

Salutatory.

In behalf of the class of 1924, I want to welcome all who are assembled here on this occasion. We appreciate the great interest ^{high} taken in this school by the people of the community, and especially on the part of the board of education, for we ^{now} very well ~~know~~ that it is largely through your efforts that it has been made possible for this large class to graduate. We are especially glad to have with us this evening the parents and those interested in our immediate welfare for we feel that our graduates is a proof of your success as well as our own, and hence must bring to you both pleasure and gratification. *A sign of this is a most cordial response.*

To many the acquiring of a mental education is the one big aim in life. In working toward this end many lose sight of ^{their} physical development and after securing what might be considered an excellent education, soon fail in health and are unable to take up their life work. To overcome this the state legislature in 1923 passed an act which requires physical instruction to be given for at least two and one-half hours each week.

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Athletic and exercises for the physical development of the body have been practiced for a great length of time. The most notable examples of early athletic training were the Olympic games held in Ancient Greece. The sports practiced at that time were practically the same as those in colleges and other schools to-day. According to Dr. P. E. Belding, an authority on ^{this} ~~this~~ subject, "the chief exercises were running, jumping, throwing the discus & javelin, wrestling, swimming and hunting. Running was the oldest exercise and very simple". The others ~~were~~ ^{are} all common sports in the schools at the present time. The athletic sports of those days were not for a few persons who were physically superior to the rest, but they were for all who cared to participate, and that usually meant all the young men of that time. So it was a sport in which everyone benefited.

The Greek ideal at that time was a person who had a strong body and also a strong mind to go with the body. They did not believe in being strong in one and weak in the other. This meant that there would be a decided tendency toward mental as well as physical development. But, even

that was not all ~~it meant~~, for it also meant the development of a strong moral character. A person with a body which is physically fit, and a mind of well developed mentality, would naturally be morally stronger than otherwise.

After this period athletic sports lost touch for a time and were only kept up by small groups, thereby only benefiting these small groups.

The development from then until the present day was gradual. In the United States to-day the physical betterment of the individual is looked after, a great deal, in the educational institutions but it has not always been that way. The German and Swedish system of physical training and discipline is one of a military order, so that young men also get regular military training. The English idea again is different. They use the "play" system in which games are introduced into the schools, games which benefit the individual both mentally and physically. The development in the United States was slow compared to the other countries. The higher schools in the East began to take it up around 1825, but it soon passed out, as ~~it was~~ ^{people} regarded it merely as a passing fad.

But about 1850 it came into regular practice in the Eastern schools. A few decades later the secondary schools also took it up, as they realized the value of physical education in schools.

It is now the business of ^{the} high schools to lay a foundation of physical education which will protect the health of America's boys and girls. This directly benefits the community as a whole, as it prevents much sickness of children and therefore helps protect the health of the rest of the family. The mortality rate has fallen in the city much more rapidly in the last three decades, according to Dr. Belding. This may be due to a number of things. First, the sanitation conditions in the city are considered better; and second, which is probably the most important, better heating, ventilation, lighting, and the hospital and medical skill is greater, also the physical education in city schools is more advanced.

This ought to prove that there can be ~~no~~ nothing harmful in athletics but instead are very valuable to the community. Besides these ^{benefits} ~~things~~ mentioned already, athletic sports develop a fighting spirit and a spirit of loyalty which is valuable to the nation as it is then better prepared for

any crisis, such as a war. Young men are, ^{then} well trained physically, as well as mentally. ~~and~~ ~~most~~ Exercises like those carried on in schools, teach the young man not to whine at defeat but to come back and try again. This prevents business failures in the future lives of the young men of America.

We must admit that there are certain evils of athletics that must be taken into consideration, but the percentage of such is very small. The public is deceived many times into believing that wrong practices are being carried on in some sport. For example, there are many reasons why athletics are frequently assailed in the newspapers. One cause is that certain coaches of earlier days have given the sport a bad name and it is still remembered. Another thing is that when an athlete is disqualified for some infraction of the rules it is given wide publicity and the public hears this "bad side" only. Then, too, coaches under stress of competition, make unjust charges against rival schools and teams; which, of course, are followed by counter charges, eventually giving rise to a controversy of wide publicity. Sometimes when coaches search for

an alibi for a defeat they stress the fact that many of their players were injured or ineligible and the public soon hears this and quickly forms its opinion of the game without ever hearing the good sides of it, which are many and large in proportion to the bad qualities. Betting is another evil of athletics but fortunately this is not practised as much in high school sports. This is disloyalty to the team, the individual members, and the school as a whole.

Athletics in schools are as beneficial for the mentality of the student as many studies taken up directly in the school. It teaches the boy to think quickly, also what to do and when to do it. It teaches coordination of the mind and body. The boy learns team work by which he finds out that he cannot do everything alone, but that each member has his certain work to perform. It makes him resourceful, dependable, and active. It requires him to be able to defend himself and at the same time be able to take the offensive action. It teaches him to respect the rules of the game, to play fair and give every one an equal chance.

This all helps to form a basis for all the activities of his future life and will make him a better and more capable citizen of the United States. One who will respect the laws of his country and give his ^{fellow} countrymen a fair deal in all matters of business and industry.