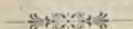


TIDSKRIFT I GYMNASTIK.

Häft. 4.



1909.

LING THE FOUNDER OF SWEDISH GYMNASISTICS HIS LIFE, HIS WORK AND HIS IMPORTANCE

By Carl August Westerblad.

Preface.

There are several Swedish names that have passed beyond the boundaries of the little Scandinavian country. Not only in Sweden but also in many foreign countries Carolus Linnæus, Emanuel Swedenborg, John Ericsson — not to mention others — are renowned. In name, if not in fact, Swedish gymnastics and their founder, Pehr Henrik Ling, are known in several countries in the civilized world. To contribute to the knowledge of Ling himself, his work and his importance is my object in the following pages, which are partly a translation from my Swedish biographical Essays on Ling and *partly* a revision of them in order to adapt the contents to foreign readers and to enrich them by the results of some new researches. From these points of view I intend to give the outlines of Ling's career as a gymnastic reformer and some indications of the import of his life-work, which is greater and more worthy of notice than people imagine.

Ling's gymnastic thoughts were rather fragmentarily committed to paper by Ling himself, far more fragmentarily than they deserved on account of their ingeniousness. My object in view is to systematize and, in some degree, complete those ideas, as they appear in Ling's own world of thought; the bearing of them may thus be made clear. In completion I add a few outlines of Ling as a poet; and my Essay will thus contain, I hope, an accurate analysis of Ling's real aims.

I owe my best thanks to Mr S. J. Charleston, B. A. (Oxon.), lecturer in English at the Royal University of Uppsala, who has gone through my English manuscript as to phraseology.

This Essay is also published in the Periodical of the Society of Swedish Teachers of Gymnastics.

75—00388 *Tidskr. i gymnastik.*

DEPARTMENT OF HYGIENE
WELLESLEY COLLEGE
WELLESLEY, - MASSACHUSETTS

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Ling's birth-
place.

To appreciate Ling's work it is necessary to follow his fortunes. It is important to trace them also because they have been related very differently by different authors. I will try to describe them as they were in reality.

Ling was born in a very Swedish part of Sweden, among large pine forests and moors, presenting a contrast to our leafy woods, placid lakes or flowing rivers; among granite hills and barren fields, which demand sinewy arms from the cultivator; in a district, far out of the way, where traditions from olden times were current. In a parsonage house in the southern part of Sweden he saw the light, on November 15th 1776, only a few miles off from the place where Carolus Linnæus was born. Just as many other great men in Sweden have sprung either from clerical or from peasant families, Ling's forefathers had tilled the soil in the wilderness for more than two centuries, literally and figuratively, ploughing the fields or, as Ling's father did, filling the country parson's office.

Of the surroundings in which Ling grew up he has himself given some pictures. In his poetry he makes us hear how "the flail beats the corn-sheaf"; he teaches us the very ancient customs of the parsonage, untouched by later innovations, or he makes us hear how "the wolves howl in the wild plain, while the driving snow envelopes everything around" — a reminiscence of the great moors around his native place and the extensive forests, innocent of railways and factories; or he depicts some genuine Swedish scenery — the still lakes, surrounded not only with grave pines and firs but also with soft and knolly meadows,

where alders and birches with their white trunks are to be seen, and he makes us see these scenes in different seasons, for instance in early spring when

"The storm of spring whistles and the vernal new moon spreads its beams over the ice".

Now and then he describes some human shape of his native place. The heroes of his poems are giants instead of human beings and his originals may have been his own forefathers — his great grandfather is said to have reached his 105th year and to have had no less than seventeen sons and two daughters. When Ling himself, with a sword in his hand and his breast naked, fenced in the fencing-room with an adversary, he was not without prototypes in his birthplace; in an old description of its inhabitants these are said to have been fond of "combats and passages of arms".

When the time came young Ling was put to school. The journey from home to school, the lodging and the entertainment may not have offered any attraction for the boy. Nothing differs more than a schoolboy's necessities of life nowadays and then. In a description of Ling's school-days we find that the food which was needed for a term's sojourn at the school was placed on a cart or in a sledge; the boy followed the team on foot the whole distance from the home to the school. Two or three boys shared in the same room. Everyone handed over his pieces of meat or bacon to get them fried in the same pan, distinguishing his own pieces from the others' by means of distinguishing marks.

The intellectual fare afforded was as little attractive as the material.

There is every difference between a Swedish school now and then. Nowadays we have lofty school-rooms and halls for mental and physical training; then there were stuffy rooms and no physical education.

Only the end of Ling's school-days has been handed down to posterity. Some conflicts had taken place between the masters

and the pupils and in one of these conflicts young Ling participated so energetically that he was expelled from the school. This happened in 1792. Next year we find Ling as a student at a Swedish university. But two years later he is no more on the lists of the students and traces of him remain scanty for several years.

*Legends about
Ling.*

As to his fortunes during these years fanciful stories have arisen. Report has taken this biographical uncertainty as a starting-point for some fantastic travels and adventures in the life of the future poet. "In the course of a series of adventures, he visited several places in Sweden, passed through France, England and Germany, serving with the colours of the Prussian and French armies or acting, now as interpreter, now as teacher of languages, and surmounting with characteristic fortitude a host of difficulties, an amusing proof of which appears in his washing his only shirt himself and lying on it till it was dry."

"At last he came to Copenhagen, where the effects of travel and toil, days spent without food and now and then nights passed with little or no shelter, began to threaten his health, and he tried fencing as a means of cure". "The impulse that made him wander restlessly from one place to another was not only a desire for seeing foreign countries and enlarging his knowledge in this manner; his reason for wandering was also — and in a higher degree — a desire for wonderful adventures, having thus a chance of succeeding only by his own efforts, by his mental energy and by his courage, in a remarkable way — —". This assertion, made by a friend of his, is, as far as it concerns Ling's audacious turn of mind, certainly true.

*Ling's real
fortunes in
youth.*

Ling's real fortunes, however, in youth are not exactly those above related.

From original documents placed at my disposal, I will try to describe them. First however, attention must be called to the fact that there is some explanation for the stories told about Ling. There is something about him that brings the heroes of the legends to our mind. He was not without the courage of olden

times. In the sagas of the North it is said that a man used to catch in the air, and return, the spear that the enemy launched against him. The following single episode from Ling's life, narrated by eye-witnesses, has some analogy to that saga. As inspector of the instruction in fencing and gymnastics at a Swedish military academy, Ling once delivered a lecture, in which he said that great strength, even the greatest, if it is badly used, is nothing compared to a little strength well used. At these words an auditor addressed the lecturer in the following words: 'Your theory is capital, and I realize its correctness; will you oblige us by giving a practical proof of it? Give us such a one!'

At this request Ling hesitated for an instant. But after a moment's consideration he answered, 'I will prove the truth of my words. Will you bring me a long lance?' he continued, addressing those present. They brought him what he asked for. 'We'll make an experiment with this lance', he said. 'Which of you are the strongest? Six of you come forward, please!' 'Seize the end of the lance, please!' Ling went on, 'You are six young men and you have at your disposal a capital lance with a head as sharp as the blade of a sword. Nevertheless I bid you to attack me and to run me through with the lance without mercy — if you are able to do it, you see. I promise you not to budge from the spot. When I give the word of command, you may advance. The lance-head directly towards my breast! Well, are you ready?'

At this moment Ling was really imposing. He positively increased in height while his eyes beamed with fire and life. He gave the word "go" and the six young men rushed forward. Ling did not move from the spot but fixed his eyes sharply on the lance-head and lifted his hand towards his breast. Just as the lance-head was at a distance of a few inches from his breast, he parried the thrust with his little finger and the lance entered the wall at his side. A volley of applause rang through the hall.

After this digression we may return to Ling's fortunes in youth, adding only that the truth of the episode in question is vouched for by a pupil of his, who was present in person.

Ling in Stockholm, in its vicinity and in Uppsala.

In 1793 Ling passed out of sight and without some difficulty we cannot get to learn where he was during the following years. But there is an old letter, written by a friend of Ling's, where it is positively said that Ling spent some time as private tutor in the neighbourhood of Stockholm, the capital of Sweden, and we must suppose that this period comprised the years 1794 and 1795. Thus, it is not impossible to throw light upon these two years, the most uncertain in Ling's life.

Next year (1796) we find him on the point of entering the civil service at Stockholm. For a time he tried his luck in a civil service department; at the same time he gave lessons in modern languages by the hour, in this manner earning his bread. Moreover, he ventured upon literary work and in addition he was entered at the university of Uppsala in 1797. That year and the two following years he spent partly in Stockholm and partly in Uppsala, where — judging from several documents — his sojourns may have been of short duration. In 1799 we find Ling's name for the last time in the university register of Uppsala, for at that time he left Sweden in order to go to Denmark.

Since 1793, the year when Ling was lost to view, he seems, then, to have been in the neighbourhood of Stockholm, in the capital itself and in Uppsala; he may also have visited his native place or other parts of Sweden but he could not have made those legendary travels abroad. It must be maintained that the only foreign sojourn he has mentioned himself in writing is the sojourn in Denmark, whither, as I said, he betook himself in 1799 and where he stayed, as can be proved, until 1804, in which year he returned to his fatherland, and remained there until his death.

Ling's real fortunes in youth, in which I include his stay in Denmark, are sufficiently full of interest even if we examine them in their simplicity and truth. It was by these fortunes

that Ling became a bearer of new ideas, that he transferred to his native country the modern thoughts of that time and that thereby he influenced the most famous poet of Sweden, Tegnér; by these fortunes, he became an inventor and a reformer, whose thoughts have borne the Swedish name out over a great part of the civilized world. And the struggle for existence that the unknown author and visiting-master had to go through was perhaps as hard as the combats in foreign battle-fields in which the legend said he had taken part.

In the summer 1799, Ling, at that time twenty-three years old, went off to Denmark, where at first he seems to have intended to remain only some short time. Time passed away, however. After the lapse of two years, he began to make ready for the journey home. In autumn he made up his mind to return next spring; but, when spring had come, he deferred the return till the next autumn. — Hard fate he has to endure. In the foreign country, he is consumed with longing for home his purse is seldom full and his dwellings are getting humbler and humbler. But he remains abroad because he is too poor and too proud to return before having conquered a world of thought.

*Ling in
Denmark.*

The years Ling spent in Copenhagen (1799—1804) mark the beginning of his success, intellectually and physically. They are the starting-point for a great deal of what he was to perform in the future. In a great measure the young Swede familiarized himself with new surroundings, taking into his mind the new things he learned across the Sound. The new thoughts of the times reached Denmark earlier than his own country. In the capital of Denmark, Ling became familiar with a new sphere of ideas, important not only to his own thinking but also to the neoromantic school in Swedish literature.

The works of the continental representatives of the new current in literature, which in England burst forth in the beginning of the nineteenth century in Coleridge, Scott and Byron, now had their influence on Ling. When he moved among those

thronging the lectures of Henry Steffens in Copenhagen he heard other ideas propounded as to culture than he had heard before.

The Voltairean culture of the bygone, of the eighteenth century, is commonplace and unpoetical, the lecturer pronounced. Such a flood of prose as nowadays history never witnessed. Once upon a time, there was a wonderful age, the mythological age, which we find in the Orient, in Greece and in the North. The universe was then something living, something that had a mind and holy legends told of the creation of the earth. That was the golden age. Also the Middle Ages were an epoch of holy devotion; then, too, we find a real poetry and a real art, for instance the poetry of Dante. The romantic-catholic poetry, however, had a subjective character in opposition to the classical art and this subjective character contrasted with the serenity of the Grecian art.

Instead of following the lecturer longer, we state that he gave vent to the spirit of the new time, of the early nineteenth century. The cosmopolitism of the century past gave place to national aims in song and in action. An interest in times past awoke, and poetical formalism yielded to poetical subjectivism. A new wind blew through the atmosphere of the North. Political dangers from abroad threatened the nations of the North, for which reason they tried to take care of all the national culture they possessed. Then their interest in times past became an interest in their own times. The ideals of olden times became the ideals of modern times.

At Copenhagen Ling made himself familiar with the current German and Danish literature, the latter represented by the Danish poet Oehlenschläger. In addition to this, he studied the Old Norse literature, that then began to be a subject of scientific research. In the poetry of Oehlenschläger there were a number of new thoughts. The poet ran counter to the prosaic character of his time, of the passing eighteenth century, against the lack of imagination that prevailed in the poetry of that century. In stirring notes, he expressed his

yearning for mediaeval faith and mediaeval devotion and he, besides, struck another new note when conjuring up the Ancient Scandinavia, its heroes, its gods and its legends, which he resorted to from his own materialistic times.

In Copenhagen, too, Ling's thoughts were led into a field in which he was to be a leading man, the domain of gymnastics. Since the last decenniums of the 18th century a great activity had been displayed within the domain of education. Rousseau had spoken rousing words in favour of a more natural method of education and in Germany the pedagogues tried to go from sounds to things when adding physical exercises to the ordinary school subjects.

New ideas of education had reached as far as the capital of Denmark, where in seventeen-ninety-nine a Dane, Nachtegall by name, set up a private gymnastic institute, the first of that kind in the North. At that institute he imparted a gymnastic instruction, that may be called good when we consider the state gymnastics were then in. The gymnastic exercises that were practised at the institute of Nachtegall were drawn up on the model of Gutsuths, a German, known as author of the first handbook of gymnastics that has been published in modern times.

A great number of persons profited by the instruction given at Nachtegall's institute and one of them was Ling. His slender, sinewy figure was seen among the visitors of the institute in question. The future gymnastic reformer seems not to have been quite content with the things he saw there. A friend of Ling's of that time observes that the young Swede was not satisfied to regard the gymnastic exercises as a mere vehicle for physical health; he maintained that gymnastics had a higher and larger significance, considering gymnastics as an art and a science. Only later on in his life, was Ling to give an example of his gymnastic inventions, but these might have stirred up his mind as early as during these years of wandering.

*Ling returns
to Sweden.*

From 1804, at which date Ling turned to his native country, a new phase of his life begins. His fancies and ideas of youth take practical shape during this period. Hitherto he had been an unknown man; henceforth he became more and more renowned, and came into contact with celebrated men in Sweden, Tegnér, Geijer and others.

Ling's return to Sweden was due to a fortunate chance. In those days, a sport of old origin, the art of fencing, was far more practised than nowadays. On the continent skilful swordsmen used to set up fencing-schools, for fencing and swordsmanship almost formed part of education. While Ling was staying at Copenhagen a Frenchman had set up such a school, at which Ling was a persistent visitor for three years. And the skill he attained there gave him an opportunity of returning to Sweden. At the university of Lund a new fencing-master was wanted, and in the hope of getting the appointment Ling went over to Sweden in autumn, 1804, and soon afterwards he was a fencing-master and a teacher of languages at that university. He had then got a new footing in his native country on the same spot from which the vicissitudes of his youth had begun.

These do not — as a biographical legend suggests — remind us of the warfares of the Northmen, but they revive in some degree such achievements of youth as the annals attribute to the men of the Renaissance. Ling's years of travel offer a trial of physical and intellectual strength and a development of various faculties, that bring to our memory the education of the men of the Renaissance.

In Lund.

The new fencing-master at the university of Lund did not only perform the duty of a fencing-master. He got leave to impart gymnastic instruction in the fencing-room and to put up there a gymnastic apparatus at the expense of the university — nothing like that had ever happened before.

A strange member of the academy was the new-comer. A friend of his describes him as follows: His manners and his temper were peculiar. His soul was a volcano, his body was of great strength. Of his earlier life he spoke little. He gave out new ideas, and he was unrivalled in swordsmanship. He insisted upon a twofold national regeneration, a regeneration of Swedish manhood and of Swedish poetry. And the remedies he proposed were gymnastic exercises and a revival of old Scandinavian poetry, two subjects that he treated of in ardent speeches. He had burst upon the sight of the inhabitants of Lund and he was looked on with astonishment.

There were people that held the new fencing-master was able to throw a spell over an adversary and his weapon in the fencing-room. More provable is that he was capable of arming and disarming the intellectual forces he met with.

The same year as Ling went to Copenhagen, the most renowned Swedish poet, Tegnér — the future author of Frithiof's Saga, which is incorporated into the whole of European literature — arrived at Lund. While the latter in his study got familiar with Greek and Latin authors, the former led a stirring life in the Danish capital and noticed the pulsation of a new time.

Between the fencing-master and the future national poet of Sweden, Tegnér, an interchange of ideas began in Lund, when the former had returned to his native country—an interchange that was of much greater consequence for Tegnér than for Ling. A document of that time tells us that, without the influence of Ling, Tegnér might never have set foot within the domain where he won some of his highest laurels, the domain of old Scandinavian saga. And, in fact, by the influence of Ling, Tegnér became the chief poetic representative of the national revival of that time.

A third phase of Ling's life begins in 1813. He then re-*In Stockholm.* moved to Stockholm where, in that very year, he founded a

gymnastic institute, the first in Sweden. This institute was called The Gymnastic Central Institute, and was situated on the same place as its namesake of our days, which is known as a normal school of gymnastics, where not only Swedes but also foreigners are admitted. During this new period of his life, he was to give his contribution to the furtherance of gymnastic science. By the work he then achieved he has materially furthered the cause of human progress — which may be said without any exaggeration. In order to analyse the importance of his achievement I intend to examine separately what Ling meant by gymnastics, his social, esthetic and ethical importance and, in completion, I give some ideas of his poetry.

Ling's person. Before proceeding to the first of those three headings, I shall add a few words about his person.

In his exterior Ling is said to have been of average height, though somewhat spare and slender; his chest was broad and full, and, before bowed down by bodily sufferings, his figure particularly graceful. He had bright grey eyes, thin and firmly compressed lips, sharp chin and features of wonderful plasticity, giving a character of thorough determination to his whole appearance. In the gymnastic exercises his word of command rang clear and distinct, so as to be heard amidst the hubbub of hundreds, and encouraging, so as to urge to strenuous efforts; his eye was keen and quick, detecting the slightest deviation from a given type or formula of movement.*

From a personal disciple of Ling's I borrow also the following description.

Humble towards the poor and sympathizing with the suffering, sportive and playful with children, he was proud, reserved and even stern, if he suspected a person of depreciating his gymnastic science or himself. He paid little consideration to rank or person. On one occasion, we remember his saying to a clergyman going through a course of treatment at Ling's

* In the National Museum of Stockholm there is a bust of Ling in the Dome Room, opposite the staircase.

institute, "Here in this room and at your altar all are equal". His straightforwardness and disinterestedness were proverbial.

There is a detached little incident in Ling's life that is strikingly characteristic. While Swedish gymnastics were yet militant and not triumphant, the daily papers commented in no flattering terms upon Ling's gymnastics, especially on their medical application, designating him as "charlatan", and the editor of a newspaper discovered a new sobriquet, "gymnastic harlequin". Ling remained apparently indifferent. Some years later, the author in question was out of health and, finding no relief from even the best physicians, was obliged to consult Ling, who, as usual, gave him no promise of his restoration to health by medical gymnastics, but said he would do his best. Within a couple of months the patient was so much improved that he declared himself better than he had been for years, which acknowledgment he made in the presence of all the other patients. Ling then tapped him on the shoulder, saying, "Well, sir, the 'Harlequin', is revenged". *

In private Ling was polite but cool towards strangers; but if his opinion was asked on any subject, or a visitor evinced an interest in his ideas, all his coolness disappeared, his discourse became animated and the facility of his language, the clearness and originality of his thoughts at once astonished and delighted his hearers. His mind possessed a power and elasticity altogether unequalled; indeed he always seemed to be struggling with a throng of new ideas. **

To Ling's own physical accomplishments, his quick comprehension, his courage and his presence of mind, and other qualities befitting a gymnastic reformer, old biographies bear witness. With his breast naked he dared fight an adversary armed with a sharp-edged sword; "the thrusts caused only slight scratches on his breast".

* See A biographical sketch of Peter Henry Ling by Augustus Georgii, London 1854, p. 43.

** See Georgii *ibid*.

The beginning of the nineteenth century was a time of enthusiasm and daring in Swedish science and in Swedish poetry, to which such names as Berzelius, the world-renowned chemist, Geijer, the historian, Tegnér, the poet — to say nothing of others — bear witness. Ling was one of the youngest among the youthful men of that period. He might be called enthusiasm itself. He sang the praises of strength and he was himself strength personified.

People trifled with his ideas and laughed at his innovations, but the innovations increased instead of diminishing. Meanness and slander did not fail to appear, but he fought his solitary fight for ideas and thoughts, with which he was supplied more abundantly than with worldly goods. In his faith in the power of ideas he recalls the ideologists of the 18th century, however he differs from them in other respects. If Ling may be likened to anything, he may be likened to the element of power and enthusiasm, to the fire, that shines and burns and sheds sparks, even when it expires.

What Ling meant by gymnastics.

Not seldom Ling's ideas about the science of gymnastics, its bearing and its importance, are erroneously or imperfectly comprehended. There are more misconceptions than conceptions of Ling's gymnastic ideas. They cannot be understood without some knowledge of the physical exercises that were practised before his time.

Gymnastics in ancient Greece. In ancient Greece the history of European gymnastics begins. Our knowledge of Grecian gymnastics is based partly on written documents, viz. the Greek authors, partly on the sculpture of the ancient Greeks. The last-mentioned source is an important one, though little attention is paid to it from a gymnastic point of view. From the earlier period of the Grecian art comes a series of marble statues

showing the naked manly body such as the Greeks conceived it, attained by physical exercises.

The attributes that characterize the statues in question are: that the joints of the body, especially the ankle-joint and the knee-joint are comparatively thin, whereas the muscular parts of the body are strongly developed, in part exaggeratedly muscular; the waist is slender and the shoulders are broad. The upper part of the body, the muscles of the chest and of the abdomen, are also beautifully and strongly developed. The aim of physical culture in ancient Greece is characterized by a Grecian author as follows: contrary to persons who are obese and pale by complexion, the young men that we see in our gymnastic establishments are ruddy-brown and manly in appearance; they have plenty of all that is living, warm and strong, and rejoice our eyes by reason of being neither lean nor obese; the girth of their bodies is in due proportion. By gymnastics we do the body the same service as when we thresh the corn: the chaff is separated from the grain.

The exercises that distinguished the Grecian gymnastics were partly dances, that were of other forms than our society dances, and were executed at religious festivities, too, partly such exercises as we nowadays call sports: jumping, running, throwing the discus or the spear, and wrestling — the so-called pentathlon consisted of these five sports — further swimming and games. It should be remembered that pugilistic exercises were characteristic of athletic professionalism, but not of the education of the Grecian youth.

In Greece gymnastics reached its first and, may be, highest stage. Gymnastics in Greece, however, offered a weak point, which the ancients themselves indicated by noticing that competitions, rather than real physical training, absorbed the general interest. It cannot be denied, however, that the most highly developed nation in European antiquity transmitted to posterity the important truth that the human body is an imperfect thing, if not specifically developed by means of suitable exercises.

The physical training in ancient Greece has repeatedly been described from Grecian documents. It may be of some interest to hear a description coming from a Christian, a father of the early Church, namely Basilius the Great (330—379). As our informant was educated in Athens, there is every probability that his description is based on a personal knowledge of the facts. Basilius writes as follows: those training for the athletic profession endure thousands and thousands of hardships and troubles, train their bodies in many ways, sweat very much during their exercises, are often flogged, abstain from the food which is most palatable to them and take the food which their trainers prescribe to them; also in other respects they lead a life that implies a preparation for competition. Before entering the lists they undress themselves and expose themselves to dangers and pains in order to gain a wreath of olive or ivy.

In the North, the different kinds of physical exercises in use in olden times seem to have been adapted to the social circumstances of the time in no lesser degree than in Greece. In the North, the ideal of a man was synonymous with a brave warrior. The exercises were composed of practice in the use of arms, archery, throwing stones with a sling, throwing the spear, hunting with a spear or a bow, swimming, wrestling (also in the water), running, jumping, sliding down steeps in winter, skating with shin-bones of animals, ski-ing; dancing on the oars of a ship, whilst the latter was in motion, and so forth.

*Exercises
during the
Middle Ages.*

It is a mistake to think that bodily exercises were neglected during the Middle Ages. The literature of that time bears witness to the contrary; the tournaments, by way of example, furnished, again and again, matter for poetical descriptions in England as well as in other countries. In the Canterbury tales Chaucer describes vividly the martial sports performed by the knights. The following quotation from those tales may be easily understood:

The heraudes lefte hir priking up and doun;
 Now ringen trompes loude and clarioun,
 Ther is namore to seyn, but west and est
 In goon the speres ful sadly in arest;
 In goth the sharpe spore in-to the syde.
 Ther seen men who can Iuste, and who can ryde;
 Ther shiveren shaftes up-on sheeldes thikke;

— —

Up springen speres twenty foot on highte;
 Out goth the swerdes as the silver brighte.

From the Middle Ages the Renaissance of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries inherited the martial sports of chivalry, and art and poetry took them into their sphere. A famous Italian poet, Angelo Poliziano, wrote a renowned poem describing a tournament, and among the sketches by Leonardo da Vinci there is one representing a tournament. The pictures of manners, that the prose-writers of the Renaissance left to posterity, give also evidence of how favourably disposed the higher classes were towards physical exercises. The claims made on a nobleman, from a physical point of view, were very high at the time in question. An author prescribes: a courtier ought to be a perfect horseman; in tournaments, in jousts and in tilts he ought to show his superiority to others; in bull-fighting, in throwing a lance or a spear, in running and in springing he ought to be skilful. — Besides those exercises, others such as wrestling, swimming, fencing were also practised.

*Exercises
 during the
 Renaissance.*

To the physical exercises hitherto mentioned there is one quality common: they all aim at the development of special bodily accomplishments, indispensable in the circumstances in which people lived at that time. In our peaceful times we hardly imagine that, in bygone days, security of life and liberty often depended on the agility and the rapidity of the individual, and his skill in the use of arms; in such a century of easy travelling as we live in, we sometimes forget that, in days of yore, man often had no other means of conveyance by land

than his horse or his legs, and was obliged to ensure safety by sharpened senses and bodily accomplishments.

There is another quality common to the exercises above-mentioned. Physical education in Greece was a national concern only in a restricted sense. A great number of the inhabitants were excluded from the benefits of physical education, viz. the slaves. During the centuries of the Middle Ages and of the Renaissance bodily training was no more a social concern than in Greece or in the North of olden times. Then, as nowadays, there were national sports and games. With a few exceptions, physical education previous to the century of the French Revolution was a monopoly of the privileged classes, which the very sort of exercises in use presupposes.

During the last decades of the 18th century, and in the beginning of the 19th, new kinds of exercises appeared. The social conditions in which people lived had altered, and, as a result of that, the exercises hitherto in use became inappropriate. A physical training fit for a knight of the Middle Ages or a warrior of the 17th century was not good for people living under new social conditions.

*Gymnastics
in modern
sense.*

In this state of things new exercises arose, *gymnastics* in the modern sense of the word, that is to say, *movements defined in regard to form, effect and performance* and aiming at a perfect development of the body. In bygone centuries gymnastic movements had been used only by way of exception, for instance when Galenus, the famous Grecian physician, made a prophylactic and medical use of similar ones. If a modern term may be used of the exercises customary in bygone centuries, they might be called sports, whereas the new exercises we speak of are *gymnastics* in the true sense.

From the gymnastic revival at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries three names are especially worthy to be remembered, viz. the two Germans *Gutsmuths* and *Fahn* and the Swede, *Ling*. In Germany, where the gymnastic revival began, this Renaissance was twoheaded: it imitated the

Grecian antiquity but it was also of a very national character. This character was most clearly manifested in the activities of Jahn, a national hero, whom not even the threats that Napoleon launched against him could hinder from proceeding with his bold, patriotic projects, one of which was the plan to increase the national strength by the introduction of gymnastics, which Jahn called *Turnen*.

As for Gutsmuths, it must be observed that the store of *Gutsmuths*. gymnastic movements he was acquainted with was taken to a large extent from the Grecian gymnastics. Only a small number of the exercises that were found in the handbook of gymnastics Gutsmuths published in 1793 were invented by himself. For the most part the exercises he recommended were Grecian in type; some of them consisted of old German sports and games such as skating, archery etc. Gutsmuths told those of his own time many truths about physical education. And it cannot be denied that he tried to choose and also to invent gymnastic movements, by which, in the new social conditions that time and progress had entailed, the human body might be re-formed and thoroughly developed.

But however great his store of gymnastic movements might have been, it did not suffice: in the gymnastics of Gutsmuths there were many movements; yet he was short of movements that were found very needful in later times, and the results that Gutsmuths promised for the movements he recommended did not always follow. It was not reserved for Gutsmuths to invent the formula of modern gymnastics. He was not an inventor who ingeniously draws up projects and carries them out.

The inventor was a Swede in this case, just as Swedes have been inventors in many other cases and in many other spheres.

At Copenhagen Ling got into the thoughts of Gutsmuths, and there is no reason to doubt one statement according to which Ling, in his first gymnastic activity, moved in the same sphere of ideas as Gutsmuths. Some few passages in his works

prove an influence from the German gymnast; partly that is the case also with his first gymnastic apparatuses. These facts do no injury to Ling as an inventive genius. The new element in his pioneering activity stands out most manifestly against the background of what was before him.

As long as the world has lasted, there have been sports what the Greeks called gymnastics might also be called sports, for the most part. Whoever desires to realize the new creations of Ling as a gymnast must not forget that there are several co-ordinate kinds of physical exercises.

*Different
kinds of phys-
ical exercises:
games, sports
and gym-
nastics.*

One kind consists of gymnastics in the modern sense that I have indicated.

If an acrobat swings in the air, clinging to an object by means of his teeth or his toes, or if he stands on his head with his legs upright in the air, this is sometimes called gymnastics. But exercises of that sort are neither gymnastics nor so much as physical exercises in a proper sense. A spontaneous movement cannot be called a physical exercise unless it implies a natural and normal use of physical powers. However artless a *game* may be, compared with acrobatic tricks, it is *one* kind of real physical exercise, provided that it demands physical powers.

Among real physical exercises there are *two other kinds*. There are exercises that enables you to develop some special dexterity, for instance, your skill in jumping or running. As for exercises of this kind, the great thing for you is to reach some height or some length in your jump, or some rapidity in your running, therefore you aim at the development of some dexterity or some dexterities. Physical exercises of this kind are called *sports* nowadays. It should be remembered that they were called gymnastics in Greece.

There is also a third kind of exercise, by which no special dexterity, but a harmonious development of the whole body is aimed at. A good bearing, a proportional culture of the different parts of the muscular system, in brief, bodily harmony and bodily truth, are the ends in view to be attained by exercises.

of the kind in question. Movements like these are called *gymnastics* in the strict sense of the word. Contrary to the species of movements alluded to above, gymnastic movements are previously and minutely defined in regard to form and performance; in this way a specified effect upon a given part of human organism is rendered possible.

The importance and the value of gymnastics and its significance for a fully satisfactory education nowadays, are most obviously vindicated by experience. It is a noticeable and suggestive fact that in countries where, for centuries, sports and games have been the only means of physical education, these means are nowadays considered not to be quite sufficient, but gymnastic movements are introduced into physical education and meet with general approbation from those who are competent to judge of the matter. And the man who has the merit of having founded gymnastics in the modern sense, above indicated, is the Swede, Ling.

Let us now return to Ling's pedagogic gymnastics in the beginning of the 19th century. Most of the movements Guts-*Ling's gymnastic inventions.* muths recommended were not new, I have said, but they consisted of old sports and games. He sought for movements of another species, viz. gymnastic movements, but he had some difficulty in finding them. Then Ling set about the matter making new efforts and new inventions.

Nowadays we find it hard, perhaps, to grasp how it is possible that most of the movements we see performed in Swedish gymnastic halls, or executed elsewhere by Swedish gymnasts, implied something new and revolutionary in the history of physical education as long before our time as a century ago. In order to show how simplifying and new Ling's gymnastic inventions were, in the domain of physical education, I cannot but cite the following specimen of pedagogic gymnastics, quoted out of a gymnastic work previous to Ling. 'If your chest is compressed', the author says, 'you may use such exercises as *pounding with a stamp, pulling bell-ropes, rowing, threshing, turning a crank*'.

Movements like these — they were called “natural”, in opposition to the “artificial” (the gymnastic) ones — may have been of undeniable use; not even in those times, when people, far less than in our days, were dependent on the social machinery and its claims on the time and the wants of an individual such exercises may have been fit for general application. To attain great effects by simple means is considered to be the greatest of arts. In that respect Ling was capable of more than either his predecessors or the gymnasts succeeding him.

An account of the new gymnastic movements Ling found out might fill up several pages in the Book of Inventions. In order to prove — in some measure — his claim to be the founder of rational gymnastics in modern times, I think proper to call attention to the fact that a large number of new gymnastic terms, denominations of new gymnastic movements, were composed by him. If Ling only had imitated his foregoer, Gutsuths, he had not been obliged to invent new gymnastic terms designating new gymnastic movements. He might have contented himself with translating into Swedish the terms of his foregoer. In reality, however, he had to find out new movements and new gymnastic names. Ling's first gymnastic appellations — in their originality suggestive of his inventive genius — were replaced by others in times that followed.

*The earliest
Swedish gymnastics.*

No important invention is made without experiments and labours. Was the Swedish gymnast an inventor discovering possibilities and realizing them, he became so thanks to a lifelong restless activity. Even in the year 1813, when he founded his gymnastic institute at Stockholm, he wrote that he had been occupied with gymnastic work for ten years. And at that time twenty-six more years were reserved for him as a gymnast. As an illustration of his unremitting gymnastic activity I quote the following passage written by an assistant of his about 1820. “It may be presumptuous to say that Ling's gymnastics have advanced so far as to form a complete system, but they advance with rapid strides towards completion; this I declare without

fear of contradiction, and I believe they will soon arrive at the most important point of their progress".

The state of experiment and observation in which Swedish gymnastics were, once upon a time, is reflected in the plan of instruction Ling followed at first. Those taking gymnastic exercises at his institute were not always instructed together as nowadays, but to each one separately an instructor imparted knowledge of the correct performance of the movements. That method was used, according to the author of the first article written on Swedish gymnastics, with a view to preventing the pupil from venturing upon the execution of exercises that were beyond his physical powers, and from performing gymnastic movements in general, before knowing the structure of his body and conditions of its rational treatment.

Swedish gymnastics were still in an experimental stage and offered a character of individualism just as every new creation. Time has dealt hardly with Ling's gymnastic writings, but what remains of them shows that new and daring ideas followed in rapid succession through the brain of the inventor. His individualism was manifested in the practice of the gymnastic movements, too. When he found it proper, he used to let the performance of some rhythmic movements be accompanied by song. Individual and expressive at the same time were the original expressions with which he designed the movements to be executed.

As a specimen of his terminology and of his capability to attain effects by simple means I quote a short gymnastic program, dating from the earliest Swedish gymnastics. On account of its shortness this program, arranged for school children as a recreation during the lesson-hours, may be described. The nine movements of which it is composed are called: 1. rolling, 2. sawing, 3. hewing, 4. tramping, 5. courtesying, 6. "jump (in place) and fling(ing upward of the arms)", 7. "two jumps and a courtesy", 8. "cock-a-hoop march", 9. lifting (forward-upward) and sinking (sidewise-downward) of the arms.

A short gymnastic program from Ling's time

The exercises in question consisted of the following move-

ments: 1. The hands grasp the hips, and the upper part of the body is rotated from the hips ("rolled"). 2. The forearms are bent against the upper arms, the left (right) arm is stretched forward and the right (left) arm downward while the trunk and the knees are bent so, that the finger-tips reach the floor. Then the body is stretched upward while the forearms are bent anew. Then the left (right) arm is stretched sidewise and the right (left) arm upward while the trunk is gently bent backward. Thus the movements of a man sawing wood are imitated. 3. The feet are planted a short distance apart, the arms are stretched straight upward, the fingers are interlaced and the movement of a wood-cutter handling his axe, is imitated. 4. March in place with the right and the left knees alternately lifted upward. 5. The heels are raised from the ground and the knees are bent so that a sitting position is assumed. (6). 7. Jumping with knees bent, by resting on the toes and by moving the feet aside and together alternately. 8. Running on toes with flinging forward of the legs in turn.

The nine movements described — which give some idea of the concrete manner of instruction which Ling made use of — take only a few minutes to execute; nevertheless they bring the different groups of muscles into action.

To this specimen of Ling's earliest pedagogic gymnastics others could be added, giving evidence of the strength, the courage and the presence of mind his gymnastics also required, if arranged for individuals accustomed to vigorous physical exercise. The claims laid on such gymnasts were rather great. A personal disciple of Ling's used to train his pupils to run from 30 to 40 minutes without getting out of breath. It should be remembered that other movements and exercises also formed part of those lessons, besides the running.

Some space of time passed before Swedish gymnastics were codified and unified. In the same degree as gymnastics became a concern of school and of the army and the navy, the spontaneity of the inventor had to yield and, like other subjects

taught, Swedish gymnastics had to be imparted according to an homogeneous scheme. The military element with its character of drill, that has remained distinctive for pedagogic Swedish gymnastics, then got a rule of general application. From that fact the mistaken conception of Ling as a military man may spring. In this connection it should be remembered that some documents prove that in the first period of Swedish gymnastics several civilians applied to be put through a course of gymnastics, in order to become teachers of gymnastics; in this respect, too, there is some difference between old and modern times.

In another chapter we shall see that the founder of Swedish gymnastics was also a thinker and a poet, and that ethical and esthetic qualities enter into his gymnastics. In this context I find it suitable to add a few words as to the new gymnastic movements Ling invented.

In order to show that Ling found out what GutsMuths sought for, namely a store of movements that might render a physiologic and plastic development of human body possible — a store of movements defined as to effect and performance — I think it proper to give the outlines of a typical program for a day's gymnastic work in our Swedish schools. A Swedish lesson in gymnastics begins with a series of simple movements for legs, arms and neck, together with a few easy bendings and twistings, and so follows a series of exercises that are to be classed according to their different effects.

A day's gymnastic work in Swedish schools.

One group consists of so-called span-bendings (the trunk is bent backward with arms stretched upward, the hands rest against a wall), that by affecting the spine and, in connection with that, the chest, improve the carriage; another group consists of heave-hanging movements (the hands grasp a beam, e. g., that is placed so high that the feet do not touch the floor, the arms, trunk and legs being stretched) which have to a certain degree the same effect, by affecting the muscles of the shoulders and of the breast and by increasing the capacity of the chest; a third group, the balance exercises, affect in a high

degree the brain and the nervous system, because it is by means of the nerves that our muscles receive orders to perform some particular function, in this case in a way that is suitable for the balance; a fourth group contains movements for the muscles of the back; a fifth for those on the front of the body; a sixth consists of movements for the muscles on the sides of the trunk.

If I also mention the gymnastic jumps, that affect almost all the muscles in succession, and in a manner that is prescribed by the nerves, and thereto add the respiratory movements affecting the respiratory organs, I have given some hints of the inventive gymnastic means by which the body can be treated, and the muscles, the nervous system, the circulation of the blood and the nutritive process can be affected.

In part we understand now what Ling meant by gymnastics: movements defined as to form, execution and effect, useful for developing the body, and we have seen that Ling founded what we call gymnastics in a strict sense. Just as the sculptor forms, in his studio, a marble statue, Ling wanted the living material of the human body, to be moulded into bodily truth and health. And the means, he indicated, were of the simplest, the most accessible and the most efficacious kind. From this you can explain the fact that no gymnastic method of any value, originating from the time *after* Ling's death, is devoid of some conformity with the system Ling founded.

German gymnastics influenced by Swedish principles.

Broadly speaking there are only two systems of pedagogic gymnastics in Europe: the Swedish and the German. An account of the German pedagogic gymnastics would require a chapter by itself. It should only be remembered that the latter has been influenced by the Swedish principles in gymnastics. It is noticeable that German physical education, in spite of a patriotic opposition, has sometimes profited from Ling's ideas. The antagonism that Swedish gymnastics meet with in Germany may not be considered merely an opposition to the peculiarity

of the Swedish system. The antagonism may also be explained by the circumstance that Germany, just as Sweden, has had to maintain a gymnastic tradition of its own, ever since Jahn, contemporary with Ling. In countries where there is no gymnastic tradition and where only objective and scientific points of view gymnastically prevail, Swedish gymnastics are gaining ground more and more.

It is then a fact that the gymnastic development in Europe would be put back no less than a century if the gymnastic principles Ling established in the beginning of the 19th century, were left out of account. — By gymnastics, however, Ling did not mean only the new movements he invented for physical exercise. Just as is the case with the Greeks and with Guts-muths *Ling uses gymnastics in a larger sense than we are accustomed to nowadays.* People often think Ling's gymnastics consist only of the new gymnastic movements, defined as to form, effect and execution, which he found out. In reality the matter does not stand thus. In gymnastics he included sports as well as games as far as the latter require physical exercise. But he excluded from his gymnastics such sports as were unsound or unsuitable for education.

As a proof of his interest in sports it may suffice to call attention to the fact that he arranged a palestra for sports and games in the open air, while he was staying at Lund; there he also set up a swimming-school. He himself was a first-rate swordsman. His interest for games in the open air is proved by several passages in his writings, and in his gymnastic practice he established the importance of games to physical education, and especially to the education of early youth, an age that from its nature is less accessible to gymnastic exactness and precision than maturer age. There is a description from Ling's later life showing us how the old gymnast played with the boys. "It was a splendid sight when the old man visited the gymnastic exercises of the youths, and all the boys ran cheering around him. He then arranged some games with them and partook in person with youthful liveliness".

*Ling meant
by gymnastics
also sound
sports and
games.*

Ling's importance to European gymnastics.

I have now tried to give an idea of the comprehensiveness and the extension gymnastics received by Ling's activity in the beginning of the 19th century. By him European gymnastics were widened but also deepened. To Ling gymnastics were a matter of science and free research, not only of school and of pedagogics. Somewhere he speaks of gymnastics based on *rational* grounds, i. e. based on scientific principles and he tried to carry out his idea. The study of anatomic science he utilized for his gymnastics and it was by means of his knowledge of the human body that he was enabled to reform the faulty ideas of physical education that were prevalent during the preceding century, the 18th.

Rational and scientific principles were introduced into gymnastics by him. It has sometimes been said that those principles are due to Ling's immediate followers. What are the real facts may be proved by the following quotation from an old document, written by Ling, and containing a plan of subjects taught at the gymnastic institute he had founded in 1813. Among several subjects taught we find: anatomy, descriptive free-standing (i. e. without apparatus) gymnastics, applied gymnastics (with apparatus and without), principles of gymnastics etc. By bringing a scientific tendency into physical education he enriched it by a new and fertile thought. In the same degree as a physical and gymnastic education is based on objective researches and keeps pace with the evolution of sciences appertaining, in the same degree it is of universal and international bearing.

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The world of new thoughts and new projects in which a pioneer of human progress lives is seldom led to perfection by himself alone.

As to Ling's personal disciples, two went abroad in order to spread his doctrines, the third remained in Sweden. From the very beginning his gymnastics were conceived as an inter-

national concern. And a hundred years after Ling's appearance it cannot be denied that his work has become as well a national matter as — in some degree — an international one. There is hardly one country in Europe where representatives of Swedish gymnastics — medical or pedagogic — do not work at spreading them, often with great success. Into the New World Swedish gymnastics have also made their way, nor are they quite unknown in other parts of the world.

Nowadays pedagogic gymnastics are a matter of course in Swedish schools. Even in Ling's time many schemes were projected in order to promote his pedagogic ideas. It was suggested that gymnastic seminaries might be set up at the Swedish universities in order to train teachers of gymnastics — which in reality became the task of the Gymnastic Central Institute; it was also suggested that the clergy should be encouraged to persuade their parishioners of the advisability of constructing gymnastic establishments within the parishes, that youth might get an opportunity of gymnastic exercises.

The application of pedagogic gymnastics in Swedish schools was posterior to that in Germany. Nevertheless the gymnastic development in Sweden got on faster than in Germany. Gymnastics cannot be said to have formed any real subject taught in German schools during the first part of the 19th century, viz. before the appearance of Adolf Spiess (1810—1858). In a word, the matter stood thus in Sweden during the period in question: in 1807 the first Swedish edict imposing gymnastics in the state schools was issued; in 1820 it was reissued and made more exacting; in the fourth decade of the 19th century there were seventeen teachers of gymnastics in all, divided among the state schools in Sweden.

The gymnastic evolution in Sweden.

At present there are gymnastic establishments, light and airy, in all the state schools of Sweden — the greater part of Swedish youth receives its education in state schools — and the gymnastic exercises are directed by special teachers, trained at the Gymnastic Central Institute in Stockholm. The teachers

of gymnastics in our elementary schools are not trained there, yet they are specially instructed so as to be able to impart gymnastic instruction themselves. In elementary schools in Sweden just as in other state schools there, and in the army and in the navy, gymnastics are compulsory. Playgrounds for games in the open air are fairly numerous in Swedish cities and sports are practised with great ardour by Swedish youth. In conformity with Ling's principles, representatives of physical education in Sweden often warn against *excessive* sports, emphasizing the harm over-exertion can do the young generation.

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Ling's furtherance of medical gymnastics.

In the beginning, Ling may not have realized the future bearing of his gymnastic work; nor may he have anticipated what that work was to require from his gymnastic inventiveness. It is a fact proved by documents from Ling's time that he became an inventor not only in pedagogic gymnastics, but also in medical gymnastics, thus giving an important contribution to therapeutics though he was not a physician by profession. In the sphere of therapeutics a new tendency had gradually made its way during the 19th century. The value of air, motion and water was held forth as something novel and people got some remote ideas of the importance that gymnastics might have from a medical point of view. In England, as well as on the continent, tracts treating of the therapeutic value of gymnastics, appeared.

From this vague and imperfect conception of gymnastics as a matter of importance also in medical respects, which even in the times of the Greeks and the Romans was known, it was a long way to a real knowledge of *which* infirmities and bodily deformities should be treated by gymnastics and *which* method of treatment should be employed in different cases. In both these respects Ling's medical gymnastics were important, as can be proved. The explanation of that fact may be no other than the following one, given by a personal disciple of his, a physician by profession: Ling, just as other men that have

pioneered, proceeded by means of experience and observation of phenomena, a proceeding that was as long as his own life. As an illustration of those words of his disciple it should be added that Ling applied to all the resources within reach, to the gymnastic writings of the classical antiquity as well as those of modern times, before all, however, to the study of the human body by anatomy and by researches in the laws of its movements.

It is a long way from the medical experiments in the early 19th century to modern therapeutics professed by professional men of the medical art nowadays. Ling himself wished that his medical gymnastics might be developed by professional physicians and that wish was a consequence of his fundamental principle, according to which gymnastics are a science. It cannot be denied, however, that Ling himself gave rise to that branch of the medical art which gymnastics comprise, though he was not a medical man.

Just as Ling in pedagogic gymnastics found out formulæ by which the healthy human body could be brought to plastic perfection, he found out formulæ by which the diseases of the human body might be eliminated. We might find it hard to believe this, if there were not documents proving it. From eighteen-twenty-something, there is a document telling us that several physicians sent patients to Ling's institute because they had found that the best way of eliminating some diseases was to apply to medical gymnastics. Ling himself writes in a letter: I have employed my movement-cure in healing some sick persons and they regard me as a wonder-worker as I use no drugs.

There is also a description of Ling practising his medical gymnastics that deserves to be quoted. He used — as are the words of our informant — to treat the diseased part of the body with an exceedingly cautious hand, and he proceeded very slowly on account of which it happened that the sick persons complained of feeling no effect from the movements employed; just for those reasons, however, his cures most often

turned out successfully and diseases that had lasted for years and baffled every treatment with drugs gradually disappeared. A large practice of medical gymnastics was enjoyed by Ling and the number of those restored to health by it was fairly great. — In this context another gymnastic contribution to medical art ought to be mentioned, viz. the practice of medical gymnastics carried on by the Gymnastic Orthopedic Institute at Stockholm that was founded in Ling's time by a friend of his and still exists. It is a State institution just as the Gymnastic Central Institute.

The social, ethical and esthetic importance of Ling's gymnastics.

*Revival of
national
energy and
activity.*

It is hardly possible to realize the general aim Ling intended to give to his gymnastics without taking a retrospect of the prevailing current in Swedish culture in the beginning of the 19th century. That current aimed at nothing less than a national regeneration. A demand for the education of the whole nation and a development of all its forces was raised, a demand that was natural on account of the political dangers the peoples of the North had gone through. The demands in question came from different sources, not only from pedagogues by profession, and they were so current as to indicate a want in time and in society. They got a typical expression in Sweden in the so called Gothic Association, a group of distinguished Swedish men, whose guiding idea was: a revival of national energy and activity.

Practically, not theoretically or poetically, the national current in question had its mightiest manifestation in Ling's gymnastic aims. From poets and theorists a complaint was heard, similar to Hamlet's

— the native hue of resolution
is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.

Tegnér, the famous Swedish poet, sang dolefully: the sinews of poetry are broken just as the sword of activity. Tegnér's friend, the Swedish gymnast, tried to restore national activity to his own times and his own people. By his gymnastics he purposed to strengthen the individual as well as the social force of will and of action. The main purpose of the Swedish gymnast was that *his gymnastics might become a social function forwarding national power of action.*

In the same proportion as a physical education is social in its essence it can spread the ethical and esthetic qualities it may possess. The fact is that the social point of view becomes a fundamental one, if we try to group Ling's thoughts on the importance and the value of a rational physical education. From the very beginning a social character distinguished Swedish gymnastics and Ling tried to attract people to national games and sports that in his days were practised in some parts of Sweden. To games and sports, however, he added a new kind of exercise, unknown up till then, the so called gymnastic movements. He did so with a social end in view.

Ling's gymnastics have a social end in view.

He understood that games, however useful they may be, are insufficient for a complete physical education. He understood there are good sports that, unfortunately, do not fall within the reach of everyone because they demand more bodily strength and more sporting accessories than everyone may be supposed to possess. In their substance the gymnastics he invented were accessible to everyone who possesses a body, accessible to high and low, to the weak and to the strong.

The thoughts in question received expression in Ling's own time when an assistant of his wrote: '*There is no art other than gymnastics that alone supplies the need of motion to all ages.* The gymnastic movements are selected for the necessities of the whole body; you can use them whenever you like and only a few minutes are necessary for profiting by them; they are arranged in such a way that they contain the easiest as well as the more strenuous exercises.'

Supposing sports were within the reach of everyone, a fundamental difference would still exist between gymnastics and sports, a difference which renders one supplementary to the other and calls for a practice of *both*. Gymnastics with their movements, specified as to form, execution and effect, aim at the development of the *whole* body whereas sports aim at *some* particular achievements, which, however useful they may be, yet are something quite special.

The universal utility of Swedish gymnastics arises from the very nature of Ling's gymnastic investigations. He founded his gymnastic activity upon a real knowledge of the human body. Through him gymnastics became a science, founded on observation and experiment. In this way, Ling fulfilled a condition necessary for the accumulation of a store of movements that might be important for the bodily training of *everyone*. The scientific basis explains the fact that Swedish gymnastics gain ground whenever, in a foreign country, the question of their introduction is objectively and scientifically discussed.

Physical education a national concern according to Ling.

When Ling appeared in the beginning of the 19th century, physical education had become a national need for the first time in modern history. In Sweden, as well as in Germany, physical education became a national concern, in Sweden by the efforts of Ling, in Germany by those of Jahn, the father of the German »Turnen». Ling's way of thinking as a gymnasiarch was in brief the following: not only the individual force of action and of will is strengthened by physical education, which promotes the strength of will of a whole people. On that ground, physical education ought to be a national concern. "At a gymnastic establishment based on true principles wealth as well as poverty, lowliness as well as greatness are levelled; equality for the public good ought to prevail there."

Among leading men in the history of physical education there is no one that has handled it in a broader sense than Ling. No one has given a larger meaning to gymnastics than he when he enriched the inheritance from times bygone —

the different sports practised in ancient Greece and in the old North—by gymnastic exercises, invented by himself. Combined with games and healthful sports he called those exercises “gymnastics”. No one has more expressly asserted the ethical and social importance of a national physical education. That is the reason why Ling’s gymnastic achievement is a natural starting-point for a useful activity in the department of physical education.

Even in ancient Greece an *ethical worth* was attributed to gymnastics as we can see from several passages in Plato and in Aristotle, the Grecian philosophers. With music — in the Grecian sense of music *and* science and art — the mind ought to be educated, the body by gymnastics. Education must include the mind as well as the body; if not, it does not deserve to be mentioned, according to Plato. He indicates the ethical value of gymnastics as follows: we want exercises for our children to develop their bodies that these may become a suitable vehicle for the mind in the highest possible degree. It is also within the power of gymnastics, according to Plato, to develop several moral qualities, e. g., nobleness of mind, obedience, courage, self-reliance; gymnastics guard against dissipation and lead the way to what is beautiful, and, at the same time, to virtue.

*An ethical
worth
attributed to
gymnastics in
Greece.*

Aristotle, too, discusses the value of gymnastics. He occupies himself also with educational questions in general. There are matters that must be separated from education. It is below the dignity of a freeborn man to trouble himself with some matters that render him incapable of noble actions. To that sort of thing belongs all that deforms the body or by which it becomes clumsy or weak; a day-labourer’s business is of that sort because it obstructs the thinking of the mind -- the Grecian contrast between freeborn men and slaves appears here. Occupying oneself only with scientific researches is also derogatory to a freeborn man, according to Aristotle. Subjects taught are, according to him: writing (drawing, painting), gymnastics and music. By gymnastics some thing is made of the body and

some accomplishments are given to it. The special ethical importance of gymnastics is indicated in his writings in this way: gymnastics form part of education as far as they promote courage and bravery.

In modern times some exceptional thinkers and educators pointed out the moral importance of a physical education, e. g. Locke in England. Nevertheless the old truth seemed to have been a new one, when Ling spoke for it in the beginning of the 19th century. "A real gymnastic education", wrote he, "should be directed to the mind as well as to the body." "The more an individual learns to act by means of his own ability, to maintain within himself power to overcome all dangers, to act on the instant with calmness and without rashness, the more he approaches to man." When emphasizing the mental worth of bodily exercises, he took up a line of thought that was to be continued by the following ages and the accuracy of which was to be confirmed and explained by the science of our days.

Physical exercises an exercising of the will according to modern science.

Modern science shows that physical exercises are not only an exercising of the muscles but also of the nerves, of the central nervous system in the spinal marrow and in the brain where Will and Consciousness reside. We can perform a voluntary, intentional movement only by means of the central nervous system, from which "impulses" or orders emanate to some muscles to work in some way. Thus bodily exercises become an exercising of the will, too; hence it follows that they may be of consequence for our power of acting, which depends upon the will, and for the development of moral qualities.

In many respects, the mental life of an individual may be affected by a physical education. Old treatises on education speak of an exercising of the senses, which exercising was not connected with physical exercises, however. For such a connection we have not far seek. Physiology shows that there are more senses than people formerly believed. There is, e. g., a muscular sense, viz., a sense by which I apprehend — when moving

— the direction and the extent of my movement and the relations between the different parts of the body; such a sense is naturally trained by physical exercises (e. g. by jumping).

In this context I cannot be silent on the fact that now and then an opinion is asserted according to which Swedish gymnastics affect in too small a degree — or in no degree at all — our mental and moral life, that is to say the will. That opinion is of long standing. It was pronounced in 1881 by Du Bois-Reymond, the renowned German physiologist. He declared that Swedish gymnastics do not train the central nervous system; this being the case they offer no exercise for the will. "The muscles are strengthened by Swedish gymnastics but these do not train the body to complicated movements. They are good for medical use only, for maintenance or restoration of activity in single groups of muscles." That is to misunderstand instead of to understand Swedish gymnastics. It is quite the contrary to what these aimed at from their very beginning.

A misconception of Ling's gymnastics.

It was the human will the Swedish gymnasiarch intended to influence, in conformity with his own words quoted above: a real gymnastic education should be directed to the mind as well as to the body. — I cannot be wide of the truth if I insist upon the fact that there is a reference to the will in Ling's words just as in his gymnastics. In his critique of Swedish gymnastics Du Bois-Reymond does not hit the inner meaning of Ling's thought. There is another assertion made by the German physiologist which should be applied to Swedish gymnastics more justly than the above-mentioned. When a complicated movement, writes Du Bois-Reymond, is being performed, e. g. a jump, the muscles must act in some succession and, according to a physiological law, the energy of every single muscle must swell, continue and slacken to the end that the right position of the limbs and a perfect balance may result. — Such an influence on nerves and will was one of the main objects Ling had in view in his gymnastics.

Gymnastics as an education of will is a pedagogic factor that must not be forgotten. Even if the psychologists dispute about the rank our will holds in mental life — whether its place in it is of a central or of a secondary character — it is a fact that good grounds have been adduced in favour of the “voluntarism”. Be this as it may, the pedagogic importance of the education of the will cannot be denied. In its capacity of being important to the development of the will physical exercise gets an importance that is not only an especially pedagogic one but also a general and social one, particularly in our days. Modern medical science speaks of “the diseases of will”; a modern penetrating thinker says that thought and reflection have become overgrown nowadays and literature not only concerns itself with pessimistic themes but itself adopts a pessimistic tone — something which is not without connection with the diseases of will.

The moral worth of gymnastics appears in different ways. There are philosophers who declare physical movements are important, ethically, from the fact that they afford pleasure. The development of power, which physical exercises afford, implies as well release from discomfort as production of feelings of pleasure, matters not only of esthetic but also of ethical importance. Movements release from the discomfort that is provoked by repressed activity, says an art-philosopher.

The words quoted deserve to be repeated by the moralists. Lust of life has become a watchword but tiredness — in other words incapacity of active exertion — is the general symptom. That this point of view, viz. that physical exercise includes pleasure, not less than the former, that physical exercise trains the will, was borne upon the mind of the Swedish gymnasiarch is proved by his own beautiful words according to which joy is a spark of divine fire that ought to penetrate everything.

National importance of gymnastics. The history of gymnastics shows that gymnastics are not *only* of ethical but also of ethical *and* national importance. It was, however, not until late in the history of gymnastics

that such a view began to prevail. In Greece physical education was a national concern only to a limited extent. A numerous group of inhabitants were excluded from it, viz. the slaves, as I have said before. Only in the century of the French Revolution and in the beginning of the 19th century, gymnastics have acquired ethical importance to society at large. The countries that in this way took care of the gymnastic development and gave it a new vehicle were Sweden and Germany.

In the Germany that fought against the armies of Napoleon, in the fatherland of Gutsuths and Jahn, this conception of things materialized into deeds and was directed towards national defence. Jahn, the German gymnasiarch and a contemporary of Ling, is an illustrious personage. "The unity of my country was the aurora of my youth, the sun of my mature years and the evening-star of my life." The course of his life did not contradict his words. His patriotism was not checked by Napoleon's imperative commands. One of his patriotic dreams was to improve his countrymen, mentally and physically, by gymnastics, which he called "turnen".

It should be added that also in Ling's fatherland, not less than in Germany, Swedish gymnastics were viewed from a national and practical stand-point, from their very beginning. During the political dangers in the beginning of the 19th century an outcry was raised in favour of a strong power of defence in a mental and in physical respect. The watchword was partly: a gymnastic education of the youth. That national character never departed from Swedish gymnastics.

Thus have ethical considerations been a part of gymnastics during their history in a more or less constant way. It is a truth that also nowadays gymnastics are in some degree recognized as a moral factor. They include, however, also esthetic moments,* which especially is the case with Swedish gymnastics.

*Swedish
gymnastics
are connected
with esthetics
and art.*

* As to the ethical and esthetic importance of gymnastics a few words of Ling himself deserve to be quoted: a true gymnast wants intellectual training as well as taste for the fine arts and morals (Ling's Collected Writings III, p. 773).

Even antagonists admit that an *esthetic importance* distinguishes them. Exactness in form is inseparable from Swedish gymnastics and the *sense of plastic form* that they are able to develop in the practisers gives them a quality of pedagogic importance.

In an article on Ling's gymnastics, dating from his own days, a parallel is drawn between these gymnastics and *art*, especially the art of sculpture. And it cannot be denied that Ling's gymnastics in their essence are an art. Clear evidence of this is the fact that some laws governing other branches of art are to be found in Swedish gymnastics. These include several esthetic conceptions and I find it proper to call attention to their existence.

*Economy
of force.*

The esthetic science speaks of a law of elegance and elegance in movement. Gymnastics are movements and that law is a matter of fact also to be found in gymnastics. The law in question — the fundamental principle of which is economy of force — insists that more exertion than is necessary for the aim in view should not be bestowed on a movement. In art, especially in the representation of the human body, everything that is unequal to the purpose causes loss of beauty, just as an injudicious use of force results in gymnastic incorrectness. The gymnastic application of that law concerning correspondence between the effort and the object of it, is thorough in Swedish gymnastics. It is applicable to every movement in that the movement should be performed without making use of more muscles, that is to say more force, than necessity demands. In this respect, Swedish gymnastics agree with art, thus illustrating and making real to us a conception of beauty.

Symmetry.

In art there is something called symmetry, with which some regularity is expressed or an identity between the two halves which make a whole. Symmetry is to be found in architecture; it exists in the pictorial art of some periods, and it is fundamental in sculpture. You have not far to look for an illustration of what symmetry is. Your own body is such an illustra-

tion. If you take the position that in gymnastic language is called the standing position — typical of a gymnastic carriage of the body — you will find that the two halves into which a perpendicular might be supposed to divide the body correspond perfectly; thus my body is an illustration of what symmetry is.

By means of the different kinds of movements that are to be found in Swedish gymnastics, you are able to have more knowledge of the essence of symmetry. Symmetry implies a harmonious balance and the repose of the whole. The gymnastic application of this principle is, that unsymmetrical and ungymnastic are all movements which prevent the capacity of balance and the mastery over the body being displayed and maintained in different positions. It is a fact that no similar movements are to be found in Swedish gymnastics, which, thus implants in the mind of the practiser another conception of beauty without his knowledge of it.

An *esthetic significance*, not only an ethical one, has been of great importance also in bygone times. An exclusively gymnastic point of view is not large enough to comprise the bearing of Ling's gymnastic thoughts. In several respects they are part and parcel of the culture of the age; perhaps this connection was wholly or partly unknown to Ling himself.

In the North history cannot speak of a plastic ideal until late. It is a fact not to be doubted that the old inhabitants of the North esteemed bodily accomplishments very highly. That plastic conception, however, got no artistic expression. The old Scandinavian sculpture deserves to be called truly artistic only with restriction. Nor did the Reformation and the Renaissance in the North produce any sculptural art in which the human body occupies such a place as in the sculpture of the Italian Renaissance. Not before the 18th century is a really plastic ideal to be found in the North. In that century a return to the old Grecian art began, the revival of which was pleaded for by Winckelmann, the renowned German scholar.

*The revival
of the old
Grecian
sculpture.*

It was the Grecian sculpture he paid special attention to, and its laws were established by him. Winckelmann wished to raise the sculpture to the same rank as it had once held in Greece and among the artists his wish became a permanent aspiration for several decades. It is not a mere chance that Sergel (1740—1814), the Swedish sculptor whose wonderful Faun is known and appreciated by every visitor to the National Museum of Stockholm, just as the Dane, Thorvaldsen (1770—1844), were born in the same century as Winckelmann lived in. By their masterpieces of sculptural genius those two sculptors gave a plastic expression of the human body in its perfection. Their works may be compared to those of a renowned English painter, Sir Frederick Leighton, in the symmetry of composition, the rhythm of the lines, the nobleness in the representation of the human body. It should be added that an important contribution to the development of a plastic ideal in the North was given by the Scandinavian sculptors mentioned. It is a noteworthy fact that two Hyperboreans are to be found among the reformers of modern sculpture, the art of the Hellenes.

The works of Winckelmann are of a special interest on account of the clear and logical way in which they hold forth the connection that existed between the gymnastics and the sculpture of the Hellenes. Of all his assertions none hit the Hellenic spirit as do those by which the Grecian gymnasia, that is to say the places where gymnastic exercises were performed, are characterized as the studios of the sculptors. In the gymnasia the Grecian sculptors became familiar with the human body, its bodily truth, its harmonious perfection, its movements and its resting-positions. Nowhere do his descriptions get such a colouring as when he leads us into the porticoes of the gymnasia.

“There walked the philosopher, there came the artist; Socrates in order to teach his disciples, Phidias in order to study the naked bodies of those taking gymnastic exercises. There the spectators followed with their eyes the action of the muscles,

the twistings of the body or studied its *eurythmy*; in the sand the outlines of the wrestlers' bodies were to be seen by the impression they made in it." — Nowhere may the critical observations of Winckelmann be more justifiable than in the passages where he emphasizes the importance that gymnastically trained bodies have as models.

Thus the Grecian sculpture filled a large place in the artistic sphere of the end of the 18th century and of the beginning 19th, a fact that explains in some degree Ling's admiration of the Hellenic sculpture, in which "the immortal models" are to be found. I don't know how much the Swedish gymnasiarch may have studied Grecian sculptures; it is a fact, however, that he was able to see with the eyes of an old Greek. Out from his writings a sound like that of a chisel fashioning the marble is to be heard every now and then.

In the hellenizing period in which Ling lived no one tried to realize the connection that once existed between gymnastics and sculpture, the Swedish gymnasiarch excepted. It may seem hard to believe that he was such an exception; the fact cannot be denied, however, as far as I know. Even when Ling was staying at Lund he turned his eyes towards a future conjunction between gymnastics and sculpture. He seems, however, to have met with opposition. "When I declared that the fine arts in Europe could not arrive at the height of prosperity, ere rational gymnastics were introduced, people laughed at me as if I were a fool." At his gymnastic institute he endeavoured to get together the artists of that time so as to show them the importance of gymnastically developed models and of observing the human body in gymnastic motion.

*Ling urged
a connection
between gym-
nastics and
sculpture.*

His efforts bore fruit. In the National Museum at Stockholm there are Swedish pencil drawings from the beginning of the 19th century which deserve to be mentioned on account of the perfection with which they reproduce the most varying positions of the human body. The drawings in question, with themes from the old Scandinavian mythology and history, are

executed by an artist that had been artistically educated at Ling's institute.* As characteristic of Michael Angelo, the most wide-embracing genius of the Renaissance in Italy, the capacity of representing the human body in its movements and its muscular perfection is often held forth. I don't intend to compare the unknown Swedish artist to Michael Angelo but it cannot be denied that the drawings of the former recall some masterpieces of the latter in their boldness of expression and anatomical accuracy.

*Statues of old
Scandinavian
divinities in
the National
Museum at
Stockholm.*

Every visitor to the National Museum at Stockholm cannot but notice the gods in marble that are placed in the entrance hall. Indirectly Ling was the author also of the statues of those old Scandinavian divinities (Odin, Tor, Balder), partly on account of the energy with which he insisted upon the introduction of the Old Northern mythology and saga into artistic subjects, partly on account of the fact that he supported, by his gymnastic endeavours, the importance that ought to be attributed to the *plastic form*.

It cannot be denied that the statues representing Odin and Tor are almost unparalleled as to the exactitude with which they reproduce the different parts of the human body and its muscles. At the same time it cannot be denied that the artistic exaggeration which the statues of these two deities manifest is enormous. It deserves still to be added that *the connection between gymnastics and sculpture that the Swedish gymnasiarch fought for is to be found only three times in history: in the Greece of olden times, in the Italy of the Renaissance and in Sweden in the beginning of the 19th century.*

A retrospective survey of the gymnastic and artistic collaboration during the two first-mentioned periods will bring the great bearing of Ling's endeavours into relief.

*Gymnastics
were of great
importance to
sculpture in
Greece.*

The religious system and the fine arts were intimately connected in Greece. There was, however, also a connection between
* Charles Wahlbom (1810—1857). See, e. g., his "Slaget vid Fyrisvall" (The battle of Fyrisvall).

tween gymnastics and arts, between gymnastic and plastic arts, as I have already indicated. The sculptural perfection of the Grecian statues cannot be explained, if the importance of the gymnastic education in Greece is not taken into account. One of the necessary factors of the Grecian sculpture was the paestrian life. The consequence of the latter is manifested by the progressive development of sculpture.

Thus were gymnastics *one* condition of the sculptural prosperity in Greece. — The Grecian sculptures of an early period are frontal, that is to say, the median-line of the statue is quite straight, its neck and abdomen are not twisted nor bent in any way, which causes a geometrical, stiff attitude. Then the frontality is dissolved into easy and agile positions, the human body is reproduced also with its twistings and bendings. This was not only the effect of an artistic capacity more developed and more skilled in the representation of the human body; it was also the result of the artistic, keen and ripe observation of the paestrian life, in which youth and manhood were trained to exercises of agility and strength. The gable-sculptures that come from the temple of Aegina are renowned specimens of that new style.

Among the sculptures of the east gable, there is one which the historians of art point out as especially noticeable on account of the perfect manner in which a movement is represented in marble — the movement that Hercules is performing when stretching out his left arm in order to draw a bow. The discus-thrower of Myron, represented in the act of twisting the body sharply, inaugurates a new series of sculptural themes, in which no frontality is to be found, because the median-lines of the statues belonging to this series, are curved.

A statue of this kind, perfect in plastic and static respects, is the renowned Doryphoros of Polyclethus. This statue is a good specimen of the exquisite discrimination with which the Greeks were able to realize the static conditions of the human body. The Doryphoros rests the weight of his body mainly

*The Dory-
phoros of
Polyclethus.*

on one foot, the front one, which causes one hip, that of the front leg, to stand out more than the other hip. In this way the symmetry between the two halves of the upper part of the body disappears. The equilibrium of the statue must be kept, however, and with this intention the sculptor has somewhat lowered one shoulder of the statue — that corresponding to the foot moved forward. In that manner the figure represented in marble receives the harmony of lines which the Greeks called eurythmy.

*The eurythm
in Grecian
and Swedish
gymnastics.*

The eurythmy, that is to say the rhythmic harmony and the equilibrium of the human body, belongs especially to the Grecian sculptures; it appertains, however, also to the Grecian gymnastics on account of the connection existing between gymnastics and sculpture in Greece. The harmony and proportion, that is to say, the eurythmy of the body, is something esthetic, not ethic, in modern times.

The Greeks attributed an ethic importance to the eurythmy. It should be remembered that virtue is a mental health or harmony, according to Plato, and he says that the supreme good is based on the right measure and proportion. It may also be mentioned that Hippocrates, the great healer, contemporary with Plato, regards the human body as a harmonious whole which sickness mars. It should be added that the eurythmy of the Grecian sculptures implies its existence also in the models gymnastically trained. By gymnastic delicacy, as to the rhythmic balance of the human body and its static conditions, Swedish gymnastics offer an exceptional resemblance to the Grecian gymnastics.

*The Grecian
sculptors got
their knowl-
edge of the
human body
from the
palestra.*

It seems to be an undeniable fact that, during the classic period of the Grecian culture, anatomic dissections of the body were unknown. The sculptures of Polycletus, with their muscular exuberance and anatomic perfection, as well as the gracious and slender bodies Lysippos designed — unrivalled as to harmonious energy — are modelled on the types of the palestra; there it was that the sculptor got accustomed to the muscular activity of the human body. To what degree the eye-sight of

the Grecian sculptors was gymnastically well-trained, may be appreciated from Socrates' words to a sculptor: I know you artistically separate the runners, the wrestlers, the pancratiasts from one another. The words quoted must no doubt apply to the artist's capacity for realizing the muscular peculiarities of the different categories of sportsmen — a capacity that few modern sporting-enthusiasts may possess.

In the art of the Italian Renaissance, the human body occupies a foremost place. The fact that the anatomic interest and the dissecting eagerness of the artists in those days were of great consequence as to the artistic realism has been pointed out by the historians of art. Whilst the mediæval art — though it shows a good deal of realism — cared little for bodily truth (as the whole spirit of the Middle Ages was a speculative one) the art of the Renaissance knew how to represent bodily truth in a very realistic way. The artists of the Renaissance became familiar with the anatomy of the human body, partly by means of dissections. A whole generation of artistic anatomists grew up. It is only necessary to recall the renowned anatomical drawings of Leonardo da Vinci.

If the classic antiquity lacked the knowledge of the human body that is based on dissections, the Renaissance possessed it in abundance. There was, however, also another way in which the art of that time made the bodily truth subject to an artistic dominion. The Renaissance of Art was, at the same time, the Renaissance of Gymnastics.

As strong as the reaction had been *against* the Grecian antiquity before, as strong in favour of that antiquity it now becomes. A revival of the gymnastic interest, displayed by the Greeks, ensued. In this connection I will mention Mercurialis' *The Renaissance of Art was also the Renaissance of Gymnastics.* "de arte gymnastica libri sex", which may be characterized as commentaries on Grecian and Roman gymnastics and descriptions of them. The gymnastic revival during the Renaissance was of great consequence to the art of this period. It cannot be denied that this fact has been almost forgotten by the

historians of art. It does not suffice to point out the artistic importance of anatomic knowledge during the Renaissance. Anatomy and dissection do not suffice for plastic art. Only the artist who has followed the movements of the human body in the palestra, or in the gymnastic hall is able to represent it sculpturally. Only a model who is gymnastically educated shows real perfection and harmony; only such a model and such an artist offer the qualities desired — this is the conception that the Renaissance has manifested in its wonderful works of art.

*Gymnastics
were important
also to
the art of the
Renaissance.*

It is an undeniable fact, I think, that the gymnastic interest of the Renaissance was of great consequence to its artistic productions. Behind the bronze-statues of Donatello, as well as behind the dazzling pictures made by the Italian painters of the 16th century, you may discern models who have come from the palestra into the studio. The sculptures and the paintings of Michael Angelo, with their exaggerated perfection in the representation of the human body and its different positions, suggest a gymnastic development of the models which borders on the incredible. One painting by Raphael recalls to the mind some scenes from a palestra: e. g. the movement performed by some figure (to the left) in "the fire at Borgo" in the Vatican; the individual is represented when climbing the wall.

*Raphael and
the palestra.*

From an esthetic point of view I have now made a few observations on the importance of gymnastics during the Renaissance and antiquity; and here we have to leave the art of the Renaissance, perfect in form and noticeable also on account of its appreciation of bodily truth, though it is inferior to the Grecian art as to harmony and eurythmy.

By the above remarks the esthetic bearing as well as the ethical importance of Ling's gymnastic thoughts may have been brought into relief. It should be repeated that only three times in the history of art is a connection between gymnastics and art to be found, viz. in the Greece of olden days, in the Italy of the Renaissance and in the Sweden of the early 19th century, that is to say in the time in which Ling lived and worked.

We now leave Ling's gymnastic ideas. I think I have established that Ling's gymnastics imply qualities which are not generally known, though these are of such an importance to social education that they deserve to be especially pointed out.

Ling as a poet.

In some degree, Ling's gymnastic and poetic activity implies a revival of the old Grecian ideal of education. What the epics of Homer and the palestinian exercises had been to Grecian youth, Ling's own epics on the old Scandinavian heroes and deities were intended to be to Swedish youth. Ling never imagined his epic poems deserved to be compared with those of Homer. Once upon a time, he designed that his "Asar" — a long epic describing the old Scandinavia — should be reading for youth; that this was a hasty thought he himself clearly understood.

It was Ling's gymnastics, not his poetry, that bore his name to posterity. During his lifetime his poetry in no lesser degree than his gymnastics may have contributed to his renown. Also as a poet he gave many fresh suggestions to his contemporaries. On account of the archaic character of Ling's poems, people are accustomed to place him somewhat too positively in the remote antiquity and, now and then, it is forgotten that he occupied a conspicuous place also among the poets of the early 19th century. In Ling's poetry, a good deal recalls the preceding century, the 18th; a good deal belongs to modern poetry of the time in which he lived.

The Old Northern times, from which he took the themes of most of his poetical works, were the vogue in the beginning of the 19th century. At that time the *young* poets sang the praise of the old Scandinavian heroes, and used the old sagas for poetical subjects. Tegnér did so in his »Frithiof's saga», which is translated into most European languages. Out from the old themes, a new time rather than an old one was conjured up.

National movements appear in different forms in different times. In the early 19th century, people considered that a new and ideal Scandinavia could be created by means of the noble examples afforded by the glorious olden times. Out from those, rather than from the future, a new era was to arise.

Ling influenced by the romanticism of his time.

In several respects Ling, as a poet, was influenced by the romanticists of his time, that is to say by the most modern poets of the early 19th century. In Denmark and in Sweden as well as in the England of Scott, Byron and Southey, a neo-romantic school brought about a reaction from false classicalism. It was not in vain that Ling during his stay at Copenhagen, that is to say during the period in which we found him breaking through mentally, became familiar with the thoughts of the continental romanticism. Those are to be found in his own sphere of ideas. By means of a neo-romantic philosophy, prevailing in the Germany of the early 19th century, he intended to establish a philosophical basis for »Principles of Gymnastics», an essay of his which was never finished and is hard to understand.

Ling's manner of composing.

His poetry too, was every now and then typically neo-romantic, and his characteristics as a poet do not deny the neo-romantic ideal: an exuberant fancy and a power of imagination which is almost suggestive of the power of the elements. In his manner of composing, poetical spontaneity appeared in all its force. He generally dictated his verses while he was walking quickly to and fro in the room and was gesticulating impetuously. The verses poured from his lips with such rapidity, that it was scarcely possible for the assistant to write them down as fast as the poet wished. It was a great offence to interrupt him, an assistant of his says. »Write as you hear», the poet would say; »if it is wrong, I will correct it afterwards.»

When occupied with any new subject in poetry or in gymnastics, the same assistant says, Ling scarcely ever slept; he always had a pencil and paper at his bedside, and he had accustomed himself to write in the dark, with the aid of the thumb of his left hand as a guide. During his periods of invention

and production he took very little food, and was positively rendered ill if prevented from satisfying the needs of his spiritual nature.

The historians of literature generally attribute to Ling an overvaluation of the old Northern mythology and sagas. Be that as it may, it cannot be denied that there are passages in his works proving the contrary. I quote the following one which, by chance, was translated into English several decades ago, by a personal disciple of Ling's. »It never was my opinion that the Northern myths could exclude the Greek mythology. They are as little capable of that as the latter have been able to expel the Old Scandinavian myths from their native abode.«

*Ling and the
Northern
mythology
and sagas.*

»I have only asserted that the Northern myths are originally incorporated with our own poetical language; that we cannot reject them in relation to such subjects as exclusively belong to the North; that it is necessary to know these myths in order to get a thorough knowledge of our history; — and that history ought to be known properly in order to impart a just love of one's country. That those myths are as intelligible and significant as those of other countries I hope to be able to show. I know the visionary attaches too great and the sceptic too little importance to them — —.«

In Swedish literature, two currents are to be distinguished from one another: an epical one and a lyrical one; they are both obvious to an observer. The former found expression in large epics and in dramas, the latter in songs and ballads. The former often resulted from the influence of foreign culture. The latter, the lyrical, is implanted in the heart of the whole nation. The national lays, with their musical rhythm, were never wanting in Swedish literature and with good justice they are regarded as peculiar and national manifestations of the national spirit and its sense of poetry and music.

One of Ling's first poems was a fine little song, which became very popular and was even inserted in collections of pop-

Ling's lyrics.

ular songs. During the following periods of his life, Ling remained partly a *lyric* poet, and some of his lyric poems deserve to be ranked among the best lyrics among earlier Swedish poetry. It was not a mere chance that he was successful in lyrics, whereas he fell short in epic and dramatic poems, however long they were as to the number of pages. He thus revealed how closely he was in contact with the national spirit. Few, if any, of the leading men in Swedish culture show to such a degree as Ling national characteristics. Besides his lyric softness, he displays an excess of force, by its vehemence suggestive of the violently rushing rivers in Sweden.

His poetry, too, reflected the spirit of the vikings. The persons in his epics are seldom human beings, they are giants and heroes; and those personages do not speak in a human voice, but in a voice of thunder. As a poet Ling often forgot the artistic self-command and used the vehemence of a giant. He himself compared his large epics to rocks undressed and rough, in which precious stones were to be seen. This comparison was a well-founded one. As a poet he cared little for a detailed critical examination of his works before publishing them.

"Asarne",
Ling's largest
epic.

The largest of Ling's large poetical works is "Asarne", an epic, comprising more than eight hundred printed pages. The events and the descriptions group themselves around an old legend, according to which a chief, called Oden, removed from Asia to the North, together with his "asar", that is to say his companions, who were men from Asia. The immigration was said to have taken place in the Old Northern time, during the reign of a certain king called Gylfe, and the legend of him and the "asar" was not forgotten in Sweden in the early 19th century.

The subject of Ling's epic is an extensive one. With the courage of a viking, the poet brought home an abundance of Old Northern poems and legends. Little of what the Old Northern documents known in Ling's time, could tell, may be

wanting in his epic, in which an attentive reader will find incidents from Snorre, from Saxo, from the old sagas, and also from other old documents.

In several respects, Ling's "Asarne" is influenced by the style of the French classicalism of the 18th century. Nevertheless, they differ widely from the epics of that century. The manner in which Ling describes his "asar" takes them out of the gilded frame, with its ornaments, which surrounds the epic heroes of the 18th century — out to the artless Swedish nature wild and soft at the *same* time. Ling's "asar" are not familiar with the ceremonious style of the 18th century. When arriving, they look like "the rushing rivers of the mountains glittering in the shine of the vernal sun". One of the deities, e. g., is said to be fair as "a fruit which is growing red in autumn" and fresh as "a young elm when blooming". Ling's "asar" are Swedish, not only on account of their language, but also on account of the figurative language which is used by their author.

"Asarne"
differs from
the epics of
the 18th
century.

In the battlefield they advance against the enemy just as "men engaged in burning woodlands". When their enemies fall, they fall just as "the frozen reed which the storm is breaking down". It is difficult to say what are the characteristics of a poet. As far as imagery is concerned, it cannot be denied that Ling was a great poet. His comparisons display a rare combination of clearness and originality. I quote two of them only. When time passes slowly in the world of the "asar" and the warriors, its slowness is illustrated by an "arrow shot off from a half-broken bow". Among Ling's epic heroes, the prevailing opinion was that if a man *dreads* a danger, this danger increases just as "the number of the vikings boarding the ship of a trader".

A special faculty of observation is said to characterize some great poets. As an observer Ling was admirable, which is proved by his poetry as well as by his gymnastic ingeniousness. With a few lines he is able to represent a scene, just as some modern sketchers. "The vernal gale is whistling

and the light of the new spring moon is spreading over the ice-packs" — those few words give all the characteristics of the strange season which is early spring in Sweden.

Ling influenced by Ossian.

It should be added that Ling's poetical style, just as that of some other Swedish poets of the early 19th century, is influenced by Ossian, and the Celtic popular poetry which Macpherson's edition of Ossian represented. The voice of the Thunderer, for instance, is by Ling compared to "the roar of a foaming and frothing river", which is suggestive of the style in Ossian: "Loud is the voice of Cairbar, high-sounding as the waters of the river of Cromla." I have already pointed out that Ling's poetical spirit offers some resemblance to that of the Romantic School; and it is a fact that his imagery recalls that of Walter Scott. There are several parallels to be drawn between the figurative language in "Asarne" and in "The lady of the lake".

Ling's imagery recalls that of Walter Scott.

There is not only much substance in Ling's epic, there is also much poetry in it, especially much lyrical poetry. Mighty dithyrambics are rushing in the epic ocean which Ling's poem was intended to be. I quote the following passage, e. g.*

Dragon-ship, amain!
 Spite of wave and wind,
 Cleave the air with thy wings,
 Like an eagle that springs
 From confinement, and wins the large ether again.
 On, on, like a fugitive hind,
 And wild as a close-hunted bear,
 With thy savage prow tear
 Through the hurtling spray.

Hurrah! like a cloud in its flight
 O'er the eye of a star; —
 Fleet, fleet like the shadows, when light
 Breaks dim and afar.

Now all changes and shifts, and nothing is steady
 But a swift-circling roll, and a smooth gliding eddy;

* With a few corrections I cite the translation of it which is to be found in the biographical sketch of Ling mentioned p. 27.

The forest spins round, and the mountain dips under,
And the distance itself,
Like a frolicksome elf,
Fantastical skips aside and asunder.

Now nothing is left but a vast void round,
That shuts and absorbs in its changeless bound
The sky and the sea;
In a weird embrace, each mingling and blending,
Like a grave divine, from its womb forth sending
Each hour death and birth,
In infinite forms of varying light,
As swift and as bright
As the sun-dust wherewith the fays strew the earth.

Speed! winged sea-horse, at a more rapid speed;
Thy spray-drowned prow o'er the white billows drive,
Like an otter that's hunted; — struggle onward and strive,
Like the wing of the gloom
That envelopes the light.

The above-mentioned, legendary king, Gylfe, furnished matter to Ling for another large epic poem. In 1810 Ling had published a poem of four pages only, which "was enthusiastically received by all the young generation", according to a statement of the time. In the course of time, the imagination of the poet enlarged the poem in question so that it comprised a whole series of cantoes, when published some years afterwards. The poet of "Gylfe" — the poem was called so — had no small intentions. He wished to celebrate in song all his native country, all Sweden. "I have tried to describe the historical curiosities, the myths, the sceneries, in brief all that distinguishes my country."

Ling himself understood best of all that he had demanded too much of imaginative and creative power for his epics. He realized himself that it was too much for human power to be successful in those poetic feats. He himself knew, too, that there were imperfections in his poetical works. He also planned a revision of these. I found, a short time ago, a copy of one of his

poetical writings, in which Ling in his own hand, has proposed a lot of alterations. Only in part was he to execute his revisionary plan.

He conjured up the Old Northern time also in his third epic, *Tirfing*, which was his last poem. There was an Old Northern legend of a magic sword called Tirfing, which brought victory, but also misery, to its possessor; and that legend Ling used in his epic. There is some resemblance between Ling's poem and "Frithiof's saga", the renowned poem by Tegnér. Just as the hero of the latter is an idealized viking, somewhat modernized Northmen are the principal personages in "Tirfing". In both poems the heroine is a maid of the true Scandinavian type. In both poems dragonships are ploughing the sea.

As early as during his stay at Copenhagen Ling drew up a plan for his future poetic activity, the scope of which was very vast. He intended to present all Swedish history in epic and dramatic works. The Old Northern times were celebrated in epics, the times that followed in dramas. These form a whole series, which may be compared to a long relief depicting historical scenes and beginning where the epics were at an end and stopping where modern times begin. The making of such a plan ought to be characterized as the work of a gigantic imagination. And it cannot be denied that Ling's poetic and gymnastic activity, as a whole, was a manifestation of the bold and daring and strenuous spirit which is inherent in the Swedish people.

Nowadays, few educators refer to the customs of their forefathers, and the poets do not generally adore the deities of olden times. It is noticeable, however, that opinions like those which Ling pronounced in the beginning of the 19th century, are again enunciated a century later. The importance of a physical education, for the whole of a people, has become a social question anew.

If it is an injustice to regard Ling as a gymnasiarch only, *Ling as an ideologist.* it is a no lesser one to regard him chiefly as a poet and a dreamer. Above all, he was a soldier of ideas. "The conflict of ideas is the most glorious conflict in the world", he uttered on a certain occasion, and he continued: "Struggle for what you feel and think. Do not permit any one to check the courage of your soul; on that depends your moral existence." It cannot be denied that Ling as an ideologist recalls in some degree such English thinkers as Thomas Carlyle and John Ruskin. He was a hero-worshipper like the former, and a national educator like the latter, though the work he did differed widely from Carlyle's as well as from Ruskin's.

I have now given some outlines of Ling, his work and his importance. He was a man of times bygone, well-nigh of Old Northern times, but he is also a man of the present age. *Ling a man of the present age.* Sel- dom a man devotes himself wholly to an ideal aim. Ling did so. What he planned in his audacious mind, he carried out with the utmost self-sacrifice. With all the fervour of his ardent soul, he devoted himself to mankind. This is perhaps the reason why his thoughts are spreading over the world. It was Ling's gymnastics that bore his name to posterity. It is a mistake, however, to think he considered gymnastics as something self-sufficing. According to him they were a vehicle for promoting individual and national energy, for furthering great achievements.

Fernand Lagrange. †

Minnesteckning vid Svenska gymnastikläraresällskapets sammankomst den 23 oktober 1909.

Af Anders Wide.

Den franske läkaren *Fernand Lagrange* besökte Stockholm hösten 1900 tillsammans med den framstående fysiologen Demeny för att här studera den svenska gymnastiken på uppdrag af och med understöd af franska regeringen.

Lagrange skref först en utförlig och uppmärksammat artikel om svensk gymnastik och andra svenska förhållanden i »Revue des Deux-Mondes» 1891. Hans förnämsta arbeten äro för öfrigt: »Physiologie des exercices du corps», couronné par l'Académie des sciences et l'Académie de médecine, 1888; — »Hygiène de l'exercice chez les enfants» 1890; — »L'exercice chez les adultes» 1891; — »La médication par l'exercice» 1894; — »Les mouvements méthodiques et la mécanothérapie» 1899; — »Traitement des affections du cœur par l'exercice et le mouvement» 1903.

Ur en minnesteckning i La presse médicale n:r 11 för 1909 anför jag följande:

»Fernand Lagrange hade i Frankrike gjort sig till den svenska gymnastikens och mekanoterapiens målsman och försvarare. Han hade för öfrigt gjort åtskilliga själfständiga studier öfver rörelsebehandlingen af vuxna, barn och åldringar. Döden öfverraskade honom, under det han skref en bok öfver »Hvilan». Han praktiserade under somrarna i Vichy, hvarest han skapade badortens mediko-mekaniska gymnastik samt utgaf tidskriften »Revue des Maladies de la nutrition» tillsammans med F. Glénard. Lagrange innehade vid denna badort en framskjuten ställning.

Han förestod dessutom i Paris ett Zander-institut. Hans studieresa till Sverige, hans utgifna skrifter och ovanliga kunskaper uti ämnen, föga studerade i Frankrike, hade nyligen gjort honom känd och eftersökt. Han gick plötsligt bort, då hans arbete började bli bekant, och ett växande rykte skulle hafva belönat hans långa ansträngningar.

Den enastående älskvärdheten i hans karaktär, säkerheten i hans anföranden, behaget i hans umgänge och sätt att skriva hade förskaffat honom många vänner och läsare. Detta för-mildrade för honom den relativa tillbakadragenhet, hvaruti han lefvat, lika mycket beroende på naturlig blygsamhet som på det ringa intresse, som man ända hittills i Frankrike fäst vid de mediko-mekaniska studierna.

Detta betydande arbete har tillförsäkrat Lagrange en af de främsta platserna bland Frankrikes physiothérapeuter. Vi skola alltid stå i skuld hos honom för hans bidrag till théra-piens och prophylaxens utveckling genom gymnastik, och i synnerhet för det han lärt oss känna de verkligen storartade framsteg, som den svenska gymnastiken representerar. Lagrange skall säkerligen i framtiden blifva framställd som en af de förnämsta föregångsmännen inom franska skolan för gymnastik, då denna, som man redan ser uppspira, skall hafva vunnit utveckling och ersatt den svenska skolan enligt svenskarnas egna förutsägelser.»

Lagrange var sedan 1891 ledamot af svenska läkaresällskapet.

Han afled i februari 1909 i en ålder af 63 år. Frid öfver hans minne!

Johann Georg Mezger. †

Minnesord vid Svenska Gymnastikläraresällskapet's sammankomst den 23 oktober 1909.

Af **Anders Wide.**

Mezger var som bekant den moderna massagens skapare, och hans betydelsefulla inlägg för utvecklingen däraf äro i detta sällskap alltför väl kända för att här behöfva omnämnas. Därför endast några ord om hans personlighet och förhållande till oss svenskar.

Mezger var född i Amsterdam den 22 augusti 1838. Efter slutade skolstudier ägnade han sig med framgång åt gymnastik, men kände snart behof af att utvidga sina kunskaper och beslöt därför utbilda sig till läkare.

Af familjen van Loon i Amsterdam erhöll han understöd för att idka medicinska studier i Tyskland. År 1863 återvände han till Holland och blef medicine doktor i Leyden, efter att ha disputerat öfver: »De Behandeling der Voetverstruikingen met FRICTIES». Han tjänstgjorde därefter någon tid såsom assistentläkare vid klinikerna i Amsterdam, började år 1864 sin egentliga verksamhet som massör och vann snart stort erkännande för lyckade och snabba kurer, utförda bland annat på medlemmar af Svenska konungahuset.

Mezger mottog endast läkare som elever och räknade bland sina bästa lärjungar flera framstående svenskar. Redan år 1872 voro J. Hafström och C. Curman hans lärjungar, år 1873 Gustaf Berghman och Uno Helleday; de 2 sistnämnda lämnade den första fullständiga och vetenskapliga redogörelsen för den nya behandlingsmetoden, och vi finna i deras uppsats äfven de mest

erkännsamma ord om Mezger själf och hans verksamhet.* Äfven doktorerna E. Fogman, E. Jacobson och L. Sellberg studerade hos Mezger i slutet af 1870-talet.

På 1880-talet började Mezger praktisera i Wiesbaden. Jag besökte honom där i maj 1889 och blef väl mottagen. Då han af mitt kort såg, att jag var föreståndare för Gymnastiskt-ortopediska institutet och jag på hans förfrågan omtalat, att jag som elev genomgått Gymnastiska Centralinstitutet och äfven varit lärare där i år samt dessutom räknade d:r Helleday som min lärare i massage, var Mezger alltför artig att säga, att jag hos honom ej hade något vidare att lära. Han ville för öfrigt vid denna tid ej mottaga några elever, men affrådade mig äfven att besöka professor Mosengeil i Bonn, till hvilken han annars tillrädde läkare att inhämta undervisning i massage.

Mezger uttalade flera gånger sin beundran öfver de svenska läkarnes grundliga studier och framstående egenskaper i öfrigt. Han satte äfven synnerligen stort värde på, att han redan år 1872 blifvit kallad till ledamot af Svenska läkaresällskapet.

Mindre väl tycktes han komma öfverens med sina tyska kolleger. Detta förhållande förorsakade, att han snart öfverflyttade sin verksamhet till Paris, där han ock afled i mars 1909.

Som ett enda bevis för hans kolossala arbetsförmåga vill jag omtala, att han på en dag under mitt besök i Wiesbaden masserade 33 patienter mellan kl. 9—12 och sedan 29 mellan 1—4.

Mezgers namn kommer för all framtid att vara inristadt i medicinens historia för att han gifvit mänskligheten en vid många olikartade sjukdomar kraftigt och hastigt verkande behandlingsmetod. Frid öfver hans minne!

* *Nordiskt medicinskt arkiv*: Band V, 1873, nr 7. Anteckningar om massage.



Bokanmälningar.

Af **Anders Wide.**

Ling, the founder of Swedish gymnastics, his life, his work and his importance by *Carl August Westerblad*. London. Sampson Low, Marston & Co. Limited. Price 1/6 net. 1909.

Vår flitige Lingbiograf är åter färdig med ett nytt arbete, denna gång på engelska språket. Uppsatsen, 62 sid., med porträtt af Ling, har äfven influtit i Tidskrift i Gymnastik 1909.

Framställningen är byggd dels på förf:s föregående utmärkta arbete om Ling, dels på nya undersökningar.

Alla veta vi, att d:r Westerblad förut med grundlighet behandlat sin stora uppgift, så är ock fallet nu. Det är en stor lycka för vår svenska gymnastik, att en vetenskapligt utbildad forskare ägnat så betydande tid och arbete åt en fullständig utredning af P. H. Lings lif och lära.

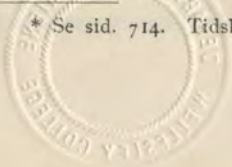
Anteckningar i Fysiologi för gymnaster. Af *doktor J. Arvedson*. Stockholm 1909. A.-B. Nordiska Bokhandeln (i distribution).

D:r Arvedson har redan förut väsentligt bidragit till afhjälpanDET af bristen på läroböcker, afsedda för gymnasternas behof. Hans nyaste arbete kommer framdeles att refereras af någon bland fysiologiens målsmän.

Om den svenska sjukgymnastiken. Af *Jakob Bolin*. Af Föreningen G. C. I. prisbelönt skrift. Stockholm. Wahlström & Wistrand. 1909. 42 sid. Pris 75 öre.

Så lyder titeln på den uppsats, som afgått med seger ur föreningen G. C. I:s pristäflan* efter förslag af den utsedda prisnämnden.

* Se sid. 714. Tidskr. i gymn. 1908.



Ref. känner ej förf:s medicinskt-gymnastiska utbildning, men han lär i Newyork vara ansedd såsom en mycket intresserad och dugande gymnast, som själf utbildar gymnaster.

Huruvida han förut uppträdt som förf., känner jag ej heller. Hans nu utgifna arbete innehåller emellertid intet för den medicinska gymnastiken nytt, men visar på snart sagdt hvarje sida, att förf. åtminstone i ofvannämnda vetenskap ej trängt synnerligen djupt in.

Bland de för prisets ernående uppställda villkoren har punkt 3 naturligen erbjudit så stora svårigheter, att förf. ej kunnat lösa dem. Hans upprepade resonemanger om blodstockning och oklara framställning om nervsjukdomarna äro tillräckligt betecknande för hans ståndpunkt. Minst af allt bör i en populär skrift, såsom förf. gjort, gymnastik förordas vid akuta sjukdomar, under hvilken grupp alla infektionssjukdomar inbegripas.

Man kunde haft rätt vänta en redig uppställning af större sjukdomsgrupper och en fysilogisk förklaring öfver de för dessa vanligast använda rörelseformerna, så har endast skett i fråga om hjärtsjukdomarna.

Af flera skäl ingår jag ej på detaljgranskning. Må en hvar medicinskt-gymnastiskt bildad själf läsa den lilla skriften och själf döma. Så mycket må dock vara sagdt som totalomdöme, att skriften innehåller bra litet af sjukgymnastik, men desto mer allmänna resonemanger, som ej höra till ämnet.

Bland villkoren för prisbelöning var framhållet, att skriften skulle vara populär, hvarmed väl i främsta rummet afsetts, att den skall vara lättläst utan att dock afvika från nutida gymnastisk uppfattning.

Om dessa rader komma under förf:s ögon, skall han på intet vis taga mina uttalanden som något mot honom personligen riktadt klander. Jag rent af frånser förf. i denna anmälan; han har naturligen både för mig och andra rätt att skriva hvad och hur han vill.

Men hr J. Bolins uppsats får inom den svenska medicinska gymnastikens häfder en mycket uppmärksammas plats och betydelse, genom att de af föreningen G. C. I. utsedda sakkunniga ansett uppsatsen värd att prisbelönas framför 4 andra medtäflande, vidare genom att föreningen G. C. I. själf ansett uppsatsen icke blott värd att tryckas utan därtill gifvit den en mycket prydlig utstyrsel och med angifvande af, att den är prisbelönt.

Den frågan ligger då mycket nära till hands: hurudana äro de andra täflingsskrifterna, då hr J. Bolins är den bästa? Och på denna fråga följer själfallet en annan: hurudan är den svenska medicinska gymnastikens nuvarande vetenskapliga ståndpunkt?

Det har varit nödvändigt, att här i Svenska gymnastikläraresällskapet i denna fråga uttala här framställda åsikter, om hvilka jag inte är ensam, för att få påvisa, att äfven en annan uppfattning är rådande bland svenska gymnaster, ty annars skulle den svenska medicinska gymnastikens nutida vetenskapliga ståndpunkt kunna komma att alltför lågt värdesättas.

Den Lingske Gymnastik i Danmark 1884—1909. En historisk Redegørelse ved *Kristen A. Lange*. Jubilæumsskrift udgivet af Gymnastisk Selskab. 165 sid. København 1909. H. Hagerups Boghdl.

Gymnastik, lek och idrott i folkskolan och deras rätta övande. Med figurer. Av *Carl Norlander* Helsingborg. Birger Hedéns bokhandel. Pris 50 öre.

Kurs N:o 10 för kvinnliga gymnaster för utbildning till biträdande sjuksköterskor under krigstid anordnas af »Drottning Sophias förening för härens och flottans sjukvård» från midten af januari 1910 å Gymnastiska Centralinstitutet i likhet med föregående år. Kursen, som omfattar 20 lektioner, är kostnadsfri.

Gymnastikläraremöte 1910. Från Danmark har meddelande ingått, att man där ämnar anordna ett allmänt gymnastikläraremöte under år 1910, omfattande samtliga nordiska länder, nien tiden för mötet har ännu ej kunnat bestämmas.

En stipendiefond för gymnaster. Med anledning af löjtnant C. Holmbergs nyligen timade frånfälle har vid Smålands artilleriregementes idrottsförening för hugfästade af den bortgångnes minne stiftats en stipendiefond, som skall bära namnet Carl Holmbergs stipendiefond, ur hvilken pris skall utdelas till den förnämste gymnasten inom föreningen.

Svenska gymnastikläraresällskapets förhandlingar 1909.

Utdrag ur protokoll den 23 oktober 1909.

§ 1.

Till ledamot i Sällskapet föreslogs af Professor A. Wide och D:r S. Wallgren Gymnastikdirektören, Underlöjtnanten i Inf. 9:s reserv *A. G. C:son Hultén* (Gymnastiklärare i Hudiksvall) och af Major W. Åman och Kapten E. Nerman Kapten *B. E. Littorin* vid Inf. 8.

§ 2.

Professor A. Wide höll korta minnesteckningar öfver D:r F. Lagrange och D:r J. G. Mezger.

§ 3.

Professor A. Wide anmälde nyutkommen gymnastisk litteratur.

§ 4.

Kapten G. Swedlund inledde diskussion om frågan: »Förestår en omläggning af den gymnastiska lärarebildningen?» I diskussionen deltog Professor L. M. Törngren, Fröken L. Wikström, major N. Selén, Kapten G. Swedlund, D:r J. Arvedson och Major W. Åman.

En af Kapten Swedlund föreslagen resolution, afsedd att inlämnas till Kungl. Maj:t, godkändes icke af Sällskapet, som beslöt att upptaga frågan om dylik resolution rörande utredning af till gymnastiklärareutbildningen hörande frågor vid ett följande sammanträde.

Utdrag ur protokoll den 13 november 1909.

§ 2.

Till hedersledamöter i Sällskapet föreslogos af Hrr Astley Levin, Einar Nerman, Sven Wallgren, Anders Wide och Wilh. Åman, samt Fröknarna Ester Svalling och Louise Wikström:

Professor L. M. Törngren och Öfverste V. G. Balck.

Professor Törngren förklarade sig icke vilja mottaga kallelse till hedersledamot utan önskade kvarstå såsom arbetande medlem.

§ 3.

Till ledamöter i Sällskapet invaldes Kapten B. E. Littorin och Gymnastikdirektören A. G. C:son Hultén.

§ 4.

Till ledamöter i Sällskapet föreslogos af Doktorerna Astley Levin och Hedvig Malmström:

Karin Alström, Emy Bruun, Siri Börjesson, Ebba Eklundh, Ragnhild Geijer, Gunhild Francke, Stina Harder, Ruth Kinberg, Gerda Lagerwall, Elsa Leijonmarck, Lilian Lindhé, Helga Molin, Margreta Montgomery, Cecilia Myrsten, Amy Möllerstedt, Lilly Nordqvist, Clara Nordström, Kerstin Nordsjö, Elsa Pyk, Astrid Rundqvist, Elsa Sandholm, Ingrid Stenberg, Astri Ström, Marika Tholander; af Doktor Astley Levin och Kapten Einar Nerman:

Löjtnanterna H. Lindeberg I. 6, A. Hylander I. 8, C. I. Rosenberg I. 12, A. W. Schröder I. 13, H. E. Rohde I. 15, Y. Björk I. 17, C. B. Lundin I. 23, Berg von Linde A. 3, O. T. Schjölér A. 4, L. Rosengren A. 7, N. J. G. W. Björkman T. 4, E. Kragh I. 25, K. O. Olsson A. 2, Reservofficersvolontär Karlsson I. 26 samt Studerande O. Schröder;

af Doktor Sven Wallgren och Professor Anders Wide:

Medicine Licentiat Carl N. Holmdahl i Malmö;

af Doktor J. Arvedson och Professor Anders Wide:

Edit Andersson, Signe Birring, Astrid Björkqvist, Hanna Eggertz, Rut Erikson, Fanny Fritsch, Anna Gardsten, Elsa Högfeldt, Ida Isberg, Elsa Jakobson, Sigrid Jakobson, Vahlborg Johnson, Kerstin Kyhlberg, Greta Käll, Elsa Nilsson, Karin Nilsson, Greta Peterson, Elin Sköldebrand, Elsa Steffen, Ingeborg Tegner, Agda Öberg.

§ 5.

Filosofie Licentiat O. A. Westerblad höll föredrag »Om den äldre svenska gymnastiken».

§ 6.

Om den gymnastiska undervisningen hölls föredrag af Prof. A. Wide.

I den därpå följande diskussionen deltog: D:r A. Levin, D:r J. Arvedson, Professor Törngren, Gymn.-dir. Thorsson, Kapten Nerman, D:r S. Wallgren, D:r Rystedt och inledaren.

Utdrag ur protokoll den 11 december 1909.

§ 1.

Till justeringsmän för dagens protokoll valdes fröknarna Tjäder och Högström.

§ 3.

Till hedersledamot i Sällskapet invaldes enhälligt Öfversten m. m. V. G. Balck.

§ 4.

Till ledamöter i Sällskapet invaldes vid föregående sammanträde föreslagna (se prot. af d. 13/11 1909).

Svenska Gymnastikläraresällskapets ledamöter den 31 dec. 1909.¹

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Andersson-Falk, Wendla G. C. I.³ Stockholm. C.
Bergqvist, Fr., Major Kristinehamn.
Bergman, Aug., Major Karlskrona.
Bergman-Österberg, M., Fru The Physical Training College.
Dartford Heath. Kent. England.
Bergstedt, Axel Fredrik Mariestad.
Berling, Fr., Major Malmö.

¹ Red. anholder vördsamt, att hvarje medlem af sällskapet är behjälplig med att till sekreteraren lämna kompletterande uppgifter af alla slag (äfvén om ofullständiga eller felaktiga adresser) i denna förteckning, så att den blir så fullständig och korrekt som möjligt.

² Ständig ledamot blir den, som på en gång erlägger minst femtio (50) kronor, eller som erlagt årsafgift i tjugu (20) år. (Stadgar för Svenska gymnastikläraresällskapet § 6).

³ G. C. I. = Gymn. Centralinstitutet.

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¹ U. s. = under sommaren. U. v. = under vintern.

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XXXII:A—XXXVI:E ÅRGÅNGEN.

ARBETSÅREN 1905—1909.

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1909

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