

Speech by R. Bruce Danald

S P O R T

Good clean athletic sport is the biggest factor in building up strong bodies and clean minds in the young men of any community. In fact, athletics have now become one of the great factors in our national life. Mr. Toastmaster, I believe the best way to foster and stimulate a spirit of optimism in the young people of any community is to give them plenty of facilities for building up their bodies and flushing out their minds with clean healthful play, and for that reason I would like to see our City Fathers make provision for more playing fields whenever the opportunity is afforded them.

The field of athletics is considered the most helpful contributor to the spirit of self reliance, it is also one of the greatest forces tending not only to equip the body, but also to mould the character of thousands of our people to-day.

A good dose of athletic spirit and training would do more than any thing else to save our youth from becoming cigarette smokers, beer drinkers, store bandits, or lounge lizards.

Sport is the paramount interest in the spare hours of most young men. It is the never failing topics in barber shops, men's clubs, and wherever healthy minded manhood meets to pass a leisure hour. The fly in the ointment however, is that most men become followers of sport rather than players.

For 20 men on the football or baseball field playing the game, there are hundreds, yes, thousands on the bleachers merely watching. There's joy in watching a well fought game between highly skilled professionals, but sports loses its best reaction if it does not impell the spectators to get out in their field themselves and take part in the game.

As a real benefit to the neighborhood, the few little local clubs that never get out the headlines are a bigger factor than the high priced aggregation of professional talent that gets the cheers and 99% of the publicity.

The clean-limbed, clean minded young Canadian Athletic boys and girls who competed at the last Olympic Games are worthy of the pride of any country and Nation. When Percy Williams of Vancouver, carried the Canadian flag to victory twice at the same games he did more to popularize sport in this country than anything else we know of. He also put his own home town, Vancouver on the map.

When Eric Liddell, the Scottish Presbyterian Minister, and world's quarter miler, carried the silken Union Jack to Victory at the same game 4 years ago, he did more to popularize the Christian life with the young manhood of Christendom, than if he had written a thousand volumes of stodgy, constipated exhortations, and finally may I quote to you the same pastor Athlete-when addressing a class of Sunday School Athletes; "I would say to you, learn your lesson of sportmanship well; but do not confine it to the Athletic field, so that one day, when you come face to face with the Great Captain of the greatest game, you will be able to say, like many who have gone before you; "That is the side I am going to be on; all my power of intellect, personality, and strength are going to pull for that side."