

The
Graduate Magazine

of the University of Kansas

Volume 7

April 1909

Number 7

A GENERATION OF ATHLETICS*

THE subject of athletics is one upon which every member of a university and every former member feels that he is an authority. But there is a phase of the subject which has not received general attention, namely, the progress that has been made in athletics in the last generation. When we hear stories of the deeds of our ancestors—the fathers of our country—or even of the deeds of skill and endurance of the alumni of our University, we are likely to conclude that though we may have a monopoly of intellectual ability, yet we are deficient in physical skill and strength as compared with our predecessors.

I suppose that athletics give us the best if not the only test of the physical condition of a people, for the very essence of athletics, and that which differentiates them from other forms of physical effort, is the fact that they may be measured by feet and inches, by minutes and seconds, or at least by points. In the two former cases, these standards of measurement are constant, and thus the records made years ago are capable of comparison with those made today. I have chosen a generation, rather than any other division of time, chiefly because the greatest advance has been made in

*A paper read some months ago, at the University chapel service, by Dr. James Naismith, professor of physical education.