

CHAPTER X

FUTURE

It is always interesting, if not always profitable, to speculate on the future. The future of education depends, of course, on the future of society. And no one knows what it will be. What will be our form of government? Is Democracy outmoded as Hitler and Stalin would have us believe? Most Americans think not. If so, is either of the systems represented by these two a lasting replacement? What effect will scientific progress have on our way of life? For example, assume that sky flivvers will be the future means of travel for all. What then will be the education needed to make everyone a pilot? There is not need to enlarge further on the difficulties a crystal gazer must face in this field.

Moreover, education is often said to lag twenty years behind, and some will say on the wrong track even then; so that we are not now actually getting our children ready even for 1920. The philosophy shaping physical education faces these same uncertainties. For what shall we prepare?

There is as general agreement on aims in physical education as in any other educational field. All students are familiar with, and most accept, the general aims of organic vigor, neuro-muscular skill, recreational learnings, and training in character qualities and in a social way. We all want health, character, sportsmanship, recreational skills, grace and so on. A basic working philosophy has been reasonably well stated - providing life does not change too rapidly. More than ever before people need nervous stability and "constitution". Worthy use of leisure concerns many social thinkers. And so with all the other points emphasized in physical education objectives; how are these goals to be attained?

Commercial sport has come in for much criticism by physical educators. The general public shows less concern. The parallel with ancient Greece is often drawn. Professional athletes are criticized as of no use to society. Gambling and other evils are deplored. Most of all the tendency to make spectators of the majority, "spectatoritis", is strongly condemned. Similar criticisms are made of much of our interscholastic and intercollegiate program. Many of these latter criticisms are not well considered. Some are. Certainly the interschool program is not adequately serving all. No more of course does school debate or music serve all.

Nearly all our students do come in contact with physical education through direct experience in the required program. As a rule, the time here is so limited that this program should be primarily one of teaching. Where, then, shall these teachings be applied? This is the primary function of the intramural program. Here the student should find his recreation for the present and his recreational training for the future. With these points in mind, let us examine intramurals with a view to their future tendencies.

One of these trends will likely be toward more out-of-door play. Gymnasiums are viewed more and more as emergency quarters for inclement weather which do not give all the benefits available in out door air and sunlight. Especially in the winter program is this change likely to be apparent. There should be a considerable expansion in outdoor winter sports, not only sports on snow and ice, but soccer, speedball, etc., in milder winter climates. One marked exception is the indoor swimming pool, which is becoming more common in schools. Aquatic activi-