

Miss Byrn

Yes, Virginia, that is a very fair criticism of my statement. But it is my point that in an average class of thirty girls, we assume, because of our natural interest in the activity, that all thirty of the members of that class are interested in developing a game of tennis to the point where they could win the city championship, and I firmly believe that that assumption is not true. Most girls are aware of their individual limitations and they are not interested in gaining the perfection of the professional in the skills they elect to take. Many of those girls just want to have something to do where they can be out of doors. They like the feel of the sun, the vigorous exercise that leaves them pleasantly tired, the comradeship of perhaps just another dub player. Perhaps they just like the appearance they make in these fetching new sports costumes, but if one is seen wearing a natty new riding habit, it's appropriate to be seen on a horse now and then to avoid being ludicrous. It goes without saying that it's not much of a problem to mount a horse, - it's staying on that requires the knowledge of a few necessary techniques. I'm all for educating as many dubs as possible - regardless of the source of inspiration. For once you establish the habit of activity, the desire to perfect that activity will come in due time. No one wants to remain a dub.

Miss Bell

I know a few of my friends in high school loathed the hours they were forced to spend in the gymnasium, simply because their efforts always resulted in a performance below the average of the class and their shortcomings were always obvious. You can take a French examination or one in mathematics and fail in it and no one knows the difference, but you go to a class in physical education and if you can't stand on your head when the rest of the class can, or you can't remember fast enough which foot goes where in a tap dance - you have to advertise your physical stupidity to the whole class. You may be stuck with a math problem, but you can retire to work on that privately in your own retreat and no one's the wiser.

Miss Byrn

Exactly, Virginia. We need to avoid having students leaving our classes with a feeling of failure and defeat. To enjoy a game we don't have to win every game we play. In order to enjoy doing tap dancing we don't have to dance as well as Fred Astaire. I doubt that Babe Ruth experiences half the thrill you feel when you hit that occasional home run. We have the chance to give the young people with whom we work some of the best ammunition for successful, well balanced living that can be had and we make the hour they spend in our classroom so unpleasant with ugly associations of failure that we defeat ourselves and perhaps do the student immeasurable harm by discouraging any future impulse to explore new fields of activity. When you observed the work being done in the tap dancing class the other day, Virginia, I'm sure you couldn't have failed to notice one young man in the class - the one who always appears to be doing solo work.

Miss Bell

Yes, I remember him. I think I have not seen anyone in a long time who appeared to be so thoroughly enjoying himself.

Miss Byrn

Did you, in the entire period of activity, see him execute one single step perfectly and in time with the music?

Miss Bell

No, I can't say that I did.