UNIVERSITY ATHLETICS.

Needs of the Department and Benefits to Students Discussed by Dr. Hastings.

In the University of Nebraska the time is now past when it could be said that we lacked material for any of the three leading university teams. Over forty of the very strongest men in the institution were candidates for the foot ball team, nearly fifty are candidates for the base ball team, and over forty for the track team. Prevailingly this means not simply of the strongest" physically, but also intellectually.

The time should be past when any one should be heard deploring the lack of university support for athletics. Not long ago in speaking to a body of athletic men I expressed the hope that no one would be found "kicking" the student body for the lack of interest in sports and lack of athletic loyalty until we deserved university support. I stated that the stimulus to increased interest in athletics must rise first from the teams themselves, that a strong running team creates university support, that we must be the center of enthusiasm, that we must successfully cope with institutions of our own rank before a permanent university pride in athletics shall become established, and that therefore teams must have the solid, careful, year-around training which means sound manhood and assures victory. After nearly two years careful observation I am ready to state that the most vital failure of Nebraska teams has been lack of physical bottom, lack of endurance, and for this reason have occurred exhibitions of weakness toward the close of contests and even toward the end of seasons. Lack of winning quality in teams surely has not been due to lack of native constitutional strength, for physical examinations show that no state can furnish stronger men than Nebraska. What we have lacked for foot ball, base ball and track athletics is not simply strength, but symmetrical strength. A chain is only as strong as its weakest link. A man is like the chain.

Muscular arms and legs do not make a man and an athlete. The addition of strong trunk muscles may give reliable and symmetrical muscular strength, but will not insure physical efficiency. Such a man may not be capable of sustaining effort. The most essential connecting link may yet be lacking, i. e., strong, healthy, well-trained, vital organs. Vitality is more important to winning in athletics than is even muscular strength and this can only be secured by the steady, regular training of years. The rugged, sturdy farm boy may need less development in endurance than some, on account of previous good hard labor, but all need training calculated to conserve energy. For this reason the maximum of athletics today is being directed toward the acquisition of vitality, endurance, and constitutional strength on the part of athletes.

Formerly the knowledge of the event was foremost; now the energy of the man and the most economic use of that energy. Formerly the emphasis was laid upon the ability to expend the last ounce of energy; now it is upon the ability to conserve it for future expenditure. Formerly trainers attempted to make athletes capable of phenomenal spurts for record, now they make men, who, through the excellence of a well-trained organism, have so far raised in themselves the normal standard of activity as to surpass these former records with little apparent effort.

We are simply returning to the natural order of things. Attainment of skill follows in the path of strength, of abounding vitality. Conservation of energy is rational and first in importance. Here the athlete meets the gymnast, the mechanical engineer, the classical student, the whole university on common grounds. Our business in the university is conservation and development of vital forces.

Neither the athlete nor the scholar is necessarily a phenomenal personage to whom a wondering tribute of reverence must be paid for native ability, but rather and more frequently there is due a solid respect for the national recognition of something good and the faithful persevering effort necessary to attain it.

The difference between individuals is largely one of emphasis. This difference should be less; all ought to conserve and develop physical and mental energy together. The scholar needs the superabundant vitality obtained from regular training for sports and recreative work, and the athlete ought to be a scholar. The statement is made that between forty and fifty per cent of the honor men of Harvard last year were prominent athletes. This is as it should be.

Where every student has some form of outdoor physical recreation during open weather and of gymnasium work when the other is impossible there will be no lack of athletic scholars or of scholarly athletics. The separation of athletic men as a class will be less distinct and the line of demarkation between athletics and other lines of recreative work will be less rigidly drawn.

Aside from the benefit to the individual, in the development of various minor forms of recreative work among the general student body, athletics proper are stimulated by a growing student sympathy and by the provision of a greater amount of practically trained material from which foot ball, base ball and track men may be drawn.

Rowing and swimming are of course not practicable as sports for the University of Nebraska, but the only apparent reason why the average student should not enjoy tennis, minton, cricket, hockey, polo, golf (with or without stockings), and other such games appear to be chiefly lack of room which to play them. During each outdoor athletic season every athletic field is fully occupied by from twenty to forty men who constitute the team and subs of one of our major sports.

True we have two tennis courts, or rather one and a half, but scarcely more than a dozen people could obtain exercise on these during an afternoon. Two minton courts would provide room for more than twenty people on the same playing space and a game equally as interesting and healthful. Both tennis and minton promote quickness of eye, grace, celerity, and precision of movement and vitality. In character, cricket is a sort of compromise between base ball and billiards. It has all the science and quick calculation of the latter without the wild excitement of the former. It is very free from accidents to life and limb, and yet to the initiated, exceedingly interesting. From twenty-two to thirty can enjoy the privilege of the same cricket field at a time.

Hockey takes a field of practically the same size and shape as foot ball, and occupies about the same number of men as cricket. It is a game for hardy, busy men who need a maximum of exercise in a minimum of time and do not care to spend much time in learning rules. It is one of the very best means of training in endurance for foot ball men and not a dangerous game when ruled properly.

Golf is the trampers' game. If one cannot persuade himself otherwise to obtain endurance through long distance walking and desires to add zest and interest to the process he cannot do better than play golf. It is a valuable game despite the ridicule of the ignorant.

With a field the size of Franklin field of the University of Pennsylvania, 300 or 400 students instead of thirty or forty might be obtaining health and strength during the fall, spring and summer months. Athletic men and and the general student body might secure body-building and endurance work through these minor sports.

We lack the interest in the physical permeating the whole student body which tennis, hand ball, cricket clubs and the like promotes.

We are growing and doing much even without the larger field, especially indoors, through basket ball, hoop ball, volley ball, battle ball and other recreative games. Many advantages are to be denied wrestling, hand ball, and fencing but there has been neither room nor facilities for their introduction.

Wrestling is excellant training for foot ball men. Hand ball is next to basket ball and hoop ball in value as endurance training for athletic men.

And nothing is more valuable than these strongest indoor games for endurance training, except regular body-building work and cross country running.

The body-building comes first in order and importance providing against possible strains by building up symmetrical muscular strength and endurance. It should be preceded by an examination on the dynomometer, which reveals through strength tests of all the groups of the muscles of the body the weak points. It should be accompanied by special corrective gymnastics through use of dumb-bells, pulley weights, bounce boards, and others, in order that there may be no possible failure in bringing that weaker part up to normal. It is first because it is irrational and even dangerous to allow a man to do an event when certain muscles are weak, e. g., it is idle to attempt to broad jump with weak abdominal and back muscles.

The first thing to do and the only rational thing, is to ascertain at the beginning of training whether the muscles chiefly involved in any given event are of normal strength.

Next in order is the development of respiratory and heart strength through recreative games, jog running, cross country running and hare and hounds. These complete the endurance training and will be continued on alternate days after the spring opens for out of door training in individual events. Training in track events has already been begun through the indoor athletics of the latter part of the winter and the early spring. The pentathlon is invaluable, as a means of all-round training of individual men. It never fails to bring to light some future record-breaker for the outdoor work, besides bringing up the indoor records increasingly close to the outdoor. This year we owe our indoor record of five feet, six inches to the indoor pentathlon and last year the outdoor pentathlon brought to light the man who was destined to make it.

Many prominent athletic men testify to the value of the pentathlon as a basis for specialization in individual events during later years. We do not need to go out of our own institution to find a man who ascribes all of his athletic prowess to the solid all-round training he obtained through the pentathlons.

Training is now being directed towards the events of the outdoor pentathlon. The system employed for this and the ordinary training will be by days' orders for each event placed in the hands of the squad leaders. The training will be under the immediate supervision of the physical director. The leader will see that all men are in place and understand their work for the day. Prescribed work will be strictly adhered to except in case of accidents, injuries, or some other good reason reported to the director. Only careful, systematic work will win the spring meets and no chances will be taken.

As far as possible men will be subdivided into sections according to proficiency in events. Selection of squad leaders has been made upon the basis of natural leadership as well as upon proficiency in events. They are appointed principally to lead their section, not to coach the events, just as the track captain was selected to lead the team. It is hoped, therefore, that every one, even the most modest, will accept the responsibility of the appointment and report the same at the office on or before Wednesday. Almost all the leaders have already reported favorably. Candidates for the track team and the pentathlon should indicate their intention as to training for the individual events immediately as scheduled for training of each man must be made. Over thirty men have so reported. Two leaders have been selected for each event in order that they may share the work by taking charge on alternate days. The following are the appointments:

100 yard run, * R. D. Andresen, W. R. Heartt; 220 yard run, R. D. Andresen, W. R. Heart; 440 yard run, F. J. Mantz, W. A. Priestly; 880 yard run, * G. M. Cowgill, F. J. Mantz; mile run, G. W. Cowgill, F. J. Mantz; 120 yard hurdle, W. R. Heartt, R. L. Waterman; 220 yard hurdle, C. M. Story, C. C. Morison; running high jump, *M. P. Pillsbury, P. M. Pepoon; running broad jump, R. E. Benedict, P. W. Pepoon; shot put, F. Brew, Fred Lemar; hammer-throw, * F. Brew, Fred Lemar; pole vault, * R. E. Benedict, I. A. Kellogg; discus, M. P. Pillsbury, H. C. Swallow; relay races, C. Poynter, W. E. Andresen.

The events starred (*) constitute the outdoor pentathlon, which occurs Friday, April 28.

The athletic teams of the university are fulfilling as rapidly as is possible the conditions of success. All the base ball, track and many foot ball men have been hard at work for over two months obtaining the all essential endurance training. They have already shown also sufficient evidence that they will be winning teams this spring. They merit the support of the entire university. I withdraw my objection now to their "kicking," if they do not get it. It will not be necessary, however, to patronize either of the spring sports, as a matter of conscience, but because one enjoys a good contest.

WM. W. HASTINGS.

WILLIAM REED DUNROY.

Poetic gems are rare especially from persons in our midst. However, one appears occasionally which displays talent and thought far above the average. Below are two such examples, both of which are written by William Reed Dunroy. The first is titled "Thine Eyes," and is dedicated to Miss Blanch Walsh, who recently produced such a sensation upon the theater-goers of Lincoln by her remarkable ability as an actress and her wonderful power of expression. It was published April 1, in the San Francisco "Music and Drama," at the time when Miss Walsh was filling an engagement on the Pacific coast, and received flattering notices from several eastern papers.

Within the depths of thy dull orbs of brown
I read a world of love and pain no
speech can tell;
The stammering tongue can no more
voice the sweet elusive thing
Thine eyes shown forth, than the moth-eyed, grinning clown
Can cast a charm, of weave a magic
spell.
Or midnight raven ravish with his
harsh attempts to sing.
Thy vioce is low and wonderfully
low and sweet;
Its liquid tones are softer than the
song
Of yonder lark, that mounts the viewless ladder of the skies.
And yet 'tis but a preface, dull and
long—
A tiresome thing compared to that
rare treat—
The book I read between the fringed
covers of thine eyes.

Another verse which as yet has never been published, is "Aspiration." It is as follows:

Upon the breast of some vile scum-
clothed pool,
Pure lilies lift their cups of lustrous
white,
They struggle through the death-engendering slime
To bathe their stainless petals in the
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