and his enthusiastic colleagues created the Olympic Movement, it was by always being in the thickest of the fray and at the head of the attack that they convinced so much of the world of the rightness of our cause. If we lack this crusading spirit, it is like a ship without a rudder, and we will have failed in our duty to our great Movement.

» This is the reason for the agitation for some age limitation, with which nearly two-thirds of the I. O. C. have expressed themselves in agreement. The Committee however, has the right to say that it does not desire to lose the advice and refreshing reunions with older members, and it is for this reason that the original proposal — which I heartily support — suggested the creation of Honorary Members. To pass from the fully active to the honorary class is no disgrace, rather it is a mark of

appreciation of good service to the cause and of the respect felt by fellow members.

» Whereas, it is customary in most countries now to have compulsory retirement from such organisations as the army before seventy, and also incidentally in this country by law from the directorship of our businesses, it is recognised that a limited number still keep this vital crusading spirit after reaching this age. Therefore, so as not to lose the advantage of these men, could we not reach agreement that members should as a general rule move into the class of honorary membership at the age of seventy, unless the Executive should — after consultation with the National Olympic Committee of the country concerned — recommend for a decision by the full International Olympic Committee that the member should remain on the active list. This could be renewed from time to time and would ensure not only that he has the confidence on his competency of his colleagues on the International Olympic Committee, but equally that his own democratically elected National Olympic Committee are satisfied that his fire and leadership in his own country are unimpaired.

» It seems to me that some such arrangement, being as it is entirely in keeping with the times might well meet with favour among all members of the Committee and would ensure that that vital crusading spirit on which our Movement has been built is kept burning as brightly as ever. »

LORD DAVID BURGHEY.

