

## THE RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAM FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN THE COLLEGES

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The demise of the American intercollegiate athletic system at the outbreak of the war was in many respects glorious and deserving of grateful remembrance, for it passed away because the college athlete—and for that matter his non-athletic mate—rushed by the hundreds into the training camps, and because the colleges themselves instantly turned their entire energies to helping to win the war. But now the critical moment has come when we must decide whether the old system, compact, as it was, of good and evil, shall be revived, or whether instead we shall try to build a bigger, better, and more enduring one. Habit, vested interest, sentiment, and a certain timid lethargy of imagination, all argue for a mere restoration of the old. Foresight, ambition, vision, faith, and courage plead for something better.

There are probably three fairly distinct views regarding the judicious reconstruction policy of our collegiate athletics. The athletic "standpatter" maintains that the ante-bellum system was in all essentials satisfactory, that its critics are chiefly old maids, male and female, or insignificant highbrows, and that our best plan is to get back to old times as fast as we can. This group is perhaps not very large, but it has a shrill voice and is decidedly influential. On the other hand, the mild progressive maintains that there were faults in the old system, but that they are capable of eradication by patient labor, and that in the meantime we can resume business on a smaller scale than before and make our improvements as we go along. This body of opinion is numerically large and probably counts the great majority of college alumni. It is marked by men generally spoken of as possessing sound common sense. Against the two preceding groups, the radical reformer maintains that the old system was a child of Beelzebub, and that no amount of camouflage or superficial reform will ever alter that fact, much less effect a change of inner character. He is accordingly for rendering permanent the euthanasia brought about by the war. This group is not very large, but while it contains some cranks, it also contains some prophets with real brains. When one passes from its negative policy in the matter of destroying the old system, root and branch, to its positive doctrine regarding the creation of a new Eden, its members display far less unanimity of program. Some are for