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ATTITUDES TOWARDS EXERCISE AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

IN ENGLAND: 1560-1714.

D.W.BRAILSFORD

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INTRODUCTION

The historical and philosophical study of physical education in England is understandably limited. By its nature, physical education inclines more readily to action than to reflection, and the consistent expansion of the subject's responsibilities since it became established in the curriculum has inevitably turned most of its attentions to the more immediate issues of method.

There have, nevertheless, been notable studies in the history of English physical education. The writings of P.C.McIntosh, which have led the way, include "Physical Education in England since 1800" (1952) and his recent "Sport in Society" (1964). Among other significant contributions are the papers of Professor W.H.G.Armytage, ⁽¹⁾ which have frequently drawn attention to less obvious aspects of the subject's history. In the published works, specialist historians of physical education have naturally tended to give most attention to periods when their discipline flourished and to avoid the periods of

(1) For example, "Jeremy Bentham and Hygiantics" ("Journal of Physical Education", Vol.46, No.137, March 1954) and "The 'Physical Conscience': Herbert Spencer and Moses Tyler" ("Physical Education", Vol.50, No.150, July 1958)

apparent flatness and limited novelty. The Elizabethan age has, for instance, attracted considerable notice, with a chapter by P.C.McIntosh on "Physical Education in Renaissance Italy and Tudor England" in "Landmarks in the History of Physical Education," (2) and fairly full treatment in the compendious "World History of Physical Education" (New York, 1953) by D.B.Van Dalen, E.D.Mitchell, and B.L.Bennett. On the other hand, little more than passing notice is granted to the English seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Moreover, with such wide fields to cover, it has not been possible to explore any period in depth or to make more than cursory surveys of the influences upon physical education at any one time. This present research is a preliminary attempt to discover what elements did affect attitudes towards physical education over a limited period of a century and a half, and a period which, for the most part, is not traditionally regarded as a fruitful one by the subject's historians. Both the discovery and organisation of material for such an undertaking must present problems, as the relationships it seeks to examine are largely uncharted. It would be optimistic to expect clear solutions to them all. What is important and what is not remains to be discovered. The material background may, for instance, prove more significant in men's attitudes towards exercise and physical education than do any theoretical considerations. But the opposite might also clearly apply.

(2) J.G.Dixon, P.C.McIntosh, A.D.Munrow, R.E.Willetts: "Landmarks in the History of Physical Education" (1957)

It could even be that approaches to physical training show no identifiable connection with any wider setting.

Any results from such an enquiry could afford guidance to future historical study of the determinants of exercise and physical education, by indicating which particular lines of research are likely to yield most profit. They might also contribute to serious contemporary discussion of physical education, which is often impeded by the sparseness of its historical evidence and illustration. While not claiming to be a philosophical study itself, this research might help to make philosophical statements about physical education more possible.

The dates 1560 and 1714 obviously set arbitrary boundaries for a research into social movements and modifications of thought and opinion, which often defy precise dating and are, in any case, not primarily influenced by the death of kings and queens. The original intention was to examine attitudes towards physical education in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as periods almost untouched by previous research. It soon became obvious, however, that it was impossible to start at 1600 without taking the Elizabethan age into full account. At the other end of the period, much of the later eighteenth century appeared to have its greatest significance as a prelude to nineteenth century attitudes and events, at least as far as physical education was concerned. Since depth rather than range was the first object, the end of the Stuart period made a convenient stopping point. This was suggested also by the fact that, by 1714, most of the characteristics of the Age of Reason were already discernible, and many of its

implications for eighteenth century exercise were predictable. As it gave the example of a traditionally healthy period for physical education to set against the reputedly leaner years which followed, this revision proved useful.

The term "physical education" is often used both loosely and widely. There is a tendency for historical accounts of physical education to cover all developments of sport and exercise, whether they are in an educational context or not. The pursuit of sport and exercise may or may not be directly connected with deliberate physical training. While it is certainly difficult to discuss the physical education of any period without considering also the prevailing adult patterns of physical activity, it seems equally important to keep the two concepts as distinct from one another as possible. Moreover, the scope of physical education itself is not precisely defined. The preliminary assumption of this research will be that it is concerned with those human activities which involve large-scale bodily movement and have about them the characteristics of "play", accepting "play" as an activity enjoyable for its own sake, set apart from "reality", and usually developing certain features of contest, rules and venue. (3)

To some extent this categorising is conventional and it may, of course, be necessary in a historical study to consider the past's notions of "play" as well as our own.

The approach made here to Elizabethan and Stuart ideas on exercise and physical education involves much general discussion of the period.

(3) as described by J. Huizinga in "Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture" (1938, English ed., 1949)

This brings obvious risks of tortuousness through trying to be comprehensive, of overstraining to show "relationships", "influences" and "implications", and of working with strands too few and too slender to support the broad generalisations which they tempt. There is, moreover, every chance of producing a large and unwieldy frame for what turns out to be a rather dull and unrewarding picture.

A further pitfall faces any writer on physical education and physical exercise. Man's play is less governed by rationality than most activities, and attempts at intellectual analysis of its forms and motives find it hard to avoid the impression of being either patronising or disparaging. The absence of any disciplined tradition of writing in this field ("perhaps the most remarkable of all existing academic taboos", as a reviewer recently described it ⁽⁴⁾) certainly contributes to the difficulties of achieving a recognisable objectivity. Unless one accepts the simple framework of values usually found in popular histories of sport, where all its extensions are made "good" and all its setbacks "bad", judgements invariably sound over-critical and unsympathetic. Such sensitivity is interesting in itself, and one is reminded of Thorstein Veblen's conclusion that this is a linguistic problem, that "everyday speech can scarcely be employed in discussing

(4) M.I.Finley: "Prowess and Play" ("New Statesman", 22May, 1964)

this class of aptitudes and activities without implying depreciation or apology." (5)

In the body of the thesis I have tried to be objective, in the sense that where judgements are made they are made consciously. Doubtless even here my own predispositions come occasionally to the surface with insufficient supporting evidence, as they certainly do, with less restraint, in the concluding chapter. If, however, I do ever give the impression of the "depreciation" of which Veblen speaks (and which he certainly failed to avoid himself!), this is not intended. I enjoy games myself, both as a player and as a spectator. I was made very welcome on the staff of a specialist college of physical education, where for four years the outrageous queries and suggestions of an educationist were received with a courtesy and consideration which they by no means always deserved. Where I question, then, I do so out of interest in the subject's prosperity.

The experience of our time moulds our attitudes. It may be some help to escape occasionally from what Christopher Dawson called the "parochialism of the present" and to see current problems in the longer perspectives which even a limited historical study may provide.

(5) T. Veblen: "The Theory of the Leisure Class" (1925), p.267. T.H. Fear has an interesting discussion of this question of attitude in his "English Social Differences" (1955): "whether to restrain oneself from developing complete sympathy and empathy with one's subject-matter, achieving, it is hoped, scientific neutrality, or unreservedly to experience the joys and sorrows of the activity studied." (Ch.11 "Social Differences in Leisure Pursuits", p.244)

This thesis is an attempt to do this, and to give to physical education more strength and clarity for its arguments, in some return for the satisfaction which physical activities have given, and still give, to me.

Chapter I

THE ELIZABETHAN INHERITANCE.

"Her love of hunting and dancing, masque, pageantry and display, was used to strengthen the wider popularity which was her ultimate strength; her public appearances and progresses through the country, which she thoroughly enjoyed, were no dull and formal functions, but works of art by a great player whose heart was in the piece, interchanges of soul between a Princess and her people."

(G.M.Trevelyan: "History of England", 3rd Edition,
1945, p.327)

"And why is it not good to have every part of the body, and every power of the soul, to be fined to his best?" (1)

(Richard Mulcaster: "Positions, &", p.34)

The opening year of the seventeenth century saw the aging and self-willed spinster who had worn the English crown with a rich

(1) Richard Mulcaster: "Positions: Wherin Those Primitive Circumstances be Examined which are Necessarie For the Training up of children either for skill in their booke, or health in their bodie." Ed. R.H.Quick (1888). (First edition, 1581)

magnificence for the past forty-two years lamenting the end of her final strange love affair.

In the same year, while the forsaken Essex languished in the Tower, a loyal subject was giving expression to the commonly voiced and perpetually renewed national love affair which characterised her subject's relationships with their queen:

"Some call her Pandora, some Gloriana, some Cynthia, some Belphebe, some Astraea - all by several names to express several loves. Yet all those names make but one celestial body as those loves meet to create ^{but} one soul." (2)

The wrinkled, hook-nosed old lady with the decayed teeth and auburn wig (and Decker admits all this, in the same passage) could still, as the Elizabethan age lingered into the new century, inspire an affection which went beyond conventional politeness. The thwarting of plots against the queen's life, a church settlement that offered a working compromise even if it failed to secure final unity, commercial expansion, and, above all, the defeat of the Spanish Armada and the exploits of Gloriana's seamen on wide oceans and narrow seas alike: all the events of a long reign had, in sum, produced a royalism which, however much it owed to the exuberance and precocious nationalism of her times, was also, in a large measure, a personal feeling towards a most remarkable woman.

Nearly half a century before she had declared, in the vigorous

(2) Thomas Decker: "A pleasant comedie of Old Fortunatus", 1600, p.A 1. Quoted in Allardyce Nicoll (ed.): "The Elizabethans" (Cambridge, 1957) p.4.

confidence of youth,

"I thank God I am endued with such qualities that, if I were turned out of my realm in my petticoat, I were able to live in any place in Christendom." (3)

Now she was drawing towards her end and, in her declining years, the tensions in English life that had gone either muted or forgotten in the prevailing patriotism and the sense of national purpose that had marked much of her reign were ready to break on the new century. Even her own personal situation could now symbolise the paradoxes that underlay the apparent unity of her reign: fulsome popular loyalty set against physical decay and failing powers; exuberance against present weariness; confidence against doubt.

The vigorous, out-going age, a golden age of physical activity and restless endeavour, and celebrated as such by the historians of sport and physical education, was easing to its close. As it did so, these inherent tensions were forcing themselves towards the surface of conscious expression. They sprang from a diversity of causes: the English Renaissance had in itself a certain tautness, a legacy of its almost equal indebtedness to Italy and Germany for its inspiration, while the religious reformation was regarded, by most shades of spiritual feeling, as a temporary and not wholly satisfactory settlement; commercial adventuring abroad was linked with significant agricultural and industrial expansion at home and the rising body of tradesmen found their economic interests increasingly prompting them into new attitudes towards the

(3) Address to the Lords and Commons, 1566. Quoted in Sir John Neale: "Elizabeth I and her Parliaments" (1953) p.149.

society in which they lived and worked.

Out of this busy age the seventeenth century, on the face of things, inherited a flourishing and energetic tradition of physical activity, expressed as heartily in high adventuring and serious enterprise as in games and sports. It was also an inheritance which had a theoretical as well as a practical concern for physical well-being and gave it a place in many of the ideas and practices of its education. Just as there were these strainings behind the apparent unity of the general Elizabethan scene, however, so there may well be, on the miniature scale, hints of the doubts, suspicions and restrictions which would impose their limitations on recreative physical activity for much of the two centuries to come.

(1) The Courtly Tradition

In so far as the pursuit of physical activity in Elizabethan England was conscious, its motivations can be almost entirely traced back to Renaissance humanism in general and to the courtly tradition of the many-sided life of public service and private virtue in particular. "Renaissance" and "Humanism" are, of course, blanket terms and are disposed to give too precise a labelling to movements in thought and attitude which were, by their diversity, vague and hardly datable. Renaissance artists were as varied in character as Fra Angelico and Titian, Dürer and Holbein. Humanist thinkers include such contrasts as Aeneas Sylvius and Machiavelli, Erasmus and Rabelais. Even within the limits of one country, the spirit of the Renaissance could cover a

great span of years and a whole spectrum of human temperament; there are at least hints of new attitudes in Chaucer in the English fourteenth century and (while granting that there were generations of silence and intellectual sterility in between) there is still a strong Renaissance flavour about John Milton three hundred years later.

It remains a general truth that the Renaissance saw the rebirth of the body as well as of the mind. Man's physical being emerged from its long medieval abasement and neglect, so that the body became once more a thing of pride and pleasure. For centuries Christendom had abnegated the material world, the flesh being spurned to foster the spirit. Just as the physical comforts of the last Romans, their aqueducts, baths and heating systems, had been allowed to waste into disuse, so man's own physical well-being had been largely ignored. In its extreme moments, the spirituality of the Middle Ages had come to see physical health as almost a sin and physical comfort as nearly a crime; the earthly kingdom had to keep its eyes constantly directed towards its heavenly end. The positive side of this attitude shines through Chaucer's picture of the poor parson, the self-denying ascete, spare in limb and simple and frugal in diet, devoting himself to his pastoral duties, to saintly reading and a humble hope of heaven. This ideal remained the canon of orthodox attitudes even after most men and women of the age, both lay and clerical, had come to accept the more indulgent habits variously displayed by the other characters on Chaucer's pilgrimage. The true light was still above, not in this world of dust and ashes:

"Her is non hoom, her nis but wildernesse:
 Forth, pilgrim, forth! Forth, beste, out of thy stal!
 Know thy contree, look up, thank God of al;
 Hold the heye wey, and lat thy goot thee lede;
 And trouthe thee shal deliver, it is no drede." (4)

In this context, the only possible justification for any physical training was when bodily strength was needed to defend or extend the influence of the Church, when soldiers had to be trained to fight the infidel. Through the Teutonic Knights in Northern Europe, through the Crusading Orders that devoted themselves spasmodically to the abortive attempt to wrest the Holy Places of Jerusalem from the grasp of Islam, a pattern of training in chivalry, in the arts of war and the graces of society, managed to persist through the centuries of physical rejection. The institution of knighthood was often abused and directed to wholly secular ends, but again the ideal remained, and again Chaucer illustrated the best of it in "The Canterbury Tales" with his characters of the knight and squire. As the only form of physical culture to secure persistent recognition through the medieval years, the military training of the chivalric tradition provided the practical starting point for a revival of physical education once men lowered their sights from the next world to this present one.

The new temper showed itself first under the soft skies of Italy, where the sculpture of the ancient world was still an occasional visual reminder of the energies and attractions of the human physique, of the

(4) Chaucer: "Balade de Bon Conseyl", in "Complete Works", ed. W.W.Skeat (1912) p.122.

potentialities of physical existence. The art of the Italian fifteenth and sixteenth centuries shows a growing recognition of the human body, a growing acceptance of its beauty and power: canvasses and marble burst into life, sinews strain and limbs discover force and movement. Only twenty years separate the birth of Michelangelo from the death of Fra Angelico (1387 - 1455), but a comparison between the brooding muscularity of Michelangelo's great figures and the spiritualised immobility of the Dominican friar's shows how rapidly the body was reasserting its claims to attention and respect.

At the same time there was an increasingly ready acceptance of man's physical nature in Italian writings on the training of the young. Already the total concept of education was widening and escaping from the narrow confines into which the classical curriculum had shrunk, although, as far as its physical aspect was concerned, it still tended at first to cling closely to the existing content and methods of the older knightly training. Vergerius, writing his "De Ingenius Moribus et Liberalibus" in the opening years of the fifteenth century and providing a pattern to which later schools and scholars regularly resorted, had military objects much in mind. As was to be the Renaissance fashion, he had the rearing of Princes as his main educational concern and he wanted his noble scholars to understand the strategies of war and be accomplished in the skills needed to execute them. Skills alone, however, were useless without the strength and endurance needed to bear the rigours of campaigning and

so he would have a programme of exercise deliberately designed to harden boys and give them the stamina to withstand heavy and prolonged exertions. The Greek pentathlon, swimming, horsemanship and the use of a range of weapons give his scheme of physical education an overwhelmingly military flavour, yet already some hint of the humanist approach is there. Sparta may be Vergerius' model, but he is himself no advocate of any "toughness at all costs" approach for his pupils. The child was emerging as an individual, and Vergerius not only recognised that all children were different but even advocated the varying of bodily exercises to suit different constitutions so as to secure for each the most beneficial results and to avoid possible overstrain. He carefully points out that "In childhood much care must be taken lest the growth be hindered or the nerves of the body be strained, by severe exertion." (5)

The hints of Petrus Paulus Vergerius were pushed nearer to their humanist goal by Vittorino da Feltre (1378 - 1446) whose educational theory and practice make him the first directly recognisable ancestor of that approach to the good life which the English educators were to assimilate into their own country's intellectual rebirth a hundred years later. Vittorino recognised the wholeness of man and urged the ideal of harmonious, all-round human development through a complete

(5) Vergerius: "De Ingenius Moribus", in W.H.Woodward: "Vittorino da Feltre and other Humanist Educators" (Cambridge, 1921) p.114. The contribution of the Italian Renaissance to the history of physical education is dealt with in D.B.Van Dalen, E.D.Mitchell and B.L.Bennett, op.cit., ch.8 and J.G.Dixon, P.C.McIntosh, A.D.Munrow, R.E.Willetts, op.cit., ch.IV.

educational discipline in which the training of the body would play an integral part. Himself a keen gymnast and first-rate horseman, da Feltre's school became famous throughout Italy and, while he still tended to think of physical education largely in terms of military exercises, (6) he was prepared to match his liberal concept of the nature of man with a generous curriculum which took in not only art, literature and music, but all other activity which he thought would lead to a greater fulfilment of body, mind, or character. While the actual physical exercises that da Feltre offered might have little novelty in them, his motives have escaped from a dominantly military mould. The spirit behind his regime went beyond narrow concepts of stamina and endurance; exercise became a stimulus and refreshment whose effects were not in themselves merely physical but served to sharpen intellectual activity as well. While he was actively concerned about the child's physical health, he saw such bodily fitness and physical well-being as part of the prosperity of the total personality.

The urbane and brilliant Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, who was Pope as Pius II between 1458 and 1464, might suggest himself as an immediate disciple of da Feltre since he actually started his "Tract on Education" with a section "Concerning the Discipline of the Body". His nostalgic revival of the old crusading spirit, however, ensured that his physical training requirements would be on the old-fashioned lines and be predominantly military in character. "It will be your destiny," he

(6) Woodward, op.cit., p.66.

told his young readers, "to defend Christendom against the Turk", (7) and so he urged the necessity of warlike skills, although some of the broader implications of physical culture also managed to survive. The body might well be "but a framework for the activities of the mind", (8) yet there are still faintly realised indications that exercise will have some personality effects: in the insistence, for instance, on the seeking of a noble posture, with head held high.

In the Italian political circumstances of the later fifteenth and sixteenth centuries it was, indeed, hardly feasible to separate physical training from warlike preparation. Military skills were not only possible life preservers in an age when personal conflicts were frequent, but they also offered one of the surest routes to social preferment and prosperity. In the knightly freemasonry of the time no trained soldier ever needed to go unemployed; Machiavelli might see a dangerous want of loyalty in mercenary armies and so try to build up his Florentine militia without them, but even he was eventually unsuccessful. Political, social and economic motives alike were combining towards the continuing of the military tradition as the backbone of all physical education.

Aeneas Sylvius may have wanted these military skills to be directed against the infidel but other thinkers saw that they were, in fact, employed almost exclusively in the slaughter of other Christians. The most notable of these dissidents was Juan Luis Vives (1492 - 1540) a Spaniard, and only peripherally connected with the

(7) *ibid.*, p.138

(8) *ibid.*, p.140

Italian intellectual movement. His ideas did not attract any comprehensive support as far as physical education was concerned. Vives, one-time University Reader at Oxford, was convinced that the most urgent contemporary need was for peace among Christians, and this influenced all his educational advice. Physical education was acceptable to him, so long as it escaped its military connotations: games and sports could, he insisted, be used to promote healthy and vigorous bodies instead of being solely aimed at producing martial spirit and aggressiveness.⁽⁹⁾ Although Vives' ideas on the physical training of children were largely ignored by his contemporaries and immediate successors, changes in the nature of warfare were slowly making the old military skills less necessary. Gunpowder and artillery, together with the development of fortification and military engineering, were all reducing the importance in battle of the individual warrior relying wholly on the arts of individual combat. Warfare had started on that train of change which was to make it increasingly technical and less exclusively dependent upon strength of muscle and direct personal aggression. The arts of war became increasingly those of the organiser and administrator, founded upon new knowledge and the possession of expensive equipment: a physical training directed immediately to the combat skills became correspondingly less important.

The changes in military tactics that took place in the later

(9) J.L.Vives: "On Education", trans. Foster Watson (Cambridge, 1913)

fifteenth and earlier sixteenth centuries gave the necessary practical encouragement for the fuller realisation of the potentialities for physical education which lay in the humanism of the Italian Renaissance. It was in their final form, as presented particularly by Castiglione in "Il Cortegiano" (translated into English by Sir Thomas Hoby in 1561), that the ideas of the Italian Renaissance on the place and training of the body found their way into the English educational tradition. Count Baldassare Castiglione painted a picture of the ideal gentleman which gained wide currency in the Western Europe of the sixteenth century: his ambition was to produce a man who had the capacities and powers of the soldier but who, more than this, had to be at home at court, where the brilliant and many-sided social life demanded that he be easy in manners and address, skilled in all acceptable games and recreations, and intellectually accomplished, versed in the classics and cognisant of the arts. (10)

Here was the education of the whole man that was implicit in the attitudes which developed in the Renaissance years in Italy. It envisaged an ease and appropriateness in all that a man undertook, whether horsemanship, swordplay, dancing or sommeteeing, an apparently effortless mastery of all the accomplishments that the gentlemen might have to perform. Here, attuned to the growing artistic and intellectual opportunities offered by courts where leisure was more available and which were no longer the temporary halting places between one military

(10) Castiglione: "The Book of the Courtier" (Everyman Ed. 1928)

camp and the next, was an education in which the intellectual, cultural and physical components were integrated into a balanced programme of activity and learning. It was a deliberately designed and mannered way of life, centred round a great ideal, that of the worthwhileness, the wonder and the wholeness of man.

Within the ideal, however, even in its original fulness, there were inbuilt tendencies towards both introspection and shallowness. Spontaneity in athletic pursuit fades or, rather, it becomes less important than the appearance of spontaneity. It was to be not merely athletics deliberately sought, but sought in a deliberately stylised way. Once games and sports ceased to be seen as training sessions for militarism, they could not be content with justification based simply upon enjoyment or even upon physical and mental betterment. They were given a conventional status dependent upon social custom. Thus Castiglione would admit of tennis and gymnastics on the ground that they were both strenuous and encouraged nimbleness of movement, but he would deny tumbling and rope climbing (which would appear to have the same physical effects) since they were the province of the professional entertainer. The cult of the Courtier was, from its beginnings, also the cult of the amateur sportsman.

The argument should not be pushed too far. The concept of "courtesy" was certainly alive and vital, and the spirit of the Italian Renaissance still supplied its inspiration. None the less, it is perhaps wise to remember that another and even more formative influence

on European thinking had broken upon the world just three years before the appearance of "Il Cortegione". Machiavelli's "Il Principe", written in 1513, and "Il Cortegione" can well be regarded as corresponding volumes in one development of the human mind, in the sense that there is, in the training of the Courtier, something of the artifice, some possibility of the desertion of morality in favour of preferment and expediency, that are for Machiavelli actual precepts, at least so far as the success of public government is concerned.

For Elizabethan England, however, the educational drive of the Italian Renaissance remained virtually unsullied by undue mannerism, slavish conventionality or tendencies to moral neutrality. It is not until the middle decades of the seventeenth century that there begin to appear wholesale corruptions of the ideal of courtesy in this genre of educational thinking; and against these can be set, in the same period, one of the most remarkable late blossomings of the tradition in John Milton's "Tractate on Education".

Sir Thomas Elyot, indeed, whose "Book of the Governour" was published before Hoby's translation of Castiglione made its appearance here, has a place in the history of ethical and political theory that owes nothing to Machiavelli beyond the form which his writing took, it being directed, like "Il Principe", to the training of rulers. "The Governour" draws almost as much directly from original Hellenic attitudes (and especially from Plato) as it does from the Italian Renaissance. The ideas and recommendations of Castiglione were of

course current in the growing circle of literate and well travelled men in this country before Hoby's translation appeared. The internal peace that came with the ending of the Wars of the Roses gave more and more Englishmen the opportunity of going to the Continent, and usually it was to Italy, as a culmination of their studies. One of the first fruits of the rebirth of classical study that paralleled the rediscovery of Italy was the translation by Thomas Linacre, physician to Henry VIII, of Galen's "De Sanitate Tuenda", which, apart from the detailed gymnastics of Mercurialis, was the fullest text on physical education available in any language and the valuable basis for an English literature on the subject. Later in the sixteenth century it became common to denigrate contemporary Italian manners and behaviour (as, for instance, Ascham did in "The Scholemaster" (11)) and there were frequent satirical gibes at the Italianate Englishman as Elizabeth's reign drew to a close, but in spite of these the Italy of the past, the Italy that was the source of the original Renaissance tradition retained, as Ascham himself showed, its honourable place in English esteem. Whatever the doubts about sixteenth century Italy, the Italian inspiration of Renaissance humanism remained acceptable and influential. David Rizzio, the murdered attendant of Mary Queen of Scots, may have

(11) "Virtue once made that country mistress over all the world. Vice now maketh that country slave to them that before were glad to serve it." (Roger Ascham: "The Scholemaster: Shewing a Plain and Perrect Way or Teaching the Learned Languages." 1743 edn. ed. James Upton, p.75) Osric, Hamlet's "water-fly", is a typical Shakespearean "Italianised" courtier, full of courtesy and cliché, but "do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out." (Act v, sc.ii)

been the most noted and worst fated of Italian tutors to venture to these islands, but he was by no means the only one of them to do so.

It is not difficult to identify the influences of the Italian Renaissance in Sir Thomas Elyot. A lawyer who had served Wolsey and Thomas Cromwell, a diplomat, versatile author and translator, Elyot ended his public life in 1530 when he was removed from the Secretaryship of the Council. Afterwards, in his retirement, he acted as a general diffuser of useful knowledge for mid-sixteenth century England. In addition to his educational theory, he translated Plutarch and Isocrates, wrote on both spiritual and physical health (his "Castel of Health" was widely read and went through many new editions following its first publication in 1534) and compiled a Latin-English dictionary. His dictionary was a significant contribution towards the use of the vernacular for serious purposes, since it enabled words in the native tongue to be given an exactness of meaning previously thought reserved for the dead languages of Greece and Rome. Elyot also wrote his serious works in English and so pioneered the movement for a broader establishment of learning. The use of the vernacular in teaching had been advocated by Vives in "De tradendis disciplinis", though the Spaniard had seen fit to use Latin as the medium for his plea. Elyot, however, was the first to show that English could serve well for the exposition of ethical, political, legal and medical arguments. "Let them remember," he retorted to the physicians who complained at his "Castel of Health", "that the Greeks wrote in Greek, the Romans in Latin,

Avicenna and others in Arabic, which were their own proper and maternal tongues." (12)

The serious use of the vernacular, particularly when harnessed to the printing press, meant eventually a revolutionary widening of knowledge, releasing into the general understanding new information and ideas from many quarters. It meant, as far as physical health and training were concerned, the wider availability of the classical texts on exercise and medicine. Moreover, the gain in status of the vernacular prepared the way for the fuller use of English in schools, so freeing the curriculum from a total slavery to Latin and Greek. The argument is tenuous and long-term but it is apparent that willingness to accept new material as "educational" was a necessary prelude to the entrance of physical education into the schools of the future.

That this subject should find a prominent place in the first educational treatise published in English promised well for the development of a liberal attitude towards the body and its training. In "The Governour", Elyot brought to the beginnings of English thinking on physical education both the native stresses appropriate to his use of the vernacular and also the continental influences of classical humanism. He was always eager to find support for his proposals from the ancient authorities, and his Platonic hints were not confined to his political theory. His views on man and on the mind/body relationship showed leanings towards a Greek wholeness, even if they

(12) Quoted by Foster Watson: Introduction to 1907 edition of "The Governour", p. xiv.

were not wholly convinced. The body remained just a lodging for the soul:

"the soul in pre-eminence excelleth the body as much as the master or owner excelleth the house, or the artificer excelleth his instruments, or the king his subjects." (13)

Yet it was not a lodging to be despised; houses, tools and subjects could all have their excellences, just as could masters, craftsmen and kings.

The interdependence of mind and body provided Elyot with his basic motive for physical activity: its necessity for the all-round development of the individual. Without exercise, man became lethargic and his body weary and susceptible to disease; "vehement motion", on the other hand, Elyot argued, using Galen's definition of exercise, not only preserved and increased the body's health but also, in so doing, brought important advantages to the character. It made "the spirits of a man more strong and valiant", so that his work and all the demands of life came more easily to him. More specifically, particular exercises could be pursued for particular effects: some for added strength and stamina, some for agility and some for speed. Some "augmenteth also strength and hardness of body; others serveth for agility and nimbleness; some for celerity or speediness" (14) - to put Elyot's words into terms which the twentieth century physical educationist immediately recognises does no injustice to the original.

(13) Sir Thomas Elyot: "The Governour", ed. Foster Watson (1907), p.276. (First edition, 1531).

(14) *ibid.*, p.72

Elyot did not elaborate on these special exercises but insisted that tutors and parents should refer for their detail to Galen's "De Sanitate Tuenda", either in the Latin or in the translation, already noted, "done wonderfully eloquently by Doctor Linacre, late most worthy physician to our most noble sovereign lord king Henry the VIII." (15)

The military stresses remained, as in the Italian writers, but they have to be seen within this framework of wider approval; granted that physical activity was valuable, and indeed necessary, it was then a question of deciding which exercises were likely to be most rewarding to the gentleman pupils. The activities described in Chapter XVII of "The Governour" appear perhaps at first glance to be wholly directed to military training, until closer analysis justifies Elyot's chapter heading: "Exercises whereby should grow both recreation and profit". Wrestling and running found his favour as promoters of strength and speed, and also because there was classical authority for their pursuit. He supported swimming at length, as was necessary in an age when this seems to have been a rare skill; although it "hath not been of long time much used", Elyot listed its life-saving possibilities, its military usefulness and the high status it enjoyed in ancient Rome. (16) Horse riding was extolled as a skill and exercise aptly fitting a man of rank but then, reflecting the new trends of warfare, only one sentence was granted for a passing mention of training in the use of weapons. (17)

(15) *ibid.*, p.73

(16) *ibid.*, pp.73-79

(17) Most convenient for a gentleman, he noted, were the sword and battleaxe. (*ibid.*, p.78)

Thus, while the military function of the gentleman is much in Elyot's mind, the activities themselves, with one small exception, are all exercises which could be fitly pursued with no warlike intentions in view.

Elyot's remarks on hunting indicate the clarity of his views on the personality qualities involved in sporting activities, as well as his insistence that sporting activity does have effects on character as well as on physique. The hunt should demand physical effort and, to promote courage in the hunter, should involve direct conflict with the prey. In stag hunting, for instance, only enough hounds should be used to flush out the deer, and then the hunters should pursue with javelins and other weapons. Killing deer with bows and arrows was, perhaps, sometimes good for the pot, but was not fit to rank as exercise. Less strenuous chases, such as hunting the hare with greyhounds, were acceptable "for men that be studious", for those of unwarlike disposition, and also for such ladies as did not fear the damage that sun and wind might do to their beauty; they would be more healthily employed in the field than they would be sitting at home. (18)

An important support for Elyot, as for many men of the Renaissance, lay in the approval of classical authorities, whose verdicts encouraged hunting. It was partly their silence which allowed him to give only muted support to hawking, although he also had doubts about it as a

(18) *ibid.*, pp.82/3

danger to the country's bird population; without control, he warns, "within a short space of years, our familiar poultry shall be as scarce, as be now partridge and pheasant." (19) Here, as elsewhere, however, he showed his acceptance of the physical, his Renaissance readiness to smile on the body's pursuit of healthy enjoyment:

"undoubtedly hawking, measurably used, and for pastime, giveth to a man good appetite to his supper. And at the least way withdraweth him from other dalliance, or disports dishonest, and to body and soul perchance pernicious." (20)

This awareness of the body's worth and of its essential relationship with the rest of man's nature lay behind the more specific motivation that Elyot ascribed to particular activities. A simple objective of physical health sometimes appeared: unceasing labour "shortly exhausteth the spirits vital and hindereth natural decoction and digestion" (21) and so demanded intervals for exercise; elsewhere social values and personality effects were foremost, with dancing, for instance, praised for bringing out the appropriate manly and womanly qualities in the performers. (22)

The major advance which Elyot made on Castiglione and the Italians lay in his attempts to justify exercise in physiological terms. The state of sixteenth century physiological knowledge ensured that he would do this inadequately and his own conflicting motives induced him also to

(19) *ibid.*, p.84

(20) *ibid.*, p.84

(21) *ibid.*, p.72

(22) *ibid.*, p.85

do it inconsistently. Deer shooting, as has been shown, was condemned because it contained "no commendable solace or exercise", ⁽²³⁾ yet the physiologically identical activity of archery emerged as ideally suitable, "moderate and mean between every extremity" as Galen demanded. ⁽²⁴⁾ His effort to justify archery on these purely physical grounds appears even thinner when set against his disapproval of bowls because it involved too much exertion and was likely to strain the sinews. The comparison between archery and tennis rests on a firmer basis; tennis, played briefly, was admirable for young men, but it was strenuous, and its demands launched Elyot off into an interesting discrimination between individual activities and direct man-to-man sports. Tennis, he pointed out,

"is more violent than shooting, by reason that two men do play. Wherefore neither of them is at his own liberty to measure the exercise. For if the one strike the ball hard, the other that intendeth to receive him, is then constrained to use semblable violence, if he will return the ball from whence it came to him." ⁽²⁵⁾

This advocacy of archery was really independent of the claims of physiology and rested mainly on reasons of national policy which are discussed below. By the same token, Elyot's rating of other sports is generally governed, explicitly or implicitly, by social sanctions. On football there could be no doubt. He found in it "nothing but beastly fury and extreme violence", while "pynnes" and "koyting"

(23) *ibid.*, p.83

(24) *ibid.*, p.112

(25) *ibid.*, p.112/3

(i.e., skittles and quoits) were to be "utterly abjected of all noble men", presumably, although he himself does not press the point, because the players in these games were usually socially unworthy. The discrimination was certainly in part, though not wholly, a social one. It depended also on those psychological suppositions which John Locke was later to extend into a system: evil company would tend of itself to corrupt and, just as Elyot believed in the sound personality influences of honourable sports, so he had to accept the adverse consequences to character in a sport like football which, by causing injury, gave rise to rancour and malice. (26) Praise for the traditional pursuits of noblemen and kings, for hawking, hunting and tennis, and the frownings in the direction of such plebian sports as bowls, ninepins and football, indicate that Elyot, in spite of his frequent attempts to ascribe his selection to other criteria, saw the received concepts of a hierarchical society extending (probably inevitably) into sport, a view which was for once made explicit when he extolled horse riding as the most honourable exercise of all, giving a man a sense of his power over others, who see him "daunting a fierce and cruel beast", a sight which "importeth a majesty and dread to inferior persons." (27)

Generally, however, these social discriminations are not obtrusive in Elyot's recommendations on physical activity. Like the Italians, he so assumed a class-structured society that, to give his programme of

(26) *ibid.*, p.113

(27) *ibid.*, p.78

approved sports any air of feasibility, he sensed that it would have to conform broadly with current social inclination. Elyot's translation of the Italian idea of the courtier into the English concept of the gentleman did, indeed, do full justice to the view of human nature inherent in its model while at the same time giving it a native grafting to harden it to cooler skies and more bracing winds. The stress on virtue and wisdom remained; learning was still demanded to the full, even if it no longer needed to be wholly classical or be allowed to bind the man of affairs too closely to his desk. In his physical education in particular, Elyot adapted the attitudes of the Renaissance to English conditions in a manner most likely to secure their acceptance by his contemporaries, expressing the principles of all-round culture in terms of English sports and games. There may well have been a strong tendency to exclusiveness and heavy conventional stresses on a finesse of elegant manners for their own sake inherent in the physical activities of the courtly tradition, but these were certainly not developed further in "The Governour".

The concentration on the education of rulers that marked Elyot's work no less than that of his Italian predecessors was a reflection of the authority structure of a monarchical age when, with mass illiteracy, the most obvious market for educational guidance was in the courtly class. It has been argued ⁽²⁸⁾ that this directing of educational theory towards the court was the means employed by the Renaissance educator to the end

(28) By Foster Watson, for instance, in his introduction to "The Governour" (pp.xvi-xviii)

of improving, through the royal prerogative, the whole range of educational provision. This is to ascribe to the courtly educators an expansionist attitude towards education which certainly cannot stand on inference alone, in view of the conservative social theory which prevailed. In its physical pursuits especially, the courtly tradition was committed to a leisure class, and hence an exclusiveness, in that it demanded a certain spaciousness of living for its adequate fulfilment. This did not mean, however, that even Elyot's writing was intended only for the immediate royal circle; social structure itself changed, even if social theory remained static, and he had in mind all ranks upwards from the rural man of property. These were the rising classes, increasingly prosperous, and enjoying a new authority in the land by the Tudor fostering of the system of local justices as part of the country's administrative machinery as well as of its law enforcement. For these upper reaches of sixteenth century society Elyot propounded a liberal and varied programme of physical activity embracing, as has been shown, running and leaping, hunting and hawking, swordplay, swimming, archery and tennis. He imbued these physical activities, moreover, with a sense of zest, energy and eagerness; they were to be much more than merely mechanical functions. Elyot's convictions over physical exercise and physical activity were, in fact, psychological as well as philosophical. He had that inward conviction which is necessary for a belief in the value of a type of activity which can only be completely

rationalised at the expense of at least some of its essential driving force. These attitudes lay behind what was, ultimately, Elyot's most important contribution to the history of physical education, namely, his willingness to discuss physical activities with intellectual earnestness and make serious analyses of their motives and effects. The results may not always have been rewarding, but the attempt itself, the ^{or}consideration that physical pursuits merited such detailed scrutiny, was highly significant.

The Elizabethan writers in the courtly tradition who followed Elyot expressly widened their scope to take in the training of the gentleman at large. The verdict, that "few of the humanists were as concerned with the physical development of the child" (29) as Elyot, is generally valid, although his English successors maintained many of the attitudes towards the gentleman's physical pursuits which Elyot had sought to promote, even if they did not develop the physical theme into anything approaching his detail.

Both Lawrence Humphrey, Puritan reformer and Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford, and the unknown author of the "Institution of a Gentleman" (1555) found space for some recommendation of physical activities even though they both quite lacked Elyot's convinced enthusiasm. Humphrey's "Of Nobilitye" (1563) discussed the rights and duties of the aristocracy and placed moderation in diet, dress and

(29) D.B.Van Dalen, E.D.Mitchell and B.L.Bennett, op.cit., p.145

sports as among the private virtues that should be sought, while the "Institution of a Gentleman" had hinted at restraint in physical activities on social rather than moral grounds. It insisted that the gentleman had not only to serve the state with virtue and nobility but had also to act as befitted his station in all things, including his physical activities, in which he had to follow only the gentleman's pastimes. (30)

Sir Humphrey Gilbert, as became a great seaman and the step-brother of Raleigh, sought a more pragmatic emphasis in his version of the courtly tradition. The conflict between "experience" and more bookish "learning" which was to bedevil seventeenth century educational thought was already appearing in Elizabethan writing with Ascham (quoting Erasmus in support) urging that "Learning teacheth more in one year, than experience in twenty." (31) Gilbert, on the other hand, in his project for a central academy (1564), wanted education to be much more closely attuned to practical ends than he found it; the moral insistences gave way to more immediate concerns, with learning embodying a close study of the vernacular (as against Ascham's convinced classicism) and physical activities directed to usage: horsemanship for soldiering and fencing as the tool of honour. (32)

A closer return to Elyot's position on physical training is found

(30) for fuller discussion of the earlier English courtly writings see, for instance, L.E.Pearson: "Elizabethans at Home" (Stanford, Cal.) 1957, pp.140-142.

(31) Ascham, op.cit., p.56

(32) Sir Humphrey Gilbert: "Queene Elizabeth's Achademy: A Booke of Precedence", ed. F.J.Furnivall (1869)

in Ascham's "The Scholemaster", surprisingly so after his academic stresses and after starting his book with the most unpromising opening sentence in the whole of pedagogical literature. (33) That the spirit of Ascham's attitudes towards sports and games should be similar to Elyot's, in spite of the much greater brevity of his comment, can be put down to an equal sympathy with the Renaissance tradition and a personal interest in sports himself. As well as being tutor at one time to the young Queen Elizabeth and a schoolmaster of repute, Ascham was also a writer on sporting activities; his "Toxophilus", a treatise on archery, was no mere sycophancy for a state-approved activity; it showed the real enthusiasm of one who was prepared to face contemporary strictures against "a man of good years" and "no ill place" who could spend "such time writing of trifles." (34) He was, indeed, so fully committed to the pristine perfections of the courtly ideal as to suggest that a diligent year's study of Castiglione was more valuable than three years' sojourn abroad would be, with Italy in its then state. (35)

Ascham produced a compact catalogue of exercise in a single paragraph of "The Scholemaster". Having urged that his scholars should "use and delight in all courtly exercises, and gentlemanlike pastimes", (36) he recommended not only the pursuits which had found favour with Elyot but also added gun shooting to the list, a symptom of the military changes which had been confirmed in the three decades which separated

(33) "After the child hath learned perfectly the eight parts of speech, let him then learn the right joining together of substantives with adjectives, the noun with the verb, the relative with the antecedent."

Ascham, op.cit., p.1

(34) *ibid.*, p.63

(35) *ibid.*, p.63. See also above, p.22

(36) *ibid.*, p.62

the two men. Such sports were "comely" and "decent"; they were also "very necessary for a courtly gentleman to use", (37) a hint, perhaps, that while the spontaneous enjoyment of physical exercise remained in Ascham as it had in Elyot, there was the possibility that it could become quite overlaid with purely social considerations.

The last quarter of the sixteenth century saw little new inspiration in the courtly tradition, although it was still being subscribed to with considerable confidence when the Elizabethan age gave way to the Stuart. In its essential features it remained apparently flourishing. The view of human nature which it embodied was flexible and broad enough to accommodate itself to all but the most extreme shifts in theological opinion, while it had no searching philosophical questionings to face in an age which was fundamentally unphilosophical. The sense of the wholeness of man in humanism encouraged the pursuit of physical activity, both for its effect on the total personality, from which the physical was inseparable, and, though less unreservedly, for its own sake, since the physical was in its own right an integral part of a worthwhile unity. From Elyot onwards there is a persistent English belief in the character-building qualities of sport, albeit the character effects have not always been considered beneficial ones. The courtly version of Renaissance humanism also established strong social, even class, attitudes towards recreation. The structure of society itself did much to foster these but reinforcement came from the concentration on

(37) *ibid.*, p.63. Ascham required also that sport should alternate with labour and should be pursued out of doors and during daylight only.

leadership and nobility which lay in the tradition of the courtier.

Within this social consciousness there grew an awareness of "style" in play, the establishment of manners and modes in games, where the result, in the theory at least, was less important than the fashion of its achievement. Such characteristics of the physical pursuits of the courtly tradition are still recognisable in the games playing of the twentieth century: whether they represent a continuous survival from Renaissance theory and practice or whether they have arisen from later revivals of sport remains to be discovered.

(ii) The Courtly Sports in Elizabethan Practice.

The forms of behaviour incorporated in the courtly tradition were idealistic. They postulated a perfection of aim and a style for the aim's achievement, which, while it owed a great deal to contemporary social practice, also embodied an abstracted morality informed by theoretical speculation. Human nature was interpreted more in terms of qualities of thought and action which appeared desirable than by an acceptance of the less constant virtues of real life. The political ethics of Machiavelli, with their wholesale derivation from an objective observing of contemporary successful practice and their ignoring of moral laws of more distant excellence, lay outside the central mode of thinking of the courtly tradition. The physical cult of the movement

was likewise idealistic in its aims, seeking sporting activities and exercise only for the most noble ends. Its English exponents accommodated its ideals of physical perfection to activities current in their own country and their time, but the idealism of intention still remained, even in the detail of their sporting recommendations, as appeared clearly, for instance, in Elyot's remarks on hunting. (38)

It cannot be expected that an idealistic code of behaviour will be constantly attained in practice. That would be a denial of the essence of idealism, as Plato knew, and Browning, with his "man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?" (39) It would not therefore be reasonable to expect a wholesale correspondence between the physical activities actually pursued by the Elizabethan gentleman and the precepts involved in the courtly tradition. On the other hand, if that tradition meant anything at all, if it went beyond merely a form of words to the second half of the sixteenth century, then there should be at least some recognisable connection between the attitudes revealed in the sports and games of gentlefolk and those inherent in the theory of courtly writings.

The sports and physical activities of the courtly writers were certainly practised by the Elizabethan gentleman, although there are the expected indications that sports were not always pursued in the

(38) see above, p.27

(39) "Andrea del Sarto", in Browning: "Poems" (Oxford 1911) p.132

full purity of the Renaissance spirit and further indications that the physical pursuits of the nobility were by no means confined to those games and sports which Elyot and Ascham considered most appropriate for them.

Horse riding was still, of course, a necessary skill as a means of locomotion, but its role in the mystique of the courtier extended far beyond the utilitarian ends of the journey or even the battlefield. (40) Medieval memories of chivalry were kept alive by the tilt-yard, where richly caparisoned knights charged the full sixty paces of the lists at each other, not giving up until their horses or their lances were spent. Henry VIII had been a lover of the tourney as a participant and his daughter loved it as a spectator and patroness. Elizabeth herself revised, in 1562, the old medieval rules of combat and, during her progresses about the country, tourneys were regularly part of the festivities arranged for her entertainment. Tilt-yards were a feature of most of the great houses and their continued use was guaranteed as long as Elizabeth remained active. The tourney, with its pageantry, richness and display, not only conformed to that temper in the courtly tradition which stressed formalised contests of skill, strength and nobility, but also fitted into the Tudor pattern of a personalised monarchy based on a showmanship which impressed the populace and prevented the aristocratic magnates, the usual providers of the

(40) see above, p.30 and Elyot, op.cit., p.78

expensive panoply, from acquiring over-dangerous reserves of wealth. The increasing unreality of the tourney, however, in face of the changing nature of warfare, was reflected in its tendency to remove itself, as the century progressed, from the field of physical pursuit to the field of spectator entertainment. The queen's personal support was, indeed, probably the main prop of its continuance until the end of the period. More frequently, as the century went on, the direct physical combat of noble men gave way to the sight of rustics tilting at a quintain. A week of lavish entertainment prepared for Her Majesty at Kenilworth in 1575, for instance, appears to have contained no knightly contests for the gentle born, although the programme was otherwise a full one. Lances had lost their sharp points and become blunt poles; sword and buckler contests now employed swords deprived of both sharp edge and point, and with the lunge debarred. Yet the absence of any such combat at Kenilworth probably showed that it was becoming harder to persuade noble performers to risk their necks, even for the royal entertainment, in the pursuit of activities which no longer had much practical military relevance. The only contest in the tilt-yard that could be linked with the old tradition of the tourney was provided by the groom and guests at a wedding, which had been elevated into grand pageantry for the amusement of the spectators, a parody of the knightly chivalries and an indication perhaps, that Tudor England was about to enter a great age of theatrical entertainment and expression! (41)

(41) See Robert Laneham: "A letter of 1575", ed. F.J.Furnivall (1907) and F.H.Cripps-Day: "The History of the Tournament in England and France" (1918)

Some of the combative energy of the tourney undoubtedly went into hunting, which retained its popularity throughout the age, even though it often fell far short in its aims and methods of those ideal conditions which Elyot had laid down as desirable. While it sometimes involved hard and rough riding, demanding both energy and courage, it did often tend to become rather a set piece of social display accompanied by lavish woodland feasts and a return home by torchlight. (42)

Especially if the Queen were present, the whole element of discovery and chase was likely to be lost, as it behoved the host to ensure that Her Majesty was in at the kill and the hunt could readily degenerate into the sumptuously organised butchery of sort which Laneham again described at Kenilworth: the pursuit of captive animals released in an enclosed park, with the Queen herself shooting the deer as it fled into a lake. (43)

More primitive hunting with hounds did continue over the wide, unenclosed countryside, as the frequent references to the music of the hounds in Elizabethan writing well illustrates, (44) but more and more the hunting done in the immediate royal circle became a predominantly social event involving a limit of physical exertion and hardly qualifying as physical exercise let alone as part of any elevated concept of human endeavour. In developing the pageantry, the grandeur and sense of occasion that Renaissance concepts of accomplishment and

(42) cf. the rural idyll of the pastoral mode and the exiled court scenes in "As You Like It", below p.45

(43) Laneham, in Pearson, op.cit., p.572.

(44) e.g. "with them" (i.e. the hounds) "we make a heavenly noise or cry that would make a dead man revive and run on foot to hear it." Anon: "Cyvile and uncovyile life", quoted in Allardyce Nicoll (ed), op.cit., p.78

finesse had called for, it had missed the essential nobility of physical and moral effort ascribed to the free pursuit and conquest of the hunt in its more demanding forms.

Among the other sporting activities demanding horsemanship, horse racing was growing in popularity, and possibly even becoming regularised before the end of the Tudor period, although its true development as a distinctive sport belongs to later centuries. Individual races were arranged even in the early years, with Henry VIII matching himself against his brother-in-law, the Duke of Suffolk, to run "on great coursers" during the May Day frolics of 1515, and by the end of the century the race horse was emerging as a distinctive breed from the hunter. There is, however, no recorded use of the term "horse racing" in an English context before the early years of the seventeenth century ⁽⁴⁵⁾ and Gervase Markham was well aware of the novelty of his undertaking when he published, in 1599, an instruction book on "How to chuse, ride traine and diet both Hunting horses and running horses with all the secrets thereto belonging discovered: an Arte never here-to-fore written by any other author". ⁽⁴⁶⁾

The changes in sword and buckler contests, already noted, were part of the general change in the nature of swordplay in Elizabeth's reign. When Elyot advocated some training in the use of battle-axe and sword, he was contemplating their possible use on the battlerfield,

(45) Oxford Dictionary.

(46) See also S.Eliot: "Portrait of a Sport - A History of Steeplechasing", p.12

not in private disputes. Even while Elyot was writing, however, the new techniques of fencing were spreading into this country from France and by the middle of Elizabeth's reign the sword had become almost an essential article of clothing for the gentleman. Although both the court and the moralists alike attacked the practice of duelling, most noble youths were given fencing lessons (often from Italian fencing masters) as part of their education. Indeed, with the advent of the rapier it became increasingly necessary for anyone who was likely to find himself in a quarrel to have the skills of parry and thrust, especially in view of the vicious nature of the new weapon. The English even won for themselves abroad a reputation for rashness in entering into affairs of honour; Fynes Moryson's "Itinerary" (1617) recalled how "of old, when they were fenced with bucklers, as with a rampart, nothing was more common with them, than to fight about taking the right or left hand, or the wall or upon any displeasing countenance."⁽⁴⁷⁾ Queen Elizabeth herself intervened to prevent many proposed duels, and a statute of 1580 restricted the weapons that could be worn, the long sword being limited to three feet and the dagger to twelve inches, but until the end of the reign the art of fencing continued to be regarded as one of the necessary physical accomplishments of the gentleman. In its form, in its demands upon skill, deftness and courage, it satisfied the more superficial requirements of the courtly tradition; in the

(47) J. Dover Wilson: "Life in Shakespeare's England" (2nd edition, Cambridge, 1913) p.93

context of private injury in which it found its expression, it can scarcely be said to have done so.

Memories of Agincourt had left England with a nostalgic attitude towards archery which was to persist long after the bow and arrow had ceased be of practical military significance. Elyot's advocacy of the sport reads like thorough-going propaganda for the royal campaign for a revival of shooting at the butts. The bow and arrow remained in use for most of the first half of the sixteenth century but it was rapidly becoming obsolescent as a weapon of war. This realisation, together with the growth of rival amusements, was drawing the populace away from the practice of archery, notwithstanding regulations of would-be severity urging its use. Elyot provided evidence of the ineffectuality of government action, lamenting that the laws were "daily broken" and that few citizens "winketh not at the offenders." (48) Legislation to promote archery, typified in the 1541 statute of Henry VIII restricting bowling, (49) was prompted expressly by an out-moded concern over military readiness and also, implicitly, by doubts over the social consequences of rival sports. Neither regulation nor the fullest support of writers like Elyot and Ascham had much success in maintaining the position of archery in the Englishman's sporting practice, whatever place it might continue to hold in his historic affections. As a courtly sport it suffered from the double disadvantage of being both

(48) Elyot, op.cit., p.112. See above p.29

(49) see also below, p.46

militarily useless and lacking in social exclusiveness since, legally speaking, it was a duty for all. It carried no prospect of distinction for the gentleman, and the archery grounds in country houses, no less than the public butts, were becoming increasingly less used in the last Elizabethan decades.

The same romanticism which tinged noble attitudes towards archery ~~were~~ ^{was} seen in relation to wrestling, another sport approved by Elyot and Ascham as fulfilling the courtly canons. Lip-service was still paid, and the noble youth in "As You Like It" might defeat the base professional wrestler, but there is little evidence that many noble youths did actually practise the sport, although there was certainly a good deal of wrestling at popular fairs and festivals. Other games such as tennis, which gained only limited support in courtly theory, and bowls, which gained none at all, did, however, have a considerable following among the Elizabethan upper classes, notwithstanding the frowns of moralists and governments at the heavy gambling which they usually occasioned. Tennis, as played by the noble and wealthy, demanded both a special walled court and light, fragile leather balls stuffed with hair, which were both short-lived and expensive. The cost of the game ensured its exclusive nature, yet its popularity within the upper classes is indicated by a petition in the Burleigh Papers seeking a licence to manufacture tennis balls, presented in 1591. The petitioners, Hugh Williams and Richard Kyd, granted that the number of tennis players could not be large, but they must have

envisaged at least an appreciable market since they claimed that their enterprise would not only keep out foreign made balls but would also provide employment and augment the revenue. (50)

The disapproval of Elyot and the silence of Ascham obviously failed to deter the nobility from playing bowls in the grounds of their houses, which they were allowed to do by the 1541 statute. Under this act commoners were forbidden to play bowls and ordered to practise archery instead. It closed public bowling greens under the threat of heavy fines and, although "every nobleman, or other, having manors, lands or tenements, to the yearly value of £100 or above" was free to play on his own property, commoners were allowed to bowl only at Christmastide. (51) It can be said with fair certainty that this statute was not strictly observed; the numerous references to bowls and the frequent use of bowling terms in Elizabethan writings at least suggests that the game was widely and regularly played.

Nevertheless, the 1541 Act is an interesting piece of social legislation which throws light on certain assumptions of the courtly tradition. In tune with other social and political theory of the age, courtly speculation assumed a strictly hierarchical society, with fixed patterns of work, prosperity and play appropriate to each rank. The games of the gentleman were to be one of his characterising features,

(50) see John Armitage: "The History of Ball Games", in "Rackets, Squash Rackets, Tennis, Fives and Badminton", ed. Lord Aberdare (Lonsdale Library vol.xvi, undated) p.32

(51) See also Geo.T.Burrows: "All About Bowls" (undated) pp.9/10

one of the marks, indeed, of his gentility, and so it was essential that they should remain largely exclusive to his rank. The tensions between social and political theory and social and political practice work constantly towards trying to achieve a greater correspondence between the two. The desertion of the relatively classless pursuits of archery and wrestling by the nobility was one manifestation of this, an acceptance of practice, while the 1541 statute was another, working from another direction, an attempt to regulate practice by legislation.

With these general considerations on the relationship between social theory and social practice in mind, it would be surprising to find an exact reflection of the philosophy of the courtier in the physical pursuits actually followed by Elizabethan gentlemen. Practice may differ from theory in numerous details and directions, however, and the particular divergences found here are indicative of the developments in the courtly tradition by the end of Elizabeth's reign. By this time it was losing its vitality as a source of inspiration for action, through its failure to preserve in its practice the idealist morality in which one of its original strengths had been found, as well as through its failure to rejuvenate itself with fresh theoretical speculation in the later years of the century. In its physical activities it was concentrating on the outward conventions of action and on exclusive social considerations based on wealth rather than worth, with the search for sensation and spectacle more and more replacing the originally intended motivations.

Such a diagnosis owes, of course, a great deal to hindsight. The cult of the gentleman was still seriously to be reckoned with as a factor in English attitudes towards physical activity when the seventeenth century began. Elyot and Ascham were to have their direct descendants in Cleland and Peacham as well as their indirect successors (as, for instance, Bacon and Burton) who retained something of the spirit and much of the detail of courtly opinion on exercise. The seventeenth century was also to inherit certain approaches to sports and games which were already becoming apparent in the practice of the Elizabethan gentry; a love of amateur status and a contempt for the professional that went with the growth of watching rather than participating; a movement away from direct physical involvement, particularly in the more violent activities; a sense of exclusiveness and, generally, a movement towards a new interpretation of what "participation" in sports and games actually involved, an interpretation that was to be significantly different from the original Renaissance concept.

The courtly tradition was certainly not increasing in depth in the last decade of Elizabeth's reign. Indeed, as its outward shows became more involved and elaborate, so its inner significance and ultimate aims lost force, as far as the pursuit of physical activities was concerned. This fading may have stemmed from inherent weaknesses in a Renaissance morality which, in this country at least, had not systematised itself into any deep relationship with contemporary belief or practice and

which found itself increasingly stranded on its humanist shores when the spiritual movements of Reformation and Counter-Reformation took hold of men's minds. In England particularly, where, as Trevelyan pointed out, the Renaissance combined with the Reformation to produce the Elizabethan system, (52) the uneven development of the courtly concept of physical education may have been less a consequence of their own inherent flaws than an effect of their competition with other attitudes towards physical activities which were of different ancestry and held different stresses.

(iii) Physical Training and the Schools.

Neither schools, nor any system of physical education designed for a school situation, made any appearance worthy of note in the theory and practice of the courtly tradition, with its concentration on the upbringing of young noblemen under private tutorage. Gilbert's project for an academy that would bring together a group of young gentleman scholars never seems to have advanced beyond the stage of speculation and, in any event, his zeal for the study of English, modern languages, mathematics and other pursuits which offered immediate practical opportunities was as much at variance with the usual stresses of the

(52) G.M.Trevelyan: "English Social History" (2nd Edition, 1946) p.97

courtier's education as it was with the practice, wholly classically based, of the Grammar Schools of his day. (53)

The English schools of 1600 showed few dramatic effects from the intellectual and spiritual upheavals of the century through which they had just passed. Their main differences from what they had been a century or more earlier lay in a somewhat wider curriculum (which had brought Greek into some of the best of them), rather less rigid methods, the widespread use of text-books, and the teaching of the tenets of the English church in place of those of the Roman. Such advances as had been made were hardly radical, and the beginning of the seventeenth century saw the schools applying an almost exclusively classical and grammatical curriculum which fell considerably short in its range and intentions of that required by the courtly educators and which, in its application, owed few debts to the Italian Renaissance.

Such humanist influences as had made their way into the schools had reached them through the German Renaissance rather than from the Italian movement. John Colet, one of the first promoters of the teaching of Greek, had certainly studied in Italy, but he had found there a method of scholarship more than a new attitude towards life. Colet's intellectual method, with its close and critical scrutiny of the Greek originals of the early Christian writings, astounded university audiences at Oxford in the last years of the fifteenth century and also caught the

(53) Gilbert, op.cit. See also above, p.34

imagination of that great thinker of the Northern Renaissance, Desiderius Erasmus, then in England. As Dean of St. Paul's and the traditional founder of St. Paul's School, ⁽⁵⁴⁾ Colet won high repute as an educational reformer; he probably deserved his fame rather as a kindly man and an original scholar.

To say that Erasmus learned his own searching and rational techniques of scholarly exposition from Colet would be to exaggerate. However, Mann Phillips' account of the impact of the Englishman's methods on Erasmus, how "his ideas crystallised out during his conversations with Colet, and he saw before him a vista of work and achievement, the goal of it all being the modern interpretation of the Bible" ⁽⁵⁵⁾ describes not only the harmony of two minds; it is indicative also of the wider harmony that was to develop between the English educational temper and the intellectual revival in Germany and Northern Europe.

The German Renaissance was different in nature from the Italian, as well as being later in time. It was more inclined to the utilitarian, towards finding specific solutions to specific problems, and disposed to seriousness more than ebullience. Dürer, the younger contemporary of Erasmus, revealed in his human figures a directness and honesty of vision about the body, a vision that lacked the idealisation of most Italian

(54) The evidence indicates that Colet revitalised an existing foundation. See A.F. Leach: "The Schools of Medieval England" (1915) p.278.

(55) M.Mann Phillips: "Erasmus and the Northern Renaissance" (1949) p.44

nudes and statues but which had beauty, and often power, of its own; the body was quite accepted and there, in the sure line, is the physical fact of existence, a cause neither for exultation nor for shame. This set the predominant tone of the Northern Renaissance's attitudes towards man's physical nature, an attitude that was essentially neutral in temper and, as such, was hardly likely, in the circumstances of the sixteenth century, to inspire positive programmes of physical culture. Erasmus himself had doubts about the necessity of organised physical education, with his pronouncement (which might well have served as a motto for the Elizabethan Grammar School) that

"We are not concerned with developing athletes, but scholars and men competent to affairs, for whom we desire adequate constitution indeed, but not the physique of a Milo." (56)

The grand instrument for action which the German Renaissance produced and had at its disposal was, of course, the printing press, the history of which provides one of the most startling instances of the intellectual force that can be generated by a technological discovery. The rapid spread of presses and printed books throughout Europe set up changes whose ramifications were obviously too numerous and far-reaching to be discussed here. One of its effects that was particularly marked in England, and one that had its influence on English attitudes towards physical activity, was, paradoxically, to

(56) "De Pueris Instituendis", trans. W.H.Woodward in "D.Erasmus Concerning the Aim and Method in Education" (Cambridge, 1904) p.202.

encourage a certain tension between internationalism and insularity, both of which, in different ways, were encouraged by the spread of books and the widening of the habit of reading. As books became cheaper, the market for them became wider and they ceased to be the exclusive province of the latinist, for local demands made feasible the publishing of serious writings in the vernacular. Since much of the vernacular writing of the sixteenth century was translation from other literatures there was a wider susceptibility to ideas from other lands, but the parallel awareness of the native language that was part of this process may well have contributed, in the circumstances of incipient Elizabethan nationalism, to a sense of self-sufficiency, even possibly to insularity. The courtly tradition's history in sixteenth century England has illustrated this process: all its authors in this country wrote in the native tongue and, although their ideas were Italian in source and inspiration, writers like Ascham could be highly critical of the country of their origin. (57) One of the factors contributing to the growing disrepute of the Italianate cult was almost certainly the increasing consciousness of the native literary culture and, with the gradual stigmatising of the cult, it was hardly likely that the educational regime of the courtier would continue to appear wholly attractive. English concepts of physical activity may, then, in one sense, be seen at this time as part of a wider European tradition, with

(57) see above, p.22.

international characteristics about them, and yet also as a native growth, with flourishing ^{local} manifestations.

Such excursions are, however, speculative. To ascribe either the development in England of the physical culture of the courtier or its decline to the growth of printing is patently unbalanced. At the same time, to ignore the more distant cues to changes in human attitudes would be to over-simplify the picture.

The more immediate effects of printing on human action were in the religious field. Since the majority of readers in the early days of the presses were churchmen, so religious writings were the first to become widely available. This availability, in its turn, encouraged the individual reading of Holy Writ which was at least a factor in the ultimate break with Rome and the establishment of Protestantism over much of Northern Europe. The reading by men of the Holy Scriptures on their own initiative contributed to the Protestant belief in the individual communion of man with God, just as the greater availability of books in general made the German Renaissance more popular in character than the Italian had been. While the Renaissance in Italy had been largely oral in nature and socially limited in effect, the German movement was based on the printed word and, if less glistening in its brilliance, it was both more precise in its intellectual content and wider in its social impact - hardly democratic, but reaching to levels in society well removed from the noble and aristocratic.

Taken in conjunction with the current state of the Roman Church, riddled with corruption and over-concerned with outward forms, the German Renaissance, by its very nature, pointed a clear finger to the German Reformation. It was, in turn, from this spiritual movement, and the later example of Geneva, that the English Reformation inevitably derived much of its theological inspiration, even if its original immediate occasion was political. The Church of England obviously looked across to Northern Europe throughout the sixteenth century, even though the foreigners, who had been so prominent in the church revolution under Edward VI, did not return after the Marian persecution to take a direct part in the moulding of the Anglican Church into its eventual form in the Elizabethan settlement.

Whether this Elizabethan settlement was, in fact, final was, at the time, very much an open question. The extent to which the more radical forms of European Protestantism would prevail in England was still far from completely decided by the end of the Queen's reign. Although the theory of Richard Hooker, the policy of Archbishop Bancroft and the practices of the Court of High Commission had, particularly during the last decade of the century, been remarkably successful in bringing Puritans within an Anglican conformity, the extreme Protestants still had high hopes that a new king, reared to that model of a Calvinist state that Scotland had become, would help to rid England of surplices and bishops alike. Once their attempt to move the country towards a presbyterian system from within the established church had

met with acknowledged failure, the Puritans suffered little really repressive persecution and their energies went into vigorous and forceful preaching (often from Anglican pulpits), preaching which explored not only questions of faith and belief but also every conceivable aspect of man's earthly behaviour.

The assumption of this role had made the Puritans, as prompters of social attitudes, already significant beyond their numbers before the sixteenth century closed. Already their views on such diverse matters as marriage, dress, diet, money and work, to quote a few themes only, were becoming well known; and already, too, their opinions on sports, pastimes, games and physical pursuits were finding expression. Although the strongest Puritan strictures against "frivolities" were to be reserved for the next century, there were already voices being raised. Stubbes was laying about sports in general and Samuel Bird was challenging his congregation at St. Peter's, Ipswich, in no uncertain terms:

"If you speak of the kind of dancing that is received with us in every place where dancing is used, all good consciences must needs condemn it. For is it a seemly thing, think you, that a Christian man or a Christian woman should be so much delighted with hearing a profane, and sometimes filthy, song played upon an instrument that they should leap for joy at the hearing of it?" (58)

During the Stuart period the full impact of Puritan opinion on attitudes towards physical activities was to make itself decisively felt. In reviewing the states of mind that were already operative

(58) Samuel Bird: "A friendly communication or dialogue between Paule and Demas" (1580), quoted in Allardyce Nicoll (ed) op.cit., p.122

when the period opens, however, it is worth remembering that Continental Protestantism, at least in its earlier phases, was far from wholly decrying either physical play or physical education. Martin Luther, certainly, had appreciated the value of a physical training to give man the strength to perform his manifold duties in life:

"It is the part of the Christian to take care of his own body for the very purpose that, by its soundness and well-being, he may be enabled to labour, and to acquire and preserve property, for the aid of those who are in want that thus the stronger member may serve the weaker member, and we may be children of God fulfilling the law of Christ." (59)

To this end he had recommended gymnastics, fencing, wrestling and similar exercises, both for the strengthening of the body and the recreation of the mind. Thus, Luther advocated a system which had recognisable kinships with the physical education of the Italian movement, while Ulrich Zwingli, the first leader of the Swiss Reformation, had not only supported the pursuit of fitness for military purposes and the defence of the state but had allowed the playing of all such sports and games which required skill and provided bodily training.

Zwingli died in battle in 1531, and something of the physical enthusiasms of the earlier Reformation years died with him. John Calvin, his eventual successor as leader of the Swiss movement, was more restrictive. He seemed, at best, suspicious of physical education and could, at worst, be interpreted as almost completely hostile. As

(59) Martin Luther: "Concerning Christian Liberty". In "Luther's Primary Works" trans. H. Wace and C.A. Buchheim (1896) pp.2/9/280.

the central inspiration of both English and American Puritan movements, Calvin's influence was widespread and lasting, and the more cautious attitude towards the body's pursuits which he displayed, as compared with his predecessors, was the one on which later Puritan tempers were usually founded. In pursuit of his aim of turning Geneva into the perfect Protestant state, permeated with a spotless moral discipline, Calvin legislated against diversions such as card-playing and dancing, and the most that he would allow to the students of the Academy of Geneva was one period of recreation a week "but in such a way that all silly sports be avoided." (60) Calvin himself neither abjured physical exercise nor despised all games playing; he is said to have enjoyed walking and playing quoits. None the less, his strictures against gambling pastimes and his limitation of sporting activities in his educational programme were, by his followers, always likely to be extended to debar even the most innocent of amusements and the most healthful of exercises.

Restrictive opinions on physical activities, of one degree of severity or another, were the ones most likely to be heard from the lips of any later Elizabethan churchman. Puritan attitudes were hardening gradually into a generalised objection, while the moderate Anglican voice was seldom heard on a subject which must have seemed so distant from the Established Church's major concerns. For most of Elizabeth's reign the

(60) John Calvin: "The By Laws of the Academy of Geneva" quoted in D.B.Van Dalen, E.D.Mitchell and B.L.Bennett, op.cit., p.156

church of which she was head was too preoccupied with questions of its own government, structure, dogma and procedure to direct itself towards fine social judgements. The happy genius of Cranmer's Prayer Book, while it had given the new church a temper that was both moderate and distinctive, had by no means exhausted the theological possibilities inherent in the break with Rome and it had to wait until the 1590's and Richard Hooker's "Of the Laws of the Ecclesiastical Polity" before it even achieved any comprehensive statement of its philosophical assumptions. One consequence of the church's preoccupation with its internal forms and problems was to limit the Reformation's immediate effects on the country's education to those few areas where the position was clearly defined. Monastic schools closed and new Grammar schools were founded, but the Reformation did not become deeply involved in matters of curriculum and method, where little change came about as its consequence, apart from some encouragement to the greater use of English in education in company with its employment in the revised religion. Economic changes and the increased importance of trade and commerce were giving some slight encouragement to the teaching of arithmetic, usually on half days or Saturdays, ⁽⁶¹⁾ but beyond this there was little additional extension of the curriculum as the century progressed. Least of all was there any opening suggested for physical training in any formal sense.

(61) See S.J.Curtis: "History of Education in Great Britain" (1948) pp. 34/5, for the time-table of an Elizabethan Grammar School.

Richard Hooker, the eventual apologist of the Elizabethan church settlement, produced in his "Ecclesiastical Polity" an extensive statement of his church's theological position, although he often succeeded in sounding rather like a Calvinised mouthpiece of medieval scholasticism than a new voice of progress and reform. Certainly his attitudes towards the body were not such as would have encouraged schools to seek the physical education of their pupils, lacking as they did all hint of Renaissance vigour. The body was the poor servant of the soul and, although it had its occasions for enjoyment in feasts and festivals, its functioning was to be seen always as a medium through which loftier objects might be sought. In all things, the physical operations of man were seen as merely contributory to higher aims; the "labours of bodily and daily toil purchase freedom for actions of religious joy" (62) while to fast, to "interrupt or otherwise abridge the care of our bodily sustenance," was proof of "the serious intention of our minds fixed on heavenlier and better desires." (63) Man, argued Hooker, sought a triple perfection, sensual, intellectual and spiritual and, although the first might have some preparatory worth as a means to the others, those who confined themselves to physical well-being alone had "no god but only their belly." (64) Aristotelian teleology and Calvinistic asceticism met Hooker's prose, with assertions such as

(62) Richard Hooker: "Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity" (1907 edition) Vol II, p.353

(63) *ibid.*, Vol II, p.376

(64) *ibid.*, Vol I, p.205

"Rest is the end of all motion, and the last perfection of all things that labour," (65) which might hint at some status at least for the body's serious employments. Moreover, Galen appears as one of Hooker's regular classical sources, although there is little hint that "De Sanitate Tuenda" had made any impression upon his thinking. The context within which Hooker saw the body's function was not fundamentally very different from that of Martin Luther, yet the stresses which emerge in the two men's attitudes are quite different. Whereas Luther was sufficiently convinced of the Renaissance ideal of all-round development to want some moderate measure of physical education, the apologist of the English Reformation was too taken up with immediate spiritual and intellectual tensions to attend to needs as peripheral as those of the body. Indeed, in his view, the central objects and methods of education presented unsolved questions enough:

"the right helps of true art and learning this age of the world, carrying the name of a learned age, doth neither much know nor greatly regard." (66)

The Reformation had, therefore, transformed the teachers into men of the English church and not the Roman, but it had not radically altered the content of their teaching. A time-table which devoted something like forty hours a week to the teaching of Latin and Greek left the Grammar school boy little time for other studies, let alone for any

(65) *ibid.*, Vol II, p.353
 (66) *ibid.*, Vol I, p.167

physical education. The view commonly expressed that "games and sport took a prominent place in school life, though they were not organised in the sense of modern games" (67) is usually presented without the specific evidence that is called for to support it against the weight of the case on the other side that the Grammar School time-table illustrates. Lu Emily Pearson, for instance, in her comprehensive survey, "Elizabethans at Home", asserts that the educators of the time "did not neglect the problem of when and where and how to train their youth in bodily exercise," (68) but her only school evidence consists of a full statement of Mulcaster's recommendations as outlined in the "Positions" (69) which were aimed, in fact, at correcting contemporary school practice rather than at describing it.

School statutes and records show virtually no evidence of active provision and guidance for the physical training of their sixteenth century pupils, although some school historians have made the assumption that the practices of private courtly education extended into their own institutions. D.P.J.Fink, in his polished and beautifully produced "Queen Mary's Grammar School 1554-1954" (Walsall, 1954), for instance, quotes from Elyot, Ascham and Brinsley to indicate the games then popular and approved among the young; he further describes how archery and wrestling were permitted in schools and concludes, by implication,

(67) This is S.J.Curtis, *op.cit.*, p.38, but similar sentiments have been voiced frequently by educational historians.

(68) L.E.Pearson, *op.cit.*, p.169

(69) see below, pp.66-77

that such pursuits were followed under the segis of the Walsall school.⁽⁷⁰⁾ The evidence in the other direction is, however, considerable: Sunday was the only day of the week free from school work and even the holy days, which saw no formal grammatical study, were partly occupied by instruction by the parish priest in the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer and the Catechism, as laid down in Queen Elizabeth's Injunctions of 1559. Other breaks from school were, apart from Christmas, all shorter than those of today, with no summer vacation and just a few days of freedom at Shrovetide, Easter and Whitsuntide.

There was usually one half-day a week set aside as a "play-day" and occasionally there are hints that the pupils' play at this time was to a certain extent directed, or at least restricted. The Harrow statutes, drawn up by John Lyon in 1590, for example, limit the play specifically to whip and top, handball and archery.⁽⁷¹⁾ Archery, indeed, was probably the nearest approach to an organised physical activity that occurred in the Elizabethan schools, in compliance with the Tudor public policy directed at its promotion. Wilson's Grammar School not only had its own archery grounds, but also had its scholars practising their shooting at the butts on Camberwell Green after service time on Sundays.⁽⁷²⁾

(70) D.P.J.Fink: "Queen Mary's Grammar School 1554-1954" (Walsall, 1954) p.86. cf. A.B.Gourlay: "A History of Sherborne School" (Winchester, 1951) p.202: "By analogy alone it must be assumed that exercise of some sort was always taken but at Sherborne evidence, though definite, is somewhat scanty."

(71) Vivien Ogilvie: "The English Public School" (1957) p.68

(72) D.H.Allport: "A Short History of Wilson's Grammar School" (1951) p.159

Schoolboys certainly played games in what time they had available; some little of their games playing seems also to have been associated with their schools for, as early as the first half of the century, Stoneyhurst School, which migrated to Rouen after the Reformation, took their "Stoneyhurst Cricket" with them and the scholars of the Free School at Guildford are recorded as having used a piece of land (subject to a legal dispute in 1598) to "run and play creckett (sic) and other plays." (73) It seems a reasonable supposition, however, that Elizabethan schoolboys' games were seldom much connected with their role as scholars, that schoolboys, in fact, generally indulged in much the same play as their contemporaries who were not at school.

The schools' associations with the universities, moreover, would hardly direct their concerns to the scholars' physical recreation. The schools were heavily dependent upon the universities, both through having to prepare their scholars for the classical demands of entrance and also through having as their masters men who were themselves products of a university system which gave scant status or recognition to any form of play. The schoolmaster's own upbringing would scarcely dispose him towards the encouragement of games or the fostering of any physical training. Oxford and Cambridge both forbade football in the later part of the sixteenth century, and even swimming was barred to all members of the University by the Cambridge Vice-chancellor in 1571 on account of its

(73) H.S.Altham: "A History of Cricket: From the Beginnings to the First World War" (1962) p.21.

danger. While there seems no reason to question G.M.Trevelyan's verdict that "organised games and athletics did not exist, and sports were either discouraged or forbidden," (74) the restrictive edicts do not seem to have been wholly successful for very long. A list of undergraduate diversions at Cambridge in the reign of James I included swimming, running, pitching the bar and football, (75) and Sir Thomas Overbury's description of 'a mere scholar', in his "Characters" (1614-1616), asserts that "the antiquity of his university is his creed, and the excellency of his college (though but for a match at football) an article of his faith." (76) Scholars, whether at school or university, insisted on having some sporting activity. They received, however, little official encouragement to do so.

Nor was there any expectation that schools and colleges would actively attend to the physical training of their pupils. A letter from Sir Henry Sydney to his son Philip (of later fame as Sir Philip Sydney, but then a boy at Shrewsbury School) implied that this was a matter which the boy would have to look to for himself and he was told to "use moderate diet ... use exercise of body, but such as without peril of your joints or bones. It will increase your force, and enlarge your breath. Delight to be cleanly" (77) It was thus a school, paradoxically enough, which produced perhaps the noblest of all

(74) G. M. Trevelyan, op.cit., p.184.

(75) ibid., p.184

(76) in J.Dover Wilson, op.cit., p.65

(77) Arthur Collins (ed): "Letters and Memorials of State" (1746)
Vol. I, pp.8/9

Elizabethan personifications of the ideal courtier, the man of action and poet, the gallant soldier who died fighting the cause of others wronged. Not many Elizabethan scholars, however, can have had quite such painstaking fathers ready to fill in the social and physical omissions of their formal education. It is certain that these omissions were considerable, for, although Elizabethan schoolboys exercised themselves as much as their lessons allowed them free time to do so, they played their games generally as young members of the wider adult society, not as schoolboys pursuing their activities under the deliberate banner of the school.

The most thorough-going programme of physical training in Elizabethan educational literature, that found in Richard Mulcaster's "Positions" (1581), (78) was not the symptom of a vigorous but otherwise unrecorded system of physical education in sixteenth century schools, but rather of its absence. Mulcaster made it plain that he expected his recommendations to cause surprise to his readers, that he regarded them as novel advice as far as the schoolmasters of his day were concerned. This was neither a conventional modesty nor an empty boast of originality on his part. In his own schools, at Merchant Taylors' and during the last years of the century at St. Paul's, Mulcaster's zeal for the physical well-being of his pupils undoubtedly showed in practice, but elsewhere an educational text that devoted over half its contents to the

(78) Mulcaster, op.cit. All references to the "Positions" are to R.H.Quick's edition of 1888.

child's physical training must have caused surprise, notwithstanding the author's explanation that he deals "with the body but once, and that only here," whereas the soul will be discussed "in my whole course hereafter." (79) The common opinion was obviously that schools needed to make no special provision for organised exercise since nature was well able to take care of herself, a view which Mulcaster disputed, as far as it related to students and others in sedentary occupations, who had a "stillness more than ordinary" and so, he argued, "must have a stirring more than ordinary." (80)

This "stirring more than ordinary" which Mulcaster found necessary owed its inception to both of the Renaissance strands in Elizabethan thinking: he starts from an interpretation of man's physical nature and needs which derives at once from the spirit of the Southern Renaissance and the method of the Northern. In the rhetorical question quoted at the head of this chapter, where he asks "why is it not good to have every part of the body; and every power of the soul, to be fined to his best?" (81) he is speaking in terms of the all-round harmony of development that was the ideal of the Italians; more typically, however, Mulcaster abjures the rhetorical and his lumpy, workaday prose presents carefully organised argument backed by medical evidence and his own schoolmaster's experience.

(79) *ibid.*, p.41

(80) *ibid.*, p.23

(81) *ibid.*, p.34

The unity of the human personality, the interdependence of mind and body, were stressed more completely by Mulcaster than by any other educational writer of his age. Their inextricable connection was, for Mulcaster, the basic reason for embarking on his full discussion of physical, as well as intellectual, education.

"the soul and body being copartners in good and ill, in sweet and sour, in mirth and mourning, and having generally a common sympathy, and a mutual feeling in all passions: how can they be, or rather why should they be severed in train, the one made strong and well qualified, the other left feeble, and a prey to infirmity? Will ye have the mind to obtain those things which be most proper unto her and most profitable unto you when they be obtained? Then must ye also have a special care that the body be well appointed, for fear it shrink, while ye be in course to get them, or in case to use them." (82)

The soul might be supreme still, although Mulcaster would find little meaning in the separation of soul from body which such a distinct preference would imply; the soul, he argues, can, by sheer will-power, perhaps exist alone for a little space ("bear it out for some while, through valiantness of courage") but lack of bodily fitness "in the end will and must bewray her own want." Many have failed to fulfil their early promise simply through feebleness of body, and to consider the one without the other would be quite unrealistic. (83)

Mulcaster can even find justification for exercise simply in the pleasure it brings to the performer. Football might be much criticised for its violence and lack of regulation, but he insists that it must

(82) *ibid.*, p.40

(83) *ibid.*, pp.40/41

have beneficial effects: "it could not have grown to this greatness that it is now at, nor have been so much used, as it is in all places, if it had not had great helps both to health and strength." (84)

However, he does not have to resort to the pleasure motive since on his premises of the body-mind relationship exercise becomes almost a spiritual and moral duty, a necessity for the proper functioning of man's other faculties, which was just the standpoint of Martin Luther. (85)

The purposes and ends of physical activity are recognised as diverse, and often interwoven -

"All exercises were first devised, and so indeed served, either for games and pastime, for war and service, or for surety of health and length of life, though sometimes all these three ends did concur in one, sometimes they could not." (86)

Mulcaster himself frequently resorts to such purely medical motives for physical activity as were available to his age: it encourages "natural heat"; aids digestion and excretion; drives out "needless and superfluous humours"; strengthens the muscles; increases the appetite and speeds the circulation. (87) The attitude, however, is far from that of doctor to patient. He seldom, for all his physical concerns, thinks of man merely as "body" or deserts that concept of the wholeness of man which was his starting point. Always there is a recognition of individual differences and psychological needs when exercise is discussed. Since all constitutions are different, all need a different regimen of

(84) *ibid.*, p.105. See also below, pp.81/2

(85) see above, pp.56/7

(86) Mulcaster, *op.cit.*, p.51

(87) *ibid.*, pp.45/48

physical exertion and he argues that there is the same logic in selecting particular physical exercises to meet particular needs as there is in giving specific mental training for given intellectual ends. Hence, Mulcaster would, in his recommendations, take into account both the object desired, whether to remedy some weakness or to preserve normal health, and also the nature of the body to be exercised, whether it be feeble, healthy, or "valetudinary", that is neither sickly nor rudely fit. (88) He follows Galen and Elyot in making these considerations, but goes into detailed prescriptions of his own, although he disclaims, with an appropriate modesty, any final authority in his training advice, since exercise has always to be governed by circumstance and modified by time and place. (89) There is no ideal form; all exercise should be realistically tailored for its own purpose.

The analysis of the various species of exercise that follows is so comprehensive as to include activities which we have become unused to regarding as "exercise". Mulcaster was writing without the advantages (and disadvantages) of a convention of physical education which defined his subject matter for him and had to speculate from first principles. This absence of any settled concept of physical activity, still less of any realised notion of what constitutes "physical education" has confused much of the writing on exercise in later centuries than the sixteenth. Elyot showed some of this confusion and Robert Burton and Charles Cotton,

(88) *ibid.*, pp.109/110 ("Valetudinary: not in robust or vigorous health; more or less weakly, infirm, or delicate; invalid" Oxford English Dictionary.)

(89) *ibid.*, p.107

among others, in the next century, were to show more, the one seeing no generic distinction between active and inactive amusements and the other equating sport wholly with gambling. Even today the conventions of physical education still have their areas of blurring: badminton is physical education, but is table tennis? More doubtfully still, is billiards? Is watching sport part of physical education, even if a lesser part than actually performing? If these difficulties still exist after a century of conscious deliberation on the notions of physical education, with a developing sureness as to what the subject involves, then it is hardly to be wondered at that Mulcaster, writing a pioneer work, should produce "exercises" that we would immediately see as "physical" in twentieth century terms.

Mulcaster is consistent, however, in the development and exemplification of his concept of exercise as "a vehement and voluntary stirring of one's body, which altereth the breathing, whose end is to maintain health, and to bring the body to a very good habit." (90) This brings in, among indoor exercises, "loud speaking", "loud singing", "loud and soft reading" and laughing (which "warmeth" and causes "redness of the face") (91) as well as dancing, wrestling and fencing. Out of doors, walking finds approval; Mulcaster was not so tied to the classical authorities that their general silence on the benefits of

(90) *ibid.*, p.53

(91) *ibid.*, pp.55 et seq. Cf. Thomas Hobbes' habit, reported by John Aubrey, of singing aloud in bed, "the doors made fast", because "he did believe it did his lungs good and conduced much to prolong his life." (Aubrey: "Brief Lives", ed. Clark, 1898; Vol.I, p.352)

this mundane activity could lessen his own enthusiasm. "In the train of health," he writes, "no one thing deserveth better place than it doth: because no other thing besides health layeth claim unto it." The subdivisions of walking into its various types show well how the sixteenth century demanded a lower level of exertion than we would expect for an activity to qualify as "exercise" and are symptomatic of its cautious approach to physical effort. There is walking "downhill", "by the sea", and in the various winds and weathers, (92) Then follows, to complete the outdoor exercises, a list of the activities that is familiar from the advice of the courtly writers: running, leaping, swimming, horse-riding, hunting, archery and various ball games. (93)

Mulcaster does from time to time reflect contemporary social concerns. As a practising and successful London schoolmaster he was particularly alive to the middle class opinions that would be voiced by most of his parents, many of whom were likely to be of Puritan inclination. He feels, therefore, that dancing calls for justification against charges that it "revelleth out of time, wherein Physic is offended," and that it directs itself so wholly towards pleasure as to make folk forget decorum and "good manners", allegations that he meets at some length with the argument that dancing's contribution to health is so considerable as to overcome current objections. Care must just be taken that it is pursued in a proper manner by masters who

(92) e.g. "The East wind is hurtful and nips," (!) *ibid.*, p.87

(93) *ibid.*, pp.89-106

"fashion it with order in time, with reason in gesture, with proportion in number, with harmony in Music, to appoint it so, as it may be thought both seemly and sober, and so best beseem such persons as profess sobriety." (94)

Like Elyot and Ascham, Mulcaster reflects the national tradition and the national policy in his support of archery as "a principal exercise to the preserving of health," (95) just as he also reflects some of his age's suspicions - for instance, of sweating, on medical grounds, (96) and of swimming, where he manages to overcome the usual doubts over its safety and conclude that it "can neither do children harm in learning, if the master be wise, nor the common weal but good, being once learned, if either private danger or public attempt do bid them venture." (97)

On the wider social issues, in the assumptions he makes about the function of education in the community, Mulcaster shares most of the prevalent attitudes of his day. His views on the education of girls are rather two-sided; he would have them trained both intellectually and physically, but he has a low estimate of their mental capacities - "their brains be not so much charged neither with weight nor multitude of matters as boys' heads be, and therefore, like empty casks, they make the greater noise." (98) He has doubts, too, about the wide extension of educational provision as society could not support a preponderance of bookish people, a social concern which was to bother many writers in the next reign, and, intermittently, in many reigns thereafter. From this

(94) *ibid.*, p.75

(95) *ibid.*, p.103

(96) see also below, pp.379/1

(97) *ibid.*, p.96

(98) *ibid.*, p.169

it follows that his physical education would also be restricted, since it is explicitly a system designed with the scholarly and sedentary in mind: while nature cannot be left to its devices to secure the health of the scholar, Mulcaster gives no indication that youngsters' physical fitness needs any special attention if they are not following a studious course. Beyond this, however, he appears to resist any movement towards the classification of sports either according to their social acceptability, as the courtly tradition was increasingly doing, or on grounds of social morality, as was the Puritan predisposition. He claims indeed that his is a programme of physical education that should be acceptable to all educated men and that what is "set out for the general train" is equally suitable for a gentleman. (99)

The "Positions" sums up and pushes to a conclusion many aspects of Renaissance opinion on the body and its training; it does so in its thorough-going acceptance of man's physical nature, the seriousness with which its welfare is considered, and its fusion of all the ancient and modern traditions of exercise, compounding the wisdom of most of the significant authorities, Plato, Aristotle, Galen, and Mercurialis (100) among them. In addition, however, Mulcaster brings his own personal contribution to the theory of physical education, particularly in his recognition that the child is a body as well as a mind, and that the two must be considered together if education is to achieve its fullest

(99) *ibid.*, p.196

(100) "I know not any comparable." *ibid.*, p.129

potential. It is from his own experience in schools that his most far-seeing proposals derive, such as his recommendations for the training of teachers in physical education, insisting that all schoolmasters should be ready to attend to the body's well-being as well as the mind's. "How shall he perceive what is the body's best," he asks, "which having the soul only committed to his care, passeth over the body to another man's reckoning?"⁽¹⁰¹⁾ It is in tune with his pleas for an all-round education that Mulcaster argues at length on the need to give both mind and body to the same man's charge.⁽¹⁰²⁾ This awareness both of the wholeness of man and of the individuality of his needs leads him into the consideration of such diverse topics as the build-up of resistance to ill-health (foreshadowing Locke with a toughening process that included limited clothing, "thin even from the first swaddling to harden and thicken the flesh"⁽¹⁰³⁾) and the need to make elementary education, with remarkable modernity, "determinable not by years, but by sufficiency."⁽¹⁰⁴⁾

Such progressive ideas might have been expected to make Mulcaster a major influence upon English educational thinking in general and on its theory of physical education in particular. In the more general field Mulcaster's opinions did win some circulation (Hoole, for instance, was well acquainted with the "Positions" and makes quite frequent reference to Mulcaster⁽¹⁰⁵⁾) but the work did, in fact, remain out of

(101) *ibid.*, p.124

(102) *ibid.*, p.125

(103) *ibid.*, p.46

(104) *ibid.*, p.261

(105) see below, p.140

print from a few years after its first publication until the revival of historical interest in education in the nineteenth century. The strange obscurity in which Mulcaster died in 1611, in poverty and to be buried in an unknown grave, only three years after giving up the mastership of a school as notable as St. Paul's, was matched by the oblivion which overcame his educational opinions, especially in so far as they concerned the training of the body.

This neglect of Mulcaster's ideas on physical education probably stemmed from a number of causes. The general inelegance of his prose may have been one factor in his lack of sustained appeal (the comparison with Ascham, for instance, leaves Mulcaster at a great literary disadvantage) but of more importance was likely to have been the unpopularity of the cause which he was espousing, particularly with the readers for whom, as a schoolmaster writing with application to schools, he was catering. The schools were generally the province of the middle ranges of society, supported by the lesser gentry, the trading and manufacturing groups, and professional men: only a few great schools such as Eton attracted the sons of the great, who were usually educated at home under private tutors. The everyday patrons of the schools were likely to have sympathy with projects for giving English a wider scope in Grammar Schools, but they may well have had doubts over other of Mulcaster's proposals, over his advocacy of education for girls, for example. Moreover, they were the social group to whom Puritanism made its strongest appeals and, in the decades around the turn of the century,

they would (in spite of the fact that the parents of Mulcaster's own pupils cooperated in his regimen) be increasingly suspicious of schemes for the physical education of their sons. Mulcaster had the misfortune to offer his wares on a falling market: he grew up himself in an age when physical training could have been considered a feasible development in middle-class education. Even when he published his "Positions" in 1581 minds were still generally open to the sort of advice on physical education that he was giving; but by the time of his death, thirty years later, a great many of the readers from whom he would be seeking support had adopted restrictive views on man's physical nature and its exercise and amusement.

Thus, even Mulcaster's staunch advocacy appears to have made little impact on attitudes towards physical education in Elizabethan schools. The courtier might have the time to sport and play, and it might be thought both socially and ethically desirable that he should have training on how to do so with the greatest grace, but those being educated in the Elizabethan Grammar School were, it was felt, generally destined for a less leisured life and a more serious activity. When spiritual doubts were added to social and economic indications, it is hardly remarkable that the schools of 1600 were virtually without any active concern for the physical training of their pupils. The cause for wonder becomes almost the phenomenon of Mulcaster himself, rather than the oblivion into which his concept of physical education so rapidly fell.

(iv) Physical Pursuits and the Spirit of the Age.

The idyll of Good Queen Bess's golden days, when every village green had its maypole, when rustics sported in every rural shade and towns rang to the frolics of their lusty apprentices, nothing of this picture has yet appeared in this review of the state of physical exercise at the beginning of our period. Was it indeed an idyll created by roseate reminiscences, or was it a true representation of at least a part of the Elizabethan reality?

There was undoubtedly a cult of the "good old days" in the seventeenth century, especially during the reign of James I and in the decade after the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660. Some of this enthusiasm was directed towards the reviving of old country sports and often giving them a sophistication that they had never before possessed, a grace and finesse unknown to them in their bucolic days.⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ At the same time, there are numerous glimpses of rustic merrymaking in Elizabethan drama, in the prose fiction with its almost unfailingly boisterous jollities, and in the Puritan attacks on frivolous amusement, often the most detailed of the sources. There is enough evidence to suggest that the picture of "Merry England" was not without its occasional elements of truth. Occasional they certainly must have been, since the opportunities of adults for recreation were even more circumscribed than those enjoyed by their children; the day's work and

(106) Most notably in the Cotswold Games. See below, chap.II, pp.160 ff.

the week's work were both long, Sundays and church festivals being the only breaks available for amusement. On these holidays there was a tradition of sports and games that was certainly alive and flourishing in 1600, although, since much of the evidence for these activities rests ultimately on folk memory, it is often difficult to isolate the original forms of popular games from later accretions and also to date their appearance with any certainty.

The folk play of the feast days has been the ancestor of many of our national sports of later ages. Quite a selection of sporting activities of indigenous popular growth were to develop more formal codes in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, while others, such as bowls, had obviously begun to do so before 1600. Most of the physical pursuits of the people, however, still retained a simple rustic form which marked them off as quite distinct from the exercises and games of the gentleman.

Because of its occasional nature, folk play had to be simple in form. The common games and sports could not demand either expensive equipment or a playing area reserved exclusively for them; they had not to involve skills needing long practice or require any special fitness beyond that which the daily labours of the players would give them. On the other hand, the games should actively occupy as many players as possible and could be rough and violent because they only took place occasionally. A final characteristic of many of the folk games being played in the Elizabethan countryside was that they were ritualistic in

origin, although they owed their continuance to habit and enjoyment, with their original, magical motivation overlaid with more recent explanation, if any seemed to be called for.

In spite of the Puritan frowns that were beginning to be cast towards the feast-day sports, with their Catholic associations, the church festivals continued to be observed widely. The winter festival of Christmas was pre-eminent as the indoor celebration, but as an occasion for outdoor sport Shrovetide held first place. A spring festival, a celebration of survival after the long winter, it produced games which were usually boisterous and marked by contest and conflict, as individuals and groups pitted their strength in the struggle for what had once been a fertility prize for their cattle, their crops or their women. The Shrovetide sports show more uniformity than those found at any other festival and records of them come from all parts of the country.

Football, in various modes, was the most widespread of the Shrove Tuesday games, and also the one which attracted most comment. In some places, including the University towns where colleges seem to have developed more or less regular "teams", (107) the game must have escaped from its exclusive association with a particular feast (a necessary first step for the development of any folk sport from the primitive stage), but elsewhere it could only have been an annual event at most.

The damage to life and property that it usually risked would have

(107) See above, p.65

otherwise been unbearable. It was still essentially a sport of mass participation, a riot for apprentices or an affray for the peasants. From Elyot onwards, its reputation among the literate was low; it was not a game for the civilised. When Kent, in "King Lear", called Oswald "a base football player" he was, of course, casting a social slur upon the steward by associating him with such a plebeian game. Heads and legs were broken and deaths were not unusual as the sides pushed, hacked and kicked their way through streets of shuttered shops, through streams and mud, waste land and fallow. In this wild state football had to be occasional; neither civil peace nor economic stability was compatible with its frequent performance.

Amid the general distrust of the game, Mulcaster's is the lone Elizabethan voice that can find some possibilities of value in football, and even his support was conditional upon the appointing of a "training master" who would act as referee and see to its proper ordering.

Played thus,

"some smaller number with such overlooking, sorted into sides and standings, not meeting with their bodies so boisterously to try their strength, nor shouldering or shoving one another so barbarously, and using to walk after, may use football for as much good to the body, by the chief use of the legs, as the Armball ..." (108)

Like other of his projects for the improvement of physical exercise, Mulcaster's prophetic recommendations on football's needs went unheeded for many generations. It was not until the middle of the eighteenth century that there are indications of the greater regulation coming into the game that was essential if it was to become more than a very

(108) Mulcaster, op.cit., p.106

occasional rout.

Mulcaster was puzzled at the rise of football and could not explain its origins and motives. (109) Puritan critics, for their part, made little attempt to explore the underlying forces behind the game; for a propagandist like Philip Stubbes, in his "Anatomic of Abuses", a scathing description was enough; football was, for him, "a friendly kind of fight" rather than "a fellowly sport or pastime", a means of paying off old scores and an opportunity for skullduggery. (110) The original promptings of such combative sports had, indeed, undoubtedly been lost long before the Elizabethan age ended and they must have been occasioned by a complexity of motives; they were an event that marked the passing year; an exhilarating physical exertion; a demonstration of strength, assuring the participants and possibly impressing their women; a satisfying contest which demonstrated their roles in the local social pattern; and, often, the vestigial observance of supernatural rites.

Although this ritualistic motivation had sunk into the twilight levels of consciousness before the seventeenth century began, the significance of folk games can hardly be appreciated without taking into account their primitive origins. The behaviour of a crowd in a soccer stadium or at a wrestling match, the peculiar in-play of the rugby scrum or the curious accoutrements and pageantries which horsemen resort to when they happen to be chasing foxes, these and similar phenomena

(109) See above, pp.68/9

(110) Philip Stubbes: "The Anatomic of Abuses", 2nd edition, 1585, quoted J. Dover Wilson, op.cit., pp.18/19

remind that rational, conscious motivation still occupies only a small area of the prompting behind some of our play pursuits today.

Primitive, even pagan, elements are still not wholly eliminated from some of the sporting rituals of the twentieth century, and it would be reasonable to suppose that they lurked even nearer to the conscious surface at the end of the sixteenth.

One of the most developed and best documented of the early football contests, and one that retained its distinctive characteristics into modern times, is the Haxey Hood game. Without providing an explanation for all football playing, it does give useful insights into the attitudes which originally underlay such combats. The "hood" was a ball, or bale, of rope, encased in leather or sacking; it was thrown up by the "Chief of the Boggons" and scrambled for by the inhabitants of several nearby villages, after the rules of the game had been announced by the Fool:

"Hoose agen hoose, toone agen toone,
If tho' meets a man, knock 'im doone
But don't 'ut in!"

Eleven other boggons, garbed like their leader in red caps and jerkins, were stationed round the field in which the contest began, and they had to prevent the hood from leaving the field if they could. Whoever did manage to get the hood away, usually after several hours of scrambling, throwing and kicking, tried to take it to his own village, generally to the inn, where he was regaled by the landlord (who would reap his own benefit from the subsequent local celebrations). The game itself was

really only part of the festivities, which continued the next day when the boggons progressed round the villages and "smoked the Fool" over a fire of straw, pitching him up and down by means of a rope thrown over the branch of a tree. As compensation, the Fool finally took his cap round the onlookers who paid him for his entertainment. so ending the performance for that year. (111)

Here, then, was a football game with complexities beyond the usual and with a gamut of ceremonial trappings. Whether the description as given here applies to the game as it was being played at the beginning of the seventeenth century is uncertain, but the explanation of the Haxey Hood game suggested by Professor James still has its relevance to discussions of the origins of sports which grew out of popular feast-day play:

"It seems very likely that originally the Hood was ~~the~~ half or head of a bull sacrificed to fertilize the newly ploughed fields, and, therefore, eagerly sought by those who could secure it to vitalize their crops. Now by way of explanation of the custom an aetiological story is told of a Lady Mowbray of the local Manor who lost her hood on a windy day and gave the land on which the Sway takes place in trust for the twelve men who restored it to her. But this is the usual fictitious interpretation of an ancient rite, the real origin of which has long been forgotten. The reference to the bullocks in the Fool's speech, the Plough Monday associations, and formerly, a final 'smoking' of the Fool, either after his oration or on the following day, over a fire of damp straw as a ritual fumigation - a practice now abandoned - are all indicative of a transitional rite at the end of the midwinter festival. It has every appearance of being the folk survival of the last stage of a ritual combat between local groups, and there can be little doubt that originally the Hood smoked at the fire in the inn as the Fool was smoked by being dangled over a damp fire. (112)

(111) This account is compiled from material in T.F.Thistleton Dyer: "British Popular Customs: Present and Past" (1911) pp.31/32 and E.O.James: "Seasonal Feasts and Festivals" (1961) pp.298/299.
 (112) E.O.James, op.cit., p.299

The Haxey game was, as is evident from this, a Plough Monday event. Other football games were played at other festivals in the early part of the year: in Leicestershire there was, and probably still is, a struggle on Easter Monday for a dummy bottle of ale between Halloton and Melbourne, while football games were played in a few places on Christmas day itself. Shrove Tuesday remained, however, the most frequent occasion for these annual football contests.

In some sports and games, of course, the symbolism lay nearer the surface: the phallic maypole erected for its maytime veneration and adornment in the spring fertility rites was an obvious example. It may even have been an unrealised sensing of this sexual significance that made the Puritans so diligent in their destruction of the offending poles and the restorers of the monarchy equally zestful in their re-creation. The May festivals were the great occasion for dancing and, in the West country in particular, for wrestling. Most of the feasts in the church calendar had, indeed, some sporting connotation, either national (in type, if not in detail, as with Shrovetide and May games) or purely local. The Shrove Tuesday sports were generally violent and combative: tug o' war contests, cock-fighting and cock-throwing, and "dog-tossing" are among the activities recorded in association with ^{this} season, although dating again

is difficult. (113) Some Shrovetide play, particularly that of the women and children, was of a less turbulent nature. Country girls used to "play with stool and ball and run at barley break until they fall"; (114) and some of the children's Shrovetide games, such as trundling hoops, whip and top, and kit-cat⁽¹¹⁵⁾ were certainly being played when the Stuart period began.

The Easter games were nearly always rather gentler than those of Shrovetide and, although there was some Easter Monday football, more typical were contests under the heading of what we should call "athletics" - running, jumping and throwing competitions - and some wrestling. The type of sport associated with other particular festivals sometimes indicates an origin that was removed from amusement. Ascension day, for example, was often the occasion for beating the bounds of the parish; it was also a day on which running races were traditionally held in many places, and it is highly likely that the perambulation of the parish had gradually transformed itself, as any procession of the young and energetic over a known course is prone to

(113) There was a tug o' war between the citizens of two districts of Ludlow. It is said to date from a struggle between rival factions within the town during the siege of Henry VI; what seems likely is that a wide-ranging free-for-all of the usual type was modified to be played under the restricted conditions of a besieged town. See "The History and Antiquities of Ludlow" (1822), pp.188-189, and Thistleton Dyer, op.cit., p.85. "Cock throwing" consisted of bombarding a tethered cock with missiles, often broomsticks. "Dog tossing" might involve throwing at a dog, or throwing the dog itself.

(114) Pasquill: "Palinodia and his Progresse to the Taverne" (1619) p.20

(115) A boys' game with many local variants, both of name and manner of playing. It was basically rounders, but with a "cat" (a piece of wood about 3 ins. long) instead of a ball. (O.E.D.)

do, into an actual race, which, in its turn, escaped then from being a circuit of the boundaries and took to a more convenient track. The proneness of the ceremony of beating the bounds to transmutation into some specific sporting event is further suggested by the embryonic form of hockey which came to be played in some Cornish towns on the day of the parish perambulation. The annual game at Helston, for instance, took the form of a contest between two halves of the town and took place on May 2nd, the day the parish bounds were beaten. (116) This is not, of course, to argue that the modern forms of games have much dependence on these original sources, or even that Elizabethan athletes had any awareness of the ancestry of their play (unless it were of the apocalyptic variety, cited by James) but it does perhaps help to explain the persistence of certain forms of play, often in the face of unpromising contemporary attitudes towards sport and even legislative attempts to end them. The deep, forgotten roots of primitive ritual could still give a strength to later manifestations of the game when reliance on more superficial motives alone might not have been able to sustain it.

By the end of the sixteenth century many sporting activities had escaped from an exclusive connection with one festival day alone. Games of handball and stoolball were being played in the same place on two or even more holidays and the ladies of Bury St. Edmunds would, on

(116) A.R.Wright: "British Calendar Customs: England" Vol. II "Fixed Festivals. January - May, inclusive" (1938) p.245

Shrove Tuesday, Easter Monday and Whitsuntide alike (which meant, in the circumstances of the age, whenever they had the leisure and the season was suitable) "side off for a game of trap-and-ball" which they would pursue vigorously until sunset. (117) This breaking out from a single annual performance was an early stage in the development of any folk game from a local frolic into anything approaching a national pursuit. Some Elizabethan games had already escaped this time-limitation; bowls had done so virtually everywhere, and football had done so in some places, particularly in urban areas. Bowls had, as has already been noted, become national enough to call forth legislation against it, (118) although whether it could have done this without the patronage of the more leisured gentry who had taken it up, is doubtful. Some other sports, such as ice-skating most obviously, were, of their nature, wholly seasonal and opportuistic. Skating was popular in hard winters, although the bone skates that were the only ones available hardly made the performers' movements comparable with those of later centuries, Elizabethan prints showing skaters propelling themselves with a stick or pole, in the manner of punting.

Ball games were widely played, and not necessarily confined to set occasions. The Queen herself was not above taking pleasure in the

(117) Thistleton Dyer, op.cit., p.86. "Trap-and-ball" was a developed version of tip-cat, or kit-cat. The "trap" was the piece of wood used as a lever; the ball rested in a groove or hole at one end of it and when the other end was hit it was thrown into the air where it was struck by the player. (O.E.D.)

(118) See above, p.46

simple play of her subjects as Nichols shows in his description, in the "Progresses of Queen Elizabeth", of a type of handball played by the Somerset servants of Lord Hartford, who

"in a square court, before Her Majesty's window, did lay up lines, squaring out the form of a tennis court, and making a cross line in the middle. In this square, they (being stripped out of their doublets) played, five to five, with the hand ball, at bord and cord (as they term it), to so great a liking of Her Highness." (119)

The sophisticated form of tennis that was played by the gentlemen was obviously only one of the many varieties of racket and ball or hand and ball games that the Elizabethans enjoyed. It is clear from Mulcaster's comments that the ball could be soft or hard, according to whether the hand or a bat or racket was used; the game might be played against an opponent face to face, as in tennis, "or against a wall alone, to exercise the body with both the hands, in every kind of motion." (120) Mulcaster praises these ball games as excellent and healthful exercises, and they seem to have provided recreation for adults and children of both sexes. Another form of bat and ball play that was beginning to take on a definitive form towards the end of the sixteenth century was cricket, although it still appears to have been exclusively a game for young boys - John Derrick's evidence that he had played the game during his schooldays in Guildford has already been mentioned. (121)

Looking back on Elizabethan popular sport, there is a temptation, in

(119) John Armitage, op.cit., p.22

(120) Mulcaster, op.cit., pp.104/5

(121) See above, p.64.

the light of the subsequent history of games, to over-emphasise these movements towards recognisable modern forms. This would, however, be to misplace the stress; it has always to be remembered that, with the restricted time available for play, the popular games, although modified by church influence out of their original pagan significance, tended to persist in the old forms, all with a predominantly medieval flavour. With few exceptions, which with our benefits of hindsight we probably exaggerate, the popular sports had not yet been adopted by the gentry and aristocracy and still remained the province of the people, not yet sophisticated or given grace, and having only local custom for their regulation. There was a wide gulf between the actual sports of the common people and those of the courtly tradition and an even wider gulf between the promptings that lay behind the two types of activity. The naturalism and immediacy of motive of popular sport, with its absence of any long-term end (at the conscious level) and its pursuit entirely for its own sake, contrasts with the idealism of the attitudes behind the courtly sports. Without denying that these often gave no less spontaneous satisfaction than the games of the humbler orders, they were also theoretically directed at objectives that were not immediate: personal ends involved in the full realisation of all aspects of the personality and social ends involved in certain graceful and mannered conventions of performance. There was a distance between the two types of physical exercise that could not be hidden by the common sharing of a few pursuits such as archery and bowls, both of which, in different

senses, were social anomalies, causing the state some concern.

The dichotomy of attitudes towards physical activities in late Elizabethan England was too deep either to be readily bridged or to be a phenomenon solely confined to physical pursuits. There may well have been a degree of fluidity in Tudor social life, and the aristocracy was not in itself a complete denial of meritocracy, but the medieval sense of hierarchy was still strong. It was a sense of difference in role and status that was far from being wholly economic and extended into a broad area of belief and attitude.

The division of opinion, conscious and unconscious, that underlay the physical culture of the age has echoes in its literary culture, where the pastoral element was pointing a constant contrast between court and country, stressing the mannerism and artifice of the one against the uncomplicated naturalness of the other. The pastoral mode idealised at the rustic level just as the Castiglione tradition had idealised at the aristocratic level. The literary attitude towards the humble, rural life, imbued it with a virtuous simplicity and wholesale honesty, and reinforced the image that later ages were to have of the Elizabethan common man. By a similar tendency, the court and gentry, began to adopt and refine some of the plebeian sports, modifying them, from their native primitivism, towards the Renaissance vision.

The development of systematised formal philosophy made little appeal to the Elizabethan temper. If a comprehensive statement of attitudes towards man's physical nature in the sixteenth century is to

be looked for, it cannot be found in (or even deduced from) any specifically philosophical statement of the Elizabethan position because, Hooker aside, and Hooker's is a special case, involved in special pleading from a particularised viewpoint, no such statement exists. It was essentially an age of practice, action and performance, when the deed tended always to outrun the philosophical explanation. The general history of the age provides ample instances of the Elizabethan zest for extroverted and vigorous action, pursued energetically, but with a style and form that marked it off from the merely brashly heroic. There is Drake, playing his game of bowls when the Armada was sighted and then setting out to rout the would-be invaders; that he stayed to finish his game is almost certainly an apocalyptic addition made by an age more aware of later traditions of English games playing and battle fighting than of the strength of south westerlies hurrying an enemy fleet up the channel. Yet the flavour of the situation is right, with its insouciance, its suggestion of performing impossible feats with an apparently untroubled ease. Seamen and voyagers sailed the oceans with a freebooting panache and then came home to fill the rich chronicles with tales of their travel and the public and private coffers with their loot; manufacturers revolutionised the wool trade and landowners changed the face of many an English village by deeds which did not mean justice for all, but which certainly indicated a sweeping boldness in some. Even the ranks of roguery and vagabondage were imbued, at least by their commentators, with a virility

and out-goingness, even (if the words are permissible in this context) with a sense of propriety and order, the "Prigman", "Whipjack", "Quire Bird" and other lesser villains all owing duty to the "Upright Man" who could demand part of their takings and the favours of their women. (122)

A rich, extroverted life, all-embraced by a cosmic frame of order patterned by the heavens, was the essential Elizabethan theme, to which all the age's more specific attitudes owed fealty.

The visual arts of the time, however, give little evidence of the vigour of the Elizabethan spirit. Practical skills were in advance of the purely decorative; energies went rather into designing and furnishing great houses and building fine ships than into statuary or painting. If Henry VIII looks down from the walls of the National Portrait Gallery in a superb authority and a massive strength, it was the Flemish Holbein who put him there. Our home-grown effigies and portraits had (in spite the impressive richness of colour from the costumes, which provided another practical outlet for the age's creativity) a virtually uniform immobility and conventionality. This eschewing of the physically vital could be a consequence of lack of skill, although the marvels of sixteenth century church building would

(122) A "prigman" stole clothes off hedges, where they were drying after being laundered; a "whipjack" either begged on the strength of false naval discharge papers or shoplifted; a "quire bird" was a discharged prisoner (cf. "bird" in contemporary prison slang) and often a horse stealer. See, *inter alia*, John Awdeley: "The fraternitie of vacabondes" (1575) and Allardyce Nichol, *op.cit.*, pp.81-83.

dispute this, as would also the similar lack, for all its colourful brilliance, of vital physical texture in much of the century's poetry.

In Spenser's poetry, for example, there is all the flowering of the Renaissance courtly tradition that contributed so much to the period's attitudes towards physical education. Great deeds are chivalrously performed in the "Faerie Queene", dragons are slain and maidens are saved; mighty conflicts glisten with a jewelled violence (such as that between Sir Artegall and Radigund, in Book V, canto v, stanzas 1 - 12) but even in the midst of turbid physical action there is little evidence of straining sinews, little sense of physical power, explosiveness or motion; they are pictures which remain nearly always still, generally tied episodically to their stanza frame. Edmund Spenser has all the appreciation of noble physical pursuit that was inherent in the Renaissance ideal, but, writing himself at the levels of ideal and allegory, he can concentrate on the lofty ends and stress the performance of virtue, while forgetting its sweat.

In this ideal world it is the soul which inspires and directs all noble action, even the fiercest of physical exertions:

"So doth the piercing soul the body fill,
Being all in all, and all in part diffused,
Indivisible, incorruptible still,
Not forced, encountered, troubled or confused.

And as the sun above the light doth bring,
Though we behold it in the air below,
So from th'eternal Light the soul doth spring,
Though in the body she her powers do show." (123)

(123) Sir John Davies: "Nosce Teipsum" (1599), stanzas ccxxx - ccxxxi.

So wrote a typical poet of Elizabeth's court, Sir John Davies, the Irish-born diplomat, and author also of "Orchestra, or A poem of Dancing" (1596) where again a physical accomplishment is shown as the manifestation of a wider harmony, the essential of the physical action becoming, paradoxically, its non-physical components.

"Concord's true picture shineth in this art,
Where divers men and women ranked be,
And every one doth dance a several part,
Yet all as one in measure do agree
Observing perfect uniformity." (124)

Physical performance, in fact, tends to emerge out of its nobler, spiritual contexts and achieve some muscularity only when it relates either to those ranks in society whose lowly station denies them any exalted vision of their ends or to those who have placed themselves outside the pale of the law. In the first case, the pastoral convention invited praise for the rude life of poverty and strenuous labour, of the sort recalled in "Arden of Faversham":

"My golden time was when I had no gold;
Though then I wanted, yet I slept secure;
My daily toil begat me night's repose,
My night's repose made daylight fresh to me." (125)

Or there is the more complex blending of elements from both pastoral and courtly attitudes towards man's physical nature, in the greenwood idyll of the exiled Duke's court in "As You Like It", where not only does the inherent nobility in Orlando bring him an unboasted triumph over the hired professional wrestler (a man of such strength that he had just

(124) Sir John Davies: "Orchestra, or a Poem of Dancing", stanza cviii.
(125) "Arden of Faversham", Act III, sc. v, ll.259-262.

left one opponent with three broken ribs and "little hope of life in him" before serving his two brothers in the same fashion), but there is also a sharp contrast drawn between the honest labour of old Adam, with his trusting loyalty, and the deceit and superficiality of the wealthy courtiers. (126)

Charles the wrestler is not the only Elizabethan villain whose physical powers are vaunted. It was no accident of language, but a reflection of an attitude towards physical strength, that the word "sturdy" was applied almost exclusively to vagrants, who were often described in the popular press as men of stature and imposing physical strength, "big-limbed" and "tawny sun-burned rascals". (127)

Physical power attracts attention only when its purposes are ignoble; it becomes significant in its own right only when it becomes separated from that exalted unity of the human personality which the age had taken as its ideal. It is only ignorant or evil strength that is granted close description; the imposing physical portraits are of tyrants like Marlowe's Tamburlaine:

"Of stature tall, and straightly fashioned....
 So large of limbs, his joints so strongly knit,
 Such breadth of shoulders as might mainly bear
 Old Atlas' burden;
 His arms and fingers long and sinewy,
 Betokening valour and excess of strength; -
 In every part proportion'd like the man
 Should make the world subdued to Tamburlaine." (128)

Virtuous toughness is seldom celebrated. Great physical accomplishments

(126) Shakespeare: "As You Like It", Act i, sc.11.

(127) Quoted in A.Nichol, op.cit., pp.83/4, probably from Decker.

"Sturdy" continued to carry a predominant flavour of disapproval about it until the nineteenth century. (O.E.D.)

(128) Christopher Marlowe: "Tamburlaine the Great" Act II, sc.i.

are often passed by without any stress on the muscular exertions they demanded. For all that he swam the Hellespont, Marlowe's Leander does not impress with masculinity in any hard physical sense:

"His body was as straight as Circe's wand;
Jove might have sipped out nectar from his hand.
Even as delicious meat is to the taste,
So was his neck in touching, and surpassed
The white of Pelops' shoulder ..."

There is sensuousness in plenty in Marlowe's poem, but it is the amorous exercise which preoccupies, with scant indication of the sheer force involved in Leander's swim. Indeed, "some swore he was a maid in man's attire." (129) Shakespeare does occasionally give glimpses of the military virtues of physical strength, whether it appears suffused in the heroics of royalism and nationalism, as in Henry V's call to "stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood", or as the symptom of a wider strength of character, as when Cassius describes his rescue of Caesar from the Tiber after a challenge to race across the river when it was in flood:

"The torrent roar'd, and we did buffet it
With lusty sinews, throwing it aside
And stemming it with hearts of controversy;
But ere we could arrive the point proposed,
Caesar cried, "Help me, Cassius, or I sink!"
I, as Aeneas our great ancestor
Did from the flames of Troy upon his shoulder
The old Anchises bear, so from the waves of Tiber
Did I the tired Caesar" (130)

This physical failing of Caesar's, argues Cassius, is part of a wider weakness of character, just as, of course, his own physical strength

(129) Christopher Marlowe: "Hero and Leander", 1st sestiad.

(130) Shakespeare: "Julius Caesar", Act 1, sc.ii

reflected greater moral virtues. It is a simple psycho-physical parallelism which accords with the Renaissance concept of the indivisibility of the personality, and of which Caesar himself provides another example in the same play, when he suspects the motives of men with lean and hungry looks and prefers about him "men that are fat, Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep o' nights." (131)

To the Elizabethan mind, as expressed in its literature, the human body remained still what it had been for the medievalist, a humbler means to higher ends. The nobler objectives of physical action, the wholly secondary nature of physical strength of itself, were taken for granted and the physical made its emergence only when these exalted ends were either absent or had been denied. Yet the body and its play, its pursuits and its power, were, within this framework of a greater scheme, completely acceptable, seldom giving rise either to a sense of shame or to any morbid preoccupation with the body's transience. A poem like Drayton's sonnet "Stay, speedy Time" might stress that beauty was short-lived but it was essentially an extolling of his love's attractions, not a gloomy reminder of mortality. Sir Walter Raleigh's "Answer to Marlowe", with its rebuttal of the pastoral invitation of the Passionate Shepherd to "come live with me and be my love" might protest that all things age ("But could youth last and love still breed....") yet he is still, in oblique fashion, writing within the convention that he is denying. Significantly, perhaps, Raleigh's poem first appeared in the

(131) *ibid.*, Act I, sc.ii

anthology, "England's Helicon" in the year 1600. The Elizabethan sun still shone brightly, indeed, and warmed men's limbs in all their worthy exercise, but it was setting slowly, even if the subjects of Gloriana had, as yet, hardly felt the lessening power of its beams.

The complex network of traditions, prejudice, belief, reason and disposition that lies at the spring of human actions does not suddenly appear as a "deus ex machina" at a point convenient for the would-be historian of ideas. Where, particularly, the attitudes are themselves as many-sided as those which are the subject of this research, it becomes a long and possibly tedious operation to attempt to disentangle all the strands of opinion that were operating at the beginning of a given period.

Elizabethan attitudes towards exercise and physical education had developed, with an apparent healthiness, out of Renaissance inspiration and native exuberance. The seventeenth century was inheriting views on man's physical being and the pursuit of physical exercise which, while they had some cohesion, were both intricate and, at least in the backward view, had within them the prospect of disintegration. A courtly tradition of behaviour, which involved a unified concept of personality and which lay behind the actual pursuits of the gentry, even where it did not exactly correspond with them; a popular and little recorded tradition of communal games-playing that involved no realised attitudes but an amalgam of motives both ancient and immediate - these were the two polarities of Elizabethan action and opinion on physical

pursuits. Any commentator of 1600 could have been just as excused for seeing them as likely to pull farther apart from one another as he could for forecasting that they were drawing ever closer together. On the one hand, the gentry were increasingly developing the pursuits which demanded wealth and leisure and so producing a growing area of games playing to which popular access was denied; on the other hand, there were hints of effort by the populace to emulate the play of their betters and instances of noble participation in the games of the vulgar. There were, too, wider imponderables which impinged on these attitudes and on which only the boldest would have risked making pronouncements. The old Queen's death might well signal a collapse of the unity that had crystallised around the monarchy, unless a new Scots dynasty could establish a peaceful succession, catch the English tune, and play it as effectively as an old Welsh one had done. The Renaissance ideals of an all-round humanism appeared still to be universally accepted and it would probably have appeared reasonable to suppose that the most telling of Puritan attacks were over. Might not new material inventions, new acquisitions of knowledge or new leaps of the creative imagination reveal new insights into the functioning, status and exercise of the human body? There was, in 1600, little indication that any of these would happen, but the answers that would be given eventually to all these speculations would have a decisive influence on the subsequent development of English attitudes towards physical exercise and physical education.

Chapter II

EXERCISE, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL ATTITUDES: 1600-1650.

"Of these things the practices are known, but the philosophy that concerneth them is not much enquired; the rather, I think, because they are supposed to be obtained, either by aptness of nature, which cannot be taught, or only by continual custom, which is soon prescribed; which though it be not true, yet I forbear to note any deficiencies: for the Olympian games are down long since, and not the mediocrity of these things is for use; as for the excellency of them it serveth for the most part but for mercenary ostentation."

(Francis Bacon, on Athletics, from "The Advancement of Learning" (1605), 1915 edition, p.117)

"What's this flesh? a little crudded milk, fantastical puff-paste. Our bodies are weaker than those paper-prisons boys use to keep flies in; more contemptible, since ours is to preserve earth-worms. Didst thou ever see a lark in a cage? Such is the soul in the body: this world is like her little turf of grass, and the heaven o'er our heads like her looking-glass, only gives us a miserable knowledge of the small compass of our prison."

(John Webster: "The Duchess of Malfi", Act IV, sc.ii)

Although the advent of the Stuarts brought a new political and religious mood to the country, the broader social movements and the prevailing social attitudes of the first half of the seventeenth

century show an essential continuity from those of the previous reign.

Literary historians usually extend their "Elizabethan" period over at least the first two decades of James I's reign and the historian of ideas finds himself invited to do the same. Men continued to view their physical activity from assumptions which were not readily influenced by the change from one dynasty to another. Change came, but it did not come suddenly, with a clean break from the past. This was so at both the social levels which were discussed in the previous chapter. The courtly tradition remained alive: distinction and style were still the objectives of the physical pursuits of the gentleman and, so long as it continued to rest upon an elevated concept of social role-playing, the idea of the courtier retained much of its integrity. It tended, however, to become deliberately conservative and nostalgic and, as it relied more and more upon its past, to lose its present vitality.

In humbler circles, the games of the people continued to punctuate the year on the traditional feast days, although much of the old popular jollification began to seem inappropriate in new economic circumstances and in the face of growing sectarian criticism. Some lamented the apparent decline of the old rural sports, but others deplored the fact that they persisted at all. Deliberate projects were set up for their revival, and so the rural sports came to provide one of the debating grounds in that grand examination of religious social and political issues which characterised the first half of the seventeenth

century. This comprehensive national debate turned also to educational theorising and, with play such a dominant contemporary issue, it might be reasonable to expect that educational thinkers would be giving some consideration to their pupils' physical activities.

The rearguard action of the Courtly Tradition, the interplay of political action and leisure pursuits, and the attitudes towards physical education in early Stuart educational thinking, are the themes around which this chapter will be developed. In all of them will be found the evidence of a gradual change of mood. Some of the old confidence ebbs away and a certain disillusion creeps into the national temper.

The noble flourish and gesture lost something of its Elizabethan conviction, and the scale of national life was reduced. The new king's peace with Spain may well have been, on his favourable victor's terms, of material political advantage, but the end of the Spanish war removed one of the main unifying elements in English patriotism, just as the death of the Queen had removed the other. The decline of the navy, the execution of Raleigh and the abortive adventure against the French Huguenots at the beginning of Charles I's reign were all signs of a dilution of the Elizabethan spirit. When the reinstatement of the fleet began in the last decade before the Civil War, it came too feebly and too late to restore national enthusiasms to their former exuberance.

Yet if public policy lost some of its swashbuckling flavour, some of its smack of noble knights performing doughty deeds of chivalry, this

did not imply any wholesale enervation of English life. A vigorous enterprise continued to promote industry, commerce and agriculture; in a prosperous and expanding economy small businesses flourished and the keenness for land ownership increased. It was largely an unsatisfied urge for a fuller share in the age's rising standards that took some Englishmen across the Atlantic to found new settlements. ^{They were} prepared to show the greatest initiative and endurance in the hope of eventual riches.

Energy did not, however, expend itself wholly in overt action. With a sharpening of Puritan social attitudes, more and more heat went into discussions on the appropriate pursuit of these activities. The observances of religion, the conduct of business and the permissibility of sports and games were all being brought under the closest scrutiny, with results that were to have a lasting influence on English life. Here, in particular, came the first widespread examination of the premises on which leisure activities were to be enjoyed. This examination, at once logical, theological and emotional, was to define much of the later opinion on exercise and physical education. So permanently significant was this Puritan discussion of sports and games that it will be dealt with separately in a later chapter.

It may well be objected that, in an age when religion was of all-pervasive importance, the social forces cannot be meaningfully separated from the great theological debate that was taking place. As far as they affected physical education, however, the social arguments are

generally distinguishable (if not wholly separable) from the religious, as well as being usually less durable in their consequences. The spiritual movement, although it reached the immediate zenith of its practical influence in the middle of the seventeenth century, continued to exert its distinctive pressures on English attitudes towards sport for long beyond this period and so is usefully, in the present context, discussed as a separate entity.

Puritanism apart, however, there remains the problem of supplying a suitable framework of general historical interpretation within which to discuss the earlier seventeenth century's concepts of exercise and bodily training. The social forces at work in this period have attracted the particular attentions of some of the most notable of twentieth century historians, Tawney, Trevor Roper, C.V. Wedgwood and Christopher Hill among them. In face of the richness and diversity of specialist historical enquiry, the analysis of social movements offered here is both sketchy and tentative, and meant to serve primarily as the context within which to discuss those specialised facets of opinion which are the subject of this research. The area covered by "social attitudes" must be wide, and such attitudes are not only often imprecise in their nature, but are also often only patchily recorded. Hence, some of the inclusions and omissions within this chapter, as well as some of its social judgements, are inevitably open to question. At the same time, there is a strong prima facie case for assuming that there is some social conditioning of physical activity. Physical activities usually demand a

degree of social participation and it is unlikely that the mode of social relationships in recreational activities will be wholly isolated from the social behaviour found in other contexts. It follows that an attempt must be made, however unpromising the prospect, to unravel the various social strands which went into early Stuart attitudes towards the exercise and recreation of the body.

(1) The Fading of the Courtly Tradition

The focus of the Elizabethan courtly tradition had been on the court itself, where the personality of the Queen had decided the accepted modes and manners. When James VI of Scotland became James I of England, he came as a foreigner whose relationships with his new subjects, whether in court or country, were bound to be very different from Elizabeth's. They could not help seeing him as an ungainly pedant with a barbarous accent, while even the prospect of his new kingdom's wealth and his escape from the strict bonds of the presbyters could not entirely offset James' suspicions of the nation which had imprisoned, arraigned and executed his mother. He certainly felt that his new crown entitled him to a more lavish existence than his old had allowed. This view was not discouraged by the considerable Scottish retinue which accompanied him or by the English courtiers, such as the Cecils and Howards, who secured his favours. So far were the purse-strings loosened that the expenses of

the royal household were, within a few years, twice what they had been under Elizabeth, who had managed to combine her outstandingly impressive public image with an inherent parsimony in government.

James had an elevated concept of monarchy. Kings were kings by Divine dispensation and their rights were inborn. The court was to be not only the source of power, but also a fountain of wisdom and knowledge, for James saw himself as the heir to the Renaissance tradition of government, combining the political acuteness of Machiavelli's Prince with the moral discernment of Elyot's Governor. In him, the golden visions of Italy vied with the sterner edicts of Geneva; he saw his learning and wisdom going hand in hand with physical strength and sporting prowess. As far as he appreciated it, James sought to promote the cult of the courtier; if he failed, it was a failure of understanding, not of intention, a failure which stemmed, at least in part, from the distortions in his own picture of himself. When James looked in his mirror, he saw, not the gawky, clumsy figure of a man already awkwardly into middle age, but the noble athlete and sportsman, the envy of the youth of his time. Nor was this the only tarnishing of the Renaissance image: the king was always an admirer of the young and lithesome physique, for reasons which were not, perhaps, always exclusively athletic. As Godfrey Davies delicately put it:

"he felt a strange infatuation for favourites chosen for their youth, graceful figures, and willingness to flatter their master. His habit of fondling them, and especially Buckingham, in public gave rise to baser intimacies in private, but these are not proved." (1)

(1) Godfrey Davies: "The Early Stuarts 1603-1660" (2nd edition, Oxford, 1959), p.2

James was disposed, therefore, from whatever complexities of motive, to interest himself in sports and physical activities. Some of this concern went into directing the games and sports of his humbler subjects; (2) but he also played the conventional part of the Renaissance courtly educator, in prescribing an upbringing for a prince. This was for the benefit of his son, Henry, whose great promise (though such is often discovered in princes who die young) was cut short by his death in 1612. (3)

In "Basilicon Doron", (4) among a miscellany of guidance on public and private behaviour and scathing attacks on Puritan doctrines, James found time to discourse on the sports becoming a prince. Football, as might be expected, was debarred to the nobly born as "meeter for laming than making able," but he allowed his son a wide range of activities, so long as all of them were used in moderation. "Running, leaping, wrestling, fencing, dancing, and playing at the catch, or tennis, bowls, archery. pall-mall and riding" were all approved, as were even, in bad weather, such indoor games as cards, backgammon, dice, chess and billiards. The motives for the royal exercise were to be moral, in the "banishing of idleness, the mother of all vice," and physical, in

(2) See below, pp.158 et seq.

(3) An anecdote in the Harleian MSS indicates that the Prince was, at least, a games player and something of a wit. When playing golf on one occasion, he was about to drive off when he was warned that his tutor was standing in the way and that he might hit him, "wherewith the Prince, drawing back his hand, said: "'Had I done so I had but paid my debts.'" (Sir Guy Campbell: "The Early History of British Golf", in B.Darwin et alia: "A History of Golf in Britain (1952), p.50)

(4) Published 1599. See C.H.McIlwain (ed): "The Political Works of James I" (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1928)

ensuring the fitness of the body. Of the remoter ends of harmony and grace there was no mention. (5)

James did, however, accompany his recommendations with a warning, which comes particularly inappropriately from his pen, against "making your sporters your counsellors." The self-blindness of such advice, from one who allowed favourites into the highest offices of state, was symptomatic of James' incapacity to match courtly principle with what he permitted, and even encouraged, in actual practice. The coarseness and corruption which were allowed to prevail in his court did a measure of injury to the ideals of the courtly tradition which the shallow academic gesture of "Basilicon Doron" could do little to repair. Already, in the final decade of the old century, a certain wasting in the cult of the courtier had been perceptible, an absence of any rejuvenation to its theory and even some falling away of standards at the court itself. With the new reign the change in the tone of the court was dramatic, the king's extravagance producing not rich pageantry, but wholesale speculation. If Elizabeth's court had not been noted for ascetic restraint, its moral lapses had always been veiled by a certain outward dignity and decorum which contrasted starkly with the roughness, licence and buffoonery that now ruled. The stately, highly organised "progresses" of Elizabeth gave way, characteristically, to hurriedly-arranged hunting expeditions; and, notwithstanding the book learning of

(5) L.A.Govett: "The King's Book of Sports: A History of the Declarations of King James I and King Charles I as to the Use of Lawful Sports on Sundays, with A reprint of the Declarations and a Description of the Sports then popular." (1890) pp. 33/4. See also N.Wymer: "Sport in England: A History of Two Thousand Years of Games and Pastimes" (1949) pp. 80/81.

the king, the level of the court's cultural aspirations fell drastically. Raleigh, the courtier-adventurer-poet, soon languished in the Tower, a sad left-over from another age, and courtiers became more disposed to turn out a new scheme for a monopoly than to compose a sonnet. It was hardly a climate in which elevated concepts of gentlemanly behaviour could be expected to flourish.

The reign of James I lasted only for the first half of the period covered by this chapter, and Charles I was dissimilar enough in character from his father to secure a considerable reform in court life. He brought to his father's stubbornness an infinitely greater grace; a sense of decorum and display was restored to the royal household and the arts, painting in particular, were once more patronised. By this time, however, the pristine splendours were past recall. The temper of the country had hardened so far as to make sure that a king who settled for non-parliamentary government, as Charles eventually felt himself forced to do, would never have the means to run a lavish and impressive court. Even had Charles been blessed with that feeling for public relations which Elizabeth so conspicuously possessed, he could hardly have revived the Renaissance inspiration which had prompted the life of her court. When the court did come into its own again, after the interregnum, it did so as a far different institution from what it had been under Elizabeth.

The courtly tradition was considerably dependent upon current courtly practice, yet it was also essentially a cultural and intellectual

movement. A complex web of relationships had held the courtly tradition in harmony not only with Elizabethan courtly practice, but also with the general mental and aesthetic mood of the time. The courtly and cultural modes had interlocked, sharing as they did the same intellectual heritage, with the written culture supporting the principles of the courtly ideal. As far as physical activity was concerned, Elizabethan literature had generally given less precise status to man's physical nature than the contemporary courtly tradition, but there had been a close identity in tone. It was a correspondence which, in spite of differences of detail, recognised their common Renaissance ancestry. Much of this harmony between court and literature was lost in the new reign. Elizabeth had been given an important personal role in the cultural ideology of her day, as has been shown. Neither in person nor in character was James fitted to play such a part and, one Scots tragedy by Shakespeare notwithstanding, there never arose the same sympathy between the royal household and literary expression as there had been under his predecessor.

The Elizabethan frame of order slowly disintegrated. Courtly practice fell away from courtly theory; the theory itself tended to lose its impetus. Writers still accepted the Renaissance view of man, but less firmly than in the past.

In the literature of the new century the humanist accounts of man's physical nature continued to be voiced: that the body was noble, worthwhile enough of its own account, but only achieving its fullest



realisation in the pursuit of idealised ends which lay beyond the physical. The voices, however, tended to grow weaker, the ideals more blurred and the tones less confident. Even where the body's worth and the enjoyment of its powers were still accepted, there was a growing tendency for the humanist unity to fall apart, for the body to receive separate consideration from the rest of man's personality. There was certainly more frequent specific reference to the human body than there had been in the writing of the recent past, although hardly in terms which would give it a high place in public esteem or in systems of education. The body had maintained a high place in the culture of humanism simply because it was seldom differentiated; as part of the whole man, it shared in the prestige of man's total humanity. While its inferiority to the soul was accepted, at least in so far as any separation between the two was considered feasible, there was no sense of its abasement in repute or of its neglect in practice, so close was the unity. To have ignored the body would have been to ignore also the soul. Now there were signs that this Renaissance wholeness was disintegrating.

Love lyrics, religious verse and, most of all, dramatic poetry all begin to show indications of a new dualist emphasis in their treatment of the mind and body. As a poetic convention, this division had shown itself in earlier writing, but it now begins to harden into something beyond a convenience of imagery. In love poems, for instance, there develops an increasingly proprietary tone in the male's attitude towards

the female. A changed estimate of womanhood, recognisable from the later years of Elizabeth's reign, did, as will be seen, influence the provisions made for female education. It is conspicuous in poems such as Carew's "Ingrateful Beauty threatened", which sees the mistress as the poet's own creation, with a status not far removed from that of a chattel or a plaything:

"That killing power is none of thine;
I gave it to thy voice and eyes;
Thy sweets, thy graces, all are mine;
Thou art my star, shin'st in my skies"

The present significance of this possessiveness lies in its denial of completeness to women: their physical nature may be praised and prized, but other sides of their personality are ignored or subdued. From the isolation of the physical to its denigration is an easy step, although not one taken by the gentler lyricist like Carew and Herrick. John Donne's love poems, on the other hand, may have an apparently wholehearted acceptance of the physical world, yet their frequent and open sexuality involves, in its very concentration on the physical, some disparagement of the humanist unity. Even the celebration of physical sex in his bedtime address to his lady in the 19th Elegy admits, at its very climax, the inadequacy of the world of the flesh:

"Full nakedness! All joys are due to thee,
As souls unbodied, bodies uncloth'd must be,
To taste whole joys." (6)

This "unbodying" of souls, as the only means to true perfection, comes

(6) John Donne: "Poems" (ed. H.l'A.Fausset, 1931) p.88

out even more specifically in Donne's theological poetry. "The Progress of the Soul", for instance, has the following contrast between physical and spiritual being:

"Think further on thy self, my soul, and think
How thou at first was made but in a sink;
Think that it argued some infirmity,
That those two souls, which then thou founds't in me, ...
...Think but how poor thou wast, how obnoxious;
Whom a small lump of flesh could poison thus.
This curded milk, this poor unlittered whelp
My body" (7)

That a man such as Donne, no fugitive from the physical world and its pleasures, came to stress so firmly the essentially transient nature of the body, to see it again, like the medievalist, as the inadequate and sinful container of the soul, is indicative of a wider shift in opinion and of a deeper disillusionment with the Renaissance ideal.

In Jacobean drama this disillusionment became increasingly evident. The body became a thing of disgust, "a little crudded milk, fantastical puff-paste", (8) and the starkness of the skull was seen ever more clearly beneath the beauties of a pretty face: "Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come." (9) Certainly, in a mellower mood, Shakespeare could still produce one of the most beautiful images of physical movement in the language, enlarging it, at the same time, beyond a purely bodily reference,

(7) *ibid.*, p.197

(8) John Webster: "The Duchess of Malfi", Act IV, sc.ii.

(9) Shakespeare: "Hamlet", Act V, sc.i.

"when you do dance, I wish you
 A wave of the sea, that you might ever do
 Nothing but that; move still, still so,
 And own no other function..." (10)

There could be the occasional full acceptance of man's unity, mind, body and spirit working together towards the fullest realisation of the human potential, but more often the picture of man presented by Jacobean drama is one of physical vanity and frailty against a far from benevolent universe. Passions are violent, the courts in which the tragedies take place are cynical and corrupt, while the stage runs with blood and reeks of vengeance.

It would be easy to attribute the ready reference of contemporary authors to physical ills (to "boils", "cankers", "abscesses" and the like) to the increasing severity, in the early seventeenth century, of the recurring outbreaks of the plague. The first outbreak prevented the inhabitants of the City from entering Westminster to see James' coronation in 1603 and a later visitation caused Charles' 1625 parliament to repair to Oxford to avoid its ravages. While these outbreaks did doubtless focus men's attention most closely on the perilousness of the human condition, they were far from being the only prompters of the new attitude of doubt towards the body. "The purple whip of vengeance", as Dekker called the pestilence, was often seen as an outward sign of the inward decay of society, a society in which preachers were making men ever more conscious of sin, where once-honest exercises of the body

(10)Shakespeare: "The Winter's Tale", Act IV, sc.iv.

were coming in for scornful rebuke and where the courts of kings, both on stage and off, were giving continual evidence of corruption and decline.

In face of the specific falling away from the traditional values and standards in the court itself and the general and growing air of disillusionment over man's essential nature, it would be surprising to find the courtly tradition flourishing in the same fulness that it enjoyed in Elizabethan times. Certainly the tradition was stagnating, although it did maintain itself sufficiently both for Milton to resurrect it in its full nobility, and also for Francis Osborn to render ridiculous its cheaper pretensions.

The chronological starting point for the courtly writing of the seventeenth century is Lodowick Bryskett's "A Discourse of Civil Life" (1606), although it does, in fact, lie outside the main stream of gentlemanly advice. Not only is it one of the few educational works to reflect the musical resurgence of Elizabethan and Jacobean England, but it also advocates that this musical element should be combined with the physical in the education of the all-round citizen. Such a combination would, Bryskett claimed, produce modesty, temperance and valour. His arguments would be completely familiar to readers of Plato's "Republic": bodily exercise alone will produce fierceness and coarseness; music alone (and Bryskett had a narrower concept of "music" than had Plato) will produce effeminacy and softness; but together they will produce a soundly balanced character, at once both courageous and sensitive.

This resurrection of the Hellenic ideal found few effective echoes in the literature of the time although there are occasional Platonic echoes in current views on mind-body relationships, such as those expressed by Giovanni in Ford's "Tis Pity she's a Whore":

"the frame
And composition of the mind doth follow
The frame and composition of the body.
So, where the body's furniture is beauty,
The mind's must needs be virtue...." (11)

Certainly the masque brought poetry, music and the dance together into a conventional courtly entertainment that was particularly popular in this period. The making of music, however, and particularly the playing of an instrument, was soon to suffer a considerable loss of status, and to become a professional pursuit, unbefitting the active attentions of a gentleman. In any event, the conditions of the day hardly allowed for the revitalising of the courtly tradition that any thorough-going development of Bryskett's ideas would have involved, nor had Bryskett himself the capacity to supply the detail of training that would have been needed. (12)

More in line with the continuous development of the courtly tradition from its late Elizabethan position was James Cleland's "The Institution of a Young Nobleman" (published in the first decade of the century and reprinted in both 1611 and 1612). Even so, Cleland has moved well away from the scholarly position of Ascham, Mulcaster and

(11) John Ford: " 'Tis Pity She's a Whore", Act II, sc.v.

(12) Lodovick Bryskett: "A Discourse of Civill Life" (1606). See also, L.E.Pearson, op.cit., p.169.

the Elizabethans. Far from idealising learning as one of the essential qualities of the gentleman, he reacted thoroughly against any academic study that was not integrated fully with experience of the world. So critical was he of "all this book learning which cannot be put to use" that he considered the time and money it demanded could be better spent on the tennis court. (13) Cleland was mirroring that rejection of bookishness which had already made itself felt on the Continent in the opinions of Montaigne (1533-1592) who had protested against any acquisition in knowledge that went unaccompanied by gains in judgement or wisdom. The rejection of book learning was to be a frequent seventeenth century theme, often being voiced by men like Hobbes who held that so many of the books were hopelessly false in their premises and arguments. Cleland had no such grand motives; he merely had doubts about its general utility, doubts which may well have been encouraged by the presence in the English court of a pedagogue whose learning had produced just such practical unwisdom. His training scheme for the young nobleman does imply, however, an acceptance of the current situation, without undue social criticism. Cleland scarcely went as far as Montaigne in calling for a complete integration of mental and bodily training. He contented himself, in his physical education, with moderate exercise in the accepted pursuits of the English courtier. Swordplay was forbidden, (since where there were fencing skills there

(13) James Cleland: "The Institution of a Young Nobleman" (ed. M.Molyneux, New York, 1948) Book II, p.11

was inevitably duelling) but the rest of his programme was conventional, involving riding, archery, wrestling, hunting, tennis and dancing. (14)

It was left to Henry Peacham, whose widely read "Compleat Gentleman" was first published in 1622, to make the fullest effort at bringing the courtly tradition into correspondence with the political realities of the new dynasty. In the last years of the old century Peacham had been Master of the Free School at Wymondham, Norfolk, and then had moved into more elevated society as tutor to the Howards and other noble families. Eventually he became a great art collector, as well as achieving literary fame, and so he was, by experience, well fitted to produce what his Edwardian editor described as this "record of the manners, education, and way of thinking of the better sort of Cavalier gentry before the Civil Wars." (15) Peacham himself was less modest; his sub-title claimed that the book would be invaluable for the aspiring young reader,

"Fashioning him absolute in the most necessary & commendable Qualities concerning Mind or Body that may be required in a Noble Gentleman." (16)

Peacham's views on society in general were those of the thorough traditionalist. Nobility was, for him, like kingship for James I, a matter of birth and blood. In fact, Peacham comes near to proclaiming a 'divine right' of aristocracy: "Nobility is the Honour of blood in a

(14) *ibid.*, Book V, p.27

(15) "Peacham's Compleat Gentleman 1634" (ed. G.S.Gordon, 1906), Introduction, p.iii. This is a reprint of the 2nd and enlarged edition of the work.

(16) *ibid.*, title page, not numbered.

race or Lineage", it is "inherent and natural". Those who labour for their livelihood "have no share at all in Nobility or Gentry", because their "bodies are spent with labour and travail". There was a loophole, however, (essential for a patriot in a reign when all titles were for sale!) for the ennoblement of those of low birth who showed "true Fortitude and greatness of Spirit." (17) This view of the innate nature of nobility, qualified by the possibility of both gaining it by effort or losing it by neglect, was very much in harmony with the social policy of the first two Stuarts which envisaged a largely static society, ruled benevolently by an aristocracy based on inherited powers, privileges and duties.

Peacham's account of human nature and human society is simple and uncomplicated. He did not speculate far into the aims of life or the principles of morality, but relied almost wholly on authority of one sort or another as the justification for all thought and action. Political morality depended upon obedience to the God-given authority of the monarch, while social justice lay in the existing hierarchical structure of society. The particular requirements of both study and exercise are again, largely a question of authority; they were decided by the verdicts of the classical writers or, as became a rather old-fashioned grandson of

(17) *ibid.*, pp.3-14. Peacham was not unduly reactionary as a social theorist, by the standard of his times; cf. Sir Thomas Smith: "The Commonwealth of England" (1583): "The fourth class amongst us.....have no voice nor authority in our commonwealth, and no account is made of them, but only to be ruled." (ed. Alston, 1906, Bk.I, ch.24)

the Renaissance, by the previous practice of princes.

Yet, in spite of the conservative unoriginality of his general outlook on the world and the shackles of scholasticism that fetter his modes of thought, Peacham does make some valid and realistic proposals at the psychological level, proposals which foretold a new sympathy with children of the sort which was to mark the Comenian movement. He shows, for instance, a much closer knowledge of childhood than Bacon, with whom he presents an interesting contrast; the one stiff in generalised ideas, but sometimes enlightened in his detailed educational precepts; the other a brilliantly foresighted thinker on the plane of abstract speculation, but much less prescient in the application of his ideas to the actual processes of child learning. Peacham had, of course, the advantage of his own teaching experience and realised the value of good relationships between tutor and pupil. He could see games as presenting one of the easiest routes to the child's heart, which led him to give physical education a new function. It was to be the means of establishing the most effective pupil-teacher relationship:

"a discrete Master with as much or more ease, both to himself and his Scholar, (may) teach him to play at Tennis, or shoot at Rovers in the field and profit him more in one month beside his encouragement, than in half a year with his strict and severe usage." (18)

An understanding of the child's nature and his needs characterises most of Peacham's practical advice, in which he regularly requires that schoolmasters should be patient and gentle in their methods. He

(18) *ibid.*, pp.24/5. "Rovers" were targets selected at random in the open country, as distinct from shooting at the butts. (O.E.D.)

scorned one particular pedagogue who beat his boys on cold mornings "to get himself a heat" (19) and urged that children should be shamed with their faults rather than chastised for them. (20)

Given this consideration for children and the heavily social ends of his educational proposals, Peacham's motives for physical education inevitably derive from a variety of sources. Games were justified first of all at this level of psychological utility, in that children enjoyed them and that their enjoyment resulted in more effective academic learning. He required a disciplined regime, but approved the practice of the Low Countries in dismissing students from the classroom after a lecture for an hour's recreation before they returned to repeat what they had learned. (21) Such a proposal is especially notable in face of the overburdened time-table to which he must have become accustomed as an Elizabethan Grammar School master, although his private tutorships had doubtless shown him the advantages of escaping from such a strait-jacket.

Health was an admitted object of exercise and necessary for the fullest employment of the mind. Health alone could be a sufficient motive for some exercises, such as "leaping" (except "upon a full stomach or to bedward" (22)) and archery. The latter wins the same fulsome medical report that it had from Elyot, in a passage which almost

(19) *ibid.*, p.27

(20) *ibid.*, p.24

(21) *ibid.*, p.26

(22) at which time, "at no wise to be exercised". (*ibid.*, p.217)

paraphrases "The Governour":

"neither do I know any other comparable unto it for stirring every part of the body: for it openeth the breast and pipes, exerciseth the arms and feet, with less violence than running, leaping, &c." (23)

Elyot's authority apart, this support of archery on the grounds of fitness was probably Peacham's substitute for the military motive, which could hardly appear to have any validity left, yet which, out of loyal necessity, he felt he had to replace.

Military factors were certainly still important, however, and something beyond an ordinary physical fitness was required for Peacham's gentleman to harden him for the battlefield. Swimming won approval for its military usefulness (from the example of Horatius), (24) while hawking and hunting promised useful campaigning experience. In chasing beasts, men rehearsed military manoeuvres. (25) Rigorous measures were justifiable to secure the toughness demanded by warfare; he approved the Spartan custom of sending children away at fourteen to endure poverty and hardship. (26) His kindly concern for the welfare of his charges, however, did, in the end, bar him from any wholesale recommendation of Spartan practices as hazarding health by unnecessary exposure and dangerous sports. Yet he remained a firm enemy of physical sloth and castigated "the effiminacy of the most, that burn out day and night in their beds, and by the fire side". He gave a

(23) *ibid.*, p.217

(24) *ibid.*, p.216

(25) *ibid.*, p.218

(26) *ibid.*, pp.30/31

final nod of approval to "The old Lord Grey", former Deputy of Ireland, who would rouse his children before first light to take them off hunting "in frost, snow, rain and what weather so-ever befell" and return them, cold and wet, to a primitive breakfast, all to harden them for the wars. (27)

The military aspect of Peacham's physical training is part and parcel of his wider social concerns: it is the training of the officer that he has in mind, not that of the common soldier, and so "throwing and wrestling" were discouraged as "exercises not so well beseeeming Nobility, but rather soldiers in a Camp, or a Prince's guard." (28) This sense of what was proper for "the better sort" of gentry was always near the centre of Peacham's considerations. He works from the traditional catalogue of courtly physical activities and seeks his justification in classical approval and royal example. A social caution limits him to the well-established pursuits of horsemanship, running and vaulting, swimming, archery, hunting and hawking. It was a thoroughly conservative programme and granted scant recognition to any changes in habits of exercise since the courtly tradition's heyday.

Peacham's "Compleat Gentleman" represents the virtual ending in England of the direct line of that tradition of courtly education which sprang out of the Italian Renaissance. In Peacham himself the original philosophical drive behind the concepts of courtesy has virtually

(27) *ibid.*, p.219

(28) *ibid.*, p.215

disappeared; only the forms of gentlemanly conduct remain, the principles of human action and social ordering which once informed the ideal being reduced to an almost sterile acceptance of the current establishment in all its aspects. His kinship with the traditions of the past ensured Peacham's popularity among both the conservative minded and the socially aspiring. The "Compleat Gentleman" aroused Puritan suspicion and its suppression was threatened during the interregnum, but it remained widely read for much of the century. It was reprinted in 1626 and 1627, the second (enlarged) edition appeared in 1634 and a third edition was published in 1661, in the resurgence of traditionalist zeal after the Restoration.

Many of the details of the courtly tradition of exercise and some of the spirit have, of course, reappeared since this period. The brightest flowering of the tradition was, indeed, to come a generation after Peacham in John Milton's "Tractate of Education". That "curious pamphlet", as it has been called, ⁽²⁹⁾ belongs alike to the general social movements and political circumstances of its time, to the broad Renaissance traditions of classical humanism, to English Puritanism and finally (if largely in a negative sense) to the movement for educational reform which was occupying many minds in the mid-years of the century. It is within this last context, in which the immediate prompting for Milton's pamphlet originated, that the "Tractate's" proposals for physical education will be examined below,

(29) S.J.Curtis and M.E.A.Boultwood: "A Short History of Educational Ideas" (1950), p.209

but his presence here serves as a reminder that the Renaissance tradition was still not wholly lost and that it could be made to serve the forces of change, as well as the forces of conservatism.

In the second half of the seventeenth century the courtly tradition of exercise was to become a subject for cynical scorn from Francis Osborn, but to find respectable echoes in, for instance, Bishop Burnett and John Locke. In the next century, its tendency to mannerism was to be taken up and pushed to radical extremes by courtly educators of a new breed, the fourth Earl of Chesterfield at their head. Nor did its influence end here, for the courtly mode of exercise, and the attitudes which it involved, have left some permanent traces on English physical activities and physical education.

Essential to the exercise of the courtier was the sense of style in his games playing; victory was sweet, but graceful defeat was preferable to a fashionless triumph. It would be too much to ascribe phrases such as "a good loser", "the game's what matters, not the result", and the aesthetic attitudes which give us "a glorious cover drive" and even "a beautiful left jab" wholly to the courtly tradition; they are modified and conditioned by many later overloadings, especially from the games playing ethos of later nineteenth and twentieth century public schools. Yet some of their inspiration lies in this Renaissance style of exercise, which flourished for the formative hundred years or more when games and sporting activities were, for almost the first time, being subjected to a deliberate and

conscious intellectual scrutiny. Out of this conscious evaluation, and as a concomitant of the courtly demand for formal style, developed a respect for rules within which play could achieve a desirable regularity. Rules developed in complexity and formality, (as exemplified by Elizabeth's own revision of the rules of tourneys and Mulcaster's attempt to achieve genteel status for football by providing it with regulations) and they often demanded an arbiter or referee, whose word had to be final if the game were to be playable in the stylistic fashion that was required. "Playing the game" and "accepting that the umpire's decision is final" are, of course, not only variably conditioned by the immediate conventions of a particular game, but are also partly the consequences of later social pressures on games playing, especially again in the public school situation. At the same time, the roots of this traditional acceptance of an arbiter, of acceptance of regulation, can be found in this first appearance of sophisticated "modern" sport. To the Renaissance courtly tradition, can thus be attributed the origins of both the moral and character-building claims that have been frequently made for sports and games in later days.

The tradition also had considerable social and economic significance, particularly in its dependence upon the existence of a leisure class. It is self-evident that the spread of complex, skilled sports over the centuries has depended upon the growth of leisure to allow for the practising of the skills involved. Since, also, money

was needed for the impedimenta of most sophisticated games, it followed that many sporting activities undoubtedly began in a socially exclusive milieu. To ascribe all sporting activity to aristocratic promptings, as Thorstein Veblen did in his "Theory of the Leisure Class", is to ignore the folk origin of much sporting activity, some of which (such as cricket) was later elevated to the purple and some of which has never become accepted as a proper pursuit in the upper reaches of the establishment (such as stoolball). None the less, Veblen's ruthless and unsympathetic analysis of the process by which the ruling aristocratic class developed what may be called the sporting activities of conspicuous leisure has some historical evidence to support it. He argued that the aristocratic class, identifiable in the terms of this thesis with the courtier, was motivated by a wish for "exploit", to assert its superiority. The courtly class would certainly have accepted that it was superior, but would have resisted the imputation of a deliberate desire to display this superiority. Although the assumption may have been that this excellence would emerge and not have to be contrived, the existence of so much written guidance on the performance of the courtly activities is in itself evidence of a deliberate seeking after successful and impressive accomplishment. To this extent Veblen is justified. Similarly, the stress which he placed on the violence of leisure class sport, accusing it of a "strong proclivity to adventuresome exploit and to the infliction of damage", ⁽³⁰⁾ is, from one viewpoint, wholly

(30) Thorstein Veblen: "The Theory of the Leisure Class" (1925) p.255

valid, in that the original pursuits of the courtly tradition were all ultimately directed at injury to man or beast. In another sense, it misplaces the emphasis, for the courtly movement tended always to refinement, to leaving the direct infliction of bodily harm always one remove farther away. The opposing knight gave way to the quintain; the exclusive use of horses for preying on other animals in hunting gave way, at least partially, to their employment in racing. Similarly, the emphasis given to style and form in physical performance was generally such as to reduce its potential for physical damage, although the progression was by no means uninterrupted, as the advent of fencing illustrated. There were class elements in the style in which damage was inflicted through sport, but violence itself was classless, as the footballers of the time well indicated. It was for a variety of reasons, religious, economic, and social, (many of them manifesting themselves later in the period covered by this thesis) that the upper classes continued to hold a virtual monopoly of most forms of predatory sporting activity.

Where leisure and wealth were particularly significant, however, as Veblen hinted, was in the ritualistic aspect of games. While this was far from being an exclusive prerogative of the courtly sports (as the Haxey Hood and other local performances showed), conspicuous leisure and considerable wealth did encourage a growing sense of ceremonial in the sporting pursuits of the upper class. These pursuits took on a make-believe air of seriousness and moment quite

beyond that intrinsic to the activities themselves. They demanded their own costumes and accoutrements, as well as a playing area specifically designed for their use. As leisure had been gradually extended to all social classes, these features of the games of the courtly tradition have correspondingly extended their application. Football moved from the commons and the streets to its own pitches, and special boots and uniforms became essential to what had been the most plebian of all the games.

The economic histories of exercise and physical education remain unwritten. Veblen's "economic study of institutions" makes only excursions into this field, excursions which are of interest, even if gauche. The social and economic background against which the courtly tradition developed certainly left permanent marks on sporting habits. With economic advance, the courtly tradition grew in importance out of all proportion to the numbers it had originally involved. More and more once-exclusive games became available to wider sections of the community, so spreading the tradition's influence into all levels of sport. The courtly mode accordingly foreshadows both much of the content and a great deal of the spirit and attitude of later English games playing.

Even more fundamentally, the underlying ideas of the nature of man which prompted the physical activities of Renaissance courtiers have repeatedly found expression in subsequent opinion. "The all-round development of the individual, mental and physical", "the

education of the whole man", "the training of body, mind and spirit", these, and other such ambitions from theorists and prospectus writers, derive from the concepts of human unity to which the Renaissance gave rise, or, at least, rebirth, concepts which found their fullest expression in the attitudes and activities of the courtly tradition. The subsequent development of theories of living and learning which embodied this view of man have almost invariably given scope to the enjoyment, training and development of the physical. In this respect, the Renaissance tradition of the courtier may have given rise to much vaporous thinking and lip-service, but it has in practice also given rise and sustenance to liberal notions of education which, while they have visions of what men ought to be, also accept them as the physical beings that, in no small part, they are.

(ii) Educational Speculation and the Training of the Body

In the first half of the seventeenth century education became a frequent topic of debate. After the triumph of parliament in the 1640's, Comenian schemes for educational reform blossomed readily, from soil which had already been well tilled.

Social, political and religious speculation reached such intensity that education could hardly remain unaffected by it. This was particularly so in seventeenth century England for, as well as sharing

in that widespread questioning of basic principles which was to produce both a new science and a new philosophy, this country was also undergoing that specific examination of social institutions which was such a feature of English Puritanism. The suspicion grew that the social function of the school lacked definition, just as its curriculum often lacked social relevance. As theological doubt and social questioning were reinforced by a growing distrust of the old philosophical bases of knowledge, so the speculative tendency in English educational thinking gained added impetus.

The central educational issue concerned the scope of schooling. Questions of content and method derived largely from this overall consideration, whether it was consciously formulated or not. There were some pointers towards an expansionist educational policy: a religious belief which relied upon the individual knowledge of God's Word implied as wide an extension of literacy as possible. At the same time, the situation was complicated by the fact that English was now the language of religion while Latin was still the language of education, and Latin was open to suspicion as the tool of Popery. Any conditional promptings to extend the provision of education were also tempered by doubts over whether the country could "support" a large population of educated citizens. Many feared the social problem (which some of the emerging countries in Africa and Asia are now encountering) of producing far too many "bookish" people for the non-manual employments available.

The assumptions they made on the extent of education coloured men's views on its content, its methods of instruction and the standards of attainment which it should seek. Finally, came a host of lesser issues, relating, for instance, to the quantity and quality of the education to be given to girls, and to whether attention need to be paid to children's physical training and bodily development, although this made only an occasional and minor incursion into the great educational debate.

Looking back, we might identify a "progressive" educational policy in the seventeenth century as one which tried to widen both the provision of education and the range of the curriculum, which sought a liberal education for both sexes, recognised children's psychological needs, by using methods which did not rely wholly on coercion, and had a concern for the physical, as well as the intellectual, development of the pupils. Could such a "progressive" educational policy be readily identified with one of two distinct sides in the grand intellectual confrontation of the period? Such a question is obviously too simple in its terms to admit of any adequate answer. The temptation to regard the division of earlier seventeenth century opinion as between radical progressiveness on the one hand and inert conservatism on the other is soon dispelled by the complexity of the evidence on specific issues. Parliament men set themselves up as conservative defenders of ancient liberties and the Crown, while yielding nothing in its own claims to historical justification,

sometimes pursued social policies that show an innovating enlightenment. The manifestations of these complexities in attitude show particularly clearly in the history of sports and games between 1600 and 1650, which is the subject of the final section of this chapter. It is hardly to be wondered at that in educational theorising, especially as it touched upon physical education, there were intricacies and apparent contradictions which defy any facile classifications.

Francis Bacon is an early example in the period of this many-sidedness: a statesman and courtier, James I's Lord Chancellor who was successfully impeached by the Commons for taking bribes, he was both politically and in most of his practical proposals for action a thorough conservative and traditionalist. Yet, intellectually, he was adventurous and far-seeing, pointing clearly for the seventeenth century the direction which its modes of speculation should follow, seeking first-hand experience and validation, as well as the authority of reading. On the level of generalisation there is a tang of modernity about such educational dicta as this, with its appeal for integration in the content of learning:

"let this be a rule, that all partitions of knowledge be accepted; rather for lines and veins than for sections and separations; and that the continuance and entireness of knowledge be preserved." (31)

As knowledge is a unity, so is man. The body may be "but the tabernacle of the mind", (32) and only a dozen pages out of the two

(31) Bacon: "The Advancement of Learning" (1605), ed. G.W.Kitchin (1915), pp.105/6.

(32) *ibid.*, p.117

hundred and fifty or so of "The Advancement of Learning" be given to its consideration, but he does recognise an integral relationship between the physical and non-physical in man:

"the lineaments of the body do disclose the disposition and inclination of the mind in general; but the motions of the countenance and parts do not only so, but do further disclose the present humour and state of the mind and will." (33)

It is when Bacon comes down to questions of application in practice that doubts arise. At the most, his attitude towards physical training is ambiguous. He asserts confidently that some appropriate exercise can be found to remedy almost any physical weakness or disease and he analyses the factors involved in exercises in terms of "strength", "swiftness" and "patience" (remarkably akin to twentieth century concepts of strength, speed and endurance), but he finally doubts whether any deliberate physical training is either necessary or desirable. A professional skill was not to be sought, native ability was unalterable and practice was easily come by, without any specific provision, although Bacon does grant, in the passage quoted at the head of this chapter, that there may be some advantage in a further examination of the premises on which physical activities take place. Such enquiry, he argues, has been neglected because of the belief that athletic skills were either inborn or the result of simple practice, a belief which he regards as false, but which he will not examine in detail as there is no call for athletic excellence in any

(33) *ibid.*, p.107

but professionals and mere exercise at the unskilled level demands no discussion. (34) This paragraph provides an admirable and economical summing up of what has doubtless been the majority view on physical education from Bacon's day to the present, even where lip-service has been paid to the claims of all-round education. The subject has been held hardly deserving of serious discussion at any but the most superficial levels; physical well-being could be left to itself, highly developed specialised skills in games were the concern of the coach, not of the educator, and no game was worth playing (as Chesterton said) unless it was worth playing badly. This Baconian dismissal of the serious claims of physical education struck a permanent chord of scepticism in English attitudes towards it as a school subject.

More generally, when Bacon thought of the "advancement" of education, he did so in terms of quality, not of quantity, as his well-known letter to his monarch, on the proposed foundation of a Hospital and School in the Charterhouse of Smithfield, clearly indicates:

"Concerning the advancement of learning, I do subscribe to the opinion that for grammar schools there are already too many, and therefore no providence to add, where there is excess. For the great number of schools which are in your Highnesses realm, doth cause a want, and likewise an overthrow; both of them inconvenient, and one of them dangerous; for by means thereof they find want in the country and towns, both of servants for husbandry, and apprentices for trade; and on the other side, there being more scholars bred than the State can prefer and

(34) *ibid.*, p.117

employ, and the active part of that life not bearing a proportion of the preparative, it must needs fall out, that many persons will be bred unfit for other vocations, and unprofitable for that in which they were bred up, which fills the realm full of indigent, idle and wanton people, which are but materia rerum novarum." (35)

Such views as these were not the peculiar outbursts of ultra-conservative pique, but were the common currency of a large section of opinion at this time. They rest on the general assumption that society should, perfectly, remain static and unchanging, the assumption that insisted that labourers should not wander the country, even in search of work, and that protested, at another social level, at the time spent by many land-owners in London, all movements which were, to a great extent, the result of the same economic causes. Parliament sought to compel any whose business did not bring them to the capital to return to the country and, although no law reached the statute book, the first two Stuarts both issued proclamations ordering such unoccupied gentry back to their estates. Proceedings in the Court of Star Chamber were even begun against those who did not comply. (36) "The badge of gentry is idleness: to be of no calling, not to labour ... to be a mere spectator a drone," (37) wrote Robert Burton, but in truth a majority of landowners stayed loyal to their shires, occupied in the many duties of justices of the peace and making their occasional journeys to Westminster as members of the House of Commons. The obstacles in the way of the extension of

(35) Quoted in Board of Education: "Report of the Consultative Committee on Secondary Education" (Spens Report) (1938), p.7

(36) G.Davies, op.cit., p.275

(37) R.Burton: "The Anatomy of Melancholy" (ed. Holbrook Jackson, 1932) Vol.II, p.70

education were, however, considerable when any hints of disturbing the established social structure could provoke so much concern.

The number of schools desirable was a general question of social policy; the content and methods of the education to be provided in them were more specifically professional issues. In spite of the generally recognisable alignments that were emerging in many major areas of contention, the same clear partisanship was not extending into educational theorising. In physical education, for instance, the "new" thinkers were generally far from being enthusiasts or innovators, while a traditionalist of the old courtly school like Peacham was, as has been seen, not only encouraging but even, in a limited way, creative and original in his programme of physical training. Although they might become attached, in one way or another, to what may be identified as the progressive social and political movements of the day, schoolmasters like Brinsley and Hoole gave little impetus to curriculum changes in general and extended, at best, only a generalised and luke-warm benevolence towards physical education.

John Brinsley, Cambridge scholar, distinguished scholar of Ashby de la Zouch Grammar School, translator of Virgil, Cicero and Cato, and author of a Latin grammar, kept most of his advice to the immediate practical issues of teaching, although his convinced Puritanism constantly shines through. His "Ludus Literarius" or "The Grammar School" was published in 1612, seven years before Brinsley lost his

licence to teach on account of these same Puritan opinions. His title, "The School of Play", suggests an understanding and sympathetic attitude towards children, but his concerns were almost exclusively intellectual and academic (although wider than most current practice, with their Greek and Hebrew) and, beyond recognising some limited value in play activities for very young pupils, he offered little scope for physical education. Indeed, he wanted an early start to formal education to ensure that scholars would be ready for university entrance at fifteen. The young children should begin their study by the age of five, lest they acquired wasteful habits of playing which might persist and interfere with later learning. Practical schoolmaster and Puritan that he was, Brinsley was inclined to see his scholars' play as presenting an opportunity for blackmail, for, although generally kindly and reluctant to use the rod except for serious moral lapses, he would deprive laggard pupils of their play-times and keep them working under the eyes of the usher. There might be occasions for sports between the hard work of learning and the diligent attention to sermons (followed by questioning afterwards), but generally Brinsley's concerns are bookish and moral, allowing little opportunity for anything approaching a scheme of physical education. (38)

The name of Charles Hoole is regularly linked with that of Brinsley in the educational histories. Both were, at least for part of their lives, practising schoolmasters, and both had connections with the movement for educational reform, Hoole by virtue of his translations of

(38) John Brinsley: "The Grammar School", edited E.T.Campagnac (Liverpool, 1917)

Comenius, the idol of many Puritan and Commonwealth educators. Hoole, however, was far from being a Puritan himself: he took Holy Orders in 1632, at the time when the church, under Laud, was shifting to a high Erastian posture; he was turned out of his Lincolnshire living by the parliamentarians in 1642 and restored to the benefice of Stock, in Essex, in 1660, the year in which he felt it safe to publish "A New Discovery of the old Art of Teaching School in four small Treatises", although it had been written "about twenty three years ago". During his years of expulsion from the church he spent his time teaching in private academies in London and in publishing his many school textbooks.

Hoole's writing, like Brinsley's, is from the standpoint of the practical schoolmaster and concentrates on immediate classroom problems, often leaving the wider theoretical assumptions to be deduced from the detailed advice. Hoole, however, shows more awareness of modern educational literature and was influenced by, among others, Richard Mulcaster, to whom he makes several close references and from whose "Positions" he quotes at length. These references, however, were usually to administrative points (concerning, for instance, the financial maintenance of Grammar Schools, the possibility of raising their standards, and the advantages of having specialised colleges to teach modern languages only⁽³⁹⁾) and he gave

(39) Charles Hoole: "A New Discovery of the old Art of Teaching School in four small Treatises", edited E.T.Campagnac (Liverpool and London, 1913), pp.217/8, and 227/8

little attention to the body's training which had been so important to Mulcaster.

As far as the training of the body went, Hoole stopped short at elementary hygiene. He will have his scholars come to school "fairly washed" and "neatly combed", from motives which are social as well as simply hygienic, for they will, thereby, set good examples to others to "go neat and comely". (40) In his physical care of his pupils, Hoole is the provider rather than the active guide and director. He would see to it that there was a playing space for every elementary school ("a safe yard adjoining to it, if not with an orchard or garden" (41)), while a grammar school should have a large playing area, part of it under cover, to "shelter the scholars against rainy weather, and that they may not injure the school in times of play". (42) The protection of the school fabric and the exercise of the boys thus vied in importance as reasons for providing playgrounds. His attitude towards "play-days", when pupils were dismissed early for recreation, shows the same cautious, disciplinary attitude. These were to be limited to one a week, and then only if the week contained no Holy day, (43) and there was to be a careful regulation of the scholar's play, which indicates at least an equal concern for good order as for physical training. They would be allowed only "such honest and harmless recreations" as would "moderately exercise their bodies, and

(40) *ibid.*, p.33

(41) *ibid.*, p.29

(42) *ibid.*, p.223

(43) Tuesday or Thursday are recommended as best for play days. (*ibid.*, p.244)

not endanger their health", and they would be carefully supervised, since, warns the practical schoolmaster in Hoole, some boys are "apt to sneak home" or stray from the playground. The master, to prevent this, should have a nominal roll by him and "call it over at any time amid their sport." (44) As to the games the boys would play, they would seem, within the bounds of safety, to be left wholly to their own devising.

This laissez-faire attitude, which hardly meant more than providing opportunities of play in relative safety and under discipline was hardly enthusiastic encouragement for positive physical education, but it did, in its tolerance, provide a permissive framework of the sort within which the public school pattern of games playing was eventually to develop.

As the translator of "Orbis Pictus", Hoole might have been expected to exhibit more of the influence of John Amos Comenius than he, in fact, does. His translations and adaptations provided the main channel for the spread of Comenian ideas in this country and, although this survey is concerned with English attitudes towards physical education, there are occasional continental influences which cannot be ignored. By far the most significant of these in the seventeenth century was that of the Moravian bishop, Comenius, who gave such an impetus to English educational thinking in the middle years of the century. His great reputation in Europe, his belief in

(44) *ibid.*, p.245

the expansion of education and the acceptability of his brand of Protestantism led to an invitation from the Long Parliament to visit this country, where his year's stay gave first-hand encouragement to those already sympathetic towards his views. The ultimate impact made by Comenius was one of spirit rather than specific detail (the limited availability of his works in English partly accounted for this), but he did appear at a time when the ferment of speculation in England on any number of social issues was receptive to his concept of education.

Physical education was by no means at the centre of Comenius' system, although it did become important as an influence on the child's development and as aid to the child's general learning. His concern for the child, like Aristotle's, began even before birth, with instructions to (and a prayer for) pregnant women. ⁽⁴⁵⁾ In their infancy children were to be carefully looked after:

"... let their health sustain no damage from bruises, from excess of heat or cold, from too much food or drink, or from hunger or thirst, observing that all these be attended to with moderation." ⁽⁴⁶⁾

They were also, from the earliest years, to have the benefits of exercise, to sweeten their sleep, aid digestion, encourage physical and mental growth and so aid their total well-being. ⁽⁴⁷⁾ Comenius believed firmly in the value of play, not merely for its physical effects, but because of its mental benefits in helping the child to focus his mind and sharpen his abilities. At all stages in

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Comenius: "The School of Infancy" (ed. D. Benham, 1858) pp. 24/5.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ *ibid.*, p. 29

⁽⁴⁷⁾ *ibid.*, p. 30

education, from first to last, some time would be allocated for the pupils' exercise, although Comenius would not set down any definite pattern of activity. This was consistent with his view that the child's enjoyment of games was one of their major justifications and so could not be directed against the child's will. Yet the activity that they involve is not allowed for pleasurable effects alone; it is essential for the child's happiness and psychological well-being. (48)

Indeed, his laissez-faire approach to physical education, is itself Comenian in form, although Hoole appears to have little positive appreciation of the motives for encouraging exercise that were advanced by Comenius. The value of play situations for child observation, noted already in Peacham, (49) was strongly urged by Comenius, who put great stress on understanding the nature of children. Hoole took the same view and recommended his teachers to study their pupils, especially during their play when "the various disposition of the children doth freely discover itself by their company and behaviour." (50) Hoole, however, was no theoretician and for him the immediate practical ends were usually sufficient, without long-term considerations. Like Locke, he insists on the importance of avoiding unsuitable companions and ordains that scholars should play only with their own school-mates, since they might be corrupted by children "that are under little or no command". (51) His reasons, however, do not depend upon any profound psychological system of environmental

(48) *ibid.*, p.39

(49) see above, p.121

(50) Hoole, *op.cit.*, p.245

(51) *ibid.*, p.246

influence; they are rather the immediate hints of disciplinary concerns and social snobberies. While it may amount to the same thing in the end, the difference in motivation is significant.

In spite of being one of the translators of Comenius, Hoole was never as close to the social attitudes represented in Comenian educational theory as men like John Drury, William Petty and Samuel Hartlib, although these English followers hardly appreciated (or were unwilling to accept) the stresses on games and the implications for physical education inherent in the Moravian's ideas. William Petty's "Advice to Mr Samuel Hartlib on the Advancement of Some Parts of Learning" (1647) does advocate manual training for all pupils, but it is the productive aspect of this work, not its physical effort, that he seeks when aiming to give his boys skill in some "genteel manufacture". (52) Snell's "The Right Teaching of Useful Knowledge" (1649) shows some concern for hygiene and health education, with its unusual reference to good posture in class (a stricture usually reserved for girls) and its recommendations on diet and sleep. Yet in spite of his assertion that

"The ignorance of any knowledge merely human may better be tolerated than of so much knowledge in physical rules as are needful to preserve the healthful well-being of a man's own person" (53)

these "physical rules" do not give much indication to exercise and, in fact, only three of the sixty-eight sections of Snell's work deal with the body's needs. There is no evidence, indeed, that the

(52) Quoted in Foster Watson: "The beginnings of the Teaching of Modern Subjects in England" (1909), p.225

(53) W.Snell: "The Right Teaching of Useful Knowledge" (1649), Sections 25-27.

import of physical education in the attitudes of Comenius ever received any significant appreciation in this country, although, as seen especially in Hoole, some of the Comenian awareness of the growing child's needs (even of his physical needs) did enter English educational thinking.

Whether John Milton belongs more properly to a discussion on Puritanism or on the Courtly Tradition than to this present section is an open question. His "Tractate on Education" was much conditioned by the Civil War environment in which it was written, at the instigation of that "master of innumerable curiosities", ⁽⁵⁴⁾ Samuel Hartlib, as the contribution of the scholar of the Puritan movement to the contemporary educational discussion. It remained the work of a Milton who, as far as this pamphlet was concerned, was generally less the Puritan than the patriotic Renaissance humanist, highly conscious of education's social functions. His concepts have broadness, liberality and nobility of aim, yet he is essentially, as John Adams pointed out, writing for a specific set of circumstances:

"what he wanted to produce was a body of country squires who would have all the sturdiness that the commonwealth squires certainly possessed, joined with a culture as profound as would be consistent with the efficient discharge of their duties as officers in the army of the Parliament." (55)

However, if Milton belongs chronologically and by association to the Comenian movement, he was in the movement and not of it. Far

(54) The phrase is John Evelyn's, who adds that Hartlib was "very communicative"! "Diary", 27 Sept., 1655.

(55) John Adams: "The Evolution of Educational Theory" (1912), p.177

from being a proud companion of his fellow reformers, he scorned the current crop of educational writings: "to search what many modern Januas and Didactics more than ever I shall read have projected, my inclination leads me not." (56) Turning his back thus upon Comenius, Milton consciously looked to classical authorities, to "old renowned authors", and adopted a view of man which, apart from some Puritan colouring, was in complete accord with the traditions of the humanism of the Renaissance, with its acceptance of man in all its aspects, its stresses on nobility of ethic and purpose, on knowledge and learning, and on a thorough propriety of action. While he may have despised much of the current educational discussion, he did not under-estimate the seriousness of his undertaking in the "Tractate". He recognised that he faced "one of the noblest designs that can be thought on" (57) and set himself the exalted and renowned aim of training pupils "to perform, justly, skilfully and magnanimously all the offices, both private and public, of peace and war." (58)

Milton was more than a mere classical scholar; he was imbued with Platonic attitudes which he did not allow his Puritanism to submerge. The idealist in Milton gave an intellectual force to his Protestant love of virtue, such as shines through "Comus", and also gave him a love of beauty such as many of his co-religionists were unable to accommodate with any conviction. It also brought him closer to an earlier English Platonist, Sir Thomas Elyot, than to his contemporaries

(56) "Letter to Mr. Hartlib" (1644), in John Milton: "Areopagitica and other Prose Works", ed. C.E.Vaughan (1927), p.43

(57) *ibid.*, pp.42/3

(58) *ibid.*, pp.46

of the seventeenth century in his attitude towards the human body and in the spirit of his approach to its training. There is the same recognition of the physical world, but also the same stress on its transcendence and inferiority in face of the world of the mind and the spirit. The validity of "the sensitive pleasing of the body" is granted in his pamphlet on Divorce, but this is placed well below "the solace and satisfaction of the mind." (59) Similarly, in "Comus", Milton, although he moralises on the power of chastity, reflects the strong appeal of the physical in the cogency and vividness of the arguments he gives to Comus in his pursuit of the Lady's virginity:

"Beauty is Nature's cofn, must not be hoarded
But must be current." (60)

However, the fall of man (or rather, as Milton carefully stresses, the fall of woman) has led humanity to

".... pervert pure nature's healthful rules
To loathsome sickness, worthily, since they
GOD's image did not reverence in themselves." (61)

The "inabstinence" of Eve, he reminds, has made the human body a thing of

"Dropsies, and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums." (62)

And so the body remains inevitably inferior to the soul, though it is still necessary as our only means to perfection.

It is to be exercised for health, to keep it "nimble, strong, and

(59) *ibid.*, p.201

(60) John Milton: "The Poetical Works" (Chandos Classics Edition, London and New York, undated) p.60

(61) *ibid.*, p.338

(62) *ibid.*, p.337

well in breath"; to help both physical growth and moral strength, to promote "a native and heroic valour" and to make scholars "hate the cowardice of doing wrong"; and as a specifically military training, with the boys being turned out "by a sudden alarum or watchword" for their martial exercises, "embattling, marching, encamping, fortifying, beseiging and battering." (63) The battles of the Civil War were to be won on the exercise grounds of Milton's Academy. He would combine health, pleasure and new experience in riding excursions "in those vernal seasons of the year, when the air is calm and pleasant", when it would be "an injury and sullenness against nature not to go out and see her riches and partake in her rejoicing with heaven and earth." Yet this pleasure would not be without serious ends: the pupils would study the military aspects of the terrain, building methods, soils and agriculture, and the excursions would only be for pupils of two or three years standing. (64) This is the nearest Milton comes to any element of play in his physical training programme; all the rest is carefully timed and organised, with specifically utilitarian ends in view. Some ninety minutes before the midday meal is to be used for exercise (which can be longer, "according as their rising in the morning shall be early") with rest afterwards, to "unsweat" before eating. Swordplay, "with edge and point", and wrestling are the exercises recommended as "enough wherein

(63) Milton: "Areopagitica &c" pp.51/2

(64) *ibid.*, p.52

to prove and heat their single strength." (65)

The situation in which Parliament and Puritanism found itself in the 1640's made it relatively easy for Milton to adapt his Renaissance heritage to the contemporary needs. The military emphases of the courtly tradition of physical training were appropriate for a cause then at war for its survival. Indeed, Milton's tone, its combination of rectitude, high courage and ascetic discipline, was very similar to that currently being established by Oliver Cromwell in the New Model Army. Milton's "New Model Academy" could, in fact, have been an officer-cadet school for Cromwell's new army! How much physical exercise Milton would have supported without this military pressure from the civil conflict, and, indeed, how much he encouraged in his own schoolmastering days, is doubtful. His attitude towards the human body, as it emerges in his other works, never escapes a certain ambiguity: while the body makes its sensuous appeal to the poet and humanist, the Puritan is perturbed at this physical attraction. Physical strength is worthy when, like Samson's or the Roundhead soldier's, it is used to good purpose, but, of itself, such strength is not of much significance. As Samson remarks, God, "to show How slight the gift was, hung it in my hair." (66) So, while the deeds of Samson are celebrated by Milton, there is little attention to the physique that wrought them. In fact, in searching for physical description in Milton's poetry, we are brought up against T.S.Eliot's

(65) *ibid.*, p.51

(66) Milton: "poetical Works", *op.cit.*, p.432

verdict on "Paradise Lost", that in reading out "our sense of sight must be blurred". (67) Milton's only impressive muscular picture is that of Satan in Book I of "Paradise Lost" and even here the bulk of the Arch-fiend soon becomes immersed in a cloud of fabulous imagery.

As an oratorical statement of an idealised concept, Milton's "Tractate" is a notable contribution to educational thinking; as a specific prescription for running a school it was little short of disastrous. Milton's own academic success and devotion to scholarship moved him towards an intellectual diet which made impossible demands upon children, whom he does not appear to have understood with anything like the insight of the Comenians he despised. After an already staggering bill of academic fare, which had included Latin, Greek, mathematics, geometry, anatomy, physiology, politics and economics, he completed his curriculum with Hebrew and the sublime afterthought "whereto it would be no impossibility to add the Chaldee and Syrian dialect." (68) It is the programme of the devoted scholar, motivated by high seriousness and singleness of purpose, and has no place for such play, happiness or individuality as cannot accommodate itself within the tight Miltonic scheme. It is designed wholly for what men should be, not for what boys are. Milton's status in the Puritan movement was to give his educational advice practical significance once English Dissent began to establish its own schools in the second half of the century; it is hard to escape the feeling that both the mental

(67) T.S.Eliot: "Selected Prose", ed. John Hayward (1953), p.145

(68) Milton: "Areopagitica, &c", p.49

and physical sides of the training offered by these schools would have been more healthily served if their most eminent mentor had combined his ennobled educational objectives with a closer understanding of how to achieve them.

Not that the contemporary practices of schoolmasters could have led Milton into serious concerns for a detailed programme of physical education. Indeed, when one sets Milton against the practising headteachers of the period, Brinsley and Hoole, he shines almost as an enthusiast for the training of the bodies of his scholars. The actual pursuit of physical exercise by schoolchildren was still, in fact, usually so divorced from any theoretical considerations as to its educational significance and so much an appendage to the period's adult sports and games, that it is most appropriately discussed after considering sporting practice, rather than in relation to the age's educational speculation.

Human attitudes are not always (some would say, not usually, of the more fundamental attitudes) consciously formulated. It may be that the actual practice of physical activity, in the first half of the seventeenth century, can reveal motivations to the historian that were not apparent to contemporaries. The object of the final section of this chapter, then, with its study of the interactions between political and social attitudes and the actual sporting pursuits of the time (interactions which were surprisingly frequent and important, considering the relative silence of the educational theorists on this

sphere of human activity), will be to attempt to find out the extent to which physical exercise was motivated by such unrealised, or partly realised, pressures.

From the present survey of ideas on physical education in relation to broader educational philosophising in the first half of the seventeenth century it is difficult to define any firm relationship between educational theorising in general and the type of physical education theory that it produces. The experience of this period suggests that "progressive" and "radical" educational movements are not always as beneficial to physical education as they may be to other branches of educational organisation, methods and content. Such benefits as they bring, may well be undramatic ones (like those suggested by the Comenian system) affecting the total attitude towards the child. They may take considerable time to filter through to peripheral subjects like physical education, especially when, as is usually the case, their chief innovators have no pronounced personal interest in the training of the body. It is probable, indeed, that, as innovating thinkers themselves, they will rate intellectual exercise far above bodily activity! The indications from the early seventeenth century are that, unless there are special factors at work, physical education tends to be merely a fringe benefit of "progressive" educational movements. Other priorities are always ready to obstruct its advancement. Particularised attitudes, towards the body, towards human attitudes, leisure, and the like, can easily deny to physical

education a place in an otherwise general educational progress. On the other hand, where radical educational theory is involved with revolutionary political forces which are fighting for survival, then the prospects for physical education within its scheme become much more promising. An educational theory which envisages the contingency of war will tend to encourage physical training, particularly that related to hardening, discipline, and military skills, much more energetically than will a theory which has no combative social or political intentions.

(iii) Politics and Play

The first half of the seventeenth century lives in popular opinion as an age of political and religious difference, the prelude to the now legendary conflict between dashing Cavaliers, all ringlets and lace, and dour, helmeted Roundheads, cruel interrogators of small boys on when they last saw their fathers.

The religious side of the struggle is recognised also as having consequences for the history of English recreation, the Puritans being the kill-joys who pulled down the maypoles, stopped bear-baiting and gave us the English Sunday. It is much less widely appreciated that the political and social conflicts also impinged considerably upon popular sport, which became one of the minor issues in the overall confrontation. Sport was, indeed, nearer to being a political issue than at any other period in our history. How this came about, and

what effect political attitudes had upon sporting practice, particularly when set against the economic and social determinants of this practice, may be useful questions to explore in an age like our own, when with sporting performance becoming a matter of national prestige, physical pursuits could again become the subject of political dispute.

Politics became implicated in popular sporting activities as a result of the loosening of the structure of government at the very moment when sport itself was changing its nature, both from changing circumstances and from Calvinistic attacks. The pattern of Tudor government had rested upon harmony between national and regional interests and co-operation between the central and local machinery of administration. J.H.Hexter has argued ⁽⁶⁹⁾ that the successful sixteenth century monarch was the one who prevented decisive cleavages from developing between the Crown and its immediate adherents and the country at large. In the Tudor pattern of government, national and local forces had achieved a successful integration, the state and court officials with the regional Lords-Lieutenant and both of these with the local justices of the peace. The tendency of the first half of the seventeenth century, however, was for these two interlocking systems to mesh less happily together.

While it reduces the national difficulty to terms which are too crude to see it merely as an ~~interesting~~^{increasing} separation of court from country, or even as a conflict between Puritan and Anglican, progress

(69) J.H.Hexter: "Reappraisals in History" (1961), pp.35-38

and tradition, these were all elements in a struggle which manifested itself in numerous different ways: crown against Commons, an imposed taxation machinery from the king against a cumbersome financing of the country through an antiquated parliamentary method; an established religion which was centralised and monarchical against one which stressed individual conscience and local control. The lines of the conflict were never wholly hard and fast, and motives and attitudes were usually complex, as the discussion of the period's educational theory has already indicated in one narrow field. Wider issues show the same intricacy. Thus, the Puritan/Commons movement (and the phrase itself suggests too precise an alignment) was in many ways "progressive" and "modern" against a traditionalist church and court. Most parliament men stoutly denied any "innovating" intentions, while the crown, especially during the period of absolutist rule in the 1630's, seemed, at times, to be groping towards some distant concept of the welfare state, notably in its efforts to maintain wage levels and to provide a national system of Poor Relief, ⁽⁷⁰⁾ in which, with an almost equal paradox, Puritan justices of the peace appear to have co-operated most readily at the practical, local level.

The breakdown of parliamentary government saw more frequent attempts by the court to interfere directly with the detail of the subject's everyday life. This intervention stemmed largely from a

(70) Under which, incidentally, according to the 1598 statute, vagabonds included anyone going about "using any subtle craft or unlawful games and plays."

genuine concern for social stability and well-being, and a belief in the prerogative power of the Crown to secure it, but sometimes it occurred as a corrective to local Puritan criticism of what, to the establishment, appeared as harmless and even healthful practices. To the question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" the Puritans had long been giving a loud affirmative; with the episcopalians and the monarchists the answer had, of necessity, become scarcely less decisive. After all, did not a willingness to try to secure fair wages and a readiness to provide a bulwark of relief against the starkest poverty, also give an entitlement to regulate such aspects of the subject's personal life, even extending into his recreation, if these were matters of both private and public benefit?

As far as popular sports and games were concerned, this interference had a considerable history before the Stuart period began, as the previous chapter has shown. The social philosophies and personal dispositions of the new rulers clearly promised that such intervention would continue. James I was always ready to make pronouncements for the guidance of his subjects, for he held that his own sagacity, no less than his royal infallibility, made it his duty to do so. As a sportsman, and an admirer of sportsmen, he was very prepared to encourage sporting activities, especially when this also met the demands of public policy. The attitudes of kings and governments towards sports were seldom ^{simple} ~~single~~. Previous attempts at royal regulation in the Tudor period had generally been social in

motive and military in pretext, as with the repeated attempts to encourage archery practice, but there had also been, on religious grounds, intervention with Sunday amusements. In 1579, for instance, "pipers and minstrels playing, making and frequenting bear-baiting and bull-baiting on the Sabbath days" had been forbidden to Catholic Lancashire as smacking too much of the old religion. (71)

It was Lancashire again which provided the immediate occasion for James' major edict on games playing. During a progress through the county he was presented with a petition protesting that the lower classes were being debarred from "dancing, playing, church-ales" and the like, on Sundays after church. (72) The avowed motives, however, of James' consequent proclamation (the "Declaration of Sports" or "Book of Sports" as it became known) were comprehensive and amounted to a re-assertion of the supposed old customs of merry rural sport, as well as a rebuke to Puritan magistrates for exceeding the bounds of their competence. The Declaration, issued at Greenwich on 24th May, 1618, argues that the prohibition of sports on Sunday bred discontent, hindered the conversion of Catholics and deprived the "commoner and meaner sort of people" of their only opportunity for exercise, "seeing they must apply their labour and win their living in all working days." Such restriction could, moreover, prevent the people from keeping themselves "able for war, when we or our successors, shall have

(71) L.A.Govett: *op.cit.*, pp.24/25

(72) *ibid.*, pp.29/30

occasion to use them." (73) For this complexity of reasons (by which the king masked his antipathy towards Puritanism and his sympathy with some features of Catholicism) the Declaration ordered that "no lawful recreation" should be hindered: dancing, archery, leaping, vaulting "or any other such harmless recreation" were to be allowed, along with the traditional Maytime festivities, so long as there was no "impediment or neglect of Divine Service". The unlawful games, however, (bear and bull-baiting, and, "in the meaner sort of people, by law prohibited, bowling") were still forbidden. The Declaration ends with a caution against riotous assembly, by ordering that no offensive weapons "be carried or used in said times of recreations." (74)

The Declaration was not initiating a new movement in this encouragement of the traditional Sabbath merry-makings; it was rather setting the royal seal of approval on an anti-Puritan reaction which had been gathering considerable support in the preceding years.

Robert Burton gave a representative non-sectarian welcome to the Book of Sports, which was issued three years before the publication of "The Anatomy of Melancholy", and he castigated those who

"out of preposterous zeal object many times trivial arguments, and because of some abuse will quite take away the good use, as if they should forbid wine because it makes men drunk." (75)

The anti-Puritanism had not, moreover, stopped at words. There were conscious attempts to revitalise the traditional recreations of the feast days in several parts of the country. At Chester, for instance,

(73) *ibid.*, p.37

(74) *ibid.*, pp.38/40. See also Godfrey Davies, *op.cit.*, pp.76/77

(75) Burton, *op.cit.*, Vol.II, p.84

civic officials reorganised the St George's Day horse-racing and presented trophies for the winners, (76) while Robert Dover led the most celebrated of the age's sporting revivals when he restyled the annual Cotswold Games.

Christopher Whitfield's careful research into the history of these games, in his introduction to a new edition of "Annalia Dubrensis", has brought to light firm evidence of this revivalist movement and has confirmed that a deliberate spirit of conservative idealism lay behind it. Whitsuntide games had taken place for longer than men could remember on the boundaries of the two parishes of Weston and Campden, the area which became known as Dover's Hill. Robert Dover, brought up as a Catholic, and by that time a lawyer of some substance, probably moved into the Cotswolds shortly after his marriage to the widow of a Bristol merchant, in about the year 1608. Whitfield's enthusiastic description of him portrays a

"genial, humorous extrovert, a lover of his fellow-men, and their oddities and eccentricities, a man of good cheer, and of the open air, and a devoted Royalist, for whom the England he lived in, ruled by his king, could have no fault - except that too many Puritans in it threatened the 'mirth' or good-fellowship to which he was dedicated." (77)

The romantic after-glow about this picture of Dover has too luminous a quality to make it completely acceptable, although the poets of "Annalia Dubrensis" leave a similar impression of the man. The revivers of the ancient games sought to enjoy themselves, but they sought also, as Whitfield remarks,,

(76) see below, p.173

(77) Christopher Whitfield (ed.): "Robert Dover and the Cotswold Games: 'Annalia Dubrensis'" (1962), p.13

"to keep alive the still lingering spirit of rural medieval England by reviving and 'modernising' its country sports and pastimes which, for them, meant relating those sports to classical mythology and Renaissance culture, whilst linking them with the throne and the King's Protestant Church." (78)

The revivals were, in fact, no chronological accident, but were deliberately motivated by the circumstances of the time, their promoters consciously seeking to imbue the old sports with something of the dignity of the pursuits of the courtly tradition.

The Cotswold Games had doubtless receded into a very pale echo of their medieval past in the years before Dover's intervention, since Puritan activity was particularly strong in the Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire border areas. Dover's self-imposed task of revival was, therefore, all the harder, but he tackled it realistically by striving to give the games a new relevance to seventeenth century conditions. Like most of the old festivals they had been wholly plebian in character; one of Dover's primary objects (and, indeed, the essence of his own participation) was to widen their social appeal and make them an example of harmony among all ranks of men. To attract the gentry, hunting, gaming and chess playing were introduced and there was even a Homeric harpist to give the games an Olympic flavour. Had Dover been given a wider scope in which to exercise his flair for public relations, the Stuart image in the earlier seventeenth century might have been more successfully promoted than it was! As things

were, his showmanship had a solid enough basis to make the annual games an undoubted social success. Gentleman, yeoman and labourer alike enjoyed themselves in peace and good order. The propriety of the games became a minor wonder of the age:

"Who durst assemble such a troop as he
But might of insurrection charged be?" (79)

"For though some of thy sports most man-like be,
Yet are they linked with peace and modesty.
Here all in th'one and self-same sphere do move,
Nor strive so much to win by force as love,
So well the rudest and most rustic swains
Are managed by thy industrious pains." (80)

This social harmony was essential to the success of Dover's venture since political action against sports was always inclined to mask its religious motivations by allegations that they disturbed the peace. Such was the case in the first parliament of Charles I when the Commons, instead of granting immediately the financial provision for foreign expeditions and domestic government, which they had been summoned to do, fell to debating Sunday sports. The outcome, the first statute of the new reign, was "An act for punishing divers abuses committed on the Lord's day, called Sunday", which imposed a fine of $\frac{3}{4}$ d or three hours in the stocks for any future profanation. The spirit of defiance which prompted this legislation was, indeed, more significant than the slight stiffening of the law that it involved, as it only forbade "unlawful exercises and pastimes". The Commons were only following the example of the King's Declaration in seeking to

(79) Nicholas Wallington, in Whitfield, op.cit., p.150

(80) John Monson, ibid., p.199

prevent sports from offending the peace. This, they alleged, was happening; quarrels and bloodshed had arisen from Sunday sports, with people "going out of their own parishes", for bear-baiting, bull-baiting, interludes and "common plays", which attracted "a disorderly sort of people." (81)

If Sunday merry-making went beyond the acceptable bounds of propriety, Puritan reaction could be just as extreme:

"some, in a furious kind of ardour, used to run into the streets, and even dash into private houses, in search of those engaged in their lawful pastimes, scatter the company, and break the instruments, and even the heads, of any musicians they found." (82)

Sunday disorder grew to such a pitch that, out of motives that were purely concerned with the civil peace, Lord Chief Justice Richardson issued an order to the western circuit to put an end to the disturbances attending church-ales and the like. As a result, Richardson was called before the Council and reprimanded for interfering with the Royal edicts, while a petition from country magistrates to put down Sunday gatherings at ale-houses was forestalled by Charles' reissue of his father's "Declaration of Sports" in 1633, with the added injunction that every clergyman was to read it from his pulpit. This prompted one parson who obeyed the letter of the edict to tell his congregation that they had heard now the word of God and the word of man, and that the choice was theirs. (83) Many other clergymen refused to read the Declaration and lost their livings in consequence.

(81) Govett, op.cit., p.95

(82) Davies, op.cit., p.76

(83) See P.C.McIntosh: "Sport in Society" (1963), p.44

Political attitudes had hardened in the fifteen years since the original publication of the "Book of Sports". The sports themselves had become little more than a pretext; they were hardly now a main consideration in the royal policy, and were being encouraged out of political obstinacy as much as from religious conviction. The distinction between political dissatisfaction and religious controversy was becoming more and more blurred and there was talk of a choice between the local riot that went with Sabbath drinking and sporting and a larger, more serious, insurrection. The Bishop of Bath and Wells argued that if the populace were denied their recreations they would either talk politics or religion over their ale at the inn, or else go to worship in conventicles.⁽⁸⁴⁾ The wider order of the realm, let alone the tenets of the High Anglican Establishment, demanded that they be kept amused and popular sports be encouraged, the risk of a few local disturbances notwithstanding.

The story of the first two Stuarts' attitudes towards Sunday sport, parliament's reaction, and the devious motives which both claimed for their actions, illustrate in miniature the tensions and cleavages which were developing in earlier seventeenth century society. Even the fiscal side of these struggles made an occasional and minor impingement upon the province of sport, especially in the granting of monopolies by the crown for the manufacture of sporting equipment or the licensing of games areas. As already noted, there had been at least one request to for a licence to manufacture sporting equipment, in this case tennis

(84) Davies, op.cit., pp.76/77, Govett, op.cit., p.111

balls, in 1591, ⁽⁸⁵⁾ but the Commons, by the beginning of James' reign, must have felt themselves fairly safe from the competition of monopoly buyers in their control of the national purse-strings, since Elizabeth had, in 1601, assented to a Monopolies Act which allowed all patents to be tested before the courts. This proved no impediment to James, however, and monopolies multiplied with such rapidity in his reign that they could hardly avoid encroaching eventually upon every sphere of activity, including sport. During the early years of the ascendancy of the king's favourite, George Villiers, later 1st Duke of Buckingham, whose family enjoyed the rights (amongst others) to license both inns and ale-houses, monopolies were granted for the manufacture of golf balls and also for the licensing of bowling alleys. The licence for the making and marketing of golf balls was for 21 years, and both the limited nature of the game in England and the names of the monopolists (James Melville, William Berwick, "and his associate") suggest that the main application was to Scotland, although it was granted by James from his court at Salisbury, ⁽⁸⁶⁾ Two years later, in 1620, the king granted to one of his household the right to license bowling alleys, in spite of the legal limitations on bowling, and 31 licences were soon granted by the monopolists. This pointedly suggests that alleys were already in existence and that the monopoly grant was not meant as a means of social control, (any more than the ale-house

(85) See above, pp.45/6

(86) Sir Guy Campbell, in B.Darwin et al., op.cit., p.50

licensing had been, since local justices had previously handled the licensing quite capably). The fact that Buckingham and Charles I were later frequent patrons of the greens raises the suspicion of a further Villier's interest in these transactions.

The granting of the odd monopoly in connection with sporting activities is, of course, only a very remote consideration either in the history of extra-parliamentary taxation or in the history of attitudes towards physical activity. Yet it typifies the non-athletic nature of most government interference in sport. Much of the early Stuart encouragement of popular sporting activities was not given on account of the benefits seen in the sports themselves, but for social, religious or political motives, associated with the fact that those whom the crown increasingly recognised as its opponents had become identified with a negative, restrictive attitude towards sport. The simple principle of opposition suggested encouragement to the people's games, while this encouragement seemed, at the same time, a useful means of propaganda on behalf of the established order.

Royal policy did represent a genuine contemporary mood, widely shared, that Britain was in danger of taking a wrong turning; that the social life of the community was somewhat ailing, but that radical innovation or wholesale prohibition offered little prospect of cure. Drayton, in the opening contribution to "Annalia Dubrensis", had expressed this attitude in praising Dover as one

"That dost in these dull iron times revive
The Golden Age's Glories." (87)

Other poems in the same anthology reflected opposition to social change, as, for instance, the criticism of those agricultural innovators who enclosed the open fields made by Shackerley Marmion (1603-1639), a gentleman writer of courtly comedies, who exhorted the shepherds to rejoice in the benefits bestowed on them by Dover's bounty, since the way of life it embraced would bring them a prosperity and contentment never seen outside the idyll of the pastoral:

"No venom'd rot shall cause your sheep to die,
But all your folds and flocks shall multiply;
For every ewe shall bear two lambs apiece,
And every lamb shall wear a silver fleece." (88)

High traditionalist propaganda of this sort should not, however, lead us to ascribe early Stuart social policy entirely to a crude bread and circuses appeal. Although there was a recognisable identity between Dover's enterprise and the attitudes of the crown (marked by James I's grant of supporters and augmentations to the family's coat of arms (89)), the reasons behind the royal interventions in popular games playing were, from the very complexity of the national situation, more intricate than the simple motivations of Robert Dover.

The notoriety of the Puritan role in the earlier seventeenth century history of sports and games has doubtless resulted in a neglect of the crown's concern with these activities. While the consequences of Puritan activity have their place in popular historical tradition,

(87) Whitfield, op.cit., p.102

(88) *ibid.*, p.210

(89) *ibid.*, pp.18/19. (It was a reward that would doubtless be well appreciated by one of Dover's chivalric temper.)

there has been no estimate made of the success or otherwise of the royal policy of fostering popular sporting pursuits. If the crown's sponsorship and encouragement were effective, one would expect to find, in the history of sporting activities between 1600 and the Civil War, a particular strength in those sports and games which enjoyed the royal encouragement. How far was this the case? This question will be the immediate concern of the following section, with its examination of the sporting practice of the period.

The sporting activities which received the royal approval do not represent a single class. They include sports actively followed by the kings themselves, and often, therefore, socially exclusive, as well as those advocated in the Book of Sports and also, it may be assumed, those revived in the Cotswold Games. An initial survey of sports and games between 1600 and 1650 under these headings should indicate the success or otherwise of the royal patronage.

(iv) Sporting Practice 1600-1650.

Sports and games were, as has been shown, the objects of much comment in this period. Religious, social and political arguments were all thrown into the debate on contemporary modes of recreation. Meanwhile, the facts of economic and social change were modifying men's play in ways which were only partly realised. While educational theory contributed little to the arguments on physical

recreation, it may be assumed that the schools were none the less susceptible to the forces of current fact and opinion. The games and sports of both adults and children may therefore be expected to show the strength of the various influences on actual practice, as well as revealing something of the assumptions, realised or unrealised, which lay behind the age's physical pursuits.

The first of these influences to be considered will be that exercised by the royal policy and practice.

There were immediate consequences of James' accession in the introduction of certain Scottish games into the country and in a revival(at least within the court circle) of the pursuits in which the king himself was personally interested. Pall Mall ("Pell Mell", "Pale Maille" and many other variants are found) was the most immediately successful of the imported games. A sort of golf-cum-croquet, (90) it was played in a special alley with low side walls to keep the ball in play; this alley was about half a mile long and different clubs were used for the various stages of the game, which ended with the ball being driven through an iron hoop at the end of the course. It was probably introduced into Scotland from France in the sixteenth century and came in turn into this country with James' retinue, who immediately established an alley in London. Since the game needed this extensive playing area and costly and varied equipment its popularity was effectively limited and it remained, at

(90) And wrongly identified with croquet as recently as in Maurice Ashley: "Life in Stuart England" (1964), p.77

least in its most sophisticated forms, an exclusive pursuit, although simplifications and extemporisings on the Pall Mall style were doubtless widespread, as the histories of sport suggest. (91) In the first half of the seventeenth century it seemed very much more likely that this game would persist in England rather than golf, introduced at the same time and by the same route.

There is no reliable evidence that golf escaped at all from its Scottish associations throughout the seventeenth century. It remained always a sport for exiles, royal or noble. In the Harleian manuscripts, in the incident already quoted, Henry, Prince of Wales, was reported as playing "at Goff, a play not unlike Palemaille", (92) a form of words which reveals the relative popularity of the two games. Blackheath was the favourite location for golf with the Scots courtiers, although the suggestion that a permanent club was founded there with a continuous existence from this time appears to have nothing but tenuous tradition to support it. With a single exception, all other indications of the game in the Stuart period have Scottish associations: Charles I played at Leith and later at Newcastle, during its occupation by the Scots army, while his two sons were, apparently, only golfers during their sojourns in their northern dominion. (93) The one specifically English reference to golf is in a petition presented in 1658 by one, William Harbottle, keeper of the "Up-Fields"

(91) For instance, N.Wymer, *op.cit.*, p.49

(92) Sir Guy Campbell, in B.Darwin et alia, *op.cit.*, p.85. See above, p.108

(93) Charles II played at Scone, and James II was regularly on the Leith Links. (*ibid.*, p.50)

at Westminster, to the Governors of Westminster School, complaining that some of the boys were doing damage by their games, one of which was alleged to be golf. (94)

The lack of appeal which golf made south of the Border implies that royal and courtly support could not alone popularise a game which had no indigenous associations, although there is little evidence that James' followers applied the same missionary zeal to the game as their followers did in later centuries. The Scots were not admired, and their addiction to golf did nothing at all to raise its prestige in English eyes. Schoolboys here and there might find pleasure in hitting a small ball round a field to set destinations, just as cruder forms of Pall Mall might achieve a somewhat wider popularity than the court game, but neither of these sports played any significant part in the recreational life of the Englishman of the first half of the seventeenth century. They served rather, like James' accent, to remind those who came across them as much of the foreignness of the king as of his penchant for games playing.

The king's personal zeal was directed into the virile sports of the chase, and here his impact was considerable. The most permanent contribution of James I to English national life was, after the production of the Authorised Version of the Bible, the establishment of Newmarket as the centre of English horse racing. Not for the royal Stuart the unmanly slaughter of released animals in enclosed

(94) Robert Browning: "A History of Golf: The Royal and Ancient Game" (1955), p.89

parks. He found the open, rolling countryside around the Gog Magog Hills so excellent for his sport that he built a royal palace, complete with gardens, stables, kennels and tennis courts, in what had been an obscure, wooden-hutted village, but which now became, as the court diligently followed his example, a flourishing town. (95) Under the royal patronage the status of hunting was lifted high, (except with some of the local landowners!), (96) with Gervase Markham, the busy chronicler of country pursuits of the day, describing it as the recreation which

"doth many degrees go before and precede all other, as being most royal for the stateliness thereof, most artificial for the wisdom and courage thereof, and most manly and warlike for the use and endurance thereof." (97)

If hunting took James to Newmarket, horse racing soon began to rival the chase itself as the town's major sport, and James himself gave encouragement by acquiring, from the same Markham, and at a cost of £500, the first Arab horse brought into England. "Matches" between two horsemen were still the most common form of racing, but wider fields of up to half a dozen mounts were becoming more frequent and public contests were being held in courses up and down the country, the most reputable of these being known as "Bell Courses", after the trophy awarded to the winner. Some contests were events in annual festivities

(95) Roger Mortimer: "The Jockey Club" (1958), p.2

(96) An anonymous petition is said to have been hung round the neck of the king's favourite hound, suggesting that the court return to London, (N.Wymer, op.cit., p.81)

(97) G.Markham: "Countrey Contentments" (1611), in J.Dover Wilson, op.cit., p.16

and so rested upon a more permanent basis than the impromptu gaming of private matches. At Chester, for instance, there was already some more or less formalised horse racing at the beginning of the century in connection with the St George's day festivities. The main event was reorganised when the mayor and an ex-sheriff of the City presented trophies for the race in 1608, and there was further modification in 1623, when "one fair silver cup, of the value of £8" was to be kept permanently by the winner. (98) It is reasonable to suppose that both the royal attitude towards popular sport and the king's own predilection for the pursuits of riding encouraged such developments in horse racing, which, along with coursing and hunting, also played an important part in the revived Cotswold games. Charles I's support, in maintaining the royal Newmarket stables, ensured the continuing prosperity of these sports, at least until the Commonwealth imposed its restrictions.

The growth of these sports did not, however, imply a universal acceptance of them. Hunting, as Markham showed, enjoyed status from its primitive, punitive ancestry, as well as from its associations with noble birth and leisured grandeur, "an honourable employment handed down from the predatory culture as the highest form of everyday leisure," as Thorstein Veblen put it. (99) This essentially aristocratic viewpoint found opposition even at the highest social levels. It was not only Puritans and East Anglian farmers, but also occasional high churchmen like Godfrey Goodman (later to become Bishop

(98) T.F.Thistleton Dyer, op.cit., pp.195/6

(99) T.Veblen, op.cit., p.258

of Gloucester) who found hunting injurious to the community, "the cry and curse of the poor tenant, who sits at a hard rent and sees his corn spoiled." (100) Horse racing, as distinct from hunting, lacked the traditional authority of the primeval chase, from which it was one stage further removed, and, while it might be widely accepted as part of occasional celebrations, it tended increasingly to be a vicarious activity of hired riders, with the "sportsmen" themselves, deprived of physical participation, confined to gambling on the result. This use of horse racing as a vehicle for gambling not only gave rise to widespread doubt and distrust (royal and aristocratic enthusiasms notwithstanding) but threatened soon to remove the sport to the periphery of what could legitimately be classed as "physical exercise".

Royal participation appears, therefore, to have had some influence on the progress of sports to which the country was already disposed even if it had little success in the introduction of new and alien activities. The effect of royal encouragement on the popular recreations was equally uneven, but here the effects were inclined to be geographical rather than varying according to specific sports.

The old festivals had undoubtedly declined during the second half of the sixteenth century and economic and social circumstances were conspiring to continue that decline. Unless there was some

(100) Godfrey Goodman's "The Fall of Man" (1616) pp.147/8

active intervention of the sort given by Robert Dover the prospects for local festivals were bleak wherever there was any trace of Puritan criticism. Dover's own games almost certainly represent the most successful result of the royal policy.

Before Dover's day, the old Cotswold games had been of a type found in many English villages, with a "Shepherd's King" (the one whose flock had produced the first lamb of the season) presiding over outdoor feasting, drinking, singing and dancing, much as described by Michael Drayton in "Polyolbion" (101) or by Shakespeare in Act IV of "The Winter's Tale" with its sheep-shearers' feast. Shakespeare's "meeting of the petty gods" gives a patronising (although basically not untypical) picture of such a festival, with its dance of shepherds and shepherdesses followed by a song and a dance of twelve satyrs, "three carters, three shepherds, three neat-herds, three swine-herds, that have made themselves all men of hair" by donning animal skins. The romping, unsophisticated country dances that marked these frolics demanded exuberance and agility rather than fine skill, the prize going to those performers who threw their partners highest. It was boasted of one group of Shakespeare's satyrs that "not the worst of the three but jumps twelve foot and a half by the squier" (i.e., by the measure). These may well have been professionals, as the Morris dancers usually were, performing intricate steps that lay beyond the rough skill of the rustics.

(101) 14th Song, lines 217-278.

Such seasonal festivals remained a significant part of country life. Strong ales were brewed and feasts held in the church house when the churchwardens presented their annual accounts; maypoles were regularly the focus of springtime celebrations; kit-cat, barley break, hand ball and ninepins were played as part of the festivities. Yet the changing patterns of rural economy, with enclosures of the open fields over large parts of the country (which was probably a frequent limitation) and some population movement, all pointed to ^a ~~some~~ decline in festivals of this sort in face of the bitter attacks of the sectarians, who singled out these "pagan" feasts as among their first targets.

The bill of fare provided by Robert Dover makes a useful vehicle for discussion of the popular rural recreations. Apart from "leaping". "dancing", "leap-frog", and a strange contest of "shin-kicking" (a contemporary football skill, no doubt!), the games for the commoners included wrestling, pitching the bar, throwing the hammer, and foot races. Throwing contests of one sort or another were doubtless widespread, and a contribution to "Annalia Dubrensis" indicates that sometimes a round rock or boulder was used as a missile, ⁽¹⁰²⁾ although an actual shot was probably already used on occasions. Foot races were also popular. At the same time as they were coming under Puritan attack, and consequently disappearing in some places, they were also elsewhere becoming more regulated, using set courses and

(102) Whitfield, op.cit., p.115

ceasing to be point-to-point scrambles. Races for women and girls attracted much attention from the few early commentators, as they doubtless did also from the spectators. The usual prize was a smock (hence, "smock races") which, at the Cotswold Games, as at many others, the smock was displayed on a tall pole before the event; the "panting rivals" waited in line for the start and the course must have been over some distance since the runners soon "left the field behind." (103)

Archery continued to attract government support, but it is hard to see this as more than an habitual gesture. In spite of the traditionalist obsessions of Dover's revival, he gave archery no part in his programme, which probably meant that even such a loyal subject as he was thought it past resuscitation. The "military" events of the new Cotswold Games were single-stick contests and handling the pike, which had a nearer relevance to the seventeenth century battleground than the bow and arrow. The only indications of the active pursuit of archery come from a few schools, and the setting up of a Royal Commission to enforce the old statutes on archery practice in 1628, the final throw in the lost cause of the long bow, had no effective results. No longer could the people see any military point or interest in the sport, and no longer were landowners prepared to set aside large tracts of land for shooting. The decline of wrestling continued similarly. It remained a sport to be recommended

to rustics for its military possibilities and it doubtless continued spasmodically on account of its knock-about attraction. It played an important part in the Cotswold Games, but its area of popularity was shrinking to the country's Celtic fringe, to the northern counties and the West Country, where there was Whitsun wrestling on many a Devon village green, with the girls' hats showing the wrestlers' favours at morning service, as an advertisement of the afternoon's sport.

The patchiness of the progress of these simple rural sports, in spite of the royal encouragement, implies changes in popular attitudes. Such basic exercise as running, leaping, throwing and rough-and-tumble wrestling had too elemental an appeal to be suppressed, but the specific festive occasions at which these sports often figured were certainly reduced under Puritan attack, although not to the wholesale extent that Trussell suggested in "Annalia Dubrensis":

"The country wakes and whirlings have appeared
Of late like foreign pastimes. Carnivals,
Palm and rush-bearing, harmless Whitsun-ales
Running at quintain, May-games, general plays,
By some more nice than wise, of latter days,
Have in their standings, lectures, exercises,
Been so reprov'd, traduced, condemned for vices,
Profane and heathenish, that now few dare
Set them afoot. The Hock-tide pastimes are
Declined, if not deserted, so that now
All public merriments, I know not how,
Are questioned for their lawfulness." (104)

Against this tide of social pressure and the development of qualms of popular conscience, the individual enterprise of a Robert Dover, or even the clearly-expressed wishes and encouragement of the monarch

(104) John Trussell, steward to the Bishop of Winchester, a Mayor of Winchester and a writer on historical subjects, (Whitfield, op.cit., p.105)

could do little that would decisively affect the issue. In parishes up and down the country, a traditionalist like Dover or an Erastian priest might be doing his utmost to promote the customary activities. In many more, however, the Calvinist opposition would not brook such gallivantings and doubtless, in still more, the supporters of tradition were too busy defending their main lines to fight skirmishes over what must have seemed merely the remoter benefits of the established order.

Had popular games playing been confined to these traditional folk pursuits of annual festivals, then the picture presented by the first half of the seventeenth century would have been one of steady decline. Some of the newer, more sophisticated sports, however, were developing both in technique and in the support they attracted. It may well be argued that Puritan criticism, in being particularly directed at the traditional festivals, was more effective in speeding up the changes in games playing habits that were already being prompted by social and economic circumstances, rather than in reducing the total pursuit of sports and games of the populace. The newer games, usually freer of the quasi-religious associations of church festivals than the old, appear generally to have met less wholesale criticism and to have progressed more evenly.

Cricket was emerging from its crude rural origins. It is obvious that cricket and stoolball stemmed from the same primitive games played by the shepherds of the Weald. "Stool" was an old Sussex dialect word for the stump of a tree, the base that had to be defended, and it was

only a short step to substitute a "wicket" (the sheep pen entrance) for the stump in the more developed version of the game. Both styles were clearly established by this period, stoolball usually, but not exclusively, being played by girls and women, with cricket becoming a game for adults and no longer just the child's play that it seems to have been in the previous century.

Stoolball was largely confined to the South Eastern corner of England and cricket wholly so. Sabbath players of the game were certainly the butts of Puritan criticism, but this was exacerbated by the fact that they had a habit of setting up their pitches in the church precincts. A Bill of Presentment was brought against six parishioners of Boxgrove in 1622 for playing the game in the Churchyard on Sunday, and a similar profanation prompted a rebuking sermon from the Reverend Thomas Wilson to his Maidstone congregation in the 1630's, at about the same time that the Park at West Horsley was ploughed up and sown for a cricket field. Opposition, it seems, could do little to check the game's growing popularity in its native region. (105)

Of all the games played in the first half of the seventeenth century, however, bowls was the one which flourished most conspicuously. Even before James I's licensing of bowling alleys, it had been regularly played on village greens as well as in private alleys, where it had always been authorised. Exactly to what extent it was a game for the lower orders or, more precisely, how far it expanded as a game

(105) H.S.Altham, op.cit., p.22

for the lower orders in this period, is a matter of some speculation. Bowls was invariably a gambling sport, and this of itself implied some degree of economic limitation. At the same time, there are such full and frequent references to the game in these years that its playing must have been extended over much of the social spectrum.

Particularly does this seem to have been so in the second quarter of the century. John Earl castigated the bowling alleys as "the place where there are three things thrown away besides bowls, to wit, time, money and curses, and the last ten for one," and he went on to describe the contortions of the players as they followed up their bowls, obviously a convention of peculiar behaviour already well established in the game:

"No antic screws men's bodies into such strange flexures, and you would think them here senseless, to speak sense to their bowl, and put their trust in entreaties for a good cast." (106)

John Taylor, in his "Wit and Mirth" (1629) talks similarly of "apish and delicate dogtricks", (107) while the ubiquitous Gervase Markham gave detailed instructions on the choosing of playing areas, "whether it be in wide open places or in close alleys," and on selecting the woods: flat bowls for alleys, round biassed balls for sloping greens and round bowls for "green swards that are plain and level." (108) Markham introduced the game by saying that it was "prescribed as a recreation for great persons", but it is likely that its following was

(106) John Earle: "Micro-cosmographie" (1628), in Dover Wilson, op.cit., p.19

(107) Burrows, op.cit., p.16

(108) "Countrey Contentments" (1631), reissued as "The School of Recreation: or, a Guide to the Most Ingenious Exercises of Hunting, Riding, Racing, &c., &c." by R.H.(1720), p.83

such that it was the nearest to a national game that the England of the first half of the seventeenth century possessed. In Shakespeare's plays, "bias", "bowl", "jack" and other such terms occur frequently in the speech of lords and commoners alike, and if the criterion of popularity was the number of references made to the game by the national ^{poet} ~~sports~~, then bowls would be unsurpassed.

The suggestion is, therefore, on the evidence provided by both old and new games in this particular period, that there are forces at work in the history of adult sport which are stronger than either the wishes of kings or the behests and prohibitions of clerics. Children's games might, perhaps, be expected to show a greater susceptibility to the pressures exerted by influential opinion, although the review of the educational attitudes towards physical training has already indicated that most writers did not concern themselves in any measure with their children's bodily pursuits. Practising schoolmasters doubtless often deserved Burton's criticisms that they made their scholars' lives a martyrdom through bodily inactivity which conduced to their frequent melancholy. (109)

School time-tables certainly left little opportunity for relaxation or exercise. Before the 1666 ordinances made slight amendments, the scholars of Bristol Grammar School, for instance, began their day at 6.00 a.m. from April to September, and 7.00 a.m. or 8.00 a.m. in the winter months. (110) while Queen Elizabeth's

(109) R.Burton, op.cit., Vol.I, pp.301 and 333.

(110) C.P.Hill: "The History of Bristol Grammar School" (1951), p.26.

Wakefield, having begun school at 6.00 a.m. (or sunrise, in winter) went on until 6.00 p.m., with just a two hour break at midday. ⁽¹¹¹⁾ Even the half day releases from classical study, usually on two days a week, were often taken up with writing or arithmetic (as in the time-table quoted by the Schools Enquiry Commission ⁽¹¹²⁾) and there seems to have been a growth of comprehension texts on sermons, as recommended by Brinsley. Nor were long hours compensated by long vacations. The statutes of Wilson's Grammar School (c.1617) are typical of other school regulations of the day in other respects and it can be assumed that the holidays they grant represent contemporary practice: they were, at Christmas, from St Thomas's Eve (20th December) to Plough Monday (the second Monday in the New Year); at Easter, from Wednesday in Holy Week to the Monday Week following, and at Whitsuntide, from the Wednesday before to the Monday following, which gives a total of about six weeks of holiday. The 18 holy days which have to be added, were, however, occasions for church-going, often with religion instruction afterwards.

There was thus little opportunity for the development of organised play under the auspices of the school. The only game which does appear to have been officially and regularly sponsored for scholars is archery, which gave its name to the "Shooting Fields" at Eton at this time. Other games allowed in a number of school statutes were running, wrestling and leaping, ⁽¹¹³⁾ and such other mention of sport which

(111) Curtis, op.cit., p.42

(112) ibid., pp.34/5

(113) Allport, op.cit., p.158

occurs is usually by way of restriction, especially in forbidding cock-fighting as was the case at St Paul's and Merchant Taylors.⁽¹¹⁴⁾ It would be a mistake to read too much into official prescripts, however, as the University evidence well illustrates. The fact that Elizabethan restrictions at Cambridge did not prevent the wide pursuit of physical activities, extending into the seventeenth century, has already been noted,⁽¹¹⁵⁾ and the Universities were well enough known for their games playing and proneness to physical recreations to be satirised on that account by John Earle. They were, he asserted, "the best dancing and fencing schools" available, and the undergraduate's progress was marked by his proficiency on the tennis court, "where he can once play a set, he is a fresh-man no more."⁽¹¹⁶⁾

Universities were compact communities and less susceptible to local opinion than were schools. Thus undergraduates were freer to pursue their own inclinations in physical activities than were schoolboys in a small town or village where the clergyman or local squire (or, as we have seen, the local populace) might find sport sinful. University practice does, however, lend credence to the belief that there was still a considerable amount of physical activity among schoolboys in whatever times of freedom they could find, physical play which, if not actually arranged by the masters, was regularly tolerated by them. Birstall's attitude at Sherborne, expressed in a letter to his Governors in 1656, was doubtless a common one:

(114) Curtis, op.cit., p.39

(115) See above, pp.64/65

(116) from "Micro-cosmographie" (1628), in Dover Wilson, op.cit., p.65

"The playing of scholars also by themselves, at their times allowed, was a thing I have found by 14 or 15 years experience in this way of how much concernment it is to the good of a school." (117)

That schoolboys continued to play is a proposition which the facts of human nature make it hard to contradict. How far this play was sponsored, or even tolerated, by schoolmasters is harder to decide, and this was probably, more at this time than at any other, a personal and local matter, with considerable variation between one school and one area and another. The schoolmaster's own attitudes would inevitably be coloured by the pressures which we have seen affecting adult games and schoolboys' play, where it occurred outside the ambit of the school, was equally certainly subject to the same influences that were changing the nature of adult sports.

These changes did, as we have seen, diminish the traditional rural sports, but they brought also some significant developments of newer games and particularly those which were convenient vehicles for gambling. While some of these changes were consciously striven for, others were the consequences of circumstances and not of deliberate policies. The decline of the older rural sports was, for instance, part and parcel of much deeper changes in the rural economy, where the tight medieval order, to which the ancient festivals belonged, was giving way to a more flexible economic and social organisation.

Enclosures not only took away subsistence; they also often removed the traditional playing areas as well. They produced, too, a certain amount of population mobility, at both the labouring and land-owning levels, setting in motion changes in community patterns, which in turn

made these community patterns susceptible to change itself, and weakened the social validity of traditional forms of community behaviour, including play.

The increasing application of capitalist methods to agriculture that went with enclosures and large-scale sheep farming was accompanied by the same tendency towards capitalist production in some areas of manufacture. Hence a tendency towards larger population units, whether the manufacture was centred in villages, towns or cities. The process of urbanisation, which has still not ended in our own day, was already under way, however slowly and, as far as governments were concerned, however reluctantly. The urbanisation of English sport is more marked in the second half of the seventeenth century than in the first, but already the increased size of population units was having its effects. One of the reasons for mass scrambles like football drawing increasing criticism and restriction was that the numbers involved grew too unmanageable; more generally, there was greater freedom for games to escape from occasional church festivals and, with greater rapidity of communication, easier social intercourse and more frequent opportunity, there were developments in the complexity of games and a more ready establishment of uniform regulations and techniques.

Moreover, the changed attitudes towards the ethics of money-making that marked the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and which gave R.H.Tawney the dominant theme for his "Religion and the Rise of Capitalism" were of obvious relevance to the increasing acceptability

(in practice, if not in theory) of gambling in sport. Large-scale borrowing was essential to the new methods of production and the new dimensions of trade; the growing legitimacy of using capital to accrue profit and the increasing^{ly} speculative nature of many purely economic transactions must have put a new complexion on investing money in play activities. New attitudes towards making money may not, perhaps, have given gambling respectability, but they did release it from the certainty of sin.

The national mood of 1650 and the prevailing attitudes towards exercise and physical education were very different from those of 1600. Just as economic forces associated with a developing capitalism were influencing men's games playing towards the financial involvements of gambling, so the political and religious discord was producing acute conflicts of opinion on physical recreation. Generally during this first half of the seventeenth century it had been the divisive and restrictive tendencies in attitudes towards physical education which had gained ground. Even conscious efforts by Dover and the revivalists could not maintain sporting traditions that had lost their social significance, while the silence of liberal educators on the pursuits that they would have their widening school populations follow are indications of the difficulty that physical education would have to face in popular education in later centuries.

With one significant exception, the specific and conscious efforts of men to regulate people's games playing were, in this period, less

effective than the pressures brought to bear on sport by less realised social and economic forces and less immediately apparent changes in public mood. The specific and conscious directions of authority could do something to alter stresses in games playing, could canalise some of its energies into one form rather than another; they could not mould it into a pattern which did violence to the social and economic order out of which the games playing arose and in the context of which it had its only reality.

It accordingly fell to the one movement of opinion which was in harmony with social and economic changes of the first half of the seventeenth century to make the age's most incisive and permanent contributions to the history of English games playing. Puritan attitudes towards sport had not merely a burning conviction but also a directness which, if not always attractive, was readily comprehensible. The pragmatic clarity of the Puritan attitude towards the ethics of capitalism contrasted with the ineffectuality of much other theorising of the time and contributed in no small way to the regular success of Puritan business venturing. It may well be that a similar combination of idealism and social realism lay behind the lasting influence of what, even in its heyday, was no more than a minority view of the proper function of physical activities and sports in the life of the Englishman.

Chapter III

PURITANISM AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.

"The principal streams which descended in England from the teaching of Calvin were three - Presbyterianism, Congregationalism, and a doctrine of the nature of God and man, which, if common to both, was more widely diffused, more pervasive and more potent than either. Of these three offshoots from the parent stem, the first and eldest, which had made some stir under Elizabeth, and which it was hoped, with judicious watering from the Scotch, might grow into a State Church, was to produce a credal statement carved in bronze, but was to strike, at least in its original guise, but slender roots. The second, with its insistence on the right of every Church to organise itself, and on the freedom of all Churches from the interference of the State, was to leave, alike in the Old World and in the New, an imperishable legacy of civil and religious liberty. The third was Puritanism. Straitened to no single sect, and represented in the Anglican Church hardly, if at all, less fully than in those which afterwards separated from it, it determined, not only conceptions of theology and church government, but political aspirations, business relations, family life and the minutiae of personal behaviour." (R.H.Tawney: "Religion and the Rise of Capitalism" (1938 edition), p.198)

"They have twenty or forty yoke of oxen....draw home this Maypole (this stinking idol, rather)... And thus being reared up with handkerchiefs and flags streaming on the top, they straw the ground about, bound bind green boughs about it.... and then they fall to banquet and feast, to leap and dance about it, as the heathen people did at the dedication of their idols, whereof this is a perfect pattern, or rather the thing itself." (Philip Stubbes: "The Anatomie of Abuses") (1)

(1) Quoted in J.Dover Wilson, op.cit., p.24

"Spend all your days in a skilful, vigilant, resolute and valiant War against the Flesh, the World and the Devil." (Richard Baxter: "A Christian Directory", p.86) (2)

Although the discussion of Puritan attitudes towards physical activities has been reserved for a chapter of its own, it has been impossible to ignore the Puritan influence completely. Enough passing reference has been made to indicate the critical nature of the Puritan contribution to the history of English exercise.

In Chapter I, it was argued that Elizabethan schools gave only lukewarm recognition to physical education because their Renaissance inspiration had come from predominantly Germanic sources. They were markedly radical in their Protestantism and already suspicious of sport and play. Puritan strictures were forcing enthusiasts for physical education into defensive postures, like that taken up by Mulcaster in his long argument in favour of dancing. Another result of these attacks was the remarkable effort made to revive the popular rural sports under the first two Stuarts, described in the preceding chapter.

It is this negative aspect of Puritanism which first forces its attention on the historian of attitudes towards physical activity.

"A Fateful Era" is Wymer's title for his seventeenth century chapter: (3) and Van Dalen and his co-authors note, with more restraint but no less pessimism, that "The Puritanical sects, both in Europe and America,

(2) "A Christian Directory: or a Summo of Practicall Theologie and Cases of Conscience" (2nd Edition, 1678)

(3) Wymer, op.cit., Chapter V, p.80

never permitted the formulation of ^{broad}~~seried~~ aims of physical education."⁽⁴⁾
 To keep the discussion of English Calvinism entirely at this level, however, fails to do justice to a movement which, as Tawney remarked, had a profound and often positive impact upon men's thoughts and actions. Its influence was even powerful, if only by reaction, upon many who had little sympathy with its tenets. The total reassessment of human personality which Puritanism demanded was of the type called for in our own century by Freud's unveiling of the unconscious mind. The Puritan re-examination of the nature of man was at once drastic and far-reaching; without it, the Wesleys and Kingsleys could hardly have been what they were, but without it neither Thomas Hobbes nor Karl Marx could have written quite as they did.

The long-standing effectiveness of the Puritan intervention in physical activities can hardly be doubted. It gave us the "English Sunday", for example, which still manages to debar many sports to the Sabbath, even when they may be allowed on Good Friday and Christmas Day; it gave the nation's official conscience, if not its private habit, a deep suspicion of gambling, from which the state is only now escaping; it gave us also a mild distrust of any physical exertion pursued for other purposes than honest toil. Such attitudes, moreover, did not arise from extemporised comment or immediate expediency. They are the legacy of a wholesale inspection of the purposes and

(4) Van Dalen, Mitchell and Bennett, op.cit., p.156

propriety of bodily exercise, a rigorous enquiry from first principles which gives the Puritan movement a peculiar significance in the history of physical education.

The reappraisal of physical activity that this produced was novel in its thoroughness and conclusions alike. Previous explorations into the motives for exercise, in fifth century Athens or fifteenth century Italy, for example, had been either socially or culturally exclusive in their application. The theory of physical activity propounded by English Puritanism was neither. While its conclusions could not wholly escape the conventional requirements of manners, the military demands of the state or the differences between the classes, they did maintain a radicalism that was self-consistent and set up no new social barriers. Nor did they raise intellectual hurdles, for the view of man which lay behind the Puritan attitude towards physical activity was plain enough to be preached to all from pulpit and market cross. It was a creed which invited the active discipleship of the many, not just the subscription of the scholar.

Yet all this can hardly explain the persistent appeal of the Puritan message, especially in view of the limitations under which the movement laboured. As a religious party (or "parties") English Puritanism was relatively short-lived, lasting hardly a century, while it enjoyed only a dozen years or more of actual political authority and probably never had a clear majority following in the country at large. To discuss the Puritan involvement with sports and games is, therefore,

to tell the story of one of the most efficient pressure groups to which physical education has ever been subjected.

(i) English Calvinism and the Human Body.

English Calvinism was one of those distinctive local forms into which European Protestantism tended to divide.

The extent to which the Reformation encouraged the emergence of separate national states can certainly be exaggerated, for, in spite of its often acute internal differences, Protestantism held to its international flavour until at least the middle of the seventeenth century. English help was regularly given to Protestants abroad, and it had seemed an obvious move for the parliamentarians to invite a Moravian bishop to this country to advise them on the conduct of their schools. At the same time, Protestantism had inbuilt tendencies towards regional variation. In each country it depended for its existence on local revolt against the Universal Church of Rome, while uniformity was all the harder to maintain since the new religion placed such stress on the workings of individual conscience. The abandonment of the international language of the old church and the loss of its international priesthood also encouraged the growth of national characteristics in both church organisation and dogma.

English Puritanism enjoyed a particular freedom to develop its own pattern. It avoided the rigidity of attitude which usually overcame those reformed churches which acquired early political

authority and it also escaped the most repressive forms of persecution. The comparative licence which it was allowed encouraged a rich diversity of belief (if the many-sidedness of the Elizabethan genius lived on anywhere, it was in the seventeenth century Puritan movement!) and the movement's own situation forced it, however reluctantly, into a greater sense of tolerance than its continental counterparts could ever abide.

At the same time, it worked ~~from~~ from the central dogmas of continental Calvinism, believing in salvation through faith alone and discounting formal observances and ritualistic works. It developed Calvin's doctrine of pre-destination, using it both to correct the anarchism that was incipient in Protestant individualism (and which came to the surface in the forays of Diggers, Levellers and Fifth Monarchy men during the Interregnum) and also to forge a system of social behaviour that combined reverence and economic dynamism with startling success.

Calvin had asserted that "God not only foresaw the fall of the first man", but also "arranged all by the determination of His own will." (5) From here, Calvin developed the argument of pre-destination: God determined upon the salvation of some, His "elect", and the eternal damnation of the rest. God's selection was unfathomable to man and yet, while salvation could not be secured by good works, there was to be no pretext for relapsing into fatalism and spiritual lassitude. Although earthly virtues had no power to win a man his place in heaven,

(5) Calvin: "Institutes of the Christian Religion", trans. J.Allen (1838) Vol.II, p.147

they might well be evidence that he was predestined from the first to be one of God's elect. Those destined to be saved were made aware of their election by a personal sense of the presence of God in themselves; their election was shown by their conversion and self-examination, by a consciousness of God's gifts and of their own sins, for which they would show a true repentance. It is hard to dispute Tawney's verdict that "there have been few systems in which the practical conclusions flow by so inevitable a logic from the theological premises." (6) The elect had to accept the world in all of its sober aspects; hard, honest work became both a matter of conscience and a considerable virtue. The English Puritans make repeated reference to "godly thrift", "Christian gaining" and "lawful prospering", (7) while one of their number asserted comprehensively that "This world and the things thereof are all good, and were all made of God, for the benefit of his creatures." (8)

Such an acceptance of the material world reflected the appeal that Puritanism made to merchants and manufacturers in particular. Hexter warns against taking too narrow a view of a movement which was not identifiably "middle class" (a term which he finds inappropriate in this period anyway) and which drew its recruits from the squirearchy and the land worker as well as from traders and professional men. (9) None the less, its philosophy was especially attractive to

(6) Tawney, op.cit., p.198

(7) See, inter alia, William Haller: "The Rise of Puritanism" (New York, 1957 edition), p.123

(8) Richard Sibbes: "The Saints Cordials" (1637) pp.280/281.

(9) J.H.Hexter, op.cit., p.33

those whose economic significance was increasing and yet who could find no appropriate role in the traditional pattern of the community. For them, there was both profit and consolation in a religion which was seeking, in the words of its historian,

"to adapt Christian morality to the needs of a population which was being steadily driven from its old feudal status into the untried conditions of competition between man and man in an increasingly commercial and industrial society under a money economy." (10)

English Puritanism, of course, had to appeal in order to win disciples. After the failure of the early Elizabethan attempt, from within the English Church, to move the Establishment towards Presbyterianism, the movement for further spiritual reform could not rely upon inheriting a national following through political action. It had to win its support, had to take on an evangelical tone; its energies went perforce into preaching and its propagators contributed very largely to that great period of pulpit oratory which covered the decades on either side of 1600. At that time preachers had to compete for their audience with a flourishing and flamboyant theatre which, like them, dwelt upon morality, sins and sinners. With this in mind, and remembering that English Puritanism had to win its followers by persuasion, it is hard to accept the verdict that its code of behaviour was alien and imposed. As we have seen, historians of physical education have often taken this view. (11) The popular, propagandist nature of the movement also partly explains the diversity

(10) Haller, op.cit., p.117

(11) Wymer, for instance, talks of Puritan influence in terms of a few years of political suppression when sports were "fettered by armed dictatorship posing as democracy"! (op.cit., p.84)

of Puritan social enquiry, its ready extension into affairs of business, pleasure, and "the minutiae of social behaviour."

Unless one assumes a drastic change in the disposition of men, the popularity of Puritanism still provides intriguing questions. How did they secure such a following when their attitudes towards the pleasures of the people appear (or have appeared to the historians of games) to run counter to human inclination? The strain of asceticism in humanity and the fact that the Puritan appeal, like that of all religions, was doubtless more widespread among the middle aged than among the physically exuberant young, may give something of an answer, but they do not give it all. Were the English Puritans, in fact, as restrictive as they have been painted? Luther, after all, had allowed a tolerant scope for physical training ⁽¹²⁾ and exercise and, if Calvin had been at best suspicious and at worst purely negative, this did not necessarily bode ill for pleasure on this side of the North Sea, where there was a persistent individualism in Calvinist thinking. A movement which sought earnestly for the support of the people could never have been as wholly negative as English Puritanism has often been depicted (and as Shakespeare, for instance, usually hinted it to be in his caricatures). Calvinist theology had strict consequences for rules of conduct, but it was not a matter of wholesale restriction. As Haller reminds us,

(12) see above, p.57

"The unloveliness of the code in some of its later manifestations should not blind us to its positive and bracing effect upon common life in Stuart times. The merry England doomed by Puritan asceticism was not ^{all} cakes and ale, maypole dancing and frolics on the village green." (13)

It has already been suggested that the England that Robert Dover and the royal "Book of Sports" sought to preserve was being eroded by social and economic change as well as by Puritan criticism. There was no single choice between gaiety and gloom, as the picture has often been painted. The stark conflict between Puritan and Roman Catholic in Lancashire which occasioned James' original declaration hardly typified the national scene. In the county where, of all others, religious extremism was most marked, where Catholic and Puritan vied with each other in superstitious fanaticism in witch hunting, (14) and where the Civil War was to be fought with a ferocity unmatched anywhere in the land, one might well find an exaggerated contrast between the old jollity and the new austerity.

Undoubtedly, however, Puritan attitudes towards physical recreation were usually unfriendly. If honest labour became service to God and a man's moral duty, then any form of play took on the badge of time-wasting, idleness and, therefore, vice. Even a moderate such as William Perkins (1560-1602), who dissociated himself from the extremists after 1590, regarded social action as an integral part of his Calvinism; he castigated the lazy and unproductive, "such as live

(13) Haller, op.cit., p.116

(14) Eleven witches, for instance, were executed in the county in one year, 1611.

by no calling, but spend their time in eating, drinking, sleeping, and sporting." (15) Physical effort took on this simple polarity, with hard work at one end and rest at the other, and with anything between appearing as idleness. There was a considerable range of Puritan opinion on many of the important issues of the day; views on social, political and ecclesiastical organisation all had a variety which was invigorating in the years of growth, however embarrassing it might become once a practical policy was called for. Puritan estimates of man's physical nature had something of this diversity, although when it came down to the question of how the body should be used there was much practical agreement. Here was an area, and one of the few, where virtually all Puritan voices spoke as one, with a unity which helps to account for the lasting effects of Puritan attitudes towards sports and games.

In Puritan eyes, the body was not, of itself, necessarily sinful although there was a constant temptation to see it as such. The Quakers, for instance, might often seem the extremists of the Puritan movement ("a new fanatic sect, of dangerous principles", Evelyn recorded (16)), yet George Fox rejected the notion that "the outward body was the body of death and sin". He argued that Adam and Eve existed in their physical frame "before the body of death and sin got into them" and that

"man and woman will have bodies when the body of sin and death is put off again; when they are renewed up into the image of God

(15) Quoted in Christopher Hill: "Puritanism and Revolution" (1962 edition), p.256

(16) Evelyn: Diary, 8th July, 1657.

again by Christ Jesus, which they were in before they fell." (17)

This may appear to be no more than a theological quibble, but it was a strain in Puritan thinking which generally kept the body free from deliberate mortification. Certainly there were extremists who subjected themselves to physical regimes of an almost impossible rigour. In the 1650's, Roger Crab, the hatter of Chesham, gave all he had to the poor and restricted himself to a diet of bran broth and turnip leaves and finally to dock leaves and grass! While Crab lived to the age of 59, several of his followers died of his prescribed diet of vegetables and water. Such abstemiousness was intended to subject the body to the soul, and so reach true happiness. For Crab, soul and body were even more separate entities than they were for most of his co-religionists, yet, in spite of his rigorous treatment of the body, he could still talk of it in friendly fashion, as when he describes how he reduced it to obedience:

"The old Man (meaning my Body), being moved, would know what he had done, that I used him so hardly. Then I showed him his Transgression..... : so the Wars began. The Law of the Old Man, in my fleshly members, rebelled against the Laws of my Mind, and had a shrewd Skirmish; but the Mind, being well enlightened, held it, so that the Old Man grew sick and weak with the Flux, like to fall to the Dust. But the wonderful Love of God, well pleased with the Battle, raised him up again, and filled him full of Love, Peace, and Content in mind. And (he) is now become more humble; for now he will eat Dock-leaves, Mallows or grass, and yields that he ought to give God more Thanks for it than, formerly, for roast Flesh and Wines." (18)

While the usual Puritan attitude towards the body was less affectionate

(17) George Fox: Journal (1924 edition) p.91

(18) "The English Hermit, or The Wonder of the Age" (1655), quoted in Christopher Hill, op.cit., p.317, in a chapter given over to Roger Crab's life and opinions.

in tone, it was also usually somewhat less drastic in its practical requirements. A certain degree of bodily fitness was implied in the participation in the labours of the world that Puritanism demanded and, however much they preached that this "life that we live in the flesh, is a thing of nothing" (19) and however regularly they equated "the flesh" with "sin" (themes with which they were almost pathologically pre-occupied) health remained desirable as a means to hard work and the serious pursuit of private and public affairs. It was not so much a rejection of man's physical nature (still less an oriental physical quiescence) as a moral rejection of all profitless physical activity and a condemnation of all physical pride. Bunyan might hold that "the Body without the Soul is but a dead Carcass" (20) and reserve as his greatest condemnation of others' arguments that they were "flowing only from the flesh", (21) yet even he implies great physical effort in Christian's laborious journey even though it is the spiritual and moral exertions alone which are stressed. Nor could there be any despising of the physique or any physical neglect in a man like Fox whose daily life was often extremely arduous. He describes, in a wholly matter-of-fact way one day of an American visit: he and his companion travelled by canoe and horse, slept in the woods, crossed two rivers, "which we went over in our canoes, causing our horses to swim" and then, after a short rest, rode thirty miles to their next town, Newcastle, which they

(19) R.Sibbes, op.cit., p.280

(20) John Bunyan: "The Pilgrim's Progress" (1904 edition) p.98

(21) ibid., p.31 (He is referring to Mr Worldly-Wiseman)

reached "exceeding tired and withal wet to the skin." (22)

In another aspect of the body's functions the Puritans were also generally free from suspicion of asceticism, namely in their attitude towards marriage. Milton's life and opinions both reflect his somewhat eccentric matrimonial enthusiasm, while the Puritans as a whole generally married early, performed their connubial duties with diligence (if sometimes also, as their private diaries reveal, with doubts about the carnal thoughts inspired in them by their own wives) (23) and produced numerous children.

Profitless physical activities and physical pride were other matters. Bunyan gives instant reproof to Christian whose mild smile of achievement, after exerting all his strength to overcome Faithful, is dismissed as "vainglorious". He is condemned to stumble "and could not rise again until Faithful came up to help him." (24) The Puritans understood well enough the appeal of physical pursuits and the pride in physical prowess, although they tended to see both as personally damning and socially damaging. Their numerous strictures are familiar and several have already been quoted in passing in previous chapters: attacks on dancing, for its carnality; on football, for its violence; on maypoles for their paganism; and on sports in general for their despoilation of the Sabbath. This last was the main target for their criticisms, since Sundays were the only days, apart from

(22) Fox, op.cit., p.285

(23) Haller, op.cit., p.120

(24) Bunyan, op.cit., pp.84/5

church festivals, when people had the opportunity for sport, (25) the particular criticism of Sabbath games playing was readily made equivalent to a condemnation of games in general. The process is discernible in a record made by George Fox of how he spent time (1649)

"testifying against their wakes or feasts, may-games, sports and plays, and shows, which trained up people to vanity and looseness, and led them from the fear of God; and the days they had set forth for holy-days were usually the times wherein they most dishonoured God by those things." (26)

It was therefore a combination of circumstance which led the English Puritans into what became a wholesale condemnation of games and sports: their account of the nature of man was inclined to make physical recreation appear an indulgence, their social philosophy of hard work was inclined to make it appear unnecessary and their doctrine of religious observance certainly made most of its manifestations undesirable. Physical recreation became certainly a frivolity and frequently a sin:

"if we should come in to a house, and see many Physic-boxes and Glasses, we would conclude somebody is sick; so when we see Hounds, and Hawks, and Cards, and Dice, we may fear that there is some sick soul in that Family." (27)

So preached John Dod, the great orator of Puritan pulpits at the turn of the century, who also contrasted the impatience of some congregations at long sermons with the persistence of sportsmen in pursuit of the trivial: "gentlemen will follow hounds from seven in morning till four or five in the afternoon" and therefore "we should

(25) This point was argued by James, in his "Book of Sports". See above, p. 168

(26) Fox, op.cit., p.22

(27) Haller, op.cit., p.59

be content though the Minister stood above his hour." (28)

If they were severe in their castigation of the merry-makings of others, their strictures sprang at least in part from this awareness of the appeal that sporting activities made, and made to Puritans themselves, as well as to the unreformed. Indeed, the most frequent references to games and sports in Puritan writings occur by way of autobiography, when the authors are recalling the misspent days of their abandoned youth, before conversion. The preacher's sinful past was a regular topic in sermons. Many Puritans also kept diaries, using them as a form of confessional, a casting up of the daily account. These sources reveal the climacteric effect of conversions on their attitudes towards play. One John Bruen, for instance, was in his youth much given to "hawking, hunting, and such carnal delights", (29) but repented early, while Richard Rothwel, "the Rough Hewer", who was "tall, well set, of great strength of body and activity," gave himself up (in spite of being a minister) to hunting, bowling and shooting, before being saved by a neighbouring parson who found him playing bowls. (30) Bunyan's early biographers made much of his confession of profligacy in youth, although these "sins" consisted of dancing, ballad-reading and a zest for sports and pastimes, hardly debauchery by any but the most astringent standards. (31) His "Pilgrim's Progress" was to give, incidentally, scant encouragement to physical activity to

(28) *ibid.*, p.60

(29) Clarke: "The marrow of ecclesiastical historie" Part 2 (1650) pp.169ff.

(30) Edward Bagshaw: "The Life and Death of Mr Bolton" (1633), quoted by Haller, *op.cit.*, p.109. (The devil is reputed to have assaulted Rothwel frequently afterwards, but his faith remained sure.)

(31) Bunyan, *op.cit.*, Introduction, pp.xi-xiii.

those millions of subsequent readers for whom, along with the Bible, it was to be the staple of their literature. Christian may have needed strength and agility to overcome Apollyon, but any sports are a diversion from his progress and the one "very brisk lad" who appears in Bunyan's work is, "Ignorance"!

The philosophical position of the Puritans on the nature and function of the human body was not, as has been seen, markedly different from that of many of their Christian predecessors. The sweeping restrictions which they produced must have been derived from other sources. Their frowns were, indeed, provoked much more directly as a result of their concepts of human nature as a whole, in its dual potentiality for sin and redemption, and in their interpretation of the relationship of man with God. It was this nature and this relationship which dictated the true believer's earthy duties, urging him to reveal signs of his own salvation and also to promote the salvation of others. In the honest high seriousness of life, these signs of election would be manifest, and so, by contrast, would damnation, in the lives of those who lacked this strenuous earnestness. Idle-ness, time-wasting and frivolity were thus, for the Puritan, not merely character flaws, economic faults or social problems; they were evidence of a lost soul. From these theological premises, much more than from any fundamental views on man's physical being, stemmed the Puritan antagonism to sports and games.

It had, of course, many contributing factors, some of which have

already been noted. Many of the activities they most opposed had associations with Catholic festivals or even with pre-Christian rites; the Calvinist respect for the Sabbath hit at a great deal of popular sport and the Puritan sense of propriety rebelled against the time-wasting pursuits, in field and chase, of a leisured class for which they could see no moral justification. The one hope for physical recreation lay in any claims it could make to keeping the body healthy, fit and ready, as Luther had demanded, to do the Lord's work in this world. Generally, however, it would be argued (as Baxter was to do) that work itself was the best route to physical fitness. Furthermore, the state of English sports and games in the first half of the seventeenth century was hardly such as to provide many examples of healthy physical exercise. Standing as they did in an interim stage between medieval folk play and sophisticated modern sport, they were frequently riddled with gambling, drinking and riot and often their physical exercise had been reduced to a minimum. Puritan strictures on games were not, in the first instance, criticisms of physical activity as such. After all, this was not a concept which came readily to seventeenth century minds. It was the "play" element which aroused the common wrath, and the physical pursuits suffered along with all other recreations.

However, once distrust of physical recreation was aroused its prospects were gloomy. The physical nature of man, the Puritans were reminded, was the seat of some of the darker vices, especially gluttony

and lust. The body's play and the body's vices tended to merge together without distinction and attitudes towards physical functions became much more antagonistic than the original philosophical premises of Calvinism had demanded. Once this antagonism was given full rein (and it was likely to have unanimous support from all the sects in the movement), drastic legislation against sports and games was almost inevitable.

(ii) Physical Activities during the Interregnum.

The previous section has outlined the assumptions upon which the Puritan movement based its massive effort to change public opinion during the first half of the seventeenth century. The present one deals with the measures taken by the administration, between the Civil War and the Restoration, in its attempts to put Puritan theory into practice.

This was by no means the first governmental attempt to amend the sporting habits of the English, but it was much the most thorough-going that the country has experienced. Only in the present century, with the state's concern for physical education and the recent extensions of state interest in all levels of sport, has there been anything approaching the comprehensive public policy on recreation which men sought to implement between 1642 and 1660.

In dealing with Puritan arguments and in trying to explain their appeal, in spite of the apparent unattractiveness of some of their restrictions, the tendency is always to produce an apologia for the creed. When dealing with the executive action of governments and administrators during the Interregnum, however, the difficulty is to sketch a valid picture of what these years did in fact mean to the recreation of the country, both at the time and in its later history. It can be said at once that the notion of a country suddenly passing wholly out of a Stuart sunshine into a Puritan gloom is quite false. The effectiveness of the Parliamentary administration was of different intensity in different parts of the country. It castigated certain physical activities (and sometimes certain social classes) more roundly than others and it did not always bear the clear stamp of Puritan social theory about it.

This is not altogether surprising when one remembers that the "Puritanism" of the War period and after was something different from the broad religious radicalism, not strictly formulated into a definite party, of the period before 1640, and with which the first section of this chapter was largely concerned. The intransigence of the Parliamentary stand in 1642 turned many moderate reformers, both political and religious, to the king's banner. Thus the parliamentary side became dominated by extreme opinions and religious fervour made internal dissension within the movement almost unavoidable. Most notable was the split between the Presbyterians and the Independents,

but the revolutionary situation also fostered numerous smaller factions, Anabaptists, Ranters, Fifth Monarchists, Quakers and the like.

Moreover, the effectiveness of Puritan policy, with regard to sports and games as in other areas, depended upon the local administration. For most of the years of the Interregnum this control was exercised by local men subject to local pressures which, added to the diversity of religious belief on the Parliamentary side, made any attempt to secure a national policy fraught with obstacles that could only be cleared by the establishment of military rule.

The observance of the Sabbath, over which there had been such contention in the pre-war period, now became the subject of rigorous legislation. In 1647 a parliamentary ordinance abolished the old church festivals and a monthly day's holiday and fast day took their place. While this made a sound economic appeal, it also meant a concentration of religious enthusiasm, previously widespread, on the Sabbath. It curtailed those popular games which had preserved an original attachment to particular festivals even if, by this time, they were not solely confined to them. At the domestic level there was obvious difficulty in enforcing this legislation in spite of the intervention of the soldiery, who would even confiscate the meat and cakes being prepared in housewife's kitchen for the forbidden feasts. The private observance of at least the major festivals certainly continued to be widespread. Members attending the parliamentary sitting on December 25th, 1656, noted with annoyance that many shops were closed and that even in the

House the benches were sparsely populated. (32) Public festivities, however, were another matter, and more readily dealt with. There seems little doubt that they were usually suppressed, both on account of their profanity and also because they provided possible occasions for sedition. Thus, the Dorset Standing Committee was warning Mr Speaker Lenthall, in May, 1647, that

"knowing what small beginnings have formerly come to, we think ourselves in duty bound to give you an account of the distempers of these parts, where under pretence of football matches and cudgel playing and the like, have been lately suspicious meetings and assemblies at several places made up of very diaffected persons, and more such are appointed." (33)

So the reputation of sport fell even lower. From being merely time-wasting it had first become sinful and now became almost treasonable. Penruddock's royalist rising in the West Country looked even blacker since, according to witnesses at the trial, it was planned at a hunting party, "where they danced at night, having a fiddler with them." (34) Notwithstanding the sinister reputation which sport had thus acquired, it would be wrong to regard the legal abolition of the festival days as a decisive event in its own right, since it had already, in many places, been anticipated by local Puritan enthusiasm. Some of the activities of sabbatarians in the western counties have already come to notice in the context of the Cotswold Games and the royal Declaration of Sports, and these could be multiplied. At Lyme Regis, for example, after a court action over the "using of profane and religious abuses" and the dispossession of a too radical priest, the Puritans had eventually

(32) G.Davies, op.cit., p.307

(33) A.R.Bayley: "The Great Civil War in Dorset 1642-1660" (Taunton, 1910) p.349

(34) ibid., p.380

succeeded, before the outbreak of hostilities, in abolishing the great Cobb Ale, the annual Whitsuntide merrymaking. (35)

Similarly, the actual legislation on the keeping of the Sabbath day was significant largely as giving official sanction to restrictions already thoroughly imposed in some areas and never to be wholly effective in others. Indeed, the relative ineffectuality of the statutes, just as much as the Parliament party's persistence over Sunday observance, is shown by the fact that three separate acts were passed, each more stringent than the one before, but each agreeing in its absolute prohibition of games, sports and pastimes on the Sabbath. All work was forbidden and even all forms of locomotion, except that of walking to church! Where-ever there was an antagonistic populace or a lax bench of magistrates such statutes were obviously impossible to enforce, and in the large centres of population particularly the Sabbath was never kept as thoroughly as the Puritan law-givers would have wished. There were some justices who sought to impose the law with rigour. At Dorchester, for instance, both men and women were fined (or "set by the heels", i.e. stocked, in lieu of payment); a pair of "sweethearts" were convicted for walking abroad during sermon-time; one Charity James was fined 5s. for carrying coals and stones to his kiln and children were prosecuted for playing "spur-point" and "nine-stones". (36) These Dorchester offences all date from the mid-1650's and so coincide, almost certainly not by accident, with the one

(35) *ibid.*, pp.13/14

(36) *ibid.*, pp.419/420

period during the Interregnum when the Puritan code was being most severely and widely applied , through the instrument of the Major-Generals. In 1655, shortly after Penruddock's abortive rising in Wiltshire, Cromwell divided England and Wales into eleven military districts, administered by Major-Generals, who have been aptly described as "tax collectors, policemen, and guardians of public morality." (37) That this military rule was hated by the people is probably both an indication of its effectiveness during the two years for which Cromwell managed to maintain it and also evidence that for most of the republican period the Puritan yoke was, in many localities, not unduly burdensome.

The Major-Generals found much to do in bringing the country to a state of true piety. Their first reports after taking up their commissions indicate how lethargically parliament's injunctions had been obeyed in many areas:

"what some justices, in order to reformation do, others undo; and the spirits of the best very low for want of such an officer to encourage them all....."

"....I am much troubled with these market towns everywhere, vices abounding and magistrates fast asleep." (38)

Their own instructions were clear-cut. Sunday was to be kept as parliament had laid down, and even on week days there was to be severe restriction of the people's recreation. Officers were ordered to suppress horse-racing, cock-fighting, bear-baiting and any unlawful assemblies (as a measure of internal security as much as on religious

(37) G.Davies, op.cit., p.180

(38) M.James: "Social Policy Problems and Problems during The Puritan Revolution" (1930), pp.292/3

grounds); to enforce the laws against drunkenness, profanity, and blasphemy; to bring an end to stage-plays, gambling dens and brothels and to reduce the number of ale-houses.

These commissions were executed with vigour and in Cheshire alone two hundred ale-houses are reported to have been suppressed. That this form of administration should prove necessary is evidence that, whatever appeal Puritanism might make in some of its more positive aspects, the harsher negatives of its code of social behaviour and recreation never won a wide enough support to secure national acceptance. Thus, attempts to impose them by force met with such bitter opposition that rule through the Major-Generals could only be short lived.

The tendency was, indeed, for the administrators of public policy, beset with the day to day problems of government, to be motivated as much by concern for national security as for the upholding of a religious mode of life. Certain sports tended to be more suspect than others. Certain social classes were given more allowance than others while the less public sports were more tolerated than those which lent themselves to large gatherings. What the country gentleman did for amusement, in his own house and grounds, does not appear to have been much interrupted and even under the Major-Generals there was sometimes a nice social distinction drawn between what was to be allowed and what prescribed. Although horse-racing meetings were generally forbidden, the prohibition was not absolute. For example, Major Whalley gave permission to the Earl of Exeter for Lady Grantam's cup to be competed for at Lincoln and

wrote to Cromwell that

"I assured him it was not your highness' intention in the suppressing of horse races to abridge gentlemen of that sport, but to prevent the great confluence of irreconcilable enemies." (39)

Obviously a great deal of recreational activity, both physical and otherwise, still continued untroubled through the years of the Interregnum. John Evelyn, the diarist, returned to England from the exiled court in 1652, and he found no lack of sporting pursuits. He hunted deer in Wiltshire, (40) went hawking in the Midlands, (41) watched a coach race in Hyde Park, (42) and was actually playing bowls on Tower Green when the ship carrying his wife home from France sailed up the Thames. (43) William Temple was gambling too much at tennis for Dorothy Osborne's liking (1653), (44) and, while these were largely private amusements, Londoners at least were not wholly deprived of their public pleasure. Play-houses were hounded and legislated against, but were only completely suppressed in the last years before the Restoration. The bear pits were closed and the bears killed. On the other hand, cock-fighting was less interfered with, (45) and citizens could also admire the physical skills of professional performers like "a famous Rope-dancer called 'The Turk'", whose feats astonished Evelyn:

"he walked barefooted taking hold by his toes only of a rope almost perpendicular, and without so much as touching it with his hands; he danced blindfold on the high rope and with a boy of 12 years old

(39) *ibid.*, p.21

(40) 27 June, 1654

(41) 22 Aug., 1654

(42) 26 May, 1658

(43) 11 June, 1652

(44) "Letters ~~for~~^{of} Dorothy Osborne to Sir William Temple" (1914 edition),

p.39

(45) M.James, *op.cit.*, p.21

tied to one of his feet about 20 foot beneath him, dangling as he danced, yet he moved as nimbly as if it had been a feather. Lastly he stood on his head on the top of a very high mast, danced on a small rope that was very slack, and finally flew down the perpendicular, on his breast, his head foremost, his legs and arms extended, with divers other activities." (46)

An extraordinary sight in an extraordinary age.

The remarkable thing about Puritan England turns out to be, therefore, not the suppression of physical recreation by the government but the persistence with which many sports and games defied official frowns and prohibitions. Local attitudes and opinions continued to colour local practice, as they had done before the Civil War. The difference was that, whereas previous governmental pressure had been directed to the promotion of sports, now virtually all of it encouraged their suppression. If "encouraged" seems too weak a word to use of the peremptory edicts of parliament, it is the one which probably best sums up their practical effect. As Margaret James remarked of Puritan social policy generally,

"except during the brief reign of the Major-Generals, it is difficult to see how the Government was able effectively to impose its wishes on the county administration." (47)

Nor, in general, and again except for the period of their too rigorous imposition by the military, did people find Puritan social policies irksome. Bayley, at the conclusion of his account of the Interregnum in Dorset (where it was exceptionally well chronicled) asserts that, even in this county which, apart from its ports, was predominantly royalist and traditionalist in its basic sympathies,

(46) 15 Sept., 1657

(47) M. James, op.cit., p.288

"the notion that Englishmen were at this time ardently craving for relief from Puritan teaching is one which receives no countenance from documentary evidence. If they were ever driven to revolt, it would be by a desire to throw off the burthen of taxes or to free themselves from military rule, not from any eagerness to change the Puritan doctrines for those which found credence among the cultivated divines who adhered to the fortunes of Charles." (48)

While the expense and compulsion in Puritan policy might be objected to, some of its benefits were widely appreciated. In education, for instance, the Interregnum saw the most active, positive and expanding programme that is to be found in the period of this thesis. Some of the educational theorising in the Revolution's more extreme moments almost escaped into fantasy, as when one member of Barebone's Parliament, the nominated Parliament of the Saints of 1653, argued that all universities and schools were "heathenish and unnecessary", although a majority of even that strange convocation came out eventually against him. (49) Some also of its more ambitious enterprises, such as the founding of a Durham college, were short-lived. At the same time, the government did see the provision of education as one of its duties and granted funds for schools in various localities, as well as fostering the serious discussion of educational topics, as already mentioned. (50)

Puritan views on physical amusement being what they were, it would be unduly optimistic to expect to find much evidence of the promotion of bodily training (except in restraint!) in the educational history of this time. The only possibilities that seemed to offer themselves were in the promotion of bodily fitness for military service, although

(48) A.R.Bayley, op.cit., p.431

(49) W.A.L.Vincent: "The State and School Education 1640-1660"

(1950) p.82

(50) See above, pp.142 ff.

educational reformers were not usually inclined to see this as a permanent necessity of their regime. In fact there is nothing bearing even the most tangential positive relationship to the physical nature of the child apart from Sir William Petty's recommendations for practical, craft training and the growing stress, widely hinted at and later to be developed by Locke, on the use of the sense as a means of experience, and so of learning. Such educational comment as does impinge upon the subject of games and sports is, like the social comment, restrictive and condemnatory. Play meant idleness and, in the words of William Dell, Master of Caius:

"there neither is, nor can be any greater evil than to bring up children in ease and idleness." (51)

Children were subject to the restrictions on play hardly less than adults, and schools were not expected to encourage games. It was probably in answer to Puritan criticisms that Birstall, the Headmaster of Sherborne, wrote to his Governors in 1656 justifying his established practice of giving scholars some free time for play. (52) Many masters must have bowed to the pressures around them, especially since their own positions depended upon a scrupulous restraint in their conduct. Under an ordinance of 1654, they were to be examined for prorane behaviour, popery and adultery (and in that order!) while they could also be dismissed for such failings as frequent card-playing or dicing, or supporting, "by word or practice any Whitsun-Ales, Wakes, Morris-Dances,

(51) Quoted in W.A.L. Vincent, op.cit., p.84

(52) see above, p.185

May-poles, Stage-plays, or such like licentious practices." (53) That tender concern for the individual conscience which lay behind the Puritan proposals for educational advancement also inhibited them (and would still have inhibited them, even if contemporary practice had given encouragement) from giving any training of the physical in their schools, actual or projected.

The same paradox lay at the heart of all commonwealth social policy, providing it with its motive force and also at the same time ensuring its ultimate downfall. Because individual salvation mattered above all else, it became the duty of righteous governments to promote that salvation, even in the teeth of opposition from those they sought to save. There could be some bending of the principle, under the demands of practicality, and one of the forms this took was in the condemnation of the public vices more roundly than the private ones, a view which entered the permanent soul of the English middle class. While it became desirable that vice should not occur, it became essential that it should not be seen to occur, a principle that has been re-asserted as recently as the Street Offences Act of 1959. What was true in the broader field of public morality was true also in the narrower, for sport, in Puritan minds, was a moral issue, whatever its physical or psychological content. There, too, the more public and demonstrative the amusement, the more caustic the action taken against it. There was some winking at sport that was polite and relatively

(53) Vincent, op.cit., pp.97/8

private, but beyond this the bounds of tolerance did not stretch. The Puritan movement was not content merely to help on the movement of disintegration that social and economic forces were promoting in the old sports inherited from a society largely static, Catholic and rural. The Puritans saw their mission to erase all sport and play from men's lives. They were bound, judged by their own critical standards, ultimately to fail.

By galloping the old rural sports prematurely to their destruction, indeed, the governments of the Interregnum contributed to their archaic persistence, as it became almost a patriotic duty for men to seek their revival once the King returned. Sports and games had by the middle years of the seventeenth century lost correspondence with the social pattern and were due for amendment. They were already changing their nature and it needed only some specific impetus to accelerate this change. The inappropriateness of much of the existing sport of the time must have tempted the Puritans to see their task of suppression as much easier than it actually was, as well as giving it a good deal of apparent success. Their failure to set up any recreation of a new sort in place of the old which they abolished (although this certainly could not have been expected of any party, as conscious policy, still less of the Puritans) left a vacuum in men's lives. English sports and games thus missed the only opportunity they were to have, for the next two hundred years, to take on a more regulated, purposive and physically appropriate style.

The history of sports and games between 1642 and 1660 suggests that any government which seeks to destroy its country's recreational life is faced with a virtually impossible task, a task that cannot be accomplished without a national conviction of its rightness and necessity. However fiercely a minority may promote such a cause, it is one which cannot succeed without the active participation of the mass and this is made the harder to win because play is not a subject which men are usually prepared to regard with an ultimate seriousness, whatever their superficial enthusiasms. Some may argue that such a verdict is, in itself, the reflection of the Puritan conscience and it is certainly true that the movement had had the profoundest effects on our subsequent modes of thinking on work and leisure, as the final section of this chapter will indicate.

As far as the actual years of Puritan government were concerned, however, their results were, for the most part, not wholly beneficial to the cause they sought to promote. In only one major area that impinges on sports and games did the enactments of this time set a permanent stamp, and that was in the recreational use of Sunday. The original battle between the Declaration of Sports and the Sabbatarians had resulted in a wholesale victory for the latter, a victory which the Restoration was not able ultimately to reverse. The nation may not have proved itself pious enough to accept the wholesale bans of the most extreme sectaries, but it had enough continuing sympathy with Puritan principles of social conduct to seek their complete application on one day a week.

(iii) The Puritan Legacy.

The Restoration of the monarchy in 1660 was, as far as the mass of Englishmen were concerned, a return to a settled pattern of constitutional government. It was not a complete rejection of all that Puritanism stood for. At first, it seemed that a wide spectrum of religious opinion would be embraced by the state church after the king's return, leaving only the most extreme sects outside its ambit. The conformist energies of the Cavalier parliament, however, narrowed the range of the Anglican Establishment, although the subsequent persecution of dissenters was eventually neither thorough enough nor persistent enough to do more than deny to them the fruits of official office and the benefits of universities. The Puritan tradition remained a decisive influence on English attitudes. It exerted this influence through the principles which it had already injected into the national conscience, through the active dissent of clergy and congregations and through the acceptance within the English Church of many who felt able to subscribe to Anglican forms and practices without giving up the stricter modes of social and domestic habit derived from their former allegiance. A talent for assimilation, combined with a degree of tolerance which was prepared to ignore the Puritan movement once the paths to power had been effectively blocked to it, ensured that the Puritan element in English attitudes generally, and towards physical pursuits in particular, would persist.

Denied the prospect of political office, the dissenting movement

had to return to making its appeal through prayer, preaching and argument. It had to accommodate itself once more to the role of a minority religion and to restate its philosophy in terms that were significant to a new age. Like the early Christians, after the fall of Rome to the Barbarian, they sought their St Augustine. They looked for someone to explain their new situation and help them guide their lives in a strange land. At this moment, Richard Baxter, "the most learned, the most practical, and the most persuasive" ⁽⁵⁴⁾ of its Restoration propagandists, produced just the definitive account of a moderate Puritanism which the times called for, detailing a system of belief and, especially, a code of conduct which, while loyal to basic principle, combined both rigour and realism in its precepts. Described by Tawney as "in essence a Puritan 'Summa Theologica' and 'Summa Moralis' in one," ⁽⁵⁵⁾ Baxter's great "Christian Directory" is a final statement of English Puritanism at its moment of crystallization and it presents us with the fullest working out of those more equable aspects of Calvinism which have found acceptance in our attitudes towards life, work and recreation.

Baxter's own life reflected the vicissitudes and uncertainties under which English dissent had to find its new bearings after the Restoration. After twenty years of extraordinary influence at Kidderminster, Baxter was appointed chaplain to Charles II in the latitudinarian honeymoon of the early months of the Restoration. The

(54) R.H.Tawney, op.cit., p.219

(55) *ibid.*

Act of Uniformity drove him out of the Anglican Church in 1662, but the King's Declaration of Indulgence, allowing dissenting worship, saw him back in London ten years later. This freedom was short-lived and James II's reign ushered in a brief spell of renewed persecution, during which Baxter was imprisoned for over a year. He lived to see the Glorious Revolution and the beginnings of a permanent toleration for the creed to which he had contributed so much.

Baxter's bequest to Puritan thinking was to soften and render more practical some of its demands on conduct, without deserting any of its fundamental tenets. He was capable of recognising, as many of his predecessors had been unable to do, that there were elements in human nature and in the social situation which compulsion could not alter. Thus, while his account of man, body and soul, runs parallel with the Calvinist views developed in the earlier half of the century, his recommendations for the body's usage, while they still appear almost wholly restrictive to twentieth century eyes, have concessions which would have condemned him as a virtual papist to the narrower sectarians of the Interregnum.

Even his views on man's physical nature take in more tolerant considerations than had been usual. The needs and desires of the body were natural, as they were given to man by God. They were, of themselves, morally neutral. Although he leaves the reader in no doubt about his final position on the role and function of the body, his assertion that "the Delight of the Flesh or senses is a Natural Good: and the natural

desire of it in itself is neither vice nor virtue," is a considerable distance from the wholesale condemnation of all aspects of carnality in some of the earlier writers. The moral issue, Baxter argues, hinges upon the use made of the body. God had given man free-will with which to control his sensual satisfactions, and vice begins where this physical gratification is sought for its own sake and not to further "a higher end". Man should, for instance, eat and drink only enough to fit him for God's service and not indulge just to please his appetite. (56) "Sensuality, Flesh-pleasing or Voluptuousness," he warns, is "the Master Sin", (57) and Part VII of the "Directory" is given over to the means of preventing it. Those who fail to acquire this restraint are guilty of a foolish and sinful misuse of God's gifts. A little consideration should lead them to see the error of their ways:

"Think what an inconsiderable pitiful felicity, it is that fleshly persons choose: How small and short as well as sordid. O how quickly will the game be ended? And the delights of boiling lust be gone? ... How short is the sport and laughter of the fool?"

And Baxter drives home his message of the transience of all the body's vanities with the passion of a Jacobean playwright:

"When the skull is cast up with the spade, to make room for a successor, you may see the hole where all the food and drink went in, and the hideous seat of that face which sometimes was the discovery of wanton-ness, pride and scorn; but you'll see no sign of mirth or pleasure." (58)

The warning, quoted at the head of the chapter, to fight a constant battle against "the Flesh, the World and the Devil" reflects the

(56) Richard Baxter: "A Christian Directory: or a Summ of Practical Theologie and Cases of Conscience." (2nd Edition, 1678) p.224

(57) *ibid.*, p.232

(58) *ibid.*, p.227

emotional attitude towards the human situation shared by Baxter with the whole Puritan movement and it shows what suspicions of the physical his intellectual conviction of the essentially neutral moral nature of the human body had to combat.

He is aided by an awareness (which he shares with Luther) that, the mind being dependent to a certain extent on the body for its support, a degree of physical fitness will be needed even for a spiritually worth-while life.

"The body must be kept in that condition (as far as we can) that is fittest for the service of the soul: As you keep your Horse, neither so pampered as to be unruly, nor yet so low as to disable him for travel: But all that health and strength which makes it not unruly, maketh it the more serviceable." (59)

This demand for a moderate health and fitness does, after all, find a neat correspondence with the established Puritan tenet that work is virtue. Labour is the sign of a worthy soul. For Baxter this adds force to his arguments on the interdependence of mind and body, for both need their exercise if each is to perform its part adequately. Man's labour should ("as far as may be") engage both mind and body and be profitable to others as well as to himself. Moral justifications aside, however, work is essential for practical reasons. It is "needful to our health and life" for, while without it the body would soon sink into feebleness and sickness, and so be useless for the Lord's work, the exercising of the body through toil also contributes to the fitness of the mind.

A heavy, sluggish body is both "a great impediment to the soul in

duty, and a great temptation to many sins," he argues, coming unintentionally close to the position that a hard physical fitness is somehow conducive to moral restraint. "Diligent labour mortifieth the flesh, and keepeth under its luxurious inclinations, and subdueth pride and lust and brutish sensuality which is cherished by an idle life." (60) Certainly for Baxter, it was the moral purpose of the labour which would yield the major burden of this virtue, not the physical fitness involved, but, substitute "exercise" for "labour" in Baxter's remark and we have the seeds of much of the later ascetic and sublimatory arguments for games-playing, arguments which neither the leisure activities of manual workers nor the behaviour of rugby teams on Saturday nights do much to support.

However, to push the argument into areas where the moral quality of the exercise itself is ignored is quite to leave Baxter, who insists that the body's activity is always to be judged according to its purpose, as "a Means or an Expression of the good or evil of the mind." A tough, functional fitness (like George Fox's or Christian's) was what Baxter sought, no more and no less than was necessary for the fulfilment of man's spiritual duty. A controlled physical balance was wanted, but always erring on the side of restraint. Fasting, and so damaging the body for a supposedly spiritual purpose, was false to man's nature and earthly purpose, although the danger was always that man would over-indulge his body rather than deprive it. Against this he must constantly

(60) *ibid.*, pp.376/7

guard:

"Watch against inordinate sensual Delight, even in the Lawfullest sport; Excess of pleasure in any such vanity, doth very much corrupt and befool the mind." (61)

This recognition, however beset with warnings, that there may be some sport which is "lawful" leads Baxter to the most complete Puritan statement on physical recreation, that found in his chapter on "The Government of the Body", with its "Directions about Sports and Recreations, and against excess and sin therein." There will, as his title indicates, be no absolute ban on all sporting activities, but they are to be firmly controlled and always made to serve deliberately conscious ends. Pure pleasure cannot be a valid motive for sport any more than for other bodily functions; all recreations are unlawful if "used only to delight a carnal fantasy", with no higher end "than to please the sickly mind that loveth them." (62) The object of recreation is the bodily fitness which he has already granted to be necessary, but recreation is little more than a poor substitute for physical work of a productive kind and "labour is fitter for you than sport."

In some circumstances, Baxter grants that a physically inactive course of life may demand some designed exercise and yet the opportunities for physical labour may not be available. (63) If so, then the exercise has to be carefully chosen, although the grounds on which the

(61) *ibid.*, p.391

(62) *ibid.*, p.388

(63) The "sickly and Melancholy" are also in particular need of recreation and exercise (though Baxter notes that they are usually the least inclined to it) but they should reduce their sport once they are fit again. (*ibid.*, p.391)

choice is to be made are not always clear.

"If you are Students or idle Gentlemen, is not walking, or riding, or shooting, or some honest bodily labour rather, that joineth pleasure and profit together, a fitter kind of exercise for you?"

Fitter, that is than hunting, which is wasteful of time and money (in that the cost of a pack of hounds would more than keep a poor man's family, (64) or the pursuits of "voluptuous youths" who "run after wakes, and May-games, and Dancings, and Revellings." (65) Recreations should not be socially damaging or time consuming: they should not provoke "further sins" (the phrase is significant of the deep Puritan suspicion!) such as, one supposes, gambling, imbibing or lust. Even if deeper sins are avoided, there remains the danger of wasting time in play. In keeping with the Puritan theme that time is always to be employed with a most scrupulous care, he seeks the diligent and conscious use of every minute of this brief earthly life.

A sign of the changed temper of Puritanism in changed political circumstances, as well as a reflection of Baxter's own leanings towards tolerance, appears in his final verdict that recreation is, in the end, a matter of personal judgement. It must be governed by individual circumstances. When you have decided

"what and how much is needful and fit, to help you in your duty, allow it its proper time and place, as you do your meals, and see that you suffer it not to encroach upon your duty." (66)

Since sport thus becomes a matter for the individual conscience, then we cannot but show a degree of humility and toleration towards those

(64) *ibid.*, p.389

(65) *ibid.*, p.390

(66) *ibid.*, p.391

whose recreations differ from our own. "Be much more severe," he advises, "in regulating yourselves in your recreations, than in censuring others for using some sports which you dislike." (67)

Personally, Baxter finds no need for any sport at all. While he does not "condemn ... all sports and games in others," he finds none of them "best" for himself and avoids them "with the more suspicion" because he notes "how far the temper and life of Christ and his best servants was from such recreations." However, he has granted that some special provision for physical exercise may sometimes be needed and, although he finds it hard to justify "any Game at all," he can proffer his own means to fitness:

"the hardest labour that I can bear is my best recreation: walking is instead of games and sports: as profitable to my body, and more to my mind." (68)

The views of Baxter on physical activity have been dealt with at some length both on account of their own fulness and also because they represent the form in which the Puritan message entered so many of our subsequent approaches to sports and games. In the two decades following Baxter's death, in 1691, the Puritan influence was more widespread and effective than the numerical sum of dissenting clerics and congregations, considerable as they were, would imply. Under William III and Anne the views of moderate dissent met with a broad degree of sympathy from many who found themselves within the Anglican Church. William, although perhaps not a Calvinist himself, was a

(67) *ibid.*

(68) *ibid.*, p.391. Baxter's personal renunciation was also, he says, bound up with the fact of his calling, as few think it proper for ministers to indulge in sport ("even Shooting, Bowling, and such more healthful games.")

member of the Calvinist Church of Holland and was not disposed to view Protestant nonconformists with any marked disfavour while some of his bishops were very ready to embrace as many of them as possible within the pale of Anglicanism. Stillington, the Bishop of Worcester, was, for example, so eager to promote a reconciliation that he tried to help the Presbyterians settle their own internal differences; and Burnett (whose concepts of the role of the physical in education, not dissimilar from those of the Puritans, will be discussed in a later chapter) was so openly sympathetic as to win a reprimand from the traditionalist majority in the Lower House of Convocation. (69)

Dissent, in turn, became less vociferous, turning more within itself and pursuing, with conspicuous success, its economic mission of honest enterprise. Many of its supporters felt near enough to the tenets and practices of Anglicanism to be able, if the call of public office demanded it, to make an occasional formal obeisance to the Established Church without undue disturbance of conscience. While there was a growing tendency for church affiliations to harden on social and economic lines (the landowners and their labourers solid with the Established Church and Dissent heavily represented in the urban middle and working classes), the actual theological gulf between the Protestants within the Anglican Church and those outside it was far narrower than it had been in the past. The Quaker would still see the High Churchman as a Papist hardly disguised and the High

(69) E.W.Watson: "The Church of England" (2nd ed., 1944) pp.122/3

Churchman would still label the Quaker a madman, yet there was now a broad area of belief and observance across which the line of conformity had become increasingly blurred.

A threatened dose of Catholicism from James II had made all the Protestant Churches realise that their common attitudes were as important as their differences. In the revival of religious energies in the following two reigns the public activities of the churches often showed a surprising degree of co-operation between Establishment and Dissent. One project, "The Society for the Reformation of Manners", saw a combined effort to re-establish standards of public morality, and its most decisive effect was to restore Sunday observance to a pattern very close to that originally laid down under the Commonwealth. Magistrates were shamed into applying the laws against Sunday labour and travel; shops were closed and entertainment and play on the Sabbath were firmly outlawed. The English had at least become Puritans on Sunday, although one cynical German visitor in 1710 noted that this was the only sign they gave that they were Christians at all. (70)

Even where men had no religious sympathy with Dissenting views, they usually found it in the general interest, once the element of compulsion had gone and they had their own personal escape clause, to laud its spirit of hard work and serious endeavour. Much of its attitude towards recreation fitted well with concepts of public order.

(70) see G.M.Trevelyan: "English Social History". (2nd Edition, 1946), p.328

Its restrictive views on sports conducive to gambling and roistering had a built-in appeal to the administrative classes and, as the eighteenth century wore on, a religion which gave little room for play and recreation was ideally fitted for a developing industrial pattern which allowed its workers scope for neither. Whatever theological doubts the continuing Puritan spirit might prompt in the minds of governments, landowners and magistrates, many of its practical applications were to have an irresistible appeal.

For well over a hundred years, however, Dissenters were debarred not only from the offices of state but also from participation in the established institutions of education, tied as they were to the Anglican Church. The Act of Uniformity of 1662 dispossessed some two thousand clergy who found themselves unable to give wholehearted and unqualified assent to the Prayer Book and the Five Mile Act, passed three years later, forbade the dissenting schoolmaster or minister from all cities and corporate towns, thus specifically hindering attempts to give any nonconformist education. The implementing of the legislation was spasmodic, especially after 1689, but the dissenters had to conduct their schools and colleges under conditions of relative secrecy until a more tolerant attitude allowed their 'academies' to enjoy the full light of day early in the eighteenth century.

These "Dissenting Academies" have rightly won a name for themselves as pioneers of new educational approaches and new curriculum subjects. (71)

(71) See, inter alia, H. McLachlan: "English Education under the Test Acts" (1931); G. Nuttall (editor): "Philip Doddridge" (1951); N. Hans: "New Trends in English Education in the Eighteenth Century" (1951)

Providing education at all levels from primary to university, their approach was dynamic, purposeful and coloured by a social awareness of their function which was usually conspicuously lacking in the official schools and universities of the eighteenth century, to which their period of greatest influence belongs. Although the history of the Academies as settled institutions (rather than as fluid gatherings of scholars round a master who might not establish himself permanently in one place) is largely outside the immediate chronological scope of this thesis, they are significant in giving a direct example of the application of the ideas of the Puritan tradition to the practices of education. Moreover, their greatest success has regularly been seen in terms of a broader curriculum, involving that acceptance of new school subjects, which was a necessary preliminary before such a complete novelty as physical training could be expected to find its way into schools. Expectations of any acceptance of man's physical nature in the Dissenting Academies, however, would obviously be seriously qualified by the doubts about the use of the body that remained fundamental to the religious attitude from which they derived, doubts which remained, even in the more tolerant approach of Baxter's restatement.

Thanks to the work of J.W.Ashley Smith, ⁽⁷²⁾ it is relatively easy to assess the part played by physical concerns in the Academies. It must be said at once that this part was a small one. Among the numerous

(72) J.W.Ashley Smith: "The Birth of Modern Education: The Contribution of the Dissenting Academies 1660-1800" (1954), which surveys in detail the curricula of the academies.

statements of purposes and programmes which can be quoted, there is very little mention of the body's health or its exercising. All is mind, heart and soul; knowledge, faith and virtue.

Charles Morton's academy at Newington Green, one of the earlier and best known, beginning in Charles II's reign and numbering among its pupils both the father of the Wesleys and Daniel Defoe, is among the very few to make provision for the exercise of its scholars, with its garden and bowling green. (73) Morton was, significantly, a moderate, a follower of Baxter and an Oxford mathematician. He was prepared to advocate physical activities and even some games for his pupils since, he argued,

"The exercise of skill or strength in man, or the sagacity, courage, celerity, or any other excellencies in brutes, is pleasant and innocent to behold, and may administer occasion to admire and praise God's Wisdom and Bounty in the Creation." (74)

Thus, he would appear to condone even sports such as horse-racing, although he did use his mathematics (somewhat opportunistically!) to demonstrate, in his tract on "Gaming", that gambling, other objections aside, simply does not pay. Other academies may, of course, have offered opportunities and encouragement for physical exercise as great as, or even greater than, Morton's, but none apparently thought them worth recording. The assumption must be that their attitude towards any form of physical education was certainly no more positive than that of the long-established schools and in many cases it was, by inference

(73) *ibid.*, p.56, quoting from Sam.Wesley's "Letters from a Country Divine.... on the Education of the Dissenters in their private academies in several parts of this nation" (1704), Letter 6.

(74) *ibid.*, p.60

from Puritan premises, probably more restrictive. The one benefit that did accrue to the physical from their widening of the curriculum was in the growth of a certain amount of anatomy teaching in a number of them. Anatomy, for instance, appears in the third half-year in John Jennings' academy at Kibworth. (75) Job Orton, a former pupil, reports that in Philip Doddridge's academy at Northampton "a distinct view of the Anatomy of the human Body was given them," (76) and at Warrington, in the second half of the eighteenth century, chemistry and anatomy were taught in alternate years, the anatomy by a Mr Aikin, surgeon, at an extra fee of one guinea. (77)

This neglect of the physical side of the child in the Academies is hardly to be wondered at, in spite of their progressiveness in other directions. There was little in either their own philosophy or in the practices of the rest of contemporary education which would have suggested the inclusion of any planned programme of physical training for their young charges. As it was, the demands of the educational tradition within which they found themselves insisted not only on a regimen of hard work and on the acquisition of such sacred knowledge as would sustain their pupils' religious lives (Samuel Jones, at Tewkesbury, for instance, followed the Miltonic path into Hebrew, Chaldee and Syriac) but also upon the teaching of such modern subjects as languages, mathematics, science, book-keeping and geography to better fit them for

(75) *ibid.*, p.110

(76) *ibid.*, p.131

(77) *ibid.*, p.161

their earthly callings. In the face of these extensive requirements, if for no other reason, there need be little surprise at the absence of reference to games and exercise in the accounts of virtually every one of the Dissenting Academies.

A constant theme of this chapter has been that the Puritan tradition has had a considerable formative influence on our attitudes towards the body, its exercise and recreation. This influence, however, as far as it has affected the physical education of the schools has done so almost entirely indirectly. Nonconformist education as such certainly pioneered the extension of the curriculum in general, but showed no initiative in the introduction of any physical education. The tradition that play and work do not mix died hard; and the view was that if children needed any physical exercise then they could have it in their free time, scant as that might be. The young Wesleys were allowed⁶ no play during the hours of their schooling at home and "running into the yard, garden, or street, without leave, was always esteemed a capital offence." (78) The ways to grace, knowledge and honest prosperity were all rough and stony. They demanded the most constant and diligent application of the mind, and the most rigorous subjection of the demands of the body. Self-willed by nature, children had to be tamed into a proper submission. "When turned a year old (and some before) they were taught to fear the rod, and to cry softly," according to Wesley's mother and thus "the family usually lived in as much

(78) F.W.MacDonald (ed.): "The Journal of the Rev John Wesley" (1906 edition) 4 Vols., Vol.I, p.392

quietness as if there had not been a child among them." (79) The Puritan assumptions on the nature of childhood and the role of instinctive life were limiting enough of themselves. Reinforced by eighteenth century concepts of reason and rational control, the scope they allowed for any development of play, any physical expression, was virtually non-existent.

The barriers in men's minds against the development of any concept of physical education were certainly high ones. Once they were surmounted, and some physical training was introduced into state schools, this took the form of mass drilling, designed to bring both mind and body under a uniformly rigid control. This course of events does not derive wholly from Puritan attitudes, but these attitudes did encourage a view of childhood which concentrated wholly on the training of the mind and the will and undervalued the emotional life and social satisfactions. Beyond this, attempts to discern the direct influence of Puritanism on the physical education of our schools are purely speculative. The sect's original fervours must bear some burden for the emotional aura which still tends to shroud discussion of the subject, whether from its advocates or its detractors, as well as for the rooted emotional distrust of games, sports and deliberately organised exercise even in many who are intellectually persuaded of their usefulness. That sports and games, where allowed, should not be too pleasant is a view which still holds in some quarters; they should train the mind, build the character and hence, by an inevitable logic, be compulsory.

(79) *ibid.*, Vol.I, p.388

They should hurt somewhat. These are not, of course, the views even of latter-day Puritans, but one wonders whether they would have prevailed so strongly in English physical education if there had been no Puritan tradition in the first place.

What, however, has this religious movement, momentous in its social as well as its spiritual consequences, meant for the broader attitudes towards sport, games and physical recreation of later ages, as distinct from their educational concepts of bodily training? While restrictions on Sunday sport may still provide the most tangible evidence of the workings of the Puritan influence, there remain other wide areas of opinion which are tinged with its effects.

It has already been suggested that the courtly mode of exercise in the sixteenth century saw the beginnings, in this country, of the cult which regards sport as a highly serious activity, noble in its purposes and character-forming in its pursuit, an aesthetic experience for both performer and spectator. Aristocratic in its origins, this pattern of belief has now spread itself widely over the whole social spectrum; the exclusiveness and distinctiveness which what may be crudely categorised as the "upper classes" have still preserved in some of their sports (hunting, polo and grouse-shooting, for instance) now depend more on the relatively simple facts of economics and social class than upon a cultural attitude of which they have the monopoly. However, if this range of attitude derived, albeit distantly and tenuously, from the Renaissance, is widespread, it has had to exist alongside another set

of ideas towards physical recreation which derive ultimately from the Protestant Reformation, ideas which rate sports and games as trivia, not meriting serious enquiry, unworthy of any undue expenditure of time and money and likely to be damaging in their personal and social consequences alike. These views, identifiable with the Puritan influence, also had a persistent affiliation with certain social levels, at least until the present century, although their hold was never complete and their class associations have now been almost wholly lost. Eighteenth century nonconformity found virtually all its support in the urban middle and labouring classes where, even in the nineteenth century, nonconformity, in spite of its widened appeal, remained strongest. The blurring of class lines in leisure activities has allayed most of the suspicion of the body that might be expected among the "respectable" working class, the social, if no longer the spiritual heirs of dissent. Yet it is still among the older members of this group that, for instance, physical prudery remains strongest; they are the ones most likely to share that sense of affront at nakedness which John Wesley felt when he saw Rubens' painting of the young John the Baptist at Hampton Court and "could not see either the decency or common sense" of painting the children "stark naked". (80)

Many of the long-term Puritan influences were certainly restrictive to the development of physical and recreational activities of those classes to which nonconformity most appealed. The doctrine that bodily fitness should be sought for spiritual ends was reinforced by Wesley,

(80) *ibid.*, Vol.III, p.460

both in his preaching (81) and by the example of his own life. The argument that such fitness could be secured solely from the exertions of a man's daily labour had, moreover, some validity in the circumstances of its original pronouncement. It became harmful by remaining in vogue long after the factory and the mine had produced working conditions which were much more likely to damage health than to improve it. The Puritan tradition produced the English Sunday, and so deprived the workers of their one regular opportunity for sport; it aided urbanisation to destroy the old patterns of folk play and it discouraged the emergence of new forms of recreation more in harmony with industrial surroundings.

This does not mean, of course, that the middle and lower classes found neither sport nor exercise for a couple of centuries or more. Indeed, the old rural sports often persisted with a remarkable stubbornness, even in the most unpromising environments. (82) Nevertheless, the lower classes were hindered from developing characteristic modes of play and exercise that were their own, as the old rural sports had been. It was economic circumstance which obviously dictated the form which working class physical activities took, or failed to take, just as they gave added force to the restraints which nonconformity applied to both drinking and gambling, but the social philosophy of Puritanism was a significant contributory pressure.

Superficially it might appear that games and sports had no share at all in the productive benefits which this philosophy undoubtedly brought

(81) See, for instance, his outline for a sermon at Leeds (*ibid.*, Vol.III, p.69)

(82) Wesley found the Durham colliers playing many of the old games - on the Sabbath (*ibid.*, Vol.I, p.420)

to the community. However, if Puritanism often allied itself with those forces which were restricting leisure activities, it also, and especially in the long run, supported and urged the gradual civilising of many sporting pursuits. Whatever the truth of the jibe that the Puritans of the Interregnum put down bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators, a hundred years later the heirs of the tradition were reacting strongly against cruelty in sports and one of Wesley's correspondents was protesting at

"the pain given to every Christian, every humane heart, by those savage diversions, bull-baiting, cock-fighting, horse-racing, and hunting. Can any of those irrational and unnatural sports appear otherwise than cruel....?" (83)

The Puritan tradition has been a considerable force in reducing barbarity and crudity in sport. It remained as firmly against duelling as it had been in its days of power, when its ordinances against the practice had been applied with notable success, and even today the Puritan conscience contributes something to the League against Cruel Sports and to criticisms of boxing. Combat sports have, indeed, always been regarded much less favourably by those in the Puritan tradition than have non-competitive recreations, such as walking and riding. The movement towards the gentler recreations was strengthened by the Romantic Revival's rediscovery of the natural world; it is possible to identify recent strains of the Puritan preference for simple, elemental physical activities in the "Keep Fit" movement of the 1930's (with

(83) *ibid.*, Vol.II, p.346

its passion for hiking, camping and the cult of the outdoors) and even in certain aspects of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. It may be objected that most of the benefits of the Puritan tradition in respect of sports, games and physical recreation were unintentional, but certainly one of its great strengths was that it did ask questions about their role and purpose. It may well have asked the questions because it was certain that it knew the answers, and the answers themselves may have been riddled with assumptions that were mistaken or at least quickly outdated. None the less, just to ask "what is physical fitness for?" was a decisive contribution to the history of physical education. The question can still usefully be asked today.

After 1660 Puritans^{ism} quitted the centre of the governmental scene, its brief official appearance over. Henceforward it operated from the side-lines, lending its influence, often persuasively and vigorously, to the development of opinion on a wide variety of topics, personal, social and economic. Just as the doctrine of predestination ceased to preoccupy theological dispute, so, as Professor Willey has pointed out, the general conflict of the later seventeenth century was becoming less that of Anglican versus Puritan than that of rational theology versus rational philosophy. The central themes of discussion during the rest of the Stuart period were, political debate aside, scientific and philosophical in their bases rather than theological. The central religious controversy of the first half of the seventeenth century had been relevant to attitudes towards exercise and physical

education, although scarcely, in its outcome, encouraging to either. While a shift in the focus of intellectual attention was likely to reduce objections to exercise, it might also displace it from the position of comparative importance which it had assumed in the earlier debates. It may be that seventeenth century attitudes towards exercise and physical education were more susceptible to theological passions and religious beliefs than they were to scientific analysis and philosophical deliberation.

Chapter IV

SCIENCE, PHILOSOPHY AND THE HUMAN BODY IN THE SEVENTEENTH
CENTURY.

"The seventeenth century, which opens with the glowing dreams of Francis Bacon, **closes with** Isaac Newton's **precise** demonstration that the whole universe is one vast mechanism. Between these two names lies a long and splendid chapter of English scientific work, beginning with Harvey's discovery of the circulation of the blood in 1624, carried on by Robert Boyle's epoch-making work in chemical science, illustrated by the foundation of the Royal Society, and giving to England a place in the intellectual life of Europe, which the insular reputation of a Shakespeare or a Milton could not have secured." (H.A.L.Fisher: "A History of Europe" (1936), p.642)

"For seeing life is but a motion of Limbs, the beginning whereof is in some part within; why may we not say, that all Automata (Engines that move themselves by springs and wheels as doth a watch) have an artificial life? For what is the Heart, but a Spring; and the Nerves, but so many Strings; and the Joints, but so many Wheels, giving motion to the whole Body, such as was intended by the Artificer." (Thomas Hobbes: "Leviathan" (1914 edition) p.1)

"it would be none of the least secrets of education to make the exercises of the body and mind the recreation one to another." (John Locke; "Some Thoughts Concerning Education", in John Locke: "On Politics and Education", ed. H.R.Penniman (Toronto, New York and London, 1947), p.376)

The Puritan Revolution was essentially a seventeenth century event, immediate in its political and social consequences.

Although Puritan influence certainly pervaded the next two hundred years and is still by no means wholly lost, the most explosive and cataclysmic moments of Puritanism belong decisively to the mid-seventeenth century. The scientific revolution that is associated with the same century may have been less dramatic in its immediately-felt political results, but its ultimate effects on the lives of men have been both cumulative and persistent. With each new decade, it still produces consequences that become more and more drastic. Computers and atom bombs, brain surgery and germ warfare, all stem from those changes in methods of studying the natural world that gathered their first full momentum at this time. The long-term significances of these changes brought about by the scientific revolution are still hard to appreciate fully, so much a part are they of our everyday lives, but its importance in the historical scale is undoubted. As Professor Butterfield remarks:

"Since that revolution overturned the authority in science not only of the middle ages but of the ancient world - since it ended not only in the eclipse of scholastic philosophy but in the destruction of Aristotelian physics - it outshines everything since the rise of Christianity and reduces the Renaissance and Reformation to the rank of mere episodes, mere internal displacements, within the system of medieval Christendom." (1)

While the fullest implications of the seventeenth century scientific revolution were to be worked out only in later centuries, contemporary opinion was not unaware of the upheaval in its thinking nor were

(1) H. Butterfield: "The Origins of Modern Science: 1300-1800" (1949), introduction, p.viii.

contemporary activities uninfluenced by its methods. The second half of the Stuart period shows a broadening consciousness of new modes of thought. Even some of its actions, while not always marching under the deliberate banner of science, hint at the new methods of objective analysis. The founding of the Royal Society immediately after the close of the Puritan Republic was symbolic of a change in emphasis in the direction of men's thinking; the ways of man, and not the ways of God became their first concern. Pope's well-known couplet,

"Know then thyself, presume not God to scan;
The proper study of Mankind is Man." (2)

was not giving a pioneering piece of advice, but was describing a change which had already established itself securely by the 1730's, when Pope was writing. The Royal Society was, indeed, only the most obvious example of an experimental and rational approach. The philosophical and political theory of Locke and the political practice of the Glorious Revolution, with its calculated balance of constitutional forces, were each illustrations of the new attitudes in men's thinking, even before the seventeenth century had ended.

The predominance of religious issues at the time made it useful to consider attitudes towards exercise between 1640 and 1660 in terms of Puritanism. While it is not possible to ascribe so precise a period to the impact of the new scientific modes of thought and the development of systematised philosophy, this is an appropriate point at which to consider the influence of these two movements on opinion regarding the human body, its nature and its proper use. This will provide a fuller

(2) Pope: "Essay on Man", Epistle II, ll.1-2.

background against which to discuss, in the subsequent chapter, the specific attitudes towards exercise and physical education which derived from the later Stuart social environment.

Whether, of course, such intellectual movements as these are likely to have any influence on men's attitudes towards physical activity is one of the questions which has to be examined, especially at the level of organised philosophy, since some would deny to such activity any practical influence on human affairs. On the other hand, it can hardly be disputed that science, if only through technological advance, may alter men's habits of exercise, as ski-lifts, mechanised golfing and ten-pin bowling alleys have shown.

This division of the seventeenth century intellectual movement into the separate components of science (with all its sub-sections and applications) and philosophy is a modern habit and not one which the age itself would easily recognise. The tendency of the time was still to see all knowledge as one. Its mission, indeed, was to discover a new cosmic order to replace the old which it had demolished. The emergence of discrete disciplines was eventually a reflection of the discovery that the problems of the universe were susceptible only to piecemeal attack through numerous methods of study and examination. This was not yet accepted by the seventeenth century, which was not the age of the specialist. The scientific revolution was itself largely promoted by men who took the whole intellectual scheme of things as their subject, who expected to discover a total and integrated solution, and who did

eventually consider that they had done so. Bacon, for instance, an original propounder of experimental method, was statesman, lawyer and man of letters; Hobbes thought himself a mathematician and produced a Latin poem of the Wonders of the Peak District, while Locke had medical training. A consequence of this diversity of interest among the promoters of the new movement was that its effects could not be cramped within the narrow bounds of academically-defined subjects but rapidly became current in all men's modes of thinking. They show in language, in what T.S.Eliot described as the "Dissociation of sensibility", in architecture, and even in gardening. They might possibly be expected to show in men's attitudes towards exercise.

This expectation might be heightened by the course which the revolution took. Beginning in astronomy and physics with studies of the motion of planets and other material objects, it gradually extended the method of observation and deduction to anatomy and physiology and thence to the other sciences. Motion and the human body were regular themes, although they were seldom brought together. It was by observation and deduction that the new philosophy likewise made its way, and it did so again along a route which gave great importance to certain aspects of man's physical being, especially in the part they played in perception and the acquisition of knowledge. Even if these physical stresses in the scientific and philosophical movements were given no application to man's physical exercise, it remains an interesting and useful question to ask why this should be so.

(i) Medicine and Exercise.

It is, most of all, in the medical side of the seventeenth century scientific movement that new attitudes towards the exercise of the body might be anticipated. One of man's most persistent motives for taking exercise has been the promotion and the preservation of health. For centuries past there have been widespread beliefs that physical activity will, in some usually ill-defined way, be good for bodily fitness. Sometimes, as in the Renaissance heyday, such opinions have been held with great thoroughness and assurance, while at others, as the more extreme Puritan views showed, they have been reduced to ^a rather grudging concession. Whether the health motive was strong or weak, it can be expected that, in most ages, the prevailing medical attitudes towards exercise will have had some correspondence with (if not influence upon) the current modes of physical activity. (3) Medicine shared significantly in the general scientific advances of the seventeenth century, with progress in equipment, in knowledge of anatomy and physiology, and in methods of diagnosis and treatment. Here, as in other directions, the century was the watershed between the essentially medieval and the essentially modern, so that the fundamental changes in medical theory and practice that occurred would seem almost certain to impinge upon current attitudes towards the care and exercise of the body.

(3) The historians of medicine have, however, given surprisingly little attention to the fluctuations in medical attitudes towards exercise. Douglas Guthrie: "A History of Medicine" (2nd Edition, 1958) does have some useful leads, but F.H. Garrison's monumental work ("An Introduction to the History of Medicine", 4th Edition, Philadelphia and London, 1929) has, in a comprehensive index, only one reference to "Exercise (Physical)" and that is to Mercurialis (p.912). The omission of any discussion of Fuller's "Medicina Gymnastica", in this period, is particularly noteworthy.

The notions concerning the structure and functioning of the human body that were current at the beginning of the century were still classical in their origins and medieval in their colourings of folk-lore and superstition. Astrology was still, in one of its functions, almost a department of medicine, and the professional surgeon faced an endless rivalry from charlatans of every type. Such quackery was encouraged by the irrational ignorance of even the best contemporary theory and practice. The doctrine of humours was still very much alive and all otherwise inexplicable human energy was accounted for by "vital spirits". Robert Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy", that peculiar encyclopaedia and bibliography of the traditional medicine, ⁽⁴⁾ provides a standard account of the basic physiology. According to Burton,

"Spirit is a most subtle vapour, which is expressed from the blood, and the instrument of the soul, to perform all his actions; a common tie or medium between the body and the soul."

The liver is the source of both blood and "spirits". The "natural spirits" within the blood give rise to "vital spirits" ("made in the heart of the natural") and these form "animal spirits", which are taken up to the brain and then "diffused by the nerves to the subordinate members, give sense and motion to them all." ⁽⁵⁾ The heart remains mystical, a subject for creative lyricism rather than objective description,

"the seat and fountain of life, of heat, of spirits, of pulse and respiration, the sun of our body, the king and soul commander of it, the seat and organ of all passions and affections." ⁽⁶⁾

(4) And, according to Sir William Ostler, "the greatest medical treatise written by a layman." (R.Burton, op.cit., Introduction, p.xiii)

(5) *ibid.*, Vol.I, p.148

(6) *ibid.*, Vol.I, p.153

The heart is cooled by the breath, the lungs acting as bellows to keep the air circulating, and physical movement is thought of in the language of Aristotelian teleology, by reference to "the object which is desired or eschewed." It is contemplated in terms of its end, rather than in terms of its mechanism. It belongs to a blurred area between physiology and philosophy, where physical motion cannot be ascribed to anything more precise than "an admirable league of nature, and by mediation of the spirit." (7)

With such an aura of the inexplicable surrounding the fundamental physical processes, it was little wonder that magic, mystery and superstition entered into much treatment of illness, and no less wonder that many ills and infections went their fatal way beyond all reach of medicine. Life hung by a tenuous thread. Almost half the children born died in infancy and often parents would produce a dozen or more children and yet only have one or two survive them. Plague was a regular and usually fatal visitor; smallpox was regarded as a scourge which would come to almost everyone sooner or later; consumption was rife and terminal gangrene the common consequence of even successful attempts at surgery. Jacobean drama revealed the early seventeenth century's special awareness of physical frailty in face of numerous ills and inadequate medicine. Even the enthusiastic Mulcaster had noted the body's perpetual tendency to waste away, its regression from moisture to dryness, its "continual rebating." (8)

(7) *ibid.*, Vol.I, p.161

(8) Mulcaster, *op.cit.*, p.44

"Nay, all our terror, is, lest our physician
Should put us in the ground to be made sweet." (9)

A fear, or at best a suspicion, of medicine was hardly avoidable when we remember some of the "cures" which were recommended by Burton and which were hardly likely to inspire any rationally grounded confidence: for headaches, "a ram's lung applied hot to the forepart of the head;" (10) for the complexion, "anooint the face with hare's blood" and wash it off next morning with strawberry and cowslip water;" (11) while "Peony doth cure epilepsy, precous stones most diseases" and "a wolf's dung borne with one helps the colic." (12) It is more the medicine of magic than of science.

Physical activity may, however, be prompted by superstition no less than by reason and a system of physiology and physio compounded of classical tradition and folk wisdom did not necessarily exclude exercise from its prescripts. After all, the most thorough-going advocate of physical education from the ancient world had been the physician, Galen; while an obscure physiology had not seriously hindered Mulcaster in his vigorous programme of physical exercise. The suspicion may remain that Mulcaster's enthusiasm for physical education springs mainly from his humanist convictions on the unity of body and soul, but he readily finds medical reasons to back up his advocacies. Health depended upon the proper distillation and distribution of the vital spirits; a correct balance of humours, without damaging excess

(9) Webster: "The Duchess of Malfi", Act II, scene (i)
 (10) Burton, op.cit., Vol.II, p.249
 (11) ibid., Vol.II, p.253
 (12) ibid., Vol.II, p.250

of any of them; good breathing and nimbleness of movement. Mulcaster finds exercise contributing to all these ends, and particular exercises providing for particular bodily needs: "moderate running", for instance, is warming, and strengthens the "natural motions", while dancing turns out to be almost a universal panacea which "drives away numbness, and certain palsies," helps the digestion and the dispelling of "raw humours" in the stomach, and strengthens "weak hips, fainting legs, freatishing (sic) feet." (13) "Natural heat" and the production of animal spirits is to be encouraged, while stagnant humours which accumulate in the inactive body have to be driven out:

"as quiet sitting helps ill humours to breed, and burden the body: so must much stirring make a way to discharge the one, and to disburden the other." (14)

The body's "heat" was an important consideration affecting exercise under both the old physiology and the new. Mulcaster frequently makes "warming" a motive for activity, but both overheating and cooling were considered dangerous. Thus, vigorous running, while "generally beneficial, could be harmful, as it promoted internal heat but cooled the flesh." (15)

Mulcaster found his medical assumptions occasionally prompting him into cautions of this sort, yet it could hardly be said that he found the traditional physiology unduly restrictive to his ambitions for a full physical education, and he would have schoolmasters acquire medical knowledge to help them further their ends. The physical training itself should not be given over to doctors, who are preoccupied rather

(13) Mulcaster, op.cit., p.48. ("Freatishing" means "benumbed with cold"; O.E.D.)

(14) *ibid.*, p.23

(15) *ibid.*, p.91

with sickness than with health, although "Gymnastice" (considered then and for the next two centuries as a branch of medicine ⁽¹⁶⁾) was a necessary study for both, and the physician was "the Trainer's Friend". ⁽¹⁷⁾

How far Mulcaster's enthusiasms for physical activity were encouraged by the prevailing medical premises and how far they arose in spite of them may emerge from a glance at the advice of Robert Burton, writing some forty years later, but sharing much the same theoretical assumptions as the Elizabethan schoolmaster. Burton's theme of "Melancholy" was somewhat apart from the medical topics that could lead most readily to discussions on the benefits of exercise. However, his approach is so digressive that he gives useful insights into most of the traditional medical opinions of his day.

Exercise, Burton writes, is good in moderation and conduces to "the general preservation of our health", ⁽¹⁸⁾ although there is "nothing so bad if it be unseasonable, violent or overmuch." ⁽¹⁹⁾ He might have been expected to come out less reservedly on the side of physical exercise since Galen figures largely among his welter of authorities, medical and otherwise, from the ancient world. Yet it is generally the more cautious recommendations of Galen which he passes on. While he agrees that exercise is "nature's physician" and quotes the claims for the therapeutic values of exercise "before all physic, rectification of

(16) Bailey's Dictionary (2nd edition, 1724) defines "Gymnasticks" as "that part of Physic which teaches how to preserve Health by Exercise."

(17) Mulcaster, op.cit., pp.125-9.

(18) Burton, op.cit., Vol.II, p.69

(19) ibid., Vol.I, p.241

diet, or any regiment in what kind soever," (20) he makes much of cautions against "excessive" physical strain and reflects his own age's preoccupation with spirits and bodily heat in the warning that "much exercise and weariness consumes the spirits and substance, refrigerates the body." (21) Moreover, he hedges in his support for bodily activity with prohibitions about exercising on a full stomach and avoiding perspiration. (22) The activities which he advocates, likewise, are generally not of the most violent. He can become lyrical, as when he seeks "to take a boat in a pleasant evening and with music to row upon the waters" (23) and he is regularly inclined to blur any distinction between activities using physical effort and pastimes that could by no stretch be called "bodily exercise". A list of cures for melancholy may start off with energetic sports such as leaping, wrestling, swimming and football, but then, by way of fishing, hawking and quoits, his raptures carry him far away from toil and strain into walks "amongst orchards, gardens, bowers, mounts, and arbours, artificial wildernesses, green thickets," and so on, until he comes even to "the very reading of feasts, triumphs, interviews, nuptials, tilts, tournaments ...", (24) etc.

Writing on a psychological topic, Burton tends to take a view of recreation that sometimes confuses the psychological with the physical in the means which it employs. Yet his apologists might claim that, in doing so, he was reflecting a typical Renaissance awareness of the wholeness and interaction of the human personality, and point out his

(20) *ibid.*, Vol.II, p.71

(21) *ibid.*, Vol.I, p.241

(22) *ibid.*, Vol.II, p.70

(23) *ibid.*, Vol.ii, p.75

(24) *ibid.*, Vol.II, pp.76/78

balanced view of the healthy life, with moderate exercise contributing to an all round fitness:

"body and mind must be exercised, not one, but both, and that in a mediocrity; otherwise it will cause a great inconvenience. If the body be overtired, it tires the mind. The mind oppreseth the body as with students it oftentimes falls out, who.... have no care of the body." (25)

There is certainly a moderate and conditional support of exercise in the "Anatomy of Melancholy" but Burton's attitudes appear to depend little upon his medical evidence, which is so catholic as to be contradictory, inconclusive, or both.

The deficiencies of the customary accounts of the body's workings were already being recognised as Burton was writing his great treatise. At the beginning of the century Bacon had remarked on the complexity of the human physique, "of all substances which nature hath produced," it being "the most extremely compounded." (26) He had regretted that this complexity had caused men to doubt whether true science could ever comprehend its functioning, so that "in the opinion of the multitude, witches and old women and imposters have had a competition with physicians." (27) For a truer understanding and a more scientific approach to the problems of physical care, Bacon had called for a close observation of patients, attention to case records and a fuller study of anatomy, (28) methods which were, in fact, largely responsible for the advances in medical knowledge which were to take place in the next two or three generations.

(25) *ibid.*, Vol.II, p.99

(26) Bacon, *op.cit.*, p.109

(27) *ibid.*, p.111

(28) *ibid.*, pp.112/3

The detail of these medical advances lies outside the scope of this enquiry, except in so far as they made new approaches to exercise appear likely. (29) The methods by which they were brought about, however, were almost as significant, not only to the history of medicine, but in the history of ideas generally, as were the results themselves.

Experiment, observation, recording and deduction, the principles of the scientific approach, were triumphantly vindicated in Harvey's pioneer work on the circulation of the blood. Guthrie has described William Harvey's "Anatomical Treatise on the Movement of the Heart and Blood in Animals" (1628) as "probably the greatest book in medical literature". (30) In its simplest terms, Harvey's great leap forward was to show that the heart, which by his day was accepted as the source of blood, could not, mechanically speaking, function as a manufacturer of blood. Within an hour it would produce more than the total body-weight of blood, far more than could be converted from any food intake. Together with his account of the structure of the valves in the veins, this led Harvey to the conclusion that the blood moved in a circulatory motion round the body. As microscopes grew more effective, it became possible to show, by the 1660's, how the final link in the circle was made up, by observing the movement of blood at the extremities from arteries to veins. Professor Butterfield remarks of Harvey that

"though he held some of the unsatisfactory speculative views which were current at the time - such as a belief in vital spirits -

(29) See, for example, Guthrie, op.cit., and Butterfield, op.cit., especially Ch. 3 "The Study of the Heart down to William Harvey."

(30) Guthrie, op.cit., p.183

his arguments never depended on these, and his thesis was so mechanically satisfying in itself that it helped to render them meaningless and unnecessary in future." (31)

The way was thus open for further advance, and the method by which the progress was to come was laid down. Henceforth there could be much more posing of the right physiological questions (on respiration, for instance, since the function of the lungs had to be reconsidered) and so more prospect of reaching experimentally tenable answers.

Harvey's discovery was the justification of the processes of experiment and observation, revealing by their means patterns of cause and effect in the body's working more precise and exact than had so far been anticipated. Whole layers of mysticism were sealed away at one blow. With our hindsight we can see Harvey's work as a decisive step in the growth of human knowledge, but it took two or three decades for his interpretation to gain current acceptance. Convention and tradition, let alone superstition, are both persistent and powerful, even in men of high talent. Robert Wiseman, court physician after the Restoration and a man of progressive ideas in most directions, had a firm belief, which seems to have extended beyond the limits of his own vested interest, in the royal power of "touching for the King's Evil", and Sir Thomas Browne was convinced of the dangers and efficacy of witchcraft. "Animal spirits" were still bedevilling medicine until far into the eighteenth century, although Francis Fuller had seemed ready to desert them, with his resigned assertion that "we shall never perhaps be able to know exactly what the Animal Spirits are." (32)

(31) Butterfield, op.cit., p.47

(32) Francis Fuller: "Medicins Gymnastica, &c." (2nd Edition, 1705)
p.26

Others grasped the significance of the scientific revolution with such absence of reservation that, in their eyes, all was at once made so rational that there was no limit to the mechanical linking of cause and effect. Hobbes was roundly announcing that life was "but a motion of Limbs", (33) all mystery seemingly gone. A clarification of the body's workings, and an apparent increase in the emphasis to be placed upon the physical in the estimate of the human personality might be expected to yield profitable comment on physical fitness and bodily exercise. The first practical exponent of the new scientific approach to medicine, however, Thomas Sydenham, proved to be no more than a mild advocate of exercise.

Sydenham was one of the great figures of seventeenth century medicine, a down-to-earth clinician who followed scrupulously the Baconian recommendation on keeping case records and making his deductions from experience. While he saw the benefits of physical activity, both to himself and to his patients, he still could not escape the cautious approach of the time. This is, at least, more firmly grounded in Sydenham than in most other contemporary writers. One of the prime causes of fevers, discussed in the "History and Cure of Acute Diseases", arises when a man has

"imprudently exposed his body to the cold after being heated with violent exercise, whence the pores being suddenly closed, and the perspirable matter retained in the body that would otherwise have passed through them, such a particular kind of fever is raised in the blood, as the then reigning general constitution, or the particular depravity of the juices, is most inclined to produce." (34)

(33) Hobbes, op.cit., p.1

(34) J.D.Comrie (editor): "Selected Works of Thomas Sydenham, M.D. With a Short Biography and Explanatory Notes" (1922) p.53

The objection, it is worth noting, is not to sweating itself (and so to any violent exercise which would promote sweating) but to sudden chilling after exertion. He certainly frowned upon the use of sweating as a cure for gout, a customary remedy, but for the healthy body he granted that exercise was beneficial so long as it was followed by a deliberately gradual cooling-off, an "interim of unsweating" of the sort Milton had prescribed for the students of his academy after their daily physical training. (35)

The phenomenon of perspiration certainly prompted a good deal of medical speculation at this time, and the explanations given of the process were bound to be crucial factors in deciding attitudes towards exercise. Burton had found it dangerous to perspire profusely, "lest it should dry the body too much." (36) There had, by the middle of the century, been modifications in this view, as reflected not only by Milton and Sydenham but also in Charles II's practice of having himself weighed before and after his game of tennis, considering loss of weight as proof of good play. (37) Sweating still had a mystique about it, however, as it tended to be, in an apparently obvious form, a "distillation" of those animal spirits through which the body had its motion. To sweat meant, therefore, "a waste of Spirits." (38) This interpretation could place a barrier in the way of any unstinted

(35) "The interim of unsweating themselves regularly, and convenient rest before meat, may both with profit and delight be taken up in recreating and composing their travailed spirits with the solemn and divine harmonies of music heard or learned" Milton, *op.cit.*, p.51 (See also above, p.149)

(36) Burton, *op.cit.*, Vol.II, p.70

(37) Pepys' Diary, Sept. 2nd, 1667.

(38) see below, p. 262 for Fuller's at least partial resolution of the problem.

medical enthusiasm for energetic exercise. While the barrier might not be insuperable, this confusion over the nature of perspiration meant that the physician was bound to bring some initial doubts to his consideration of physical exercise.

Sydenham, for example, although not tied completely to the 'classical' account of sweating, derived his moderate advocacy of exercise from experience and observation rather than from theoretical principle. His comments on the subject are all incidental, and scattered widely in his writings, especially in the "History and Cure of Acute Diseases" and "A Treatise on the Gout". He himself had poor health, which persuaded him to a simple life:

"I am careful to go to bed early, especially in the winter, nothing better than early hours to accomplish a full and perfect concoction and to preserve that order and even course of life we owe to nature." (39)

Lack of exercise he put down as the major cause of gout and the reason why this was a disease of age and easy living, with the leaving off of "those exercises which young persons commonly use." (40) These exertions had formerly served "to invigorate the blood and strengthen the tone of the solids", and he argued that to resume as much of them as possible was far more likely to relieve the disease than any of the other methods of treatment available. What Sydenham particularly recommended was riding, giving the body continual motion and so reviving its natural heat. He thought it much healthier, incidentally, to ride in the country than in the town, "where the air is full of

(39) Comrie (Ed) op.cit., p.18 (from "Dissertio Epistolaris")

(40) *ibid.*, p.58

vapours that exhale from the shops of different mechanics." (41)

This was significant enough in itself at a time when rest seemed an obvious remedy for all such complaints. It was even more important in that, from hints such as this, one of Sydenham's avowed disciples, Francis Fuller, developed something approaching a system of medical exercise. Some of Fuller's recommendations, indeed, such as his comments on the desirability of horse-riding, read like extensions of Sydenham's sketchy proposals, although the "Medicina Gymnastica" ("A Treatise Concerning the Power of Exercise, with Respect to the Animal Economy; and the Great Necessity of it in the Cure of Several Distempers") goes far beyond Sydenham in its therapeutic claims for exercise.

Fuller had, of course, to face this central problem of sweating and he felt, doubtless, that he had solved it satisfactorily. It might not be possible to give a clear account of the nature of "animal spirits", but exercise, he argued, stimulated the brain to produce these spirits more rapidly. Hence, the "Waste of the Spirits" in sweating presented no objection as the brain's extra productive capacity was more than compensating for such a loss. ~~(42)~~ Physical energy was, in fact, seen not as dissipating, but as self-perpetuating, with all exertion generating the potentiality for further exertion. Fuller himself hardly appears to have realised to the full the degree to which his arguments had freed him from the constraints of the old views and the problems of

(41) *ibid.*, pp.87/88

perspiration still tended to remain at the front of his mind, as they did with his other contemporaries. Sweating might no longer be a danger, but it was a preoccupation. He was brought, for instance, to his preference for horse-riding above all other forms of exercise not only by Sydenham's example but also because of the evenness of the perspiration it produced. It did not heat some parts of the body at the expense of others, unlike activities where "some of the Secretary Vessels (are) made to throw off too much, while others throw off too little." (42)

Fuller provides much medical support for the view that exercise can preserve health. This was, of course, accepted widely by the seventeenth century, even ⁱⁿ its most Puritan moments. Fuller's claims become novel when he urges the curative power of exercise in the treatment of sickness:

"That the Use of Exercise does conduce very much to the Preservation of Health, that it promotes the Digestions, raises the Spirits, refreshes the Mind, and that it strengthens and relieves the whole Man, is scarce disputed by any; but that it should prove Curative in some particular Distempers, and that too when scarce any thing else will prevail, seems to obtain little Credit with most People, who tho' they will give a Physician the hearing when he recommends the frequent use of Riding, or any other sort of Exercise; yet at the bottom look upon it as a folorn method, and the Effect rather of his Inability to relieve 'em, than of his belief that there is any great matter in what he advises: Thus by a negligent Diffidence they deceive themselves, and let slip the Golden Opportunities of recovering, by a diligent Struggle, what could not be procured by the Use of Medicine alone." (43)

Since disease takes so many forms, argues Fuller, is it not reasonable to suppose that cures will equally be on many types? He criticises

(42) Fuller, op.cit., p.162

(43) ibid., pp.1/2

contemporary attitudes for their narrowness and for their concentration upon internal treatments alone, a result of "attributing too much to the Fluids, and too little to the Solids," that is, thinking too much in terms of blood and spirits and too little in terms of bone, muscle, and nervous function. Medicine was still thought of in terms largely of an inert body, not as an organism in motion. It is a line of argument in which Fuller reveals himself as a true child of seventeenth century science. An unused machine will rust and seize up: human inertia will produce the same effects. It is surely logical, he argues, to suppose that, since "the Nervous parts are weakened and relax'd" by lying inactive, an energetic way of living will be "most likely to repair 'em." "As for the Exercise of the Body," Fuller sums up, if any medicine could prove so potent in restoring health, then "nothing in the World would be in more Esteem, than that Medicine would be." (44)

Although limited in their field of application, these represent some of the most ambitious claims for exercise to be made since the writings of the courtly educators. For the first time also since the Elizabethan age a serious attempt was made to define "exercise", which Fuller saw as

"all that Motion or Agitation of the Body, of what kind soever, whether voluntary or involuntary, and all Methods whatsoever, which without the Use of Internals, may (or without which Internals alone may not always) suffice to enable Nature to expel the Enemy which oppresses her." (45)

(44) *ibid.*, Preface, pp. a-a4 (some pages not numbered)
 (45) *ibid.*, p.4

Like Mulcaster's, this is a wider concept of exercise than the twentieth century usually accepts, but, apart from his references to the benefits of sneezing, coughing, laughter and so on, (46) Fuller does concentrate almost entirely on consciously pursued activities. In spite also of an expressed intention to discuss his theme "only as it may prove Curative, not as Palliative, or barely Preservative," he does make contributions towards the theory of physical activity in general.

He sees many benefits arising from exercise: to the circulation, to the muscles, and to the respiratory system. The example of Tumblers, Rope-dancers and other such performers, "in whom the Nervous and Solid Parts must be incomparably more wound up, more tense than in other people," shows that exercise increases strength. The strongest men may often seem "thin and Raw-bon'd" but, through their exertions, their muscles are tense, hard, and consequently more powerful,

"capable of greater Actions than the Muscles of those who seem to have a better Habit of Body, which plainly indicates that exercise does communicate some Strength to the Nervous Parts, which cannot be any other way procured." (47)

This association of exercise with actual physical strength, as against simple health, seems obvious enough to us. Fuller's theme that physical usage promotes the powers which it employs, and does not merely "use them up", still had to be argued at a time when, as he shows, the best "Habit" of body (the best constitution, physique or

(46) *ibid.*, pp.7-9

(47) *ibid.*, p.36

physical appearance ⁽⁴⁸⁾) was heavy and well-fleshed, not necessarily "athletic" in the later sense in which the word was applied to physique. While Fuller himself sees no reason for promoting physical strength beyond the normal good health which his regime, intended for the sick, aims to restore, he does prepare the physiological path for those who may.

The same stress on usage occurs in the assertion that the lungs are similarly capable of being strengthened by exercise. He quotes the example of two men of apparently equal strength, both used to hard labour,

"wherof one has accustom'd himself to Running, the other never done so, all the World knows that the Practis'd Footman shall Run a great deal farther and much faster than the other can: Tho' in the Common Sense of the Expression, this latter has a Clear Wind as we say, and is in perfect health." (49)

To attribute, as Fuller then did, the trained man's speed and stamina almost entirely to "stronger lungs" was, of course, far too grand a simplification, but it did give a further reinforcement to his theory of exercise. It also encouraged Fuller to recommend, as Sydenham had done before him, outdoor activity in clean air.

Such out-door exercise would also bring more subtle benefits, as it would produce that sense of physical well-being, that psycho-physical glow, which constituted the final claim for exercise. It "gives the Solid and Nervous Parts a grateful Sensation, which in some Cases is not contemptible." (50) Yet even the prospect of such "grateful

(48) "Habit" is defined by Bailey, op.cit., as "any particular Disposition or Temperament of the Body."

(49) Fuller, op.cit., p.80

(50) ibid., p.42

sensation" is, as Fuller well realises, unlikely to make the sick convinced of the force of his arguments, accustomed as they are to having their ills cossetted, and unwilling to allow reasoning to "prevail against the Apprehensions of the Pain and Trouble to be undergone in the first Attempt of Exercise." (51) He warns them, too, that the results of treatment are not always immediately apparent, just as warm baths in cases of paralysis often showed no effects until some months after the course of treatment ended. An all-round patience was essential, not only in this direction but also in the other: there should be no rushing headlong into the treatment. The exercise of the sick had to be both moderate and sustained. Its necessity, however, was beyond doubt: "if a Supine and Luxurious Course of Life has enervated the Body, an Active and Vigorous one" should restore it. (52)

After marshalling such strong support for physical exercise, Fuller's actual programme seems extremely cautious and moderate. Of course, he was writing for the sick and not the healthy. His recommendations might otherwise well have been more varied and strenuous, although he was no enthusiast for really energetic activities. In the final chapter of the "Medicina Gymnastica", on "The Practice of the Ancients", he commends his professional precursor, Galen, for approving only "of the more moderate Exercises" and for condemning "the Athletic, and other violent Practices of the Gymnasium." The ancients, he alleges, carried these things too far, "the whole Education of the

(51) *ibid.*, p.61

(52) *ibid.*, p.41

Athletae was blameable." (53) That this is the final chapter, almost an appendix, provides a significant aside of itself on the changed status of classical authority by the end of the seventeenth century. Fuller sees the ancients' widespread support of gymnastics as of no particular strength to his cause and he had carefully disclaimed in his preface that he wrote out of admiration for them and disrespect for modern authors. (54) He accordingly avoids all violent forms of activity and, apart from the Spartan rigours of the cold bath, the main feature of his "most easy Natural Gymnastic course" is horse-riding which, quite apart from its even heating of the body, has many other particular advantages for the sick. The rider is subjected to vigorous motion with very little action on his part, making it very different from almost all other activities, such as walking or running, "all which require some Labour and consequently more strength for their Performance" and all of which demand considerable muscular exertion. (55) Many positive results can be expected from it: it promotes sound, beneficial sleep; brings rosy cheeks; clears obstructions of the lower belly and gives "the vivacity, the gaiety which does always more or less result from brisk Motion." (56) The lady may choose to take her excursion in a chaise, although Fuller cannot "see any breach of Decorum, if a Lady, attended with a servant, should ride on Horse-back daily for Health, if she like it best." (57) Finally, riding lends itself to "a variety of Pleasures of the Field, some of which any Man may make

(53) *ibid.*, p.250

(54) *ibid.*, Preface, pages not numbered.

(55) *ibid.*, p.162

(56) *ibid.*, pp.163-179

(57) *ibid.*, p.155

agreeable to his Humour." (58)

Walking, "the most Common and unpromising exercise", has his commendation, and Fuller completes the programme with "chafing", cold baths, and being "Exercis'd to bear Cold", which consists of a hardening process having much in common with John Locke's and stressing "as thin a Habit as Decency will permit". Flannel is "scarce necessary or convenient on this side Old Age"! (59) He even joins Locke in seeing the desirability of getting used to having wet feet and points out that both unclothed savages and those who are used to getting their feet soaked "without changing their Shoes and Stockings for it" are the strongest and healthiest folk to be found. (60)

Such, then, is Fuller's proposed system of exercise and, even making due discount for the essentially therapeutic nature of his work, it does appear to fall somewhat short of the promise that was held out in his original claims for the benefits of physical activity. There was a general reluctance among Stuart physicians to develop the physiological possibilities for exercise that the seventeenth century had revealed. That these possibilities were so considerable was, in no small measure, however, due to the speculative efforts of Francis Fuller, whose re-interpretations of some of the body's functions had made exercise, in theory at least, much less fraught with danger and much more capable of positive values, both to the sick and the healthy.

There was one specific area in which seventeenth century medical

(58) *ibid.*, p.185

(59) *ibid.*, pp.224-5

(60) *ibid.*, pp.224-6

views did impinge upon physical exercise. This was in the encouragement they began to give to swimming. Although this is not a history of hygiene and although the medical stresses on the water cure belong to later centuries than the seventeenth, the lessening fear of water is obviously relevant here.

The Elizabethans and their immediate successors had felt a partly justifiable temerity towards this dangerous medium. It was a hazardous venture to drink it, with only a sketchy public water supply, and taking a bath was an event to be noted. Queen Elizabeth was looked upon as remarkable because she took a bath once a month, "whether she needed it or no." (61) More cleanliness, indeed, would have made a major step in preventive medicine, and Guthrie notes that the "sweating sickness" epidemics of the sixteenth century were largely due to "dirty personal habits and the scarcity of soap". (62) The plague visitations of the next century would have been better met by washing away the causes of some of the smells rather than by trying to overpower them with lavenders and nosegays. Bacon might assert that "cleanness of body was ever esteemed to proceed from a due reverence to God, to society, and to ourselves," (63) yet regular bathing was far from popular for many generations after his day. If the use of water for cleansing was so unacceptable, its use as an element for exercise and pleasure was reserved for the most foolhardy and venturesome, such as the Cambridge undergraduates who had to be protected by their mentors

(61) see Lawrence Wright: "Clean and Decent: The Fascinating History of the Bathroom and Water Closet" (1960), p.75

(62) Guthrie, op.cit., p.170

(63) Bacon, op.cit., p.117

from the perils of swimming. (64)

Burton, garnering his support from more hygienic ages, could find baths "of wonderful great force" in treating melancholy, but even he could find little authority for cold water bathing and so had his doubts about the possibility of swimming to any benefit in the English climate. (65) Even towards the end of the period, Fuller realised that his advocacy of the cold bath was still novel enough to startle and even frighten his patients, but it is symptomatic of a considerable shift in opinion that he sees it as a thoroughly practical proposition. He comments upon it as

"a severe method of Cure taken up lately among us, and which upon the first Consideration carries the Terror enough in it; which if anyone had presum'd to recommend some years ago, he would have been thought one of the most Wild and Barbarous of Men; and yet we see now the tenderest of the fair sex dares commit herself to that terrible element, and upon the first Experiment the Fears and Amusements vanish." (66)

The scope for healthful exercise was, in fact, expanding rapidly in the second half of the seventeenth century. With immersion on its way to acceptance as a method of cure, water had lost its worst terrors and was to become increasingly a medium for purely pleasurable exercise in the next century, with the growing popularity of swimming and the spread of sea-bathing. The value of the open air was also being realised. A growing awareness of the function of the lungs and of the processes of respiration inclined doctors to see specific benefits in outdoor activities, whereas in the past there had been little

(64) see above, p.64

(65) Burton, op.cit., Vol.II, p.33

(66) Fuller, op.cit., pp 62/3

distinction drawn between indoor and outdoor exercise and a frequent confusion between the physical and psychological benefits that could arise from exercise out of doors. The views of Sydenham and Fuller, for instance, show a considerable advance in clarity and discrimination over those of Mulcaster and Burton.

In urging the benefits of fresh air and water, medical theory helped to widen the range of physical activities that were popular in the later seventeenth and subsequent centuries. This apart, however, the revolution in physiology was hardly accompanied by the revolution in medical attitudes towards exercise which it made possible. Fuller's arguments made the way to positive fitness and abundant health through exercise quite clear. His line of reasoning could have been developed to provide a strenuous system of exercise for the healthy, to stand alongside his mild regime for the sick. Fuller did not see his terms of reference extending to these lengths; the physician's task was to heal the sick, not to strengthen the healthy. In spite of occasional phenomena such as vaccination, the concept of preventive medicine was hardly to be formulated before the end of the nineteenth century.

Moreover, Fuller would certainly have questioned the need for any fitness that went beyond freedom from illness. Contemporary opinion did not demand the application of the new theories of medicine to deliberate physical training, while the physicians themselves had no particular motive to make any such application. They usually belonged to the section of society to which play pursuits made little appeal.

Applied scientists can make effective use of the discoveries of pure science only when society at large is psychologically ready or economically forced to accept these applications. It seems certain that medical science can decisively influence patterns of exercise only if physicians are concerned enough to speak out loudly and persistently and if there is a section of public opinion disposed to listen to their views. Neither of these conditions obtained in the period under review. Physical recreation might be popular, but it was not so much because it was physical as because it was recreation. Men were more concerned about making it more enjoyable than more healthful. The coolness of the physicians towards physical exercise was not for cynical reasons of profit from the unexercised but because they themselves, in spite of the theoretical position, were generally as unconvinced as their lay contemporaries of any need for it. Other considerations almost certainly weighed more heavily than the medical in the minds of Stuart physicians when they made their assumptions about the exercise of healthy men and women. Other predispositions made them less eager in their search for reforms than they might otherwise have been.

It is, in particular, reasonable to suppose that the Puritan attitudes towards exercise were very influential in medical thinking. Many of the important figures in the profession in both the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were associated with the Dissenting tradition. Thomas Sydenham fought on the parliamentary side during the Civil War, serving in ~~the~~ Weymouth, where his brother was Governor; Francis

Fuller was the son of a non-conformist clergyman; the medical poet of the eighteenth century, John Armstrong, was a friend of John Wilkes for many years and his editor, Aikin, (67) also a physician, was not only the son of a tutor at the Warrington Academy but also made his house at Stoke Newington (again significant in the history of nonconformist education) a centre for liberal thinkers from Priestley to Darwin. The close links between medicine and nonconformity may help to account for the appearance of medical studies in the academies. They also throw light on the close correspondence between the exercises recommended by physicians and those which found favour among the Puritan divines, exercises such as riding and walking in particular. Physicians, no less than other men, had their social attitudes and religious beliefs. Social and religious pressures certainly had a considerable effect on medical attitudes towards physical activity, whether of children or adults. When Stuart doctors pronounced on bodily exercise, the voice of Puritanism was as loud as the voice of physic.

The Stuart period had, however, seen major advances in the understanding of the body's working. Its motions appeared to have become explicable, articulated in the great chain of cause and effect. The spirits, animal, vital and otherwise, might still linger on to bedevil another generation or so of medical men, but they became increasingly irrelevant as the functions of all the major physiological systems became more comprehensible. The heart, the lungs, the muscles

(67) "The Art of Preserving Health" by John Armstrong, M.D. to which is prefixed a Critical Essay on the Poem by J.Aikin, M.D." (1796)

and (at least in outline) the nerves all seemed to operate in accordance with a mechanical logic. The mysterious forces of former medical theory, with its humours and distillations, were no longer needed to explain the body's motions. The relevance of these new concepts for physical activity had been noted, even if they had not been pushed to any very far conclusion, by Fuller. He had himself made the comparison, which the early eighteenth century was to find so fascinating, between the human frame and an inanimate machine:

"There is the Difference between the most complete Productions of Human Artifice, and that Divine Piece of Mechanism, the Body of Man, that the former are always the worse for wearing, and decay by Use and Motion; the latter, notwithstanding the Tenderness of its Contextures, improves by Exercise, and acquires by frequent Motion an ability to last the longer (yet) in our Considerations of the Animal Economy, we seem to regard Nature only as in a quiescent State, without a due Allowance caus'd by the Motion of the whole." (68)

The whole medical future of physical education lay waiting for development in the line of argument enunciated by Francis Fuller in that paragraph although it was to be undeveloped until, a hundred years or so later, Clement Tissot (1750-1826) was to inaugurate the modern history of medical involvement in physical education with his "Medical and Surgical Gymnastics". The notion of the mechanical body was not applied with any great rigour to physical exercise in the minds of Stuart doctors. They did not pursue the concept as thoroughly as did contemporary philosophers and it is possibly from the philosophical quarter that we should expect contributions to thought about the body and its exercising.

(68) Fuller, op.cit., pp.12/13

(ii) The Mechanical Body: Thomas Hobbes.

Is there likely to be any profit in searching for relationships between physical education and philosophy, or is such a search presumptuous?

A number of answers are possible. The pragmatic solution would be to say that it all depends on the philosophy, that some philosophers have had physical education in the forefront of their thinking (Plato, for instance, for whom the training of the physical was a central feature of moral education), while others have had nothing to say that was applicable, without undue attenuation, to the training and exercise of the human body. Berkeley, Hume and Hobbes, to take three philosophers from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, would qualify for this category.

A second answer would be more catholic in its assumptions. It can be argued that an enquiry into the nature of reality will have significant implications, if nothing more, for attitudes towards a more or less "real" human body. Less metaphysically, any systematic evaluation of human activities will ask questions which come, ultimately, into the province of the physical educationist. "We do, presumably," writes Professor Peters, discussing the philosophical approach to the content of education, "aim at passing on poetry rather than push-pin." And cricket rather than bar-skittles? Moral education, he continues, "will be as much concerned with the promotion of good activities as it will be with the maintenance of rules for

social conduct." (69) Such "good activities" will, in most ages, include physical pursuits as well as other forms of behaviour.

Philosophers will not always see the relevance of their speculations, particularly in areas in which they themselves are not much interested. Still more, many of them would be startled at what future ages did, if not in their name, at least in their alleged tradition. Aristotle would scarcely have been enthusiastic over what Restoration dramatists made of his "Three Unities", which he had propounded as descriptive, rather than prescriptive, observations on the structure of Greek tragedies. In the history of ideas, the intrinsically "philosophical" content of a writer's work may, indeed, be less important than what unprofessional opinion, both in his own day and later, has made of his theory. If a major role of philosophy is the study of the human understanding, the history of ideas will often be the study of human misunderstandings. It follows that philosophers tend to figure in histories of ideas with significances which vary according to the presuppositions of the historian. Some philosophers have a high professional appeal, but may have had little popular impact. Others, who may be less philosophically satisfying, have none the less had considerable influence upon attitudes and opinions. Bertrand Russell has noted that nobody has yet succeeded in satisfying both types of requirement by inventing a philosophy "at once credible and self-consistent." (70) Consequently, it is likely

(69) R.S.Peters: "Reason and Habit: The Paradox of Moral Education", in W.R.Niblett (ed): "Moral Education in a Changing Society" (1963) p.53
 (70) B.Russell: "A History of Western Philosophy" (1946), p.637

that the philosopher who aims at credibility (like Locke) will figure more largely in the histories of ideas, and the thinker who aims at self-consistency (such as Hobbes) will be of more interest to the professional philosopher. Such a dichotomy is, of course, too radical except as a theoretical postulate. In practice, there is sometimes a point of fusion between systematised philosophy and contemporary attitudes but which the philosopher himself may not reach. Locke did reach such a point, particularly in his political and educational theory; but with other philosophers it may be left to some more or less avowed disciple to publicise certain aspects of his work for a wider consumption. This, it will be suggested, was the fate of Hobbes.

The England of the later Stuarts was prepared to listen to what its philosophers had to say. At first, men might laugh off the theories of "Atheist Hobbes", yet he compelled attention because his political philosophy had such relevance to their experience and they even found his time-serving advice uncomfortably near the bone. By Locke's day, philosopher and audience had moved into a more respectable sympathy with each other, with the result that the philosopher's system, perhaps more markedly than on any other occasion, became the manifesto of his times. Nor was it only in England that men accepted the philosophical movement which has Hobbes at its beginnings, Locke and Berkeley as its centrepieces and Hume as its conclusion. All Europe looked to its intellectual leadership and granted its primacy.

That the philosophy of Hobbes and Locke was influential in both English and European ideas does, of itself, make out a distant case for

its inclusion in a history of attitudes towards the body and its exercise. This case is strengthened by the importance of the physical in their accounts of human nature and human knowledge. Certain aspects of the body's workings, if not those usually associated with physical education, were a first concern of their philosophical systems. The philosophical origins of attitudes towards physical activities are customarily seen in political theory, with its examination of the citizen's upbringing and training, or in ethics, with its evaluation of human qualities and activities. It might well be, especially in an age when the importance of philosophy became widely accepted and the ideas of philosophers were expected to have relevance to practical affairs, that a philosophical approach based upon theory of knowledge could have influence upon notions of physical activity and physical education.

Thomas Hobbes does not usually find a place in histories of educational philosophy, let alone in the theory of physical education, yet he propounded the basic doctrine of perception, which Locke was to develop into an educational theory. He also showed a recurring, if almost wholly critical, interest in the content and methods of the education of his times. In the context of the theory of physical education, Hobbes could claim space not only as an influence on John Locke (who has long had a seat of honour in the history of ideas on physical education), but also on account of his preoccupation with movement, even physical movement, and because certain applications of Hobbesian viewpoints on the upbringing of children were current for at

least a hundred years after his death.

The scientific movement of the seventeenth century may be said to have reached its theoretical culmination in the philosophy of Hobbes. The old Aristotelian world, where the motion of objects was directed by their own inner forces in an earth-centred universe, had quite disappeared, yet the continued teaching of Aristotelian principles was the most persistent object of Hobbes' scorn. Rules of cause and effect had been shown by Galileo to operate in the mechanical motion of the heavens, and Isaac Newton was soon to underline the logic of the new approach with laws of inertia and motion that rang with mathematical certainty. Harvey, as has been seen, extended men's awareness of the same principle by his discoveries in human physiology. What had once seemed mystery became suddenly explicable. Hobbes grasped this concept of mechanical, mathematical logic, whose universal workings were being so rapidly revealed, and applied it comprehensively to the explanation of human behaviour. His very first sentences in "Leviathan", quoted at the head of this chapter, announce his message without ceremony or preamble: man is a mechanism, with the heart its power-house, the nerves its driving belts and the joints its wheels, all working together as devised "by the Artificer." (70)

The "motion of limbs" was, for Hobbes, the characteristic of life. It could have led him to a concentration upon physical movement, the production, even, of a materialist, biologically based education. This was not, of course, what Hobbes had in mind. The end of Hobbes'

(70) Hobbes, op.cit., p.1. See also above, p.244

philosophy was political stability. Its beginning was his belief in logical cause and effect, exemplified in motion and derived from his age's scientific experience and the passion for the logical structures he had lately discovered in geometry. In the long journey from his beginning to his end, Hobbes had to sharpen the tools of his method, to examine the nature of knowledge so as to establish clearly the processes of logic. Understanding the nature of human knowledge demanded an examination of the sensory processes through which knowledge was attained; and such an examination led Hobbes where science beckoned, into a mechanistic theory with all its emphasis on the one who does the perceiving. The motions of the sense organs were the only active participants in the perceptual event. (71)

The Hobbesian man, then, is all activity, and it is physical activity at that. Hobbes never becomes really clear about how what is usually called the "mental" side of perception occurs, but even this remains in the physical world; the "mind" is of the physical order of things, of the same nature as the body. The physical has a central place, too, in his psychology of behaviour, although here again he is blurred through lack of physiological detail. Perception, he argues, produces emotional responses by impinging upon the "vital motions" ("innate drives" is our nearest equivalent), giving pleasure when it helps this "motion" and pain when it hinders it. Voluntary movements

(71) This was a view so contrary to what was currently taught that it prompted Hobbes to one of his many violent attacks on University teaching. He did not criticise "as disapproving the use of Universities," however, and promised "to speak hereafter of their office in a commonwealth." (ibid., p.4). The promise is only fulfilled in a very fragmentary manner in later sections of the work, e.g., pp.127, 183, 365/6.

of the body, like its perceptions of the outside world, depend upon invisible, internal mechanisms. The "vital motions" prompt these processes, and

"The small beginnings of Motion, within the body of Man, before they appear in walking, speaking, striking, and other visible actions, are commonly called ENDEAVOUR." (72)

Thus, Hobbes not only places physical movement at the centre of his considerations, but he also constructs a physiological and psychological account of how this movement is originated.

This would be the starting point for a theory of physical education, or, indeed, the point of departure for any thinker whose main concerns were with individual behaviour, with the promotion of desired activities, with morality or with bringing up young people to any given standards of thought, feeling, and conduct. Hobbes has the built-in psychology of learning that suggests these lines of development. It is less explicit, perhaps, than that which won Locke his status as an authority in educational theory, although it is no less systematic. Had Hobbes been seriously concerned about physical exercise or thought it important, he might have explored the possible ways of making the "motion of limbs" more efficient, giving it greater quality, but there was nothing in either his object or his experience to suggest to him that this aspect of human activity was worth his enquiry. His analysis of human motivation was a step on his way towards political authoritarianism and the subordination of the individual will. Fear had originally moved men to the sinking of their own selfish and mutually destructive desires,

the primitive urgings of the "vital motions", in the interests of their safety. The state's duty was still to protect, while the citizen, in return for security, owed the state his implicit obedience.

The mathematical means, the concept of motion, and the political end, these were Hobbes' main themes. That his treatment of them led to ^{an} analysis of human motion and placed physical movement so squarely in the centre of the human function was doubtless thought commonplace by Hobbes and hardly noticed by his readers. Large-scale body movement was something that you did. Only the imperceptible motions that marked its origins were deserving of profound speculation. Hobbes did, indeed, have some concern for exercise himself, as Aubrey reports:

"Besides his daily walking he did twice or thrice a year play at Tennis (at about 75 he did it) then went to bed there and was well rubbed. This he did believe would make him live two or three years the longer.

In the country, for want of a tennis-court, he would walk uphill and downhill in the park, till he was in a great sweat, and then give the servant some money to rub him."

Hobbes even accepted the catholic interpretation of exercise favoured by Mulcaster and Fuller, with singing, behind closed doors, as one of his favourite exertions, pursued, as Aubrey describes, for its physical and not its musical effects! Although he had no voice, "he did believe it did his Lungs good." (73)

If Hobbes did not consider his own personal attitude towards exercise worthy of integration into his philosophy, neither did his

(73) J. Aubrey, op.cit., Vol.I, p.352. Aubrey's creative zest for anecdote may be quite justified here as Hobbes was personally known to him, both came from the same corner of Wiltshire and had been taught by the same schoolmasters. The biography of Hobbes is the longest and fullest of Aubrey's "Lives".

readers find any particular significance in his remarks on physical movement. They did take notice of Hobbes, although it was his political advice, or his alleged "atheism", which caught most contemporary attention. Buckingham saw him in the vanguard of a new rationalism:

"While in dark ignorance we lay afraid
Of fairies, ghosts, and every empty shade;
Great Hobbes appear'd, and by plain reason's light
Put such fantastic forms to shameful flight." (74)

Such all-embracing panegyrics were, however, rare. Outside his political thought little direct notice was taken, at least by non-philosophers, of Hobbes' philosophy until the revival of interest in the present century. (75)

Although no immediate school of thought grew up around Hobbes, he was not without practical influence and, in particular, the educational attitudes that could be derived from his philosophy received wide currency through the writings of Francis Osborn. Osborn's "Advice to a Son" was first published in 1656, went into five editions within three years and continued to be republished until well into the eighteenth century. (76)

There is both internal and external evidence that Osborn's dependence on the philosopher was a fairly direct one: Aubrey lists him as Hobbes' "great acquaintance"; (77) the two were certainly at Oxford at the same time in the early 1650's and there are specific, if oblique, references to Hobbes in the "Advice", quite apart from its

(74) John, Duke of Buckingham: "On Mr Hobbes and his Writings" in "Poems" (1726) p.97.

(75) e.g. in F.Brandt's "Thomas Hobbes' Mechanical Conception of Nature" (English translation, 1928) and Richard Peters: "Hobbes" (1956)

(76) References here are to F.Osborn: "Collected Works" (7th Edition, 1673)

(77) Aubrey, op.cit., p.370

general exploitation of Hobbesian ideas. (78) Osborn's interpretation of the philosopher's speculations is usually superficial and often distorted. His is by no means the only educational theory that could be derived from Hobbes, yet the link is strong enough to make this the place for a discussion of the "Advice to a Son", which belongs only in date and not at all in spirit to the Puritan Commonwealth.

Osborn takes his stand in the new movement of scientific thought by a loud announcement of his faith in Reason, which he sees enshrined in mathematical logic. Beyond this, he finds reality only in the material world. Only the tangible is worthy of serious pursuit, and worldly success is to be the single aim of the upbringing of his son. In such a context, physical education, exercise, sports and games can be expected to make only fleeting appearances, as incidentals, where they promise to contribute to this overriding object. Osborn recommends, for instance, a school education rather than a private tutor, one of his reasons being that a school gives a boy more opportunities to play with others. Lest this should be thought either an advocacy of play or part of an elevated concept of social education, he makes his motives clear. The schoolboy may,

"by plotting to rob an Orchard, &c. run through all the Subtilities required in taking of a Town: being made by use familar to secrecy, and Compliance with Opportunity." (79)

(78) The evidence for Osborn's dependence on Hobbes is presented in more detail in D.W.Brailsford: "A Critical Study of the Educational Theories contained in the "Advice" offered to their own children by certain moralists in the period 1660-1770, with special reference to Osborne, Halifax and Chesterfield." Unpublished M.Ed. thesis, Nottingham University (1955).

(79) Osborn, op.cit., p.1. He would have learned these lessons at the low risk of a whipping, moreover, whereas in later life failure in them might mean death. Marauding schoolboys also quickly realised the danger of trusting others and of obstinately pursuing rashly conceived plans.

Book learning, he thinks, is over-estimated. The young should have first-hand experience, without which academic knowledge can remain devoid of all meaning. He taunts

"those stuffed with Learningnot seldom observed to obstruct rather than open the Organs of Understanding, which ought not to be crammed faster than she is able to concoct, nor kept in a coop without taking the prospect of all worldly experience." (80)

Here again he is identifying himself with the new movement in thought, for, by the mid-seventeenth century, the long-standing distrust of "mere" book-learning had been re-inforced by the discredit into which classical authorities had fallen and the philosophical concentration on perception, which had turned interest towards direct personal experience. Osborn similarly recognises the progress of medical science, whose study has been eased, he writes, "by reason of the late helps." He would even have his son take up the subject "if a more profitable employment pull you not too soon from the University." His reasons for this recommendation, however, are largely social, material and cynical, unconnected with concerns for health or interest in the human body, "it being usual, esppecially for Ladies, to yield no less reverence to their Physicians than their Confessors." Even then, there are warnings against the dangers of hypochondria ("therefore you may live by, not upon Physic") and Osborn cannot resist the joke, that must have been unoriginal even in 1656, that "the Grave hides the Faults of Physic, no less than Mistakes" (81)

This slight concession to medicine, on the grounds of social

(80) *ibid.*, p.163

(81) *ibid.*, p.11

expediency, provides the only study, apart from the mathematical, which Osborn can find worthwhile. Much of his educational "programme" consists of little more than warnings, limitations and prohibitions; and the same pattern persists when he considers the physical side of his son's upbringing. A rational materialist of Osborn's type, who sees little value in emotional qualities, will generally see little worth in sport beyond the possible preservation of health. In any system deriving from Hobbes, the one real opportunity for the development of a physical education scheme was through the biological motive, to secure the greater efficiency of the organism. Osborn, however, held the accepted view that an adequate health could be attained and preserved without undue exertion. A good horse, and the ability to ride it, become a gentleman, although the horse should not, in the interests of economy, be "fat without hope of improvement" and, in the interests of his reputation, he is not to gallop it through towns, lest onlookers "think your Horse, or Brains, none of your own." (82) Little exercise is needed beyond riding. Wrestling and vaulting are suitable activities, and preferable to fencing because they are safer. Swimming is a useful skill, so long as it is used for its real purpose, to help to preserve one's own life, and not seen as an excuse for going into deep water for the sake of pleasure or in risky attempts to save others. (83)

Even though hawking was, Osborn grants, allowed by Machiavelli to his prince as "the wholesomest and cheapest of diversions", he cannot

(82) *ibid.*, pp.14 and 25

(83) *ibid.*, p.15

find any form of hunting desirable for his own son. He sees in it the danger that moods of despondency or exhilaration provoked by sporting success or failure may carry over into the more serious business of life and so make a man's whole contentment rest upon whether he manages "to bring home a rascal Deer, or a few rotten coneys." (84) For Osborn to desert Machiavelli, even on a minor point of recreation, becomes more notable in the light of Osborn's indebtedness to the author of "Il Principe". At the level of political theory, Machiavelli had abandoned absolute values and made material success the criterion of successful statecraft. Hobbes' advances on Machiavelli had made the same desertion of principle seem possible on the plane of personal ethics, although he had carefully not come to this point himself. It was left to Osborn to reduce ethics to a completely individualistic expediency.

This general trend in Osborn, already illustrated in the references made to the "Advice", was well attuned to the anti-Puritan feeling which high taxation and military rule were fostering in the later 1650's, while his disillusioned hedonism made a continued appeal to much of the Restoration mood. His specific proposals for physical activity might turn out, most opportunely, to be almost Puritan in their restriction, and so just help to save the "Advice" from the suppression with which it was threatened. All the motivation behind them, however, was coloured by the materialist cynicism that was soon to be typified in a monarch who preferred a crown to a principle and a pretty pair of lips to a

(84) *ibid.*, p.16

wedding ring. Osborn's ideas maintained a recurring attraction for that strain of bourgeois anarchism which persisted alongside, and partly in reaction to, the honest, public-spirited middle-class ethic encouraged by Puritanism. He remained influential and widely read, but as an entertaining purveyor of miscellaneous maxims and not as a systematic educational theorist representing a deeply realised philosophical code. The English philosophical movement that Hobbes initiated found its inheritor in John Locke, who gave it its fullest educational expression in an age that was more wholly in harmony with the new ideas.

It has already been argued that seventeenth century physicians derived most of their thinking on physical exercise from the common-sense attitudes they shared with their contemporaries, and particularly from the attitudes of their own social group. They looked at physical exercise less as medical men than as members of the Puritan-inclined middle class and tended to draw upon their professional knowledge and authority only when they were making recommendations which showed some deviation from the common opinion. Yet they were, by the nature of their calling, involved in giving advice, negative or positive, on the exercise of the body. They were brought face to face with at least one aspect of physical exercise.

No such confrontation was imposed upon seventeenth century philosophers. Only if their professional speculations were matched by their own personal interests and predilections would they feel invited to ask whether physical education or physical exercise needed discussing.

For most of the century major questions on the nature of knowledge and the bases of political authority were raising such fundamental issues that there was little scope for peripheral comment. Hobbes was a fit man, long-lived, given to physical exercise himself and, it is reasonable to suppose, ready to encourage exercise in his role as tutor to successive generations of young Cavendishes. Yet he did not see even education itself, the major occupation of his working life, a central enough theme to give it much book-space. Still further from his higher intellectual concerns would any thoughts on physical education appear to be.

Once the missionary years of the new science and the new philosophy were over and the main positions were won, there might be the opportunity to apply the rational philosophy to all facets of behaviour as had been done so successfully with the Puritan religion. In such circumstances, Locke was indeed to show that there was room, in the philosophical system which he took over from Hobbes, for the development of distinctive attitudes towards physical activity and physical education and to demonstrate that the opinions of Francis Osborn were far from being the only ones of which the new philosophy was capable.

(iii) Rational Physical Education: John Locke.

The years between the publication of "Leviathan" in 1651 and Locke's "Essay Concerning Human Understanding" in 1690 were a time of gradual settlement and definition in attitudes and beliefs. The fervour and

passion which the Puritan movement had brought into English public life slowly ebbed away and, as the religious turmoil quietened, so men could turn with more equanimity to that search for the natural order of things which science promised to reveal. A mood of optimism, a confidence in the imminent and rational completeness of scientific explanation, edged out most of the former disillusionments and fears. The nature of the change may be sensed in the language of the two philosophers themselves. In tone, texture and feeling alike, the developments are striking. Where in Hobbes, and in Osborn, there is tension, excitement, even pugnacity, and a need for muscular expression, in Locke there is ease, assurance, urbanity and a reasonable persuasion. This stylistic difference is something more than a change in linguistic fashion, explicable solely within a technical scheme of grammar and imagery. Hobbes had been struggling to bludgeon a logic and order into a world apparently in love with chaos. Locke was confirming a rational society in its own reasonableness.

Another clear indication of the change that was permeating the country's mental attitudes is provided by the Royal Society. In their different ways, both the Society itself and Thomas Sprat's history of its early years provide insights into newly-developing attitudes. When Charles II, soon after his accession, bestowed his royal sponsorship on the Society for the Improving of Natural Knowledge, he was putting the official seal of approval on the quest for objective truth. The Society might keep its doors closed to some of the more drastic speculators like Hobbes (much to the old philosopher's disappointment), but henceforth the

scientific movement was accepted as belonging to the mainstream of the country's intellectual life.

Meanwhile, Sprat's history of the Society's early achievements reflected the newly-felt assurance of progress towards a reasonable world. With all knowledge coming under new scrutiny and "so great a change in Works and Opinions", the scientific movement was bound to extend its influence into every corner of life. It would have, for instance, Sprat argues, "some fatal consequence, on all the former Methods of Teaching," (85) and so most certainly impinge upon education. Sprat did, incidentally, wonder whether the functions of scientist and teacher were compatible with each other. While the labour of teaching the young was, he granted, an important one, it was both time-consuming and likely to promote too "magisterial" an attitude, destroying the open-mindedness that was essential to the scientific approach. (86)

Sprat's "History" does not show the same awareness of any impact of the scientific movement on the physical side of education or on physical exercise itself. The Royal Society was conscious of the strides made in the knowledge of the human body earlier in the century and was zealous in promoting further enquiry. Sprat praises the physicians' contribution to the Society's work and affirms that "not only in the Skill or their own Art, but in general learning" they are unsurpassed anywhere in the world. (87) The increased awareness of the

(85) Tho. Sprat: "The History of the Royal Society of London for the Improving of Natural Knowledge" (3rd edition, 1722) p.323

(86) *ibid.*, pp.59/60

(87) *ibid.*, p.130

body's workings which they had provided was, as already suggested, the main channel through which, at this moment in history, physical exercise could hope to gain prestige. Other opportunities for the development of exercise depended either upon military resurgence of a highly improbable type or upon a psychological revolution which gave recognition and value to emotional satisfactions. Such a revolution was made unlikely by both intellectual conviction and the Puritan conscience, especially before Locke's partial rehabilitation of play. For the time being, therefore, the intellectual justification of physical exercise and physical education was in the hands of the scientists, and they saw no need to take it up.

It is tempting to regard John Locke's philosophy as, in many of its aspects, the inevitable conclusion of seventeenth century experience. The movement in thought and attitude which was both reflected in, and accelerated by, the work of the Royal Society was pushing men into the expectation of a rational perfection, directing their minds towards ideas of balance, form, toleration and restraint. The "Age of Reason" would, of course, have dawned upon the English eighteenth century without Locke. In one, very limiting, sense he was merely an astute commentator upon the contemporary scene. In another, however, he was a thinker of genius whose philosophy could make creative use of the points of growth in his age's mental life and so produce a system of ideas that, created in the last years of one century, was able to persist through most of the next.

From the point of view of this enquiry Locke has, of course,

great significance. Philosophers seldom devote much of their attention to physical education. Of the English philosophers, at least before the present century, and with the possible exception of Herbert Spencer, John Locke is the only one to have considered at any length the upbringing of children. Since Locke is also the only major theorist in the Stuart period to occupy a considerable place both in the histories of educational philosophy and also in the histories of physical education, he has provoked most of the few comments that have been made by subsequent educational writers on the subject matter of this thesis.

In the "Short History of Educational Ideas", Curtis and Boultwood warn against the temptation to overrate Locke as an advocate of physical education and point out the second-hand nature of much of his advice:

"John Locke set out to encourage the protection of children from the factors of the environment harmful to their physical welfare. Because the strictures on this matter are given first in "Some Thoughts", it is customary to conclude that he ranks vigour of body as a main aim of education together with his other main aims - morality and knowledge. Lest too much emphasis be laid on this arrangement as a possible innovation resulting from his own medical knowledge, a weakly childhood and criticism of current convention, the reader may do well to glance again at the summary of "The School of Infancy" of Comenius. It will then be clear that he had, in fact, adopted wholesale not only the opinions of the encyclopaedists, but also the essential principles of Comenian child welfare and education." (88)

Is this "customary" conclusion, then, that Locke does rank "vigour of body as a main aim of education", a valid one? The answer given is, in fact, to quite another question, namely whether Locke's physical programme was original. The authors do go on to say that Locke's main new contribution was, perhaps, "his principle of 'hardening' both the body and the mind," although we have seen this Spartan element, as far as the body at least was concerned, in most of supporters of physical education

from Mulcaster onwards.

Van Dalen, Mitchell and Bennett give a very appropriate summary of the role of physical education in Locke's total scheme:

"Although the development of character was the principal part of the disciplinarian education, health was to be established first. The English philosopher envisioned physical fitness as the base of the educational pyramid, for he realised that the temper and strength of the body regulated to a large degree the possible attainment and disposition of the personality. Locke's physical education program for the child was to create a strong and inuring constitution, to provoke and sustain healthful habits of living, to provide refreshing recreational experiences, and to develop the specific skills necessary for a gentleman in polite society." (89)

Their discussion of the psychological motive behind Locke's advice on physical training is, however, very limited, and the authors are preoccupied with the problems which Locke presents over classification. He was a "social realist" because he aimed all education "toward the production of a gentleman of ideas"; he was a "sense realist", in that "he thought ideas are secured through the senses"; but he was "definitely a disciplinarian" as he stressed "the continual practice of desirable behaviour habits." We finally, then, arrive at the right label, but it has to have conditions attached:

"In classifying Locke as a disciplinarian, perhaps it is best to identify the English philosopher as a 'middle of the road' disciplinarian." (90)

The usefulness of this categorising, when done at such an elementary level, is doubtful. The attaching of a name adds little light and may, indeed, discourage further enquiry.

Locke's notions on perception, for instance, when seen in the context

(89) Van Dalen, Mitchell and Bennett, op.cit., p.193

(90) ibid., p.192

of earlier thinking on this topic, justify more than simple reference to the "tabula rasa" view of the mind and its implications for learning theory and child rearing, even in discussions on physical training.

Locke may not have been approaching the subject of perception with the physical emphasises that had been so much a part of Hobbes' account.

He disclaims all intentions of exploring physiological psychology:

"I shall not at present meddle with the physical consideration of the mind; or trouble myself to examine wherein its essence consists; or by what motions of our spirits or alterations of our bodies we come to have any sensation by our organs, or any ideas in our understandings." (91)

Nevertheless, ⁶even in the "Human Understanding", where this occurs, Locke does make assumptions about the physical structures involved in mental processes. The mind is accepted as a plastic substance upon which ideas can be "imprinted", and "memory" varies from individual to individual probably because of physical differences. The physical constitution of the body ("and the make of our animal spirits," he added, in the Fourth Edition) and "the temper of the brain" makes the difference that in some the memory "retains the characters drawn on it like marble, in others like freestone, and others little better than sand." (92) Locke often works by image and analogy (let us "suppose" the mind "to be, as we say, white paper," on which all perceptual experience is "painted"), (93) yet there is always the strong implication of a physical mind, however intricate its involvement with mental events. Whether the "soul", or mind, is coeval or not with the body is a question with too many

(91) Locke: "An Essay Concerning Human Understanding" (edited A.C.Fraser, New York, 1959), Vol.I, p.26 (This will subsequently be referred to as "Locke: 'Essay'")

(92) *ibid.*, Vol.I, p.196

(93) *ibid.*, Vol.I, p.122

theological overtones to tempt Locke into an answer, but he cannot conceive it

"any more necessary for the soul always to think than for the body always to move: the conception of ideas being (as I conceive) to the soul, what motion is to the body; not its essence, but one of its operations." (94)

The diminution of the physical aspect of the perceptive process, from its former predominance in Hobbes, may, like this diminution of the function of motion in the total account of the physique itself, be more apparent than real. In any event, in the light of the recommendations which Locke eventually makes for a programme of physical education, this change in emphasis does not produce any profound practical effects and adds further to the suspicion that metaphysical considerations of mind/body relationships are not, of themselves, prime movers in theories of physical education.

A complete account of Locke's philosophy is not called for in an enquiry into attitudes towards the body and its exercising. There are a number of points, however, at which it does have relevance, and these are particularly important since they come from a philosopher who was generally in tune with the emerging attitudes of a new age. His theory of knowledge relied upon an intricate, if not fully explored, psychosomatic pattern in which the physical was a partner, indispensable, if not equal, to the mind. The famous first words of the "Thoughts Concerning Education" that "'A sound mind in a sound body' is a short but full description of a happy state in this world," (95) is the logical

(94) *ibid.*, Vol.I, p.128

(95) Locke: "Thoughts", p.210

complement of his philosophical account of man's nature. The mind is wholly dependent upon the efficiency of the physical perceptors for the vast store of ideas with which it becomes furnished. "Innate ideas" are denied any place in the mind's make-up. Observation of children, Locke argues, disproves their existence, ⁽⁹⁶⁾ as also does the behaviour of primitive tribes, where he finds no standard pattern of belief or action.

This and other references made by Locke to primitive societies is of more than passing interest. Apart from a precise foreshadowing of the way in which early twentieth century anthropologists were to undermine later instinct theories, they indicate a new factor which was periodically to influence the eighteenth century's thinking in several directions, notably in its discovery of native innocence. Locke's attitude is often one of lofty superiority, as when he cites primitive instances to dismiss the idea of inborn moral rules. He describes, for example,

"a people in Peru which were wont to fat and eat the children they got on their female captives, whom they kept as concubines for that purpose, and when they were past breeding, the mothers themselves were killed too and eaten."

Similarly, there is no universality in men's views of what constitutes the highest virtue, since the saints "canonized among the Turks, lead lives which one cannot with modesty relate." ⁽⁹⁷⁾ On the other hand, primitive practices sometimes provide Locke with praiseworthy examples as when the scant dress of the ancient Scythian and the modern Maltese is cited in support of his argument for light clothing. This theme,

(96) Locke: "Essay", p.40

(97) *ibid.*, p.73

that man in sophisticated communities might have lessons to learn from a "natural" and "unspoiled" life was to be influential in much eighteenth century thinking and was highly relevant to the consideration of physical activity.

Locke thus accumulates a weight of evidence and argument against the notion of universal, inborn ideas. Denied these innate ideas, the mind, Locke says, derives its total content from its environment. It is moulded, in fact, by the experience to which it is exposed:

"all that are born into the world, being surrounded with bodies that perpetually and diversely affect them, variety of ideas, whether care be taken or not, are imprinted on the minds of children." (98)

The mind is virtually passive in all these procedures, (99) a prey to the influences it receives. What, then, of the emotions, those dark and turbulent passions which for Hobbes were only kept in check by the collective self-interest of the social contract? Even his editor, A.C.Fraser, admits that Locke's account of the emotions is "desultory and superficial". He explains them simply on a pleasure/pain basis, blandly remarking that "pleasure and pain and that which causes them, - good and evil, are the hinges on which our passions turn." (100) They are mild enough to be kept well under the control of the understanding, which is where they belong in the rational man since if one passion were allowed to become dominant it could completely distort the judgement. (101)

(98) *ibid.*, p.125

(99) "It is true that the mind is active in combining simple into complex ideas, though it is difficult to conceive how a mind which is a tabula rasa can be active at all." (Curtis and Boulton, *op.cit.*, p.223)

(100) Locke: "Essay", p.303

(101) See "Essay", Book IV, ch.XX, Sec.iii (Vol.2, pp.453-6)

Neither emotional needs nor emotional satisfactions have, therefore, any distinctive place in Locke's psychology, which means that, when he comes to consider the upbringing of children, the demands of reason are over-riding.

Specifically, Locke is led to support private education against schools. Although in the "Conduct of the Understanding" and the "Thoughts Concerning Education" Locke modified his total rejection of all innate ideas and granted that there were some inborn characteristics, these were seen as individual and not universal. This gave each child some individuality and so reinforced the case against teaching them in the mass. No one system of education could deal appropriately with a number of children, each of whom would have his own individual peculiarity and demand his own special treatment. It was essential that the experiences to which the child was exposed were carefully regulated and no schoolmaster, let alone a parent, could have control over the innumerable influences which would come the child's way among a large group of boys. The case against schools was, therefore, in Locke's view, unanswerable. Such benefits as a boy might receive from the company of fellow pupils, "some little skill of bustling for himself among others" (102) or "learning to wrangle at trap, or rook at span-farthing," (103) are hardly seen as recommendations, and Locke adds that

"'tis not the waggeries or cheats practised amongst schoolboys, 'tis not their roughness one to another, nor the well-laid plots of robbing an orchard together, that make an able man." (104)

(102) Locke: "Thoughts", p.254

(103) *ibid.*, p.245

(104) *ibid.*, p.256. This direct refutation of Osborn's "motive" for school education is one of several pointed but unacknowledged references to the "Advice" by Locke.

Locke is drawn by his own disposition, his own experience as a boy at Westminster School and his views on knowledge and the passions, to neglect social satisfactions in spite of his awareness of social influences. The support which he gives to play methods in various parts of the "Thoughts Concerning Education" have to be set against this blindness towards any possible gain in social and emotional well-being from playing with others. Play is something which Locke can think of in solitary whip and top terms. It is the social purpose of education which is in the forefront of Locke's mind, not its possibilities for providing social satisfactions to the growing child. The aim is to prepare the pupil for his place in adult society. This leads Locke into further criticisms of schools, this time on curriculum grounds, for being out of touch with the needs of society. His condemnation is in direct line with the strictures of such diverse critics as Milton, Hobbes and Osborn, and has a familiar ring:

"A great part of the learning now in fashion in the schools of Europe, and that goes ordinarily into the round of education, a gentleman may in a good measure be unfurnished with, without any great disparagement to himself or prejudice to his affairs." (105)

Education should bring "prudence and good breeding", yet these are seldom taught. Latin has its claims and its utility, but the prior requirements of the gentleman are

"to have the knowledge of a man of business, a carriage suitable to his rank, and to be eminent and useful in his country, according to his station." (106)

He should have both social usefulness and social ease, the one to be

(105) *ibid.*, p.280

(106) *ibid.*, p.281

sought through "the principles of virtue and wisdom" and the other through grace of movement and fluency of conversation.

The appearance of the social graces and a concern that his pupil should cut an acceptable figure in the world brings Locke close to certain attitudes of the old courtly tradition. Dancing has an important part in his programme, as it did in the training of the Elizabethan courtier and was to have in the education of the eighteenth century man of the world, (107) although Locke's intentions in having it taught were far from being wholly governed by social convention. He wanted dancing less for its own sake than for the grace of deportment which he considered it produced, for dancing was held to have great "transfer" effects. For Locke, dancing gives "graceful motions all the life", it encourages "manliness" and a becoming confidence and so should be taught from an early age. Its object should always remain clearly in mind, however, and the child be introduced only to "what is graceful and becoming, and what gives a freedom and easiness to all motions of the body" and not to "apish, affected postures." He further adds that

"as for the jigging part, and the figures of dances, I count that little or nothing, farther than it tends to perfect graceful carriage." (108)

There is some concession to the world, here, if none to the flesh and the devil, and it is a reminder that Locke is writing for a limited social class. It is not an exclusive group, however, that he has in

(107) See especially its importance for Chesterfield, in his letters to his son.

(108) Locke: "Thoughts", p.375

mind, a small aristocratic circle, but rather all that middle section of society which contributes to the ranks of the gentleman. Much of the "Thoughts Concerning Education" were taken (often verbatim) from the letters Locke wrote to his Somerset friend, the lawyer and parliamentarian, Edward Clarke. (109) He seems to see the products of his regime as men of affairs, serving in church, parliament, or law-court, or managing their estates with understanding, humanity and profit. It is an education for action and not for idleness. Men are to have employment and they should even, during their younger days, acquire manual skills irrespective of whether they would have actual need of them. Sir William Petty had formerly recommended the learning of "genteel manufacture", (110) and the Puritan ethic had encouraged the belief in the value of work, yet Locke still felt this proposal needed justification as it seemed "wholly inconsistent" with a gentleman's calling. His arguments are that the skill may be worth having for its own sake and that its exercise may be "necessary or useful to health".

Manual arts often "employ us in the open air" (painting, gardening, working in wood and the like) and so "health and improvement may be joined together." The recreational benefits of such pursuits are considerable, because they involve a change of occupation and not mere inactivity which is sometimes mistakenly assumed to be the essence of leisure:

(109) see, B.Rand: "The Correspondence of John Locke and Edward Clarke" (1927)

(110) see above, p.145

"recreation is not being idle (as everyone may observe) but easing the wearied part by change of business: and he that thinks diversion may not lie in hard and painful labour, forgets the early rising, hard riding, heat, cold and hunger of huntsmen, which is yet known to be the constant recreation of men of the greatest condition. Delving, planting, inoculating, or any the like profitable employments would be no less a diversion than any of the idle sports in fashion, if men could but be brought to delight in them, which custom and skill in a trade will quickly bring anyone to do." (111)

Such a concept of recreation, fundamentally Puritan in its spirit and in complete sympathy with the views preached by Richard Baxter, may at first glance appear to be extremely restrictive, but it is, in fact, opening up a new promise for physical education by making it compatible with the dourer elements which had, for the last hundred years, been frowning on virtually all physical activity. Once it was established that

"recreation belongs not to people who are strangers to business, and are not wasted and wearied with the employment of their calling," (112)

then the pursuit of physical recreation had not merely reconciled itself with the Puritan conscience and the Puritan devotion to hard labour, but had even become a pillar in their support. Play, in the twentieth century sense, was the reward of work and only existed, with any validity, in contrast with it. While the recreational activities propounded by Locke might not themselves be either very physical in their demands or have much play in their make-up, his arguments could readily be extended to justify games and sports to all who had worked hard enough to benefit from them.

The main motive which Locke finds for physical education in his own

(111) Locke: "Thoughts", pp.380/1

(112) *ibid.*, p.381

scheme is to promote and preserve health. The narrow dependence of the mind on the physical efficiency of the perceptors has already been pointed out, and this was only one aspect of a general interconnection. Physical fitness was more than the quickness of eye and acuteness of learning which his theory of knowledge implied. It was more even than a matter of preserving that general "temper of the body" which was necessary for the effective assimilation and retention of ideas and stemmed from the essential dualism in Locke's view of man which made mind and body inescapable partners in existence:

"He whose mind directs not wisely will never take the right way; and he whose body is crazy and feeble will never be able to advance in it." (113)

The mind is certainly "the principal part" but the business of bringing up children to a healthy physical pattern has, Locke implies, been too long neglected and both his medical interests (114) and his philosophical tenets on the mind/body relationship induce him to give physical education first place in time, if not in importance, when setting down his opinions on bringing up the young.

He feels, however, that neither philosophical nor medical arguments are necessary to justify this. The desirability of sound health is self-evident. The road to such health is more disputed and Locke found that gentlefolk in particular often weakened their children by pampering,

(113) *ibid.*, p.210 ("crazy" is defined in Bailey, *op.cit.*, as "distemperate, sickly, weak.")

(114) Locke had taken up medicine ("that study I have been thought more peculiarly to have applied myself to") during the latter part of his seventeen years at Oxford. He was often known as "Doctor" Locke, although he took no medical degree and he did occasionally practice, apparently taking Osborn's advice and doing it on an amateur basis!

spoiling and over-protecting. They should look to "the honest farmers and substantial yeomen" to discover a less cosseted method of child rearing, of the type which he then described in his famous advocacy of physical "hardening". Attention has perhaps focused too exclusively on the extreme points of this advice, such as training to endure wet feet, while ignoring the moderation of most of the physical regimen, some of it even over-gentle by modern standards, and the fact that even his more drastic proposals have other voices in their support. (115) Locke's advice is more generally significant in its "natural" approach to physical upbringing, although to call it "less unnatural" would be a better placing of the stress. The face, he argues, is no hardier by nature than the rest of the body; "use alone hardens it, and makes it more able to endure the cold." Experience can, as primitive peoples illustrate, make nakedness quite bearable and the recommendations on daily foot washing and wearing thin, leaking shoes is backed by analogy with the hands, since there is no reason why the feet should not bear cold water with as little ill effect as they do. (116) The moderation in Locke's "hardening", and the extent of contemporary coddling, both show in his comments on clothing:

"remember, that when nature has so well covered his head with hair, and strengthened it with a year or two's age, that he can run about by day without a cap, that it is best that by night a child should also lie without one." (117)

Social objections to a tanned face might be valid for a beau, but they are irrelevant to "a man of business". "Let nature have scope to fashion

(115) eg. Fuller's comments, see above, p.269

(116) Locke: "Thoughts", p.213

(117) *ibid.*, p.212

the body as she thinks best": while this is said with specific reference to clothing (to be loose, not tight or constricting) it sums up the spirit of the guidance Locke gives on what has become known as "hardening".

Locke's educational psychology gave prime importance to training. The establishment of correct behaviour responses in the child was seen as a matter of environmental influence and pressure. Hence, the repeated inculcation of one response in any situation, from an early age, would "stamp in" that response and make it habitual. Much of the child's physical upbringing belongs to this type, and consists of the promoting of sound bodily habits. When advocating simple and regular food and drink for the infant, Locke makes the general point that

"the great thing to be minded in Education is, what habits you settle; and therefore in this, as well as all other things, do not begin to make anything customary, the practice whereof you would not have continue and increase." (118)

The regular training will cover diet, sleep (119) and defecation. (120)

Habit will settle much that is conducive to good health. Moreover, the very practising of regular physical habit is, in itself, good training for the child, giving it that sense of discipline "that it may be able to obey and execute the orders of the mind." (121) Habit will play its part in physical learning, come what may, as Locke illustrates by the

(118) *ibid.*, p.221

(119) in sleep alone are children "to be permitted to have their full satisfaction," but early rising is to be insisted upon, and this will, out of tiredness, produce a habit of early retirement. (*ibid.*, p.223)

(120) *ibid.*, p.227

(121) *ibid.*, p.229

example of the student who, having learnt to dance with a large trunk in the middle of his room, could not accommodate his skill to an open floor! (122) It was obviously important that the habits should be good ones.

So far, this discussion has concentrated upon the sources of Locke's ideas on physical education, the medical, philosophical and social premises which prompted many of his recommendations. However, "Some Thoughts Concerning Education" was not a highly organised and systematic treatise such as the "Essay Concerning Human Understanding". The "Thoughts", as Locke remarks in the dedication, were "rather the private conversation of two friends than a discourse designed for public view" (123) and examination of the correspondence shows this to have been a valid claim. In these circumstances, a thorough-going cohesion is hardly to be expected in the "Thoughts", and it is arguable that Locke would have been just as important in the history of educational ideas had he not produced his specifically "educational" work at all. Yet the fact that "Some Thoughts Concerning Education" belongs as much to the level of common sense as it does to the realms of philosophical theory makes it particularly useful in an enquiry into educational attitudes and so it remains to examine briefly the programme and methods of physical education which Locke advocates there.

It is in tune with the stresses on the blankness of the new born

(122) Locke: "Essay" Vol.I, p.531. The story has a familiar ring about it, but Locke, while admitting it "to be dressed up with some comical circumstances", claims to have got it "from a very sober and worthy man upon his own knowledge."

(123) Locke: "Thoughts", p.208

mind, (as well as with the Comenian ideas then current, as Curtis and Boulton note) that Locke should give space to the training, physical and otherwise, of the infant. The emphasis on play and persuasion in the young child's learning are just derivable from psychological premises, since both pain and pleasure are prime instruments in the fixing of ideas, yet it would be wrong to overemphasise the Comenian sweetnesses of "a plentiful enjoyment of what-soever might innocently delight them." Against his support of play methods, we must set Locke's praise for the mother who whipped her child eight times "successively the same morning, before she could master her stubbornness, and obtain a compliance in a very easy and indifferent matter." (124) Even the young Edward Clarke, the original subject of the "Thoughts", is threatened with brute force after some five years of scant educational progress under the philosopher's system. Writing to the boy's mother, Locke only preserves his principles at the very last gasp!

"Perhaps I might advise you to Westminster, or some other very severe school, where, if he were whipped soundly whilst you are looking out another fit tutor for him, he would perhaps be more pliant and willing to learn at home afterwards. But I think not that." (125)

The recommendation that the infant should be carefully observed in his play "when he is under least restraint" and so likely to give the earliest indications of his temperament not only tends to undermine the denial of innate mental characteristics but is also indicative of Locke's general approach to the subject of play, which he regards as wholly

(124) *ibid.*, p.264

(125) *Rand, op.cit.*, p.336

instrumental, a means of moulding the child into a completely adult-devised pattern. The actual letter of Locke's comments on play might lend encouragement to a sympathetic view of childhood, although it is hard to be convinced that Locke himself saw much intrinsic value in children's play. It merely pointed a way to the child's more successful exploitation by its adult mentors. The same implication emerges from his comment that children cannot distinguish in worth between "dancing and scotchkoppers" , (126) for to Locke the distinction is wholly clear.

The programme of physical activities approved of by Locke is governed by this sense of priorities. Some pursuits are of greater value than others, although the choice has already been restricted by his decision for home education and his failure to appreciate any social benefits from games involving several children. The remaining scope can hardly be very wide. Swimming is to be encouraged, when the pupil "is of an age able to learn, and has anyone to teach him." It is a useful skill in that it may preserve life and a healthful one in that the advantages of "often bathing in cold water during the heat of summer are so many that nothing need be said to encourage it." There is just the caution against bathing when warmed by exercise, which is in line with his warnings against sitting down on "cold or moist earth", or drinking "cold liquor" when heated by play. (127) Riding is "of use to a gentleman both in peace and war" (and is "one of the best exercises for health"), although

(126) i.e. "hopscotch" (Locke: "Thoughts", p.261)

(127) *ibid.*, pp.215/6. Constant training against these errors will produce "the custom of forbearing, growing into habit," which "will help to preserve him, when he is no longer under his maid's or tutor's eye."

how far it should be encouraged beyond the modicum needed for health is for parents to decide. They should remember, however, that it has a special value for the town dweller as being one of the few exercises available in "these places of ease and luxury". Fencing seems, to Locke, to be "a good exercise for health, but dangerous to the life" in that the young man who has fencing skill may be encouraged to use it in duelling and Locke would rather any son of his own were "a good wrestler than an ordinary fencer."

These, with dancing and the recreational pursuits, constitute the whole of Locke's programme of formal sporting activity and so leave it with a thinness which might appear surprising in one who has such an established place in the history of physical education. Is Locke's status undeserved, then, in the light of detailed examination?

If Locke's proposals appear very limited both by the earlier standards of the Elizabethans and the later standards of the twentieth century, this should not blind us to the fact that they were, some few Jacobean remnants of the courtly tradition excepted, the most thoroughgoing and liberal advocacy of physical training found in his own century's educational theory. Against their apparent caution and restraint have to be set the ingrained distrust of sports and games bequeathed by Puritanism to a wide section of contemporary opinion as well as the disorderly flavour which existed, by contrast, in much contemporary sporting practice. (128) The Puritan influence remained strong in Locke's advice, with its stress on work, on the recreative

(128) as discussed below, ~~in~~ ch. V, (i)

possibilities even of manual toil and its avoidance of virtually all games-playing. These Puritan influences served to reinforce the rationalist stresses in Locke's account of human nature which already, while they gave full due to the body's need for health and efficiency, disposed him to underrate emotional satisfactions such as might be derived from games.

It is not as a cataloguer of sports and pastimes for the young that Locke could be expected to contribute to the theory of physical education. His positive importance lies in the high regard he had for the child's physical well-being. This is in striking contrast to the virtual ignoring of bodily needs in many of his seventeenth century predecessors. Puritan doubts probably encouraged the neglect of earlier writers and medical knowledge and interest doubtless steered Locke in the other direction, in spite of his own strong tinge of Puritanism. It was another of Locke's significances, in fact, to be able to unite the different and often conflicting strands of seventeenth century opinion on physical education. He was writing at the moment when reconciliation was in fashion and he had both the temper and the sympathy to be able to see values in all the main approaches to physical education which have come under review in this thesis.

His own personal experience made him peculiarly fitted for this catalytic role. As both medical man and philosopher he was securely based in the intellectual movement which has been the subject of this chapter and could write with the authority and prestige which, by the end of the century, its members enjoyed. His own middle-class

upbringing almost certainly exposed him to Puritan pressures, and his Protestantism was confirmed by his exile during James II's reign, while a life spent largely as a tutor in noble families made him aware of the social requirements of the courtier. Thus the educational theories which he propounded drew upon a diversity of traditions: the courtly; the Comenian; the Puritan and the Scientific and philosophical. The reconciliation of different viewpoints which his physical education achieved provided a definitive statement of the subject's aims and functions which was to remain more or less authoritative, largely for want of an alternative, for a century and a half or more.

In view of this, one would expect to be able to discern Locke's influence on later physical education theory and practice much more precisely than is, in fact, possible. He had immediate specific influences (most notably in the proposals of his former pupil, Shaftesbury, discussed below ⁽¹²⁹⁾), but was more significant as a force behind lay, rather than professional, opinion on physical education, where his moderate reasonableness, with its slight strain of the Spartan, was perfectly attuned to everyday attitudes towards a human function which was generally recognised but not to be enthused over. Locke's concessions to the "natural" mode of life kept alive the attitude towards physical education which he represented through the changes in emphasis that took place in men's thinking in the later eighteenth century and left the "Thoughts" virtually unchallenged by any other English work of similar stature to deal with bodily training until

(129) see below, pp. 356, ff.

Herbert Spencer published his *Essays on Education* in 1861.

The failure of physical education to make significant advances during most of this period has, to a certain extent, to be attributed to the view of human nature subscribed to by Locke. His psychology may have had a short-term advantage in bringing clarity and order into men's notions of learning, but its long-range influence was restrictive. Locke's failure to understand human dynamism and creativity was a lasting hindrance to educational progress, physical and even, eventually, intellectual. His lack of insight into the value of the emotional satisfaction arising from play, which he recognised as existing, and his exclusion of any possible social benefits to the individual from play with others, which he quite failed to see, were persistent obstacles to the development of any acceptable ethos of organised games. Even when the benefits of social participation in play began to be recognised in the nineteenth century public school, it was the corporate, rather than the individual, well-being which won attention and produced that stress on "team spirit", as against individual satisfaction, as the only manifestation of emotive value which either psychology or the social ethic allowed to play.

While these may have been, to some extent, the consequences of Locke's thinking, they do not represent his intentions in the context in which he was writing. Bertrand Russell has remarked on Locke's good fortune to write at a moment when men were settling their opinions in a direction and fashion with which his pronouncements found correspondence.

"Both in practice and in theory, the views which he advocated were held, for many years to come, by the most vigorous and influential politicians and philosophers." (130)

The persistent status which Locke enjoyed as philosopher and political theorist unfortunately extended also into areas such as education, where his writings had been of a much more temporary and transient nature. This gave to his proposals on the training of mind and body a lasting authority which they did not themselves claim. Whatever their subsequent effects, it was the measure of Locke's achievement, within the circumstances of his own time, to have been able to utter the verdict already quoted at the head of this chapter:

"It would be none of the least secrets of education to make the exercise of the body and the mind the recreation one to another." (131)

If subsequent ages took an unconscionably long time to develop this theme, it was none of Locke's fault.

The seventeenth century scientific and philosophical movements gave a mild and moderate encouragement to physical activities and physical education. Their effects in this direction were certainly not revolutionary, and it has been seen that when scientists, physicians or philosophers turned their attentions to physical exercise they tended to speak with the common voice of their times more than from a recognisably professional viewpoint. While Fuller's medical theory and practice or Locke's psychology and years of tutoring did have influence on their proposals for exercise, there was neither public interest in or concern for any major reappraisal of physical activity

(130) B. Russell, op.cit., p.629

(131) Locke: "Thoughts", p.376

and physical education. Unless, therefore, their basic speculation in science and philosophy gave decisive indications for drastic change, the men of the seventeenth century's major intellectual movement were likely to resort either to silence or conformity as far as physical exercise was concerned. Moreover, although the movement gave considerable attention to the human body and various of its workings, the nature of its concerns was seldom such as to take it near the province of physical exercise. The great physiological advances of the century hardly reached the consideration of exercise and the philosophical concerns were with the nature of the mind and the physical bases of perception, which proved less fruitful than the social and political preoccupations of earlier philosophers for positive programmes of physical education.

Much of the influence of seventeenth century science and philosophy becomes more discernible in the common attitudes of the next century. Even in our own age of rapid communication and widespread education, the implications of Freud and psycho-analytical approaches have hardly been worked out in all their manifestations after more than fifty years, so it is hardly surprising to find this time-lag in Stuart times.

Previous chapters have concluded with a discussion of sporting practice. This is impossible here, since the influence of the scientific and philosophical movements cannot be identified with any precise period. Yet these intellectual movements were important factors in many forms of human behaviour under the later Stuarts. The attitudes towards exercise and physical education between 1660 and 1717 will be discussed mainly by reference to the social order within which they

arose, but it will remain necessary to refer, from time to time, to the profound intellectual changes which began to have effects upon such attitudes during this period.

Chapter V

THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF EXERCISE IN THE LATER STUART PERIOD

"I stood in the Strand and beheld it, and bless'd God. And all this was done without one drop of blood shed, and by that very army which rebelled against him; but it was the Lord's doing, for such a Restoration was never mention'd in any history ancient or modern, since the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity; nor so joyful a day and so bright ever seen in this Nation, this happening when to expect or effect it was past all human policy." (John Evelyn's Diary for 29th May, 1660)

"Gaming is an enchanting witchery, gotten betwixt idleness and avarice." (Charles Cotton: "The Compleat Gamester" 1674) (1)

"I (the real I) am not a certain figure, nor mass, nor hair, nor nails, nor flesh, nor limbs, nor body; but mind, thought, intellect, reason." (3rd Earl of Shaftesbury: "The Philosophical Regimen") (2)

Unbounded joy, unbridled pleasure, followed soon by sober reflection: this, in essence, is the later Stuart story.

(1) Reprinted from 1st edition in "Games and Gamesters of the Reformation" (1930), p.1

(2) In B.Rand "The Life, Unpublished Letters and Philosophical Regimen of Antony, Earl of Shaftesbury" (1900), p.147

When the king came into his own again in 1660, a reaction against the restraints of Puritanism was inevitable. The country, released from what had come to seem an enforced sobriety, turned to revel and frolic, spurning the repressive policies under which its customary pastimes had been curbed and its festivals put down. The maypole and the royal standard were raised together. The good old days were to be reborn and the civil strife, the high taxes and the ever-present soldiery of the past two decades were to be forgotten.

Like all would-be returns to the past, it could not happen. Reaction itself, and the rejection of restraint, produced a licence in social life which Charles I and Archbishop Laud would never have brooked. The stage gave public expression to the flippant morality which Charles II both allowed and indulged in himself; a cynical grace jostled alongside roughness and ribaldry in men's pursuit of happiness. Yet the eventual victory was to be won by restraint and decorum. The habits of twenty years or more had bitten too deeply into the national conscience to be cast merrily aside at one swing of a feathered hat or a few throws of the dice. Soon the search was to be for a new order, for new modes of social behaviour which could combine enjoyment with good taste and win pleasure without the abandonment of reason and style. The monarchs who followed Charles II, all, in some degree, reflected the changing social mood; James II, although certainly no Puritan by religion, signified his intention to raise the moral tone of the court by removing Catherine Sedley, his mistress of long standing, to a house in St James's square; William III remained a Dutchman at heart and a Calvinist

in spirit, distant and aloof, while Anne, though she enjoyed a tippie, a gossip and a gamble in private, had a sense of public morality and personal dignity. She was always ready to give support to projects for moral reform. (3)

The movement towards a reasonable social behaviour, including (implicitly if not explicitly) a balanced attitude towards sport and exercise, was in keeping with the social and political messages of the new philosophy, with the political example of the eventual Revolution Settlement and with some at least of the more acceptable strands of the Puritan tradition. S.R.Gardiner's well-known verdict that the Restoration was a restoration of Parliament, even more than a restoration of the King, is valid in more than the narrow political sense. Many of the economic forces which the Parliament men of the first half of the century represented and many of the social attitudes which they embodied, persisted, in spite of the monarchy's return, into the new age.

The progress of the political revolution is apparent enough. The parliaments of Charles II had already secured enough power to make it difficult for him to govern without regard for the majority interest among the members. The Revolution Settlement of 1689, underlined by the Act of Settlement of 1701, affirmed the position; and the major parliamentary struggles of the future were, with few exceptions, to be internal rather than external. The Revolution Settlement was to set

(3) These movements flourished in her reign, as noted above, p.231. Apart from "The Society for the Reformation of Manners," there were, for example, the activities of "The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge" (founded 1698) and its overseas offshoot "The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts" (1701)

the characteristic seal of the Augustans on the eighteenth century's political life, establishing what was thought to be a perfect balance of power between Crown, Parliament and an independent judiciary; a balance that was considered so perfect that its shortcomings and corruptions were, for almost a century, to escape all but the most searching eyes.

While the economic and social revolutions of the seventeenth century were less crisply defined than the political, their progress, during the second half of the Stuart period, was hardly less significant. They were influencing men's basic modes of perception, altering their presuppositions, and reshaping their habits of thought. Their ramifications were widespread and could hardly avoid (if the example of previous ages provides any guide) having some influence upon men's habits of recreation and exercise.

Economically, capitalism was becoming firmly established and, socially, it was becoming tentatively acceptable. Much energy was devoted, in the last years of the seventeenth century, to the building up of a financial system upon which capitalist trading could expand. "Trade", although still frowned upon by the aristocracy, was becoming a respectable enough occupation for a country gentleman's son. With the exploitation of overseas markets in the next century the merchants were to grow in wealth and influence and even to infiltrate the ranks of the nobility. Even by the end of the Stuart period, the new respect being shown towards business and commerce is readily visible in, for instance, the "Spectator", where, for the first time, the middle classes found

themselves neither patronised nor derided, but treated as a serious audience whose sober views demanded respect. Moral forces and social change worked hand in hand to give prestige to that "middle station" in life which the early eighteenth century regularly celebrated. As an epitome of the appeal of the "middle way", Pomfret's "The Choice", written in 1700, is well suited to be the first poem in "The Oxford Book of Eighteenth Century Verse". Defoe brought commerce into literature by producing much that reads like the inventory of a God-fearing tradesman. Later middle class authors, such as Lillo in drama, and Richardson in the novel, showed that entertainment could be combined with the personal and economic virtues to which their public aspired. The commercial and business classes were, in fact, establishing their place in the age's culture.

They were becoming more articulate. Their influence on contemporary attitudes and opinions was growing and, as the social group most permanently tinged by the Puritan message, they were unlikely, on the face of things, to exert this influence in favour of sport and play.

The growth of trade helped to make cities and towns more important, as centres of both economic and social life. This applied most of all, of course, to the capital. Now, that drift of local squires to the metropolis about which earlier Stuart kings had complained was becoming a necessity. Such migration, if only temporary, was essential for any country gentleman who did not want the reputation of a rustic bore.

The "society" which he found there, moreover, increasingly meant more than just the royal court which did, indeed, under the last two Stuarts,

become less prominent in social life than it had been in the past. Although the royal household still held the keys to the greatest preferments, powerful aristocrats conducted their own levees and there were growing (and not unpowerful) social groups centred around the coffee-houses, parliament, the law-courts and Grub Street, quite apart from the flourishing provincial life of cities such as Bath, Bristol and Norwich.

Such cities, however, only served to emphasise the domination of London, with its population, as far as can be judged, of over a quarter of a million.⁽⁴⁾ This compared with the thirty thousand inhabitants in the second largest city, Bristol. London was giving the country an early experience of the urbanisation which was to come to many of its regions a century or more later and which was, among its effects, to make impossible the old, rural-based habits of recreation and exercise.

The last two sections of this thesis have dealt with the great spiritual and intellectual movements in terms of their relevance to men's physical recreation in the second half of the Stuart period. The present chapter will look at the exercise itself, against the canvas of its immediate social and political background. It will attempt to discover any effects produced in attitudes towards physical activity by those social and economic movements which were currently changing the national scene. Material influences cannot, of course, be separated completely from theoretical considerations, and so it is necessary to refer the practice of later Stuart exercise not only to the attitudes of

(4) See G.N.Clark: "The Later Stuarts 1660-1714" (2nd Edition, Oxford 1955), p.40, n.1

science, philosophy and religion, already discussed, but also to other contemporary thinking relevant to the body, its exercise or its training. The physical practices of the schools have to be set against current educational theory, and the chapter concludes with a discussion of such physical education for girls as managed to survive through a century not generally sympathetic towards the interests of their sex.

(i) The Restoration Spirit.

The most unfortunate author of all time in his choice of publication date was Thomas Hall. He produced his "Funebria Florae: the Downfall of the May Games" in May, 1660, the very month of the king's triumphant return. The time of the spring festivals was obviously propitious for celebrating the end of Puritanism, and the Maypoles were raised again above village greens all over the country. The symbol of paganism and decadence which the Puritans most detested became overnight the symbol of the new joy which was to suffuse men's lives. In the following May, London celebrated with a Maypole so enormous that it was beyond the skill of mere landmen to raise it:

"Prince James, the Duke of York, Lord High Admiral of England, commanded twelve seamen off aboard to come and officiate the business, whereupon they came and brought their cables, pullies, and other tacklins, with six great anchors." (5)

The Puritans were naturally horrified. "Sin now appears with a brazen face," wrote one of them, as the English remembered their village

(5) "Cities Loyalties Displayed" (1661), quoted in T.F.Thistleton Dyer, op.cit., p.229

wakes and Whitsun Ales. The initial enthusiasm with which the festivals were revived can hardly be doubted. What is more difficult to assess is the long-term effect of the Restoration on the traditional popular recreations.

These revels had been losing some of their significance for at least a century. They were, too, and especially in urban centres, often changing their nature and sometimes sliding from rustic roughness into sheer cruelty. At the same time, their hold was still strong enough to make their suppression one of the most elusive tasks of Commonwealth administrators. All these factors can be seen operating in an incident reported from Bristol only two months before the Restoration: on the 5th March, 1660, the day before Shrove Tuesday, the bellman, by order of the justices, cried down the ancient sports of the season, cock-throwing (i.e., throwing sticks at tethered cocks) dog-tossing, and football in the streets. The bellman was attacked, and the next day the apprentices threw at hens and geese and tossed cats and bitches. (6) This is not to suggest that all the old rural sports had declined into sadistic butcheries and torturings. Traditionally there had been a flavour of scourging or ritual sacrifice about many of them, as James noted in his comments on the Haxey Hood Game. (7) It is likely, however, that the freer atmosphere of the Post-Restoration era gave the traditional festivals an opportunity to develop their more barbarous potentials.

Much of the evidence on the customary rural sports depends upon

(6) John Latimer: "The Annals of Bristol in the Seventeenth Century" (Bristol, 1900), p.292

(7) see above, p.84

first-hand experience and oral testimony, most of it dating from the mid-eighteenth century at the earliest. The wealth of this evidence indicates the widespread survival of traditional festivals, but it indicates too the prevalence of later accretions to the traditional pursuits, which often have a flavour of the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries about them, at least in the form in which they have been recorded. The frequency with which the festivals included the organised baiting and butchering of animals, with such "sports" as dog-fighting and cock-fighting, is notable. At Hartland, in Devon, "Cock-kibbit" was the local variant of cock-throwing. The cock was stood on an earthenware milk-pan at which cudgels were thrown until the pan was broken. The cock then escaped, was chased, and shared between the catcher and the successful kibbit thrower. (8) This was a Good Friday event, and its timing and style suggest the overlaying of some pagan ritual with Christian allegorising, with the cock as some long-forgotten medieval Pontius Pilate. Frequently, however, the primeval significance seems to have been wholly lost. In the neighbouring county of Somerset, "cock-squailing" (throwing loaded sticks or "squalls" at the cock) marked the Easter Monday and Tuesday festivities, while A.R.Wright shows that cock-fighting was a common part of both Easter and Whitsun festivities in many areas. (9) Cock-fighting, however, had become such a popular and frequent pursuit that the church holidays now merely provided the convenient occasion for matches and calendar significances

(8) A.R.Wright: "British Calendar Customs: England Vol.I" (op.cit.) pp.76/7

(9) *ibid.*, pp.112, 164 et alia.

were often lost.

Bull-baiting and bull-running was also common. Bull-baiting was part of the September wake at Eccles and the 13th November, the second day after Martlemas, saw the Stamford bull-running, where the bull was chased through the town, tortured, killed and eaten.

"The bullards....exerted themselves to the utmost in their efforts to cause the bull pain, madden it, and finally kill it; sometimes the bull was very dangerous and the bullards needed all the protection that could be afforded by a series of hogsheads placed in chosen positions." (10)

The inhabitants of Stone, Staffordshire, where the church was dedicated to St Michael and All Angels celebrated their patronal festival with bull-baiting, bear-baiting, dog-fighting and cock-fighting! (11)

To lay such crudities entirely at the door of the Restoration would, of course, be ridiculous. Cock-fighting, for instance, was at least as old as Christianity in England, and the Puritans had shown a surprising tolerance towards it. None the less, with the Restoration, all popular festivities, whatever their nature, tended to be met with approval and were allowed a licence to develop in those directions where they provoked the maximum possible sensation in participants and onlookers. Whatever Puritans may have thought of cock-fighting, they would hardly have winked at some of the resurging customs, especially some of those connected with Easter with their hardly disguised sexual components. In a number of areas men were "heaved" on Easter Monday and women on Easter Tuesday, (12) while in the Bishop Stortford area a cross-country

(10) A.R.Wright, Vol.III, p.166

(11) *ibid.*, p.89

(12) A.R.Wright, Vol.I, pp.107/8

follow-my-leader ("through ponds, ditches, and places of difficult passage", according to an eighteenth century newspaper report) was held on Michaelmas Day and in the course of it everyone met was "bumped". The women, it was said, generally stayed at home, "except those of less scrupulous character." (13) It is not difficult to believe that such activities as these received an impetus from the general mood of release from inhibition which followed the Restoration, but any temptation to see the advent of Charles II as a glorious resurgence of the golden traditions of English physical activity does have to be tempered by considering the forms which the rural "sports" increasingly tended to take and which put them rather into the ambit of the historian of morals than into that of the historian of physical activity.

Certainly the older forms of rural play, described in Chapters I and II, were revived. Many of them, indeed, can hardly have been effectively suppressed during the Interregnum. Kit-cat, barley break, stool ball, nine-pins and similar games which neither attracted large crowds nor demanded an elaborate arena appear to have been played with little but local interruption. With the Restoration, the mass activities such as football were again given their formal licence, although there are signs that there was growing difficulty in accommodating them in the towns. The example quoted from Bristol possibly hints at this; (14) the prime motives of the Justices' ban were undoubtedly religious and political, but they were responsible too for public order

(13) Thistleton Dyer, *op.cit.*, p.380

(14) see above, p.325

and the protection of property. It may be significant that the report does not mention any attempt to defy the football-playing part of their ban. At some time after the Restoration, a variant of football known as "Camp" or "Camping" was establishing itself in the Eastern Counties, and the same name was given to a game played annually on Shrove Tuesday at Dorking. It has been suggested that this was an ancient form of Rugby Football, ⁽¹⁵⁾ although its regulated nature points to an origin possibly later even than the seventeenth century. The number of players on each side was limited and the ball had to be thrown, not passed hand to hand. "Camp" was certainly being played in the second half of the eighteenth century, by which time, however, the traditional style of football was also reaching some degree of formalisation, as Joseph Strutt described. ⁽¹⁶⁾ In spite of the difficulties of dating which so befog attempts to trace the precise story of popular sports, it is reasonably safe to generalise on the state of football until the end of the Stuart period. There was little appearance of rule or regulation, and it still usually involved putting the inhabitants into a state of siege. So it was, for instance, at Kirkham, in Lancashire, where the annual game was held on Christmas Day. The outside shutters of the houses were closed tight immediately after the mid-day meal and the

(15) by A.R.Wright, for instance, Vol.I, p.35 It may have been this form of the game that Cambridge scholars were playing in the early seventeenth century, since, as Overbury's remarks show (above, p.65) there must have been some vestige of rule about the proceedings.
 (16) see "The History of the Football Association", Football Association, 1953, pp.5-8.

match began. (17)

While the Restoration of the monarchy was a restoration of the sports of the people, it was not a restoring of these sports as they had once been. The old Catholic pattern of the church's calendar with its frequent seasonal feasts had received a sufficient battering from Puritan attacks to make sure that it could never be restored to its full significance. Its economic disadvantages to mercantile eyes, quite apart from the continuing suspicions of Popery, diminished all but a persistent few of the Holy Days. Christmas, for instance, no longer meant a holiday until Plough Monday (which was, however, still celebrated, especially in the North) but a return to labour after Boxing Day. The bonds between the popular sports and specific feast days were accordingly further loosened, and there was a perceptible tendency for the sports (possibly as the occasions for their pursuit grew fewer) to spread over several days in larger-scale events than had been common in the past. The pattern of the Cotswold Games provides a model, whether consciously or not. The Whitsun games in the Devonshire villages developed extensive programmes which included wrestling, skittles, boxing, running, cock fighting, dancing and cock-shying. Women ran for gowns, men wrestled for silver spoons, and the games were supported by all classes of local society. (18) Similar events marked the Eccles September Wake, which stretched over three days. An eighteenth century advertisement for the Wake spoke of "baiting the bull, Fury" and "the additional

(17) Wright, Vol.III, p.260. The football matches gradually disappeared, one by one, between 1750 and 1850 as towns grew too populous to support them. The few which have persisted into the present century were generally in smaller communities.

(18) Wright, Vol.I, p.163

attraction of a smock race by ladies", obviously with the intention of attracting spectators as much as participants. (19) All this was very different from the uncommercial innocence which Shakespeare could still idealise in the sheep-shearing feast of "Winter's Tale"! The Cotswold Games themselves were certainly resuscitated after the Restoration, although the precise date is unknown. Their history in the later seventeenth century is uncertain, and Christopher Whitfield suggests that the revival probably took place under noble patronage, with the suspicion of strong support from the Campden innkeepers. (20) Loyal duty, as well as any personal enthusiasm, would certainly invite the initiatives of the aristocracy, who were taking a growing part in the promotion of sport, while Whitfield's second supposition is quite in tune with the commercialising tone which creeps more and more regularly into the popular sports at and after this time.

New stresses were appearing. There was concern for spectators; an increasing emphasis on prizes and gambling; the growth of the large meeting at the expense of the local village feast and an increasing coarseness in some of the popular amusements. There is a danger in reading too much into these tendencies, at least as far as the Stuart period itself is concerned. Many of the gentler, more intimate village activities continued still in many places, as indeed they have sometimes continued, in an isolated, anachronistic and esoteric fashion, into the present century. The essence of the popular sporting tradition is its

(19) Thistleton Dyer, *op.cit.*, pp.369/70.

(20) Whitfield, *op.cit.*, p.60

persistence and its deep roots in the social order. It is to the slow changes in this order to which it most assuredly (and however belatedly and reluctantly) makes its reponses. The Restoration itself did not seriously disturb the existing social order of the mid-seventeenth century or interfere with those forces which were taking the whole cultural context of the old rural sports out of existence. By triggering off a strong sentiment for their revival at this particular moment, it was running against the ^{or} forces of social change and the resurgence which it did inspire was bound, as has been seen, to have elements in it which would eventually undermine the traditional unskilled ritualistic ethos of popular play.

Once we are past the maypoles and merriments of the early 1660's there is a vagueness about the Restoration influence on folk sports which has had to be filled in by deduction and surmise. In some of the more sophisticated games it is possible to be more precise.

Many factors can contribute to the form and social status of a particular sport. This is well illustrated, in miniature, in the development of ice skating, which the Royalist exiles introduced into this country after their return from Holland and which the extreme winters of the following decades gave them full scope to enjoy. The great frost of 1683, which froze the Thames hard from December to February, firmly established it as a widely followed pursuit. Technological advance, considerations of economic and social class, and the historical accident of the royal exile in Holland, were all important

in determining the sport's progress. The return of the court in 1660 provided the specific occasion for its introduction, although sliding on ice and even the simple skating that the old bone skates had allowed had for long been popular winter amusements over most of Northern Europe. It was the invention of the metal bladed skate which encouraged the Dutch to make great progress in technique during the early part of the seventeenth century. With these developments in skill, two distinct branches of ice-sport had emerged in Holland: the speed-skating of the commoners, for whom rapid locomotion over the ice-bound canals might be as much a matter of business as of amusement; and the gentler figure skating of the nobility.

"Refinement and grace were a nobleman's passport. Exaggerated speed on ice, and the manner of performing it, would appear vulgar to him. To his refined tastes it was an exercise of no appeal." (21)

This judgement by the historian of the sport rather overstates the case. When figure skating was introduced into this country it continued to be largely an upper-class sport for more solid reasons also: good skates were expensive and the sport demanded readily available leisure, with both time and transport available when suitable waters froze hard. The skater who aimed to achieve proficiency at figures had to take every available chance for practice. Commoners did take up figure skating but, with their disadvantages, they were for many years to be the followers where the gentry were the leaders. It was left to the Fenland artisans, probably under the influence of Dutch workers on drainage

(21) Nigel Brown: "Ice-Skating: A History" (1959), p.29

projects, to develop speed skating, (22) and the Fens have remained the centre of English speed skating to this day.

Not all royalists went into exile during the Commonwealth. Many retired at leisure to their homes in the country, and H.S. Altham makes the feasible suggestion that this was the prompting of the progress which cricket began to make in the 1660's and subsequent decades. Some of the gentry, he argues,

"such as the Sackvilles at Knole Park and the Richmond family at Goodwood, would find themselves watching the Wealden games as played by their gardeners, huntsmen, foresters and farm hands and from sheer ennui would try their own hand at it and find that it was good." (23)

The evidence which John Evelyn left of life in the country houses during the Commonwealth lends support to this theory. Even if the sentiments in which it is expressed are a little exaggerated, Altham's supposition is likely to be sound. Cricket certainly established itself as an adult and organised sport during the second half of the Stuart Period, although it was to remain confined to the South Eastern corner of England until the middle years of the eighteenth century. In 1668, the proprietor of "The Ram" at Smithfield was being rated for a cricket field; the 1707 edition of Chamberlayne's "State of England" mentioned cricket among the people's recreations for the first time; and already the peculiar colonising nature of the game had begun to assert itself when a party from one of His Majesty's ships at Aleppo, in 1676, set up

(22) Brown is somewhat patronising about the process: "The point which is important is that the type of society which did bring it to this waterlogged area was that of workmen or artisans whose skating activities would be confined to its utility as a form of locomotion, and where pleasure and fun entered, to speed." (ibid., p.31)

(23) H.S. Altham, op.cit., p.22

" princely tent" ashore and diverted themselves with various sports, including cricket. (24)

The gentry found cricket an appealing game. They found it also an intriguing vehicle for gambling. Matches were made, teams were brought together and clubs probably came into being. A St Albans Club, for instance, is said to date from 1666. Cricket matches at this time usually involved stake money. The "Foreign Post", in 1697, announced "a great cricket match" in Sussex, eleven a side, for fifty guineas, while three years later a match was arranged for the best of five games, the first to be played "on Clapham Common near Foxhall on Easter Monday next, for £10 a head each game and £20 the odd one." (25)

The summers were obviously earlier then! It is reasonable to suppose that this association of cricket with gaming led to the formulation of rules. With considerable stakes involved, there was a strong motive for regulation, for the "play" thereby became a serious affair.

Although the game was still far away from its modern form and retained both its heavy curved bat and the bowling of "sneakers" until the mid-eighteenth century, there were already umpires officiating and these were usually gentlemen, to judge from their dress in early prints. They had, indeed, something of the air of seconds at a duel. The first written code that has survived is embodied in the "Articles of Agreement" drawn up to cover two matches in 1727, (26) but there must have been an established body of convention governing the game well

(24) *ibid.*, p.22

(25) *ibid.*, p.23. The first recorded county game was played between Kent and Surrey at Dartford in 1709.

(26) *ibid.*, p.25

before the end of the Stuart period, in order to make any "matches" possible.

Cricket, like skating and the other developing sports, was susceptible to the distinctions of social class. It had, even so, a degree of egalitarianism since gentry and commoners played the same game, and frequently in the same teams. The game continued to flourish on the rustic level, where it generally kept pace with the sophistications that were developed by the gentlemen promoters of grander matches. There was, after all, every incentive to keep the local village version of the game in tune with the wider developments, since it was more profitable, on many estates, to be a good batsman or bowler than a good thatcher or ploughman. By the early eighteenth century, there were distinct signs of professionalism, with noble lords employing men on their estates for their cricketing prowess alone, and before the end of the century there was a crude transfer system operating and Richard Nyren was "having words" with the powerful Sir Horatio Mann who had lured James Aylward away from Hambledon by giving him a bailiff's job at Bishopsbourne (which, we are told, he discharged most ineptly!). (27) Within the game itself there was a tendency, as the players' roles became more specialised, for the noble patron to become a batsman and the commoner to be a bowler, a distinction which, until the dilution of the class divisions in the game in the last few years, nearly always left the Gentlemen with a much weaker bowling side than the Players.

The Restoration marks the beginning of a period when aristocratic

(27) *ibid.*, p.47

patronage played an important part in the development of several sports. Athletic events of various sorts were traditionally part of the games of the people. The programme of the Cotswold Games showed that throwing competitions as well as flat races were well established in the early part of the seventeenth century. The nobility, after the Restoration, not only gave support to the revival of the old festivals but also began to take a direct interest in athletics. Running races were found to be yet another of the convenient means for gambling (Restoration gentry seemed to have a great capacity for discovering these) and it became common to arrange matches between rival runners, the wealthy each backing their own fancy. It was then but a short step to employing, as footmen, athletes of proven speed and stamina, who had the dual tasks of running messages and acting as their master's professional in racing contests. (28) Celia Fiennes describes such a contest between two footmen in Windsor Park in the first years of the eighteenth century. A circuit of four miles was marked out and the runners had to cover five and a half laps, to make up the 22 miles of the race. They took 25 minutes over the first lap and the time for the whole race was $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours, which compares closely with the present time for the Marathon of 26 miles 385 yards. Gentlemen sometimes competed in running races themselves, although seldom, it seems, in races that were also open to commoners. Athletics, however, had yet to emerge as a separate sport. While it had some permanence through its folk associations with annual feasts and

(28) Celia Fiennes: "Journies" (ed. C.Morris, 1947) pp.359-60.

festivals and through the professional retainers of the nobility, it remained rather an "ad hoc" affair.

As the noble patronage of sports increased and widened its scope, the interest of the crown tended to decline. Charles II, a thirty-year-old of some sporting pretensions when he came to his throne, was interested in a range of pursuits, but his immediate successors took little part in the sporting life of the nation. Robert Browning, in his entertaining and carefully documented "History of Golf", makes the rash assertion that

"One of the saddest results of the Revolution of 1688 was that neither Dutch William nor any of the 'wee, wee German lairdies' who came after him had any interest in the game." (29)

Leaving aside the sweeping historical judgement here, we are left with a truth which could be extended to most other games.

Charles II himself, however, did show interest in such diverse sports as tennis, bowls and horse-racing. According to Strutt he had special clothes made in which to play tennis ⁽³⁰⁾ and he is also said to have been weighed before and after play, regarding any loss of weight as a sign of successful physical effort. Wymer makes reference to Charles' fondness for the game, but claims that it was losing popularity. This seems hard to believe, as far as the seventeenth century was concerned. There was money to be made, through wagers on matches, and these must have been fairly frequent; of one Richard Bouchier, Lucas wrote that "if he could have lived upon two or three hundred a year, the Tennis-court might have maintained him." Bouchier, apparently, "being no bad player,

(29) Robert Browning, *op.cit.*, p.6

(30) Strutt, *op.cit.*, p.162

won a pretty deal of money at it, not so much by his skill, as his dexterity in hiding it, and covering his play." (31) Various types of the game continued. "Tennis", in fact, remained still a group of games rather than one precise activity, and as late as 1742 a London court was advertising itself as available for play with "Racquets, Boards, or at Hand-Fives" indiscriminately. (32)

Charles II followed the royal examples of his Tudor predecessors by acting as an arbiter of sporting practice. He probably drew up a set of rules for bowls, which remained a highly popular game and a great vehicle for gambling, although it was soon to lose a little of its overwhelming following, possibly due to the development of other gambling sports. All classes were playing the game in Restoration England and there are printed cards at some old greens which claim to reproduce the "rules for the Game of Bowls as settled by His Most Excellent Majesty Charles II in the year 1670." (33) Whether authentic or not, this shows a tradition of early regulation in the game. Rules were certainly needed, for even a Restoration gamester like Charles Cotton, not a man of over-nice scruple, found bowls marred by "cunning, betting, crafty matching, and basely playing booty." (34) In the growing sobriety of the last years of the century the lack of decorum at bowling greens

(31) Theophilus Lucas: "Memoirs of the Loves, Intrigues, and Comical Adventures of the Most Famous Gamesters and Celebrated Sharpers in the Reigns of Charles II, James II, William III and Queen Anne." (1714) Reprinted "Games and Gamesters of the Reformation", op.cit., pp.195/6

(32) Armitage, op.cit., p.28

(33) see G.T.Burrows, op.cit., p.12

(34) Cotton, op.cit., p.22

began to deter the polite. The eighteenth century was to see the game slowly slipping back to the common people, with the greens in the fashionable areas of London being closed one by one, partly on account of the attractive profits their sites could then yield as building land and partly because of the loss of upper class support. The gentry had withdrawn to more exclusive sports, or at least to sports where their own class was assured of control, such as cricket and horse-racing.

In fact, the "Sport of Kings" was to be, for nearly the whole of the eighteenth century, the sport of the aristocracy, with the kings themselves not playing a major part in its government. Charles II, however, was an active supporter of horse-racing and he encouraged the further development of Newmarket. The Town Plate was established here in 1665, and the first rules for racing were laid down for this race. Again, Charles was to be the arbiter if disputes arose. Betting increased considerably and the stakes grew higher and higher, until, in 1698, William III was staking 2,000 guineas on his horse matched against the Duke of Somerset's. (35) With such heavy financial involvements, sports obviously had to be regulated; and racing provides another example of the pattern seen already in cricket and repeated, almost without exception, in other sports; rules were first drawn up for individual competitions or matches, and later extended to become the rules of the game itself. (36)

(35) Mortimer, op.cit., p.6

(36) The rules of golf, for instance, developed out of the regulations made to govern the competition for a silver club presented by the City of Edinburgh in 1744.

It is sobering to consider that the regulation of games grew up not from noble motives of "fair play", or even merely out of a desire for tidiness, but to protect the financial investments of gamblers. Veblen decided that the detail of the rules governing sports and the importance of referees and umpires were proof of the fraud and chicanery endemic in games. (37) This certainly seems to be the case once sport achieves the level of "business of importance". In horse racing, some early regulation was required to keep it above sheer criminality, and Cotton warned against "the many subtilities and tricks there are used in making a match, the craft of the betters," and "the knavery of the riders." (38) Horse-racing was, indeed, by the end of the seventeenth century, involving less and less physical exercise for the great majority of those interested in it. With paid jockeys undertaking more and more of the actual riding, the gentry's major roles became those of owner and backer. Certainly, it was not until James II's reign that the professional was allowed to ride in races (he had previously been confined to training gallops), but thereafter the functions of owner and rider became increasingly separated. In the eighteenth century, even steeplechasing was sometimes becoming a professional affair: a match between Mr Loraine Hardy and the future Lord Middleton for 1,000 guineas was contested between their valet and whipper-in respectively. (39) The gentry did, of course, continue to ride their horses to hounds, and even to ride for sheer pleasure or as

(37) This, he argues, therefore makes sport valuable as economic training! (Veblen, op.cit., p.271)

(38) Cotton, op.cit., p.99

(39) Elizabeth Eliot, op.cit., p.20

a means of locomotion. It is not suggested that they gave up the physical exertions of horse-riding, but that it becomes harder to discern much of these exertions in organised horse racing.

The years following the Restoration were, therefore, years of development and formulation for a number of sophisticated, "modern" sports, owing their development to aristocratic participation and encouragement and to their utility and attraction as media for gaming. The spirit of the Restoration, as it affected sports and games of this sort, was typified in "The Compleat Gamester" of Charles Cotton (1630-1687). Cotton, poet and translator of Montaigne, provided a guide to Restoration "gaming". His title itself is significant, as "game" was, for Cotton, virtually synonymous with "gambling".⁽⁴⁰⁾ The common appeal of the pursuits with which he deals is to the gambler. He makes no distinction between activities which demand physical effort and those which are indoors and sedentary. Chess and card games receive the same treatment as bowls and archery. Horse racing and cock-fighting have the fullest discussion of all, and both are dealt with in the same tone. The breeding and training of both race horses and fighting cocks are described in detail, together with some repulsive recipes for the treatment of ailing and wounded cocks. These include sucking wounds, bathing in urine and spitting the juice of chewed ground ivy leaves into injured eyes. Cotton is convinced of the sport's pre-eminence, and of its social standing:

(40) Bailey, op.cit., makes no entry for "gamble" or "gambler". The Oxford Dictionary finds no usage of the words until the later eighteenth century, and they remained slang until Victorian times.

"Cocking is a sport or pastime so full of delight and pleasure, that I know not any game in that respect to be preferred before it, and since the Fighting-Cock hath gain'd so great an estimation among the gentry, in respect of this noble recreation I shall here propose it before all the other games of which I have afore succinctly discoursed." (41)

Horse racing and cock-fighting appear to have very different characteristics to twentieth century eyes, with the degree of cruelty to the animal being so much greater in the one as to raise a virtually unanimous voice for its condemnation. This was not a consideration which seemed important to Restoration England. No widespread awareness of evil in cruelty towards animals troubled men before the second half of the eighteenth century, when, under the influence of the Wesleyan movement, there began to be calls for reform. Cotton was not just revealing some personal quirk in placing horse-racing and cock-fighting side by side. They were commonly thought of in the same terms and, fifty years after "The Complete Gamester", John Cheney's Racing Almanac (the forerunner of Weatherby's "Racing Calendars") listed

"... all Horse Matches run and all Plates and Prizes run for in England and Wales (of the Value of Ten Pounds or upwards) etc., etc., and to which is added a list of all Cock Matches of the same year." (42)

The Restoration attitude towards sports is further underlined by Theophilus Lucas, in his "Memoirs" of the famous gamesters of the time. This shows quite clearly the growth of professionalism, the development of the cash nexus in sport and the prevalence of exhibitionism and sensationalism. Country dancers, like Charles Eaton ("the best dancer

(41) Cotton, op.cit., pp.100-114

(42) Eliot, op.cit., p.11

in England for the dance call'd Cheshire-Rounds"), gave performances at the London theatres. (43) Wrestlers were recruited from the village greens and brought to the capital to perform. Evelyn records how he saw

"a wrestling-match for £1,000 in St. James's Park, before his Majesty, a world of lords and other spectators, 'twixt the Western and Northern men, Mr Secretary Morice and Lord Gerard being the judges. The Western men won. Many great sums were betted." (44)

The combat sports generally were reduced to the level of spectacles. Wrestling had become, in London at least, a wholly professional activity and, inevitably, a vehicle for gambling. Boxing was still a free-for-all and was not to achieve the dignity of "self-defence" until the eighteenth century. Its first "Academie of Boxing" was to be established by James Figg a few years after the Stuart era closed. Swordplay, likewise, was more likely to attract spectators than participants. It had lost much of its former finesse of technique and was, as Wymer remarks, "becoming a blood bath." (45)

The sporting gentleman was the trainer, the matchmaker, the gambler. Only occasionally did he disport himself for his own amusement, although he might, from force of circumstances, turn professional himself.

Lucas cites such a case, that of one Bob Weed, once in the service of the Duke of Monmouth and brought up to dancing, fencing and music, who was

"forced to follow gaming for a livelihood, and after supplied his wants at some tennis-court, or the bowling-green at Mary-Bone, where by betting and playing he won a great deal of money." (46)

(43) Lucas, op.cit., p.162

(44) Evelyn, op.cit., p.327 (19 Feb.1667)

(45) Wymer, op.cit., p.88

(46) Lucas, op.cit., pp.238/239

Merry England may have been restored in 1660, but if the Restoration carried a maypole in one hand, it also carried a purse full of stake money in the other.

Yet to dismiss the exercise of the English between 1660 and 1714 wholly in these terms would be too harsh. The "typical" Restoration picture which much of this chapter has so far been painting is not the only one which can be drawn from this period. It has already been claimed that the Puritan influence continued to exert itself after the downfall of the Commonwealth, yet this has only emerged in a very negative sense, as a restrictive force provoking extreme reaction. Moreover, the scientific and intellectual movements of the age appear to have been quite unrelated to the sports that have been ascribed here to the Restoration period. Science, medicine and philosophy may not have produced any dramatic advice for later Stuart sport and exercise, but any that they did throw up, from their sober reasonings and experiments, hardly attuned with the sporting practice exemplified by Charles Cotton.

The paradoxes in the situation are deep-rooted, and cannot be resolved simply.

The first point that has to be made is that the recorded evidence is probably so biased as to give an unrepresentative picture for the whole country for the whole period. A great deal of it comes from London, and much of that from the period between 1660 and 1690, rather than from the reigns of the more stolid monarchs who ended the Stuart line. In other parts of the country it is reasonable to suppose that there was a much more readily discernible continuity between the sporting

habits of the earlier and later parts of the seventeenth century. Those tendencies towards ^Wcomercialism, exhibitionism and professionalism in sports, while they were doubtless creeping in (as the development of some of the larger traditional festivals showed) almost certainly proceeded more slowly away from the capital. Away from London, the old patterns of games playing were often still vital enough to resist the worst excesses of the Restoration and so to survive into the next age, when public conscience was once more exerting its checks.

The predominance of London in later Stuart times has been pointed out already, and it would be worthwhile to explore the implications of the capital's size and domination of the country in sporting terms. The very fact that London had become the centre of the country's literary life (coupled with the severe restrictions on the press throughout the country) meant that much of the period's writing was based upon London. Its sporting habits accordingly came in for much fuller and more precise recording than those of provincial towns and the rural areas. These habits were not necessarily typical. It is more than likely indeed that the peculiarity of London made for uniqueness in its modes of recreation. Even the physical environment which it provided for the citizens' play was unusual. While open space was much more readily accessible in later seventeenth century London than in most modern cities, it appeared to contemporaries to be an extremely crowded and confined place. It was covered with a pall of smoke and pervaded with the fumes of manufactures. Sydenham had already recommended escape, for health's

sake, from "the vapours that exhale from the shops of different mechanics", but with no cult of the fresh air, and little status yet established for outdoor exercise, the close and busy atmosphere of the capital could hardly have been conducive to thoughts of healthy exertion. Although they were written with later and rather different circumstances in mind, Wordsworth's comments on the effects of urbanisation on men's modes of thought and behaviour seem relevant to the situation in Restoration London when he talks of the deadening of the soul to all but "gross and violent stimulants." He goes on to argue that

"a multitude of causes, unknown to former times, are now acting with a combined force to blunt the discriminating powers of the mind, and, unfitting it for all voluntary exertion, to reduce it to a state of almost savage torpor."

Apart from the great international events of his time, he claimed that the most important of these causes was

"the increasing accumulation of men in cities, where the uniformity of their occupation produces a craving for extraordinary incident, which the rapid communication of intelligence hourly gratifies." (47)

The sports of Restoration London were certainly typified by this

"craving for extraordinary incident."

The concentration of population meant that audiences were readily available for all manner of performance and contest. However many might frown on a particular sporting event, there were enough supporters left to keep it going. The strongest of the support for many of the developing Restoration sports came also, as we have seen, from those

(47) Wordsworth: Preface to Lyrical Ballads. (Wordsworth and Coleridge "Lyrical Ballads", ed. R.L.Brett and A.R.I.Jones, 1963, p.243)

levels of society which had been least imbued with the Puritan spirit, from the aristocracy and some of the gentry. In the mood of the 1660's and 1670's in particular, the Puritan restraint could hardly be expected to operate very effectively upon them. The sports of Restoration London represented a sustained burst of "free" activity which gradually became milder and more controlled as the passions of the royal return slowly burned themselves out. As the seventeenth century moved towards the eighteenth there can be sensed an increasing form, organisation and style about the sports and games. They hardly became less cruel or less speculative, but they did become more decorous and a shade less coarse in tone. The revival of the social conscience at the turn of the century (with, for example, "The Society for the Reformation of Manners" and the reimposition of control over Sabbath observance) can scarcely have left the nation's games playing habits wholly untouched.

Even judgements of Restoration sport in its Cavalier heyday should not be wholly critical. There were undoubtedly considerable advances in skill, even if, in some activities, these were confined to small numbers of performers. There was increasing specialisation, which again produced higher standards of performance. Games and sports, as they came to be organised, undoubtedly brought a considerable extension of enjoyment (and sometimes profit) to many more people. Whether the nature of the enjoyment was always morally justifiable and whether, indeed, the story of games and sports belongs at this time primarily to histories of exercise or to histories of amusements are other questions.

One of the features of the Restoration attitude towards sports was

its failure to reconcile the two concepts of "sport" and "exercise". Our own customary thinking here is imprecise, but we do tend to see the two as intermingled. In the later seventeenth century "sport" and "exercise" were considered as two quite different, or at least quite separable, things. This has been noted in Cotton, but it was there also at the other end of the scale in Baxter, who was quite sure that man could take all the exercise that health and sanity demanded without indulging in sports as such. Exercise and sport pulled further apart from one another; the nature of contemporary sport made it unattractive to many of the milder advocates of exercise while many considerations, as we have seen, contributed to the fact that this advocacy was, indeed, usually mild and moderate enough to be fulfilled by simple, unsophisticated exertions.

The moderate and conditional advocacies of exercise and physical training which have already been seen in the writings of medical men, philosophers and the later Puritans were voiced too by writers who had more direct concerns with the upbringing of children in this period. The thoughts of these theorists, seen alongside contemporary educational practice, will provide some balance to the sporting extravagances which typify so much of the Reformation spirit.

(ii) Physical Education and Rational Doubt.

Since John Locke's contribution to physical education has already been discussed in the context of the seventeenth century philosophical movement, this present section must, on the theoretical side, be rather

like "Hamlet" without the Prince.

This is more noticeable than ever because this was not an age of specifically educational speculation. There is in it a remarkable absence of those books on teaching and child-rearing which appeared with considerable frequency both during the Elizabethan days and in the first half of the seventeenth century. It may well be that the raising of basic questions on the nature of man and the state which had marked the intellectual movement of the age had undermined men's confidence in making concrete practical proposals for education. Puritan energies, which had lay behind much of the educational advice of the first half of the century, were now directed to the central task of accommodating their faith to conditions which promised to be permanently alien. The inheritors of the courtly tradition, on the other hand, must have been conscious that this was now defunct and yet found themselves in no position yet to propound a new cultural basis for an educational system.

Most of the educational writing which was produced in these circumstances was of an oblique nature. It consisted often of "Advices" or "Guides to Conduct"; it was, like Hanna Woolley's "Gentlewoman's Companion" and Halifax's "Advice to a Daughter", often directed to the ladies; or it lay hidden, in fragments, in the works of philosophers, journalists and divines.

Theological speculation tended inevitably to the twin preoccupations of accommodating religion with the new philosophy and of finding an account of political and ecclesiastical authority which would tally with the facts of the Restoration settlement and yet avoid the sins of atheist

Hobbes. In spite of these concerns, one clergyman who was later to hold a bishopric, Gilbert Burnet, did find time to produce a volume of "Thoughts on Education", although (and perhaps typically) this was not published until 1761, long after his death.

The "Thoughts on Education" was written, so its author claimed, in 1668, when Burnet was not quite twenty five years old. There seems no reason to doubt this early dating as the work contains echoes of older traditions and even of the great educational debate of the Long Parliament years, when he was hardly out of his cradle. It is reminiscent, in parts, of Sir Thomas Elyot, in, for instance, its stresses on the physical inheritance of personality characteristics. The child should not be given to the wrong wet-nurse. The nurse should be free "from those vices which infect the body: such as uncleanness, boldness, or love of drink," since the infant "sucks in with the milk many spirits, and by consequence much of the nurse's temper." (48) We would expect the physiology of "spirits" to lead a man into doubtful conclusions far into the eighteenth century, but would hardly expect a man of Burnet's sharp intelligence to hold so firmly to the doctrine of innate ideas if he were writing after Locke. He almost surrenders to the mysticisms of the Cambridge Platonists, however, when he finally decides that "there being so many things joining in this compound of a man, none of the probabilities must pass for assertions or conclusions." (49)

(48) Burnet: "Thoughts on Education", in J. Clarke: "Bishop Gilbert Burnet as Educationist, being his 'Thoughts on Education' with Notes and Life of the Author." (Aberdeen, 1914), pp. 18/19

(49) *ibid.*, p. 13

For Burnet, then, man was to be more than a mere "motion of limbs". Any physical education he proposed would have to derive its sanctions from wider considerations than the physical, although this did not prevent him from demanding elementary training in hygiene and instruction in knowledge of the human body. Children were to learn cleanliness as "a good curb" to preserve them "from many nasty tricks." (50) He thus foreshadowed the "hygiene for politeness" that was to mark eighteenth century training for high society. Moreover, once their basic classical learning was established, his pupils were recommended, as the first step in acquiring "a general touch of most things", to the study of anatomy. This was not to be merely verbal learning, getting off the names of muscles and bones, but was to lead to an appreciation of the body's working, an understanding of "the use, function, situation, figure, and dependence of the chief parts." (51) Burnet reflects the experimental curiosity of his time by adding that this study will be particularly interesting, "if we be where we may see dissections."

The medical revival of the seventeenth century encouraged a fairly widespread teaching of anatomy both in the Grammar Schools and, as has been noted, in the Dissenting Academies. In recommending it, Burnet was a true child of his time. He was similarly attuned to progressive contemporary educational thinking in his attitudes towards young children, where, consciously or unconsciously, he has absorbed much of the Comenian approach. He is aware of the psychological values of play.

(50) Burnet, *op.cit.*, pp.14/15

(51) *ibid.*, p.60

Children are children, he reminds, "and not men"; accordingly the discipline of the young (that is below the ages of seven or eight) should be managed with discretion, "for to expect to force other things from children is to contradict nature" which made them what they are. (52)

He recognises the natural inclinations of young children and even allows that these tendencies, if not actually desirable, are at least not so damaging that they have to be suppressed at all costs. Burnet, in fact, came nearer to realising the full Comenian implications for the child's physical life than did any of the immediate English disciples. Children, he argued, are stimulated by playing together; one of the advantages that schools have over private education is that they give opportunities for play. This play, with due safeguards, should be left to the child's own wishes:

"For a child's exercises, he should be allowed all that he hath a mind to, if they be not too excessive wasters of his body, and devourers of his time." (53)

This applies to the young child. Above the age of eight, Burnet not only regards it as inevitable that the child will be in charge of a tutor but also sees his physical recreations as being more directed. As the boy approaches his teens, the tutor's task is to persuade him away from "childish and trifling" recreations and encourage "better and pleasanter ones in their place." (54) The "manly" exercises that Burnet urges have a vague dependence upon the courtly tradition. He directs his charge to the socially "safe" pursuits of the upper class:

(52) *ibid.*, pp.18/19

(53) *ibid.*, p.24

(54) *ibid.*, p.49

"hunting, hawking, shooting, archery, fishing, riding horses, and the like"; a good part of the day may be spent out of doors, often the whole afternoon apart from an hour before supper, and "yet time enough remains for study." Yet the tutor must make sure that games and recreations are kept to their proper place; he has to

"wean him from all fondness of these exercises, and teach him to use them only as recreations, not making them his work or delight." (55)

No doubt the example of the Restoration gamesters prompted Burnet into this warning. As a physical educationalist, no less than as a churchman, he was a latitudinarian, with some of the flavour of the Puritan Baxter and some of the attitudes of John Locke, while lying moderately between the two of them. Some physical education was desirable, for both mental and physical well-being, but no sport should ever be taken seriously nor was there need for any deliberate regime of physical fitness. Burnet's enthusiasm for physical training was by no means unbounded even when writing in the vigour of his own young manhood. When, ten years later, he had to put his theory to the test, as tutor to the young Duke of Gloucester, he seems to have forgotten ~~even~~ his earlier tolerance and awareness of children's physical needs. The lad was the only one of Queen Anne's numerous progeny to survive the cradle; he showed great ability, but the curriculum of study presented to him can have left little scope for the recreation that such an ailing and sickly child needed. Burnet describes, in his "History of My Own Time", his programme for the young prince: it includes the Psalms, the Proverbs and the Gospels (all with full commentary and explanations), Geography,

History (Constitutional and Economic), Plutarch, Xenophon, and so on.

The boy was just a few days past his eleventh birthday when he died, in 1700. One must largely agree with Burnet's editor that the

"child's precocity was a warning which ought to have suggested moderation of the pace of learning, and attention to physical rather than to mental development and well-being. The relation of body and mind was not then so well understood as it is now, and Burnett shared the ignorance of his time in paying exclusive heed to advance in studies irrespective of the effects produced in other directions." (56)

Not everyone in his time, perhaps. At least not always!

The death of the Duke of Gloucester threw open the whole question of the succession. "Every schemer and intriguer woke up," as Sir George Clark remarks. (57) The speculation was ended by the Act of Settlement of 1701, which did much more than provide for the Hanoverian succession. It emphasised the balance of powers between crown, parliament and the judiciary; it signified a demand for political stability; it reflected, indeed, a range of attitudes towards government which were completely in keeping with the new spirit of reasonableness and balance, to which John Locke had already given such exact expression.

What this rational ethos involved is summarised most economically by Bertrand Russell:

"The period from 1660 to Rousseau is dominated by recollections of the wars of religion and civil wars in France and England and Germany. Men were very conscious of the dangers of chaos, of the anarchic tendencies of all strong passions, of the importance of safety and the sacrifices necessary to achieve it. Prudence was regarded as the supreme virtue, intellect was valued as the most effective weapon against subversive fanatics; polished manners were praised as a barrier against barbarism. Newton's orderly cosmos, in which the planets unchangingly revolve about the sun in law-abiding orbits,

(56) J. Clarke, in Burnet, pp.140/1

(57) G.N. Clark, op.cit., p.190

became an imaginative symbol of good government. Restraint in the expression of a passion was the chief aim of education, and the surest mark of a gentleman." (58)

John Locke has already presented us with an almost perfect representation of these Augustan ideas, in the freshness of their earliest expression. As the age's representative in the history of attitudes towards physical education he is, however, slightly untypical, on account of his medical training and interests, and the extent to which he developed his psychological understanding of the child's play life. He has an awareness of the child's physical being beyond that of most of his contemporaries. More in keeping with intellectual attitude towards the body, as the Stuart period drew to a close, was that expressed by his pupil, Anthony Ashley Cooper, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury.

Shaftesbury pays tribute to Locke's regime and even to his physical education:

"from the earliest infancy, Mr Locke governed according to his own principles ... and with such success that we all came to full years with strong and healthy constitutions." (59)

but in his own theorising Shaftesbury kept the body much more firmly in its subordinate role than ever his master had done. The argument of his "Philosophical Regimen" concerning mind and body has a persuasive simplicity. Man, he begins, is either a creature with some end, purpose, or design, or else he is without such objective. If we say that man has no given end, if he is not a deliberately designed creature, then "neither muscles, veins, arteries, are designed, nor are they to any purpose, or

(58) Bertrand Russell, op.cit., p.703

(59) Letters to John le Clerc (1705) in B.Rand (ed): "The Life Unpublished Letters and Philosophical Regimen of Antony, Earl of Shaftesbury" (1900) p.332

can they be said to any end." If parts of the body exist merely for their own proper functioning, then, he continues, the design of man is solely for physical ends:

"If we can find nothing beyond, then all that we can say is, that the end of man is only to be in such a sound and perfect state of body; and such as serves to generate similar bodies." (60)

Shaftesbury found the teleological model inescapable. There must be some end beyond (and therefore "above") physical continuance and reproduction, and he finds these further goals in society, affection and virtue. Thus, the Hobbesian relationship between man's physical nature and his civilised behaviour is ~~referred~~^{reversed}. The life that, for Hobbes, was physical in its essentials and which demanded the artificial structures of society and morality as the instruments of its successful continuation, does, for Shaftesbury, exist only for the social and moral ends. The possibilities for a reassessment of human physical activity which lay in Hobbes' views were never developed; from Shaftesbury's viewpoint such possibilities hardly existed.

Just as "the several parts of the creature have their end" (namely, in securing the proper functioning of the whole organism), "so the whole creature has his end in nature and serves to something beyond himself." (61) This physical body is not to be wilfully neglected, and "bodily ease, soundness of limbs, health, and constitution are undoubtedly eligible and desirable," "yet the body's utterly minor role is already completely clear:

(60) Rand, op.cit., p.48

(61) ibid., p.52

"a truly wise man thinks his body no part of himself nor belonging to him even whilst in it; he only takes care of it as a lodging, an inn, a passage-boat or ship, a post horse." (62)

If the influence of Puritanism appeared to have deserted the sporting practice of Restoration England, it had reappeared in strength in the speculative life of the beginning of the eighteenth century! This is the voice of Richard Baxter speaking again. When, indeed, Shaftesbury devotes the whole of a later chapter of the "Regimen" to "The Body", far from making concessions, he returns almost to the imagery of physical decay which marked Jacobean drama. It is vain to flaunt your figure, decorate your face or anoint your limbs: "you are not roses, nor your bodies amber; the vulgar labouring bodies which ye despise are healthier and sweeter far."

However, alongside the physical doubts of the Puritans and the old dramatists, Shaftesbury introduces the positive beliefs of the new age in man's intellect. The terrors and delights of the human passions may have gone, but the calm confidence in reason has arrived.

"I, (the real I) am not a certain figure, nor mass, nor hair nor nails, nor flesh, nor limbs, nor body; but mind, thought, intellect, reason." (63)

The body emerges then as an almost accidental appendage to the intellect, and worthy of only minimal care. Any glorying in the physique, any pride in its power or its skill, is wholly misplaced:

".... it were better and more modest for a person so much in love with an athletic Milo-like constitution not to ask, 'Why was I not made strong as a horse?' &c. but 'Why was I not made a horse?' for this would be suitable." (64)

(62) *ibid.*, p.134

(63) *ibid.*, p.147

(64) *ibid.*, p.186

Shaftesbury's first thought on physical education is, therefore, virtually also his last. A hardening regime like John Locke's was presumably good for the very young child, but after that the body was best left to itself.

Yet the 'health' and 'sweetness' of Shaftesbury's "vulgar labouring bodies", as well as echoing the persistent voice of the pastoral idyll, is a signpost to one of the routes by which the body was to be rehabilitated as the eighteenth century grew older. As civilised life became more formal and more 'artificial', men were more and more to ask themselves whether the simple, healthy existence of the 'uncivilised' (in their own countrysides or, more usually, in distant lands) did not have a great deal to commend it.

The cult of the "noble savage" belongs more fully to the later years of the eighteenth century, but it is possible to discern its origins before the Stuart period was out. While Defoe's "Robinson Crusoe" was not published until 1719, the events from which it derived its inspiration, the marooning of Alexander Selkirk for fifty-two months on his Pacific island, date from Anne's reign. Moreover, Henry Neville's novel "The Isle of Pines" had, as early as 1668, painted a glowing picture of the life of primitive innocence enjoyed by a group of castaways who inadvertently colonised a tropical island. Even nearer to the eighteenth century mode, Mrs Aphra Behn had published "Oronooko" in her "Novels and Histories" in 1698. Here the physical and moral excellences of the primitive life were celebrated in sentiments which clearly predict Rousseau:

"'tis most evident and plain, that simple Nature is the most harmless, inoffensive and virtuous mistress. 'Tis she alone, if she were permitted, that better instructs the World, than all the inventions of Man." (65)

The peoples of the ideal world ("a colony in America, called Surinam, in the West Indies") have a natural justice and absence of all fraud, vice or cunning, save what they learn of these from white men. They are, too, physically vigorous and skilled; they can run at great speed over the most difficult terrain, so swiftly as to be able to run down the nimblest deer, while in the water their prowess is astonishing. They seem like "Gods of the Rivers, or Fellow-Citizens of the Deep; so rare an art they have in swimming." (66) The pattern is clear already. If the noble savage is likely to win admiration for his unspoilt manners and morals, his physical grace and strength are likely to be envied also. If reason and an over-artificed society are criticised, the elemental feelings of the mind and motions of the body are likely to be the beneficiaries.

This stage was by no means reached by 1714, when reason was sitting most securely on her throne. Even Defoe's Robinson Crusoe is the economic man of the middle-class revolution rather than the natural man of Rousseau. His savages are cannibals and heathens, although something of their potentiality is recognised in Friday, who matches an agreeable mind with physical speed and skill. Crusoe's prudery, more than considerations of health, prevent him from going naked ("nor could I

(65) Aphra Behn: "Oroonoko: or The History of the Royal Slave", in P.Henderson (ed.) "Shorter Novels, Vol.II: Jacobean and Restoration" (1930), p.149
 (66) *ibid.*, p.150

abide the thought of it, though I was all alone") (67) and even when he is thrown ashore on his desert island his mercantile interests prevail. His dialogue with himself when he considers removing the gold from the wreck shows how Defoe was poised between two worlds: "what art thou good for?" he asks. "Thou are not worth to me - no, not the taking off of the ground." But then, "upon second thoughts I took it away"! (68)

Neither Defoe nor his contemporaries were yet ready to rejoice in the joys of unimproved nature. The body was still full of doubt, temptation and frailty - or too trivial a concern for the rational man, devoted to his higher ends.

The attitudes of mind on which the later Stuart schoolmaster based his considerations of his pupils' physical well-being did not promise that this would be regarded with any great seriousness. What enthusiasm had been shown by the theorists for physical training had been mainly directed to the youngest children, who were usually in the care of mentors who would be little touched by educational opinion. Locke overshadowed the educational thought of the age, and his recommendations for physical education might be expected, at least by the end of the period, to be showing some results in practice. However, a number of factors prompt doubts about this fruition. Locke's physical education was, as has been shown, less attuned to contemporary needs (in so far as they were conscious) than the rest of his educational thought, and

(67) Defoe: "Robinson Crusoe" (A. and C. Black edition, 1925), p. 148
 (68) *ibid.*, p. 62

was likely to be put down to his "doctor's" idiosyncrasy. The dearth of other educational theorising in the period would also imply a lack of that speculative and innovating mood which was a prerequisite of educational change. Moreover the schoolmasters themselves were generally of a class and a persuasion to whom the Puritan message would, irrespective of their precise religious allegiance, tend still to be making the strongest appeal and still to be inhibiting any support for physical training. One senses that the general education temper of the second half of the Stuart period was such that any marked advance in the provision of physical education by its schools was unlikely.

The period was, of course, one of great intellectual advance and it would have been surprising if education did not reap some of the benefits of this progress, in spite of the occasional nature of its educational theorising. Such was indeed the case. The verdict that the grammar schools were in a state of decline during the second half of the Stuart period is one that can only be partly accepted. In number they certainly increased, with at least forty new foundations as well as generous benefactions to existing schools. (69) They lagged where schools have usually lagged, in failing to keep pace with rapid intellectual and social change, for they found it difficult to see alternatives to the wholly classical and grammatical curriculum to which they had for so long been devoted. It was this slow reaction of the schools to new circumstances and educational needs to which the

(69) See G.N.Clark, *op.cit.*, p.416

more perceptive critics, like Milton and Locke, took particular exception.

Some changes were made, however, especially in attempts to promote the teaching of mathematics. The sound of Dutch guns in the Thames in 1667 had awakened many to the need both for new ships and better trained seamen. This vocational need found support from the contemporary interest in science and mathematics and prompted the establishment of "mathematical schools", such as that at Christ's Hospital in 1673. Other grammar schools in the coastal towns followed suit and private schools, such as Churchers at Petersfield, were also established for the teaching of navigation. There was, therefore, scope for innovation in the later Stuart schools, even if it needed a predominantly military motive to bring the change about. For physical education this might be no bad sign, since the training of the body has often been most deliberate and thorough when men have war in mind. However, there appear to have been few other curriculum changes of particular note, beyond signs that some schools were giving (as some of the Dissenting Academies were to do) a smattering of medical instruction. Schoolmasters were obviously often qualified for this task; William Hill left the headship of Sutton Coldfield Grammar School in the middle of the century to practise medicine in London, while the statutes of a number of schools either make reference to medical teaching or forbid the master from practising physic without the consent of the Governors. What teaching there was must generally have been confined to learning the names of parts of the body, as Burnet's comments imply, but it is

possible that the revival of medical interest in the seventeenth century had made an impression on some schools and had provoked a little awareness of man's physical functioning.

The general disposition of later seventeenth century teaching was to pursue the well-trodden grammatical paths and there is little evidence of changing attitudes towards the pupils' physical exercise. Such changes as are discernible are generally minor ones, or else are premature hints of future developments. Schoolboys did begin to have a little more leisure as the school day was gradually shortened; they also tended to stay longer at school before proceeding, those of them who did so, to the universities. The 1666 ordinances of Bristol Grammar School abolished the old 6.00 a.m. start to the day and substituted 7.00 a.m. from 1st March to 1st November and 8.00 a.m. for the remaining winter months. (70) Meanwhile the age of university graduates moved upwards, until few were going to Oxford and Cambridge before they were seventeen, a change which was reflected in the colleges' abandonment of such schoolboy traditions as corporal punishment.

By implication therefore, the later Stuart schoolboy had more scope for his games playing and there is some continuing evidence that schools made provision for this, at least by way of recreation areas. One of the Sherborne prefects, according to the 1679 statutes, was responsible for the "Church and Fields" and there are references in the school records to "ye fives place" (1675) and "the ball court"

(70) C.P.Hill, op.cit., p.29

(1694); (71) an Eton manuscript also mentions "football fields." (72) Schools in London and other growing towns, however, were soon to feel pressure on their playing spaces as they were usually in the centre of the city where land was most in demand. The experience of King Edward's School, Birmingham, must have been repeated in many places: there was a "school croft" of about two acres at the beginning of this period, but this was gradually leased off by the governors over the years, culminating eventually, in the nineteenth century, in the transfer of the school to premises outside the town centre and the building of New Street station on the old site. (73)

There is little evidence of direct instruction in physical activities. Locke's recommendations on dancing were taken to heart in some of the more socially conscious schools, although how early in the eighteenth century this occurred is difficult to estimate. At all events, by the 1720's, among the "extras" in a pupil's account from Ipswich School are fees for the dancing-master. (74) During this period the more usual channel for the dancing-master's talents was the girls' school, of which he was sometimes the founder, (75) although boys would obviously be tending to receive dancing instruction as the period drew to a close and dancing became a more necessary social accomplishment. The school's deliberate interference with the physical activities of its charges was, however, more usually limited

(71) A.B.Gourlay, *op.cit.*, p.202

(72) H.C.Maxwell Lyte, *op.cit.*, p.322

(73) T.W.Hutton: "King Edward's School Birmingham 1552-1952" (Oxford 1952), p.144

(74) I.E.Gray and W.E.Potter: "Ipswich School" 1400-1950 (Ipswich 1950) p.69

(75) see below, p.371

to prohibition and supervision where life and limb might be at risk. Swimming was particularly likely to call forth the sort of restriction found in the 1679 Sherborne statutes:

"Neither shall any presume to go into the water, without leave of the Master, Usher or parent that some may be present to prevent the danger that often doth ensue." (76)

The unsupervised play of the boys seems generally to have followed the conventional pattern of traditional games, although there are signs that something of the turbulence of the Reformation spirit entered into some of the sport particularly of the public schools. Except possibly for cricket at Eton, there was virtually no playing of recognisably modern games under school auspices. Gray's "Distant Prospect of Eton College" described the simple rustic sports that were still being played there in the mid-eighteenth century; there were youngsters swimming, bowling hoops, and playing ball, although the prolixities of his style throw a literary veil over these mundane pursuits:

"Who foremost now delight to cleave,
With pliant arm, thy glassy wave?
The captive linnet which enthrall?
What idle progeny succeed
To chase the rolling circle's speed,
Or urge the flying ball?" (77)

The poet of Bristol Grammar School paints a similar, if more detailed, picture, from the same period:

"Part arm'd with scourges vex the flying top;
Part whirl from head to foot the circling rope;
Some strike the ball; and some, the goal around,
Pursu'd, pursuing, travers o'er the ground;

(76) A.B.Gourlay, op.cit., p.253

(77) Thomas Gray: Ode III "On a Distant Prospect of Eton College"
("Poems, Letters and Essays" 1912, p.4)

Taw pleases these; with bodies crouching low,
And thumbs compress'd, they aim a distant blow." (78)

Against these idyllic scenes of innocent play have to be set the coarser events which were certainly entering some of the schools. The tone of many of them, especially the larger ones, was inevitably rough; the enormous ratio of pupils to staff made the birch the only means to any vestige of discipline, with boys who were often on the edge of rebellion. In these circumstances it is hardly surprising that some of the less restrained amusements of their elders should have found a footing in the schools. The Eton ram hunt was a particularly barbarous ceremonial which must have been well established by the end of the Stuart period. The Duke of Cumberland went to the school to enjoy the fun on August 1st, 1730, when

"The Captain of the School presented him with a ram-club, with which H.R.H. struck the first stroke. H.R.H. was in at the death of the ram, and his club was bloodied according to custom...."

The rams were often lively and chases through the town took place, causing concern to the college authorities. "Such severe exercise in summer," wrote Maxwell Lyte, "was deemed dangerous to the health of the boys" (one might add that it did the ram no good either!), so henceforth the beast was hamstrung and, with due ceremonial, was deliberately beaten to death in one of the college yards. This butchery was eventually abandoned in 1747. (79) Such crudities were not confined to the public schools. Many schools approved of cock-fighting and matches were sometimes arranged there, particularly on the traditional

(78) C.P.Hill, op.cit., p.50

(79) Maxwell Lyte, op.cit., pp.302/3

holidays. On Shrove Tuesday, for instance, Wimborne School held a knock-out competition with the master presiding; names were drawn out of a hat, until one survivor was left. (80)

There were doubtless schoolmasters who entered into the spirit of such sports for the demands of their calling at the time would hardly dissuade them from sadism. Generally, however, Stuart schoolmasters, endured the play of their scholars, but did not encourage it and the games which the boys played were still usually those they would have followed whether they were in school or not. The school authorities' concerns were with safety and good order, much of their intervention with scholars' sports being on these grounds. The current sporting vogues were, as we have seen, not of the most decorous and it was only as games became more ordered and regulated in the later years of the eighteenth century that they began to win any positive acceptance, as against bare toleration, in the schools.

The characteristic theme of this chapter has been the apparent contradiction between the enthusiasms and passions of much of the sporting practice and the doubts and restrictions of much contemporary thinking, religious, moral and educational, on which school physical training might have been based. With reason and artifice in control of men's conscious thinking, and restricting their leisure activities no less than their serious employments, it was perhaps inevitable that when the bonds of reason were slipped sports and games should run to an extreme of licence. It was to be almost a century before both the games themselves and the habits of thought related to exercise had both changed

(80) J.Hutchins: "The History and Antiquities of the County of Dorset" (1868), Vol. 3, p.197

sufficiently to find a new correspondence with each other.

(iii) The Physical Education of Girls.

There were signs of a mild awakening of interest in the education of girls in the second half of the Stuart period. This was shown in the publication of such works as Mrs Makin's "Essay to Revive the Antient Education of Gentlewomen" (1673), Mrs Wooley's "Gentlewoman's Companion" (1675), Mary Astell's "A Serious Proposal to the Ladies for the Advancement of their True and Greatest Interest" (1694) and Halifax's "Advice to a Daughter" (1687). Apart also from writings specifically directed to the status and upbringing of women (which received their loudest support from the translation of Poulain de la Barre's "De l'Egalite des deux Sexes" in 1677), attention was given to their education by, for instance, Defoe, whose "Essay on Projects" advocated the establishment of women's colleges in London and in each of the counties, and by John Locke, both in his "Thoughts Concerning Education" and in the correspondence with Edward Clark. This interest may well reflect the partial emergence of the gentlewoman from the position of utter subordination which she endured in the man's world of the first half of the century. The occasional woman does once more begin to achieve distinction (the Duchess of Newcastle as a poet and Aphra Behn as a novelist), and queens were on the throne again for the last decades of the period, although the personal influence of neither Mary nor Anne

could come near to matching that of Elizabeth in adding to the status of their sex.

Whether this renewed concern for female education would have any beneficial results for the physical training of girls was doubtful. As far as they were concerned, there was not even an old tradition of physical education at which to look back. The courtly experience of the Renaissance provided boys' physical education with a perpetual image of what was possible, while girls' schooling, even in its Elizabethan heyday, had developed no comparable pattern of exercise or play as part of its system. Court ladies shared a few of the physical benefits of the Renaissance cult; some of them, like Elizabeth herself, would join in hunting expeditions (which had, as we have seen, become so organised as to make the ladies' participation possible) and show their skill with the bow; they also went hawking, to judge from their portraits with hooded falcons at the wrist. These, however, were fringe benefits from the courtly mode of training enjoyed by the men. The nobly-born girl's education might often, in the earlier part of the Queen's reign particularly, bring her to a high level of classical scholarship, but it would involve little if any physical training. Indeed, it was probably when the girl's education became more superficial, as it did in the last decades of the sixteenth century, that it took on a slightly more physical stress, even if that was only in the greater importance it began to give to dancing.

Richard Mulcaster, the stoutest champion of physical education in the period, urged, for much the same reasons as Plato had done, that girls should be educated. To leave them in ignorance was to reduce

palpably the efficiency of the nation. He would also give them some physical education, although of a much gentler type than that proposed for the boys, with merely "some ordinary stirring" as its basis. Yet the opinions even of a liberal educationalist like Mulcaster show what advances in ideas were necessary before any widespread female education could be seriously considered; after several pages of argument on the need for their education, he concludes that

"their brains be not so charged, neither with weight nor with multitude of matters, as boys heads be, and therefore like empty casks they make the greater noise." (81)

For most of the seventeenth century girls' schools treated their charges as though they were, indeed, "empty casks". Dancing became the staple diet of their physical and social training, and the social and domestic accomplishments, in their turn, occupied a far higher place in the schools' programmes than did any intellectual exercise. The earliest record of a girls' boarding school dates from James I's reign, when we hear of the scholars of the "Ladies Hall" at Deptford (daughters of nobility and gentry) dancing elaborate figures, invented by their dancing master, Mr Onslow, at a Masque given before the court at Greenwich in 1617. (82) So important was dancing in the curriculum of the early girls' schools that it was quite common for a dancing master to be the actual founder; John Waver, for instance, set up a school at Oxford in 1676. In or about the same year, a new boarding school was established at Gorges House, Chelsea, and this was shortly taken over by

(81) Mulcaster, *op.cit.*, p.175

(82) see D.Gardiner: "English Girlhood at School" (1929), p.209

Josias Priest, a dancing instructor and ballet master, whose greatest claim to fame stems from the invitation he gave to a young musician friend to compose an opera for his pupils to perform. The musician was Purcell and the opera "Dido and Aeneas".

Few schools would have had the skill and musical training that such a performance required, and to judge by the criticisms that boarding schools for girls often aroused, Priest's academy must have been better run than most. The provincial schools were regularly parodied as poor imitations of London's; "a strolling player for a dancing-master and a deserter from Dunkirk to teach the French language," according to Richard Flecknoe, with the girls taught "to quaver instead of singing, hop instead of dancing." (83) The prevalence of dancing over the rest of the girl's education was still being satirised right to the end of the period. "The Spectator's" comment had its usual ironic exaggeration, but was fundamentally valid:

"When a girl is safely brought from her nurse, before she is capable of forming one simple notion of anything in life, she is delivered to the hands of her dancing-master; and with a collar round her neck the pretty wild thing is taught a fantastical gravity of behaviour and forced to a particular way of holding her head, heaving her breast and moving with her whole body; and all this under pain of never having a husband if she steps, looks or moves awry." (84)

"Good carriage" might, indeed, mean physical training of a sort, but the girl was either hauled round in this way like a horse or forced

(83) Richard Flecknoe: "Aenigmaticall Characters" (1665), p.86

(84) Richard Steele: "Spectator" No.66

into strange machines to straighten backs, hold heads erect or elongate the neck. (85) Appearance, not health or fitness (or, still less, enjoyment) was the sole aim of this regime, and criticisms of these constrictive practices were to increase in frequency and volume during the eighteenth century and to culminate in the onslaughts of Erasmus Darwin on the condition of girls' boarding schools, with their lack of ventilation, their contrivances to "aid" gait and posture, their tight lacings and their shared beds. (86)

Even an enlightened thinker like George Saville, 1st Marquis of Halifax, was unable to see prospects of education for his daughter much beyond those which the society of his day generally allowed. Whether on account of Halifax's political reputation as Charles II's minister or because of the book's acceptability to contemporary taste, the "Advice to a Daughter" was very widely read through the first half of the eighteenth century, Dodsley's edition of 1765 being the fifteenth. The formal education which it envisages is of the thinnest, with little more than the elements of reading and writing, together with instruction in the basic skills of arithmetic, so that she may watch over the household accounts. Dancing makes its appearance as the only activity of a physical nature to be allowed, but its aim is completely social, to give not pleasure, but grace of movement. In fact, she must not enjoy it too much. A grown woman, Halifax writes,

(85) see, inter alia, Gisborne: "An Enquiry into the Duties of the Female Sex" (1797), p.76; F.J.Harvey Darton: "The Life of Mrs Sherwood" (1910), p.34.

(86) Erasmus Darwin: "Plan for the Conduct of Female Education in Boarding Schools" (1797)

is only to dance on rare occasions and his daughter is to remember that

"the end of your learning it was that you might know better how to move gracefully; when it goeth beyond that, one may call it excelling in a mistake, which is no very great commendation." (87)

It is better for the girl never to dance at all, for lack of skill, than to be always dancing, "because she does it well," (88) and it should be enjoyed privately, carelessly and gaily, not as a solemn, over-rehearsed performance.

Halifax was neither an educational reformer nor an advocate of woman's rights. The advocates of women's education of his time, however, held out scarcely any more promise of opportunities for exercise for women than he had done. Bathsua Makin, inspired by the intellectual attainments of Elizabethan ladies and by Comenian educational principles, sought to teach girls Grammar, Rhetoric and Logic, after the established classical pattern, although by the use of the enlightened, practical methods of the "Great Didactic". She would allow also "all things ordinarily taught in other schools, works of all sorts, dancing, music, singing, writing, keeping accounts." (89) although she was not an enthusiast for what passed usually for physical education:

"Merely to teach Gentlewomen to frisk and dance, to paint their faces, to curl their hair, to on a whisk, to wear gay clothes, is not truly to adorn but to adulterate their bodies." (90)

(87) Halifax: "Advice to a Daughter", in H.C.Foxcroft (editor): "The Life and Letters of Sir George Savile, Bart., First Marquis of Halifax, &c." (1898), Vol.II, p.423

(88) *ibid.*, p.424

(89) Bathsua Makin: "An Essay to Revive the Antient Education of Gentlewomen", p.22

(90) *ibid.*, p.42

Even less was to be expected from Mary Astell whose "Serious Proposal" advocated the establishment of a women's college on a monastic pattern, with coarse clothing, plain diet, and a study of English, Modern Languages and Modern Philosophy. While her curriculum proposals were far-sighted, her college, if realised, would have done little to forward women's physical education. As far as can be seen, it would have removed what little there was, by way of dancing, in the existing schools of the day.

The tendency of the writers on girls' education was either to accept what current physical training there was, or to reject it wholesale and provide no basis for any substitute. It was left to John Locke to be both critical of contemporary practices and also to make new proposals which recognised that girls, no less than boys, were physical animals.

Locke saw no need for any fundamental differences between male and female education. There was no call for wholly different concepts of curriculum and method, merely the need for some occasional modifications. The first consideration in the boy's education had been a healthy body and the same applies to girls:

"since I would desire my wife a healthy constitution, a stomach able to digest ordinary food, and a body that could endure upon occasion both wind and sun, rather than a puling, weak, sickly wretch, that every breath of wind or least hardship puts in danger, I think the meat, drink and lodging and clothing of should be ordered after the same manner for girls as for the boys." (91)

The physical education of the girl has to be slightly modified to meet the different social demands made on her sex, but it is certainly not

to be abandoned. She has to be beautiful, with a clear complexion, untanned by sun and wind, so, while she still wears as few clothes as possible to allow her free movement, the young girl's face must be "fenced against the busy subbeams," particularly when they are "hot and piercing".

He is reluctant to change his advice on physical hardening much beyond this. There are, he insists, no medical grounds for making special concessions to girls and, had he a daughter of his own, he would accustom her to wet feet no less than a boy. If this were kept up until the age of thirteen or fourteen, Locke is certain that the results would be wholly beneficial:

"I would not doubt at all, I should do her a very great kindness by preventing the mischiefs, that others (who used to keep their feet warm and dry) very often receive by taking wet in their feet, whereof in your sex there are daily examples."

This may seem drastic, he tells Mrs Clarke, and he grants that "there are many healthy women without it", but he insists that these are logical proposals since girls will not get their feet wet "dabbling about in water as your boys will be" and so need a deliberate introduction to it! (92)

Dancing he will not only allow, but will begin teaching it earlier with the girls than with the boys, where his support had been very conditional and half-hearted. (93) Since girls are not going to be sent off to a school where they would lose all the good grace that they

(92) Correspondence, pp.102-4. (A long letter in which Locke replies to Mrs Clarke's request that he should say how he would amend his system for her daughter, Elizabeth.)

(93) see above, p.302

had been taught at home, they should

"have a dancing master at home early: it gives them fashion and easy comely motion betimes which is very convenient."

He sees dancing as means of aiding the personality development of the girl, who might otherwise lead a rather secluded existence. It gives opportunities for both physical and social education, as the bashful girl can be taken to the public dancing school where she may gain confidence and poise. Yet Locke's doubts about dancing remain and he wonders, on second thoughts, whether even this advice is wise,

"too much of the public dancing schools may not perhaps do well, for of the two, too much shamefacedness better becomes a girl than too much confidence." (94)

The social opportunities of the lady remained circumscribed and gave no encouragement to her education, either mental or physical. Halifax's view on the inferior status of women was doubtless, in spite of the dissenting voices of the few, accepted by the vast majority, who resigned themselves to the situation in the fashion he recommends to his daughter:

"You are, therefore, to make your best of what is settled by law and custom, and not vainly imagine that it will be changed for your sake." (95)

The winning of educational rights for women was the necessary preliminary before any physical education for girls could develop. These general rights were to be won in only the second half of the nineteenth century, and it would be too optimistic to expect to find, before that time, any notable attention to their physical training. We have seen already, however, that an absence of school concern for

(94) Correspondence, p.104

(95) Halifax, op.cit., p.394

physical activity did not mean that the pupils were totally cut off from such exercise. It would obviously be false to assume, from the severe limitations of the attention given to physical activity in female education in this period, that the whole of womanhood spent its days in stately graciousness or wilted in pale vapours and swoons. Even the gently-born had their recreations: Dorothy Osborne played shuttlecock with her maid (who was a hopeless opponent); (96) ladies skated; by the mid-eighteenth century they were playing cricket; (97) and Fuller, at the end of the seventeenth, had considered it decorous for them to go riding, properly accompanied. (98)

If the educated gentlewoman could have a little physical activity, doubtless her untutored sister could have much more. Formal education was even more severely rationed among the girls than among the boys, and the Bess Bouncers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries must have far outnumbered the Lydia Languishes. In that vast area ^{of} society which was neither much schooled nor much written about, we snatch occasional glimpses of vigorous physical activity among its young women. They often had a part in the traditional rural sports, playing stool-ball, barley break or shuttlecock, particularly on Shrove Tuesdays but certainly also when other occasions offered as well. "Smock Races", as we have seen, were common all over the country. At Maidenhead, the smock was competed for by "five damsels under 20 years of age, handsome in person and chaste in principle; bandy legs and humped backs not

(96) As part of her cure for "the spleen". "Letters from Dorothy Osborne to Sir William Temple", op.cit., p.62

(97) H.S.Altham, op.cit., p.36

(98) Fuller, op.cit., p.155

being permitted to start." (99) Elsewhere, to judge by the frequent references, races for women were as frequent almost as those for men, and by the eighteenth century they were suffering the fate of much male sport, becoming largely a spectacle for onlookers. Eighteenth century cricketers, engaged in a match on Walworth Common, are reported to

"have subscribed for a Holland smock of one guinea value, which will be run for by two jolly wenches, one known by the name of The Little Bit of Blue (the handsome Broom Girl) at the fag end of Kent Street, and Black Bess, of the Mint. They are to run in drawers only, and there is excellent sport expected." (100)

The "excellent sport" to be derived from such events could not hope to survive into more prudish ages, and already there was criticism of the Cotswold Games, where the competitors for the Smock Race were alleged, by the Wesleyan writer, Richard Graves, to "exhibit themselves before the whole assembly in a dress hardly reconcilable with the rules of decency." (101) By the mid-eighteenth century women were even taking part in boxing matches. The frequent recording of boisterous activities for women by predominantly male authors may well reflect interests that were not wholly athletic, but they do serve as evidence of the survival of female physical pursuits which, it may be safely assumed, flourished alongside the popular rural sports of the men during the Elizabethan and Stuart periods and shared in their fluctuations and developments.

Between 1560 and 1714 the exercise of women tends to be the exercise of men "writ small". In the upper social reaches it shows a relative prosperity during Elizabeth's reign, while the Renaissance influence is

(99) Wymer, op.cit., p.149

(100) G.B.Buckley: "Fresh Light on Eighteenth Century Cricket" (1935), p.18

(101) Whitfield, op.cit., p.69

still being felt. Later, during the Stuart period, there is virtually complete submergence, as far as anything approaching a conscious physical culture is concerned. Meanwhile, at the popular level, women's sport continued, a less comprehensive and usually more gentle accompaniment to that of the men; it almost certainly both shared its vicissitudes under the Puritans and its tendencies, towards the end of the period, to spectacle, exhibitionism and gambling.

Women's physical education scarcely existed at all, and, while women's sport and games may not have flourished very conspicuously, they certainly did exist. In doing so, they underlined the lesson that can be drawn also from the general sporting history of the period; namely, that a considerable body of sport and exercise may endure without any deliberate social sanction still less without the support of any deliberately designed physical education. The communal and psychological motivations for sport proved strong enough for it to overcome the lack of theory for its excuse or justification.

Chapter VI

PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN ITS HISTORICAL SETTING.

"The Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton."
(attributed to the Duke of Wellington)

"I have often wondered what converted physical training into physical education. No doubt, historically speaking, this came about, as do most changes in educational institutions, through pressures of a militant group requiring fuller recognition. But the underlying rationale of the change was surely the conviction on the part of some that exercising the body must not be seen merely as a skilful and disciplined business related to a specific end such as physical fitness; rather it is to be seen as related to and contributing to other worth-while things in life. To be asked to imagine that one is a leaf is to be given an unusual way of conceiving of what one is doing in the gym. But at least it conveys the impression that one is not just being trained in circumscribed skills."
(Professor R.S.Peters: "Education as Initiation") (1)

"It is not helpful to lump American college football, Real Madrid and international athletics with Gordonstoun, fishing or diving off a pier, boating and camping. The only thing they have in common is

(1) In R.D.Archambault (editor): "Philosophical Analysis and Education" (1965), p.99

that some males and fewer females of varying ages are using their muscles."

(M.I.Finley: "New Statesman" 22nd May, 1964) (2)

This research was based on the possibility that a study of the motives for exercise and physical education in a limited historical period would have interest that extended beyond the historical. It started from the premise that these motives could not be isolated from the rest of human thought and action, and that an examination of the various pressures to which men's attitudes towards physical activities have proved susceptible in the past might therefore have useful insights for the twentieth century, where physical education has achieved a wide, if not always clearly rationalised, acceptance. We might become aware, in fact, not only of "the pastness of the past", but also of its presence, to use T.S.Eliot's terms.

However, before any attempt is made to "place" twentieth century physical education into its historical setting, it would probably be useful to review briefly the period covered by this research. Physical activities and physical education did not enhance their prestige between 1560 and 1714, and the story is neither one of simple progress nor of continuous development.

In the Elizabethan years bodily skills and exertions had some standing. Vigorous physical activity was widely pursued and widely approved; its status derived from the philosophies of humanism as well as from the material circumstances of an age in which abounding energy brought success to the nation's endeavours in many directions. It was

(2) In a review of "Sport in Society" (P.C.McIntosh).

wholly in tune with the spirit of the times that its greatest military adventure should have started off (in popular memory, if not in fact) with a game of bowls. Meanwhile, the conscious pursuit of physical education was being consistently advocated by most men who turned their thoughts to the upbringing of the young. Yet already, before Elizabeth's death, there were signs of a decline and hints of renewed doubts about the body's worth. The dramatists were beginning to find a sickness in man; Puritan preachers were calling for faith, abstinence and hard work, and consigning the world and the flesh to the realms of darkness; the sports and games of the people, rooted in a now-disapp^{ear}~~ing~~ social order, were prompting frowns and criticisms and were finding no cohesive formula which could come to their defence.

The early Stuart attempts to promote sport by government decree and deliberate social action are potent indications of the decline which they sought to stem. The old forms of play were losing their validity just as they had, in the eyes of many, lost their respectability, and no legislative measures could restore these. The courtly traditions of past ages could still persist in writers such as James I himself, Cleland and Peacham, but they have a nostalgic and old-fashioned air about them. The more positive attitudes towards the body which would eventually modify the Puritan doubts were being predicted by Francis Bacon, with his promise of a rational and scientifically determined role for man's physical being, but the former enthusiasms were gone. Seventeenth century science and philosophy stripped the body both of much of its mystery and some of its majesty; it was to be consigned strictly to the conscious control of the

reasoning mind. While the medical conclusions of the scientific revolution might prove ultimately favourable to exercise, they had little opportunity to secure much immediate effect against a background of intellectual scepticism and amidst the welter of unhygienic superstition with which both popular and professional opinion were riddled.

The practice of the Restoration era and the educational theory of John Locke might seem, at first glance, to be signs of revival. Indeed, in their different ways, they do indicate both the eighteenth century development of more sophisticated sport and its greater consciousness of exercise as a means to health, but their portents were false as far as any development of physical education was concerned. They came at a time when schools were hardening their resistance to curriculum change and about to enter what was, generally, one of the least conspicuous and least enterprising periods of their history. At the end of the Stuart period, therefore, the prospects of any widespread acceptance of physical education in English schools were, if anything, rather more remote than they had been when the period covered by this research began.

It was to be almost another two hundred years before schools regularly accepted a responsibility for the physical training of their pupils: the recognition of physical education as a school subject in this country belongs almost entirely to the twentieth century.

This long delay may itself have prompted the ambitious claims which the protagonists of physical education in this century have sometimes made for their subject. The motives for physical training which were

familiar to the Elizabethan and Stuart periods all made a reappearance, and often with an extravagance unknown to more cautious ages, as the subject was establishing itself in the modern curriculum. Earnest supporters urged the powerful and varied benefits of the new training and the moral, social and psychological effects attributed to its influence were often as unlikely as they were unprovable. It taught cooperation and/or competition; it trained character; promoted qualities of leadership; was necessary for mental, as well as physical health; brought a sense of "body awareness"; trained essential skills. Claims such as these obviously went far beyond anything voiced by the keenest Elizabethan and Stuart propagandists.

Inevitably, many twentieth century minds have been unable to accept the more lavish of the arguments. Even teachers who were sympathetic to the sport and play of their pupils often found it difficult to accept specialists' views on the nature and purpose of physical education. Their doubts ^{were} reflected in the status which the subject and its teachers were given: where there was already a well-established games' tradition, the scholars' sport was often left in the hands of the masters; games preserved their amateur standing, and the physical educationist was firmly confined to his gymnasium. Elsewhere, even today, physical education remains one of the likeliest victims when cuts have to be made in time-tables of older pupils, while it is still the lesson most prone to neglect in many primary schools. Meanwhile, there are signs that the questions which physical education has so long been begging are now being asked. Professor Peters articulates some of the scepticism of

the educational world, while physical educationists have themselves, in the last few years, become conscious of their calling's need for a more precise and sober justification.

Whether research into a period ending almost two centuries before physical education became part of the curriculum can produce insights relevant to the contemporary situation would appear questionable. Distance may, however, help to make the perspective clearer. The primitive stages of physical education may prompt a critical awareness of some of its present attitudes, just as studies of primitive societies have of our present social organisation. Attitudes towards exercise and physical education are complex and they are all the more difficult to discuss because they have seldom been consciously analysed. They are entangled with so many facets of human experience and emerge out of such a varying spectrum of belief, argument, emotion, and fact that they can be understood with any confidence only within their wider context. A historical period of some remoteness, and even one which has little reputation for its physical education, may have advantages here, since negative indications may be as significant as positive ones in the search for a fuller understanding of the nature of physical education. Even so, any generalisations suggested by this research must be treated with reserve, based as they are on the single example of one country over the space of less than two hundred years.

It was anticipated, for instance, at the outset of this research, that there would be a clear relationship between attitudes towards physical activity and training and an age's broader views on life in

general. Men would think in the same way about exercise, in fact, as they thought about their other activities, and bring to it the same suppositions, prejudices and reasonings. While this proved to be so, the connections were by no means clear or inevitable. On the evidence of this period, it would be a most speculative undertaking to postulate a set of general attitudes and beliefs and then attempt to decide what approach to physical education they will demand.

The relationship was highly conditional. Renaissance ideas of all-round human perfection expressed themselves quite specifically in a deliberate programme of physical activity. Equally clearly, Puritan estimates of man's earthly purpose led directly to their condemnation of sport and play. At other moments, the same continuity of idea between the larger view of man and the world and the particular attitude towards physical education has been missing. The outburst of sporting exuberance following the Restoration had no theoretical support of any depth, while quite broad theoretical indications for physical exercise were not always realised into a definite attitude of encouragement, as the seventeenth century's medical revolution showed.

Some of the factors in this relationship between general opinion and attitudes towards physical activity can be seen. A concept of human nature had to have a wide following, either in numbers or influence, to modify existing exercise. However much it invited one, an isolated philosophy (such as Thomas Hobbes') could not produce a sporting tradition. Moreover, unless the prevailing habits of thought, opinion or belief had an inbuilt disposition towards physical activities or

play, then it was slow to react to them. In other words, men have usually been slow in making any deliberate conclusions about physical activity. They have only done so quickly when some central tenet in their broader attitudes to life has prompted an immediate reaction to the body, physical exercise or play. Thus, the Puritans turned readily to the formulation of a conscious policy on sport because their social and moral philosophies both pointed to the value of hard work as a means to salvation. The slower response of the Anglican establishment was the more typical. Exercise and physical education are very peripheral topics as far as most intellectual movements are concerned; they are usually among the last areas of human activity to feel the impact of fundamental changes in thought and opinion. This time-lapse certainly still occurs, although, thanks to the conscious efforts of the physical educationists themselves, it tends to be less prolonged than in the past. Physical education generally lies as far away from the central concerns of educational thinking as man's physical activities do from the main concerns of his life. When it comes to applying new educational principles to particular subjects, no specialist teacher has a longer or lonelier task than the physical educationist. Only occasionally do the educational innovators think in his terms or apply their proposals in his field. It is hardly to be wondered at that physical education, in its purpose and methods, is usually a decade or so behind general educational opinion.

Occasionally, of course, general attitudes towards life will indicate a role for physical activity, and general attitudes towards

education will point out a particular function for physical education. For this to happen, it did seem that both the accepted "facts" of human nature and the current vision of what man ought to be like had to give the same positive encouragements. On the descriptive side, accounts of the body's functioning might, of themselves, conceivably prompt the pursuit of exercise, although in this period they failed to provoke anything wider than Locke's toughening process for children and Fuller's gentle regime for the ailing. Meanwhile, the psychological facts on which Elizabethan and Stuart attitudes to exercise had to draw were limited, imprecise and controversial, pointing to no clear view of physical activities. The Puritans recognised the strength of human passions, and so did Hobbes, but what led the Puritans into a subjugation of the flesh through hard labour and self-denial, led him to a contractual interpretation of human society, where men could sport and play so long as the Sovereign Power let them. It was not so much a firm body of knowledge about man which led to views on physical activities as some overall predisposition; and it is important for our own age to remember this. We are faced, for instance, with medical evidence which identifies lack of exercise, overweight and stress as three important factors in coronary thrombosis; even with our greater confidence in such facts, we should not expect them to lead automatically to the systematic encouragement of adult exercise for which they seem to call.

In this period, at least, the values involved in views of man and the world were more important determinants of physical activity than any of the available "knowledge" about his nature. Where humanist

principles saw both the unity of man and the desirability of his fullest earthly use of all his potential (so long as it was done within a framework of virtue and style), they developed a favourable attitude towards physical activities as one expression of man's many-sidedness. When rationalist principles, on the other hand, asserted so confidently the pre-eminence of reason, they set intellectual activities high in their scale of values and were not disposed to give much encouragement to the purely animal activities of the body. ~~Such widely held philosophies as these (and they were subscribed to by a majority which did not "hold" them as conscious philosophies) have had general~~ dispositions. The general dispositions inherent in such widely held philosophies as these (even if, by the majority, they were not consciously "held" as philosophies) have certainly had important consequences for physical activities and physical education. The temptation is, indeed, to see them as "producing" attitudes towards these pursuits. We may remind ourselves that they are not simple "causes", and that there is no deductive inevitability about attitudes towards physical education, by looking briefly at some of the developments of later centuries.

The resurgence of physical education and physical exercise which came to much of Europe in the first half of the nineteenth century had a strange intellectual ancestry. It was born out of Romanticism by Nationalism. Per Henrik Ling, founder of Swedish gymnastics and generally acknowledged as the "father of modern physical education" was himself the archetype of the Romantic Nationalist, at once scholar, poet,

dramatist, fencing master and patriot. His system of physical training was inspired by the new idyll of the ancient Norseman, which his own writings also helped to create, and it aimed at producing the strength and sinew which would restore Swedish greatness. It began in romantic dreams and ended in military drill.

There was not the same early urgency in English nationalism, and the Romantic movement here produced only vague encouragements for physical exercise. The later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries demonstrate clearly, in fact, that a zeal for physical activity depends upon more than the simple existence of an appropriate philosophical basis, for, ever since the publication of David Hume's "Treatise of Human Nature" in 1738, such a basis had been available. Hume had shown that if reason was all man had to rely on, then he was a poor creature indeed. He had to look elsewhere for his supports. The view of man as pre-eminently rational, which we saw established by the end of the Stuart period, gave little scope for his physical pursuits. Locke's physical education was in spite of his philosophy rather than because of it, and drew its strengths from medical, psychological and social motives. The reasonable man of the eighteenth century found his body's mechanisms demanding little serious attention and, if he played games, his motives were rarely physical. Hume's demonstration of the weakness of reason, and his intuitive ethic, lifted the intellectual barriers which had denied status to man's physical nature.

The second half of the "Treatise" gives such a positive invitation to physical training and met with such little response that it is worth

some attention. Hume has argued that man's passions and emotions, even his moral inclinations, are independent of reason. The body is itself the source of some of man's "natural" feelings; its skill and strength become worthy and acceptable.

"It is certain, that a considerable part of the beauty of men, as well as of other animals, consists in such a conformation of members as we find by experience to be attended with strength and agility, and to capacitate the creatures for any action or exercise. Broad shouldets, a lank belly, firm joints, taper legs; all these are beautiful in our species, because they are signs of force and vigour, which, being advantages we naturally sympathise with, they convey to the beholder a share of that satisfaction they produce in the possessor." (3)

Here was justification both for playing games and for watching them, for giving positive (and not merely preservative) attention to the body's qualities. Physical education, in fact, could claim to be morally good. It never staked this claim because the age was not ready to give any wide approval to the undermining of its comfortable rationalist ethos. Even Hume himself was unprepared to desert the world of reasoned cause and effect which, as a logical exercise, he had destroyed. In that he sought merely the tempering of reason by intuitive response, his theorising found frequent echoes in eighteenth century creative sensibility, but Hume's restrained radicalism had little part in the eventual revolt against the established order. This revolt took its mood much more from Rousseau. The Romantic Revival gave it expression in the arts, but its political and social movements were less welcome and less effective in this country than they were over much of Europe. A consequence was that they failed to produce in England any conscious

(3) David Hume: "A Treatise of Human Nature" (1911 edition) Vol.II, pp.307-8

system of physical training.

Again it was shown that the intellectual justification for training the physique was not enough to ensure its appearance. In this case, favourable social and political attitudes were at least as important. It might be argued, however, that the mild and limited expression which Romantic attitudes did find in English physical activities was possibly nearer to the spirit of their original inspiration than the formidable gymnastic systems produced on the Continent, although less widespread in effect. By turning attention to nature and the countryside, romanticism made it more possible for the English gentleman to enjoy outdoor exercise without having to kill something in the process. Throughout the nineteenth century there was some following for the physical vision of Romantic man, the bare-chested hero pacing the open moors, knowing, loving and fighting the natural elements and, through his closeness to them and to his own essential nature, achieving a nobler being than ever the artificial life of towns could offer. Something of this vision rubbed off also on to the public schools' games playing tradition, where a healthy pattern of exercise and enjoyment developed a peculiar aura of mysticism, with its appeals to corporate spirit, its subliminal tendencies, its proneness to emotionalism and myth and its fondness for romantic hero figures. Here was a restricted social setting in which some of the Romantic attitudes towards physical activities could find opportunities for growth.

In the wider nineteenth century social context they were allowed little scope, in spite of occasional support, sometimes from surprising

quarters. The unromantic Herbert Spencer, for instance, protested at the artificiality of such physical training as schools generally gave and urged games playing, with its more "natural" movements. Although women's physical education maintained an aesthetic strain through dance and eurhythmics, during the Victorian age and after, it was not until the decade before the second World War that Romantic attitudes made their full and belated impression on the country's physical life. They became apparent, for instance, in the hiking cult, the "Keep Fit" movement, the "Women's League of Health and Beauty", the leap in popularity of Youth Hostelling and Camping. While consciously prompted by health and social concerns, (and perhaps, half-consciously, by motives of military preparation) these activities tended to assume an emotional view of man and often took on a sentimental attitude towards rural nature. They cannot be wholly isolated from the developments in physical education in contemporary Germany, where the incipient dangers of the intuitive approach to the human physique were still less apparent to many foreign observers than its strengths, yet it had always been open to this development of a physical "mystique", to the idealisation of the body for dubious ends and to a surrender to the "dark Gods" of blood and race. It was not only physical educationists who were impressed by the vigour, fitness and dedication of Nazi youth; their muted attempts to secure the benefits of the German physical revival hedged away from its political embarrassments.

Romantic man is gone. He could not survive Auschwitz and Hiroshima.

The intellectual mood of the later twentieth century probably

holds both promises and cautions for man's physical pursuits. On the one hand, there is growing evidence that they can perform useful psychological and social functions, as well as being medically desirable, while, on the other, there is a sharpening of analytical criticism and an increasing utilitarianism and functionalism in contemporary thinking which is likely to subject sports and games to a close scrutiny. History suggests, however, that neither the theoretical support nor the theoretical criticism will, of themselves, produce an effective attitude towards physical activity. Speculation, at the abstract level, where it attracts a following and coincides with current moods, may have an important influence upon attitudes towards exercise. Unless it fulfils these conditions, its role is unlikely to be decisive and if it does fulfil them the inference to be drawn from history is that it is working in close harmony with current social and economic circumstances as well.

The material environment has always greatly influenced physical activities. Even the intervention of government and the sanctions of law, if they have denied social and economic facts, have been unable to alter the course of sporting habit. To be effective, a conscious policy for sport must first of all coincide with social and economic reality. It was fruitless to prescribe archery practice once land-owners, convinced of the bow's uselessness, would no longer reserve space for butts, or to forbid bowls when the game had a large and influential following. Dover and the Puritans owed what successes their diametrically opposed policies gained to their respective

recognitions that the old social order of the countryside was changing. Dover modified his games to cater for new trends, and gave them size, spectacle and gambling, while the Puritans merely misread the pace of the change that was taking place, not its direction. The Elizabethan and Stuart periods provided useful reminders, to an age which now has a Minister of Sport, that it takes much more than a government decree to create an effective policy for physical activities.

However, the surest area for success would seem to lie in material provision. The amount and style of the exercise taken in this period was certainly governed, in the first instance, by the availability of leisure, space and equipment. Men's opportunities for recreation were probably curtailed rather than extended between 1560 and 1714; the weakening of the church calendar, the undesirability of frequent holidays under new economic conditions, meant the concentration of games on Sundays, when they became likely to meet considerable opposition. The leisure of schoolboys was also restricted, but while the lot of adult workers tended to grow worse until at least the middle of the nineteenth century, that of the limited number of scholars became slightly better, and so the games of youngsters took up a larger part in the later history of exercise. The later twentieth century problem is less likely to be the provision of leisure time than the discovery of appropriate pursuits to fill it.

The availability of space is an obvious determinant of play. The annual free-for-all football matches had to stop once nineteenth century towns grew too big to support them, while the Cotswold Games came to an

end when the local vicar enclosed the land on which they were held. While, by our standards, there was still much space for wide-ranging play, this was being gradually limited throughout the period, and already the effects of the rising values of urban land were being felt by schools in the centres of towns. The chronic urbanisation which set in towards the end of the eighteenth century continues to make this problem increasingly acute and, even where there is willingness and money, no sure means have yet been found to its solution. Covered gymnasias and open playgrounds pose highly-contrived situations, while recreation grounds are generally barren uninviting areas designed for specific adult games.

The natural environment has, in their early stages, conditioned the growth of many of our games. Cricket provides an excellent example; it is essentially a downland game, played in gentle country where sheep have finely cropped the turf, and where the material is readily available for wickets and bats. Skating was obviously at home in the bleak, flat fens, where, with the land in its natural sodden state, cricket would never have proved possible. As games became national and money for arenas was available from patrons or spectators, they lost their dependence on a particular terrain, until today we have rugby grounds carved out of Welsh hillsides and football pitches on the rubbish dumps of Hackney Marshes.

Material resources have thus altered the course of many games. From the age of Elizabeth onwards it has been apparent that wealth, and the power that usually goes with it, has been used both for the promotion of games and sometimes for their limitation to an exclusive

social class. A wealthy, leisured class had obvious opportunities to develop sophisticated sports, which could be time-consuming, involving complicated skills which needed practice and demanding expensive equipment or a specially constructed venue. All these conditions would raise effective barriers to the participation of all other classes. This happened in ^{the} courtly tradition of Renaissance England, where the upper class sports developed a pageantry, style and extravagance, and courtly theory came generally to frown on those physical pursuits, such as bowls, where the nobleman might find himself in vulgar company. The eighteenth century aristocrat, who frequently matched enormous wealth with a minimum of political responsibility, often found compensation by wielding authority in sport, to the particular advantage of cricket and horse racing.

Aristocratic control remains, if only nominally, in some sports. In a few, such as horse racing, it is still more than nominal. Elements that are rooted in class distinctions also remain: in the attitude of Twickenham to Rugby League Football; in the Edwardian rituals of Cowes and Henley; in the social exclusiveness of some golf and tennis clubs. Attitudes towards physical activity have also persisted from the old aristocratic tradition into a world where they are inappropriate. Where amateur sport really exists (and that usually means today where it is financed by the players themselves, with little help from spectators or sponsors), the inherited attitudes of the aristocratic tradition may still have relevance, but they have been extended also into sport at the entertainment level, at which even the

nominally "amateur" sports have found means, official or unofficial, of paying their performers.

It has been a feature of the old aristocratic tradition of sport to extend itself over all social classes. With the spread of both cash and leisure, more and more once exclusive games have become available to more and more would-be players. A sport has now to set extremely high economic barriers (as does polo, or racing twelve-metre yachts) if it is to be sure of its exclusive status. As the aristocratic sports have widened their following, so have some of the people's sports assumed what were once the trappings of the games of the wealthy. Football moved from the streets and commons to its own pitches, and special boots and clothing became essential to what had once been the most plebian of games. The folk games have generally left their origins far behind, but at their highly specialised levels (where they are probably best regarded as branches of the entertainment industry) they sometimes give reminders of the dark forces they once served; national fertility symbols are hoisted to the tops of rugby posts and the soccer referee is the ritual scapegoat in the conflict between the home team's virtue and the visitors' vice.

In the past, English sport has reflected the social influence of the different classes. Until the seventeenth century this influence emanated largely from the court, and the most conscious and developed physical activities were those promoted under its auspices. In the eighteenth century the court largely dropped out of the reckoning and the sporting inclinations of the aristocracy governed the growth of

physical pursuits. This monopoly of the great houses was undermined by the middle classes in the Victorian age and the beginning of the present century, while, since 1945, the working class influence has been more and more effective, generally working towards the breakdown of class barriers in our games. The direction of the changes can be seen clearly in cricket, once the most aristocratic of games and still obviously tied to the conception of a leisure class so long as it persists in trying to operate a full programme of three-day matches. Its changes in attitude since the war have nevertheless been remarkable: it has abandoned the distinction between amateur and professional; it has introduced a knock-out competition; it has, in 1965, put out an "English Schools XI" and not a "Public Schools XI" against the Combined Services. These changes, large and small, are indicative of the direction in which traditional games have to respond to social pressures. Apart from these modifications of existing games, it seems likely that new and ~~new~~^{classless} pursuits will arise, of which ten-pin bowling may be the fore-runner. Here, highly complex and expensive technical equipment provides the maximum of physical effort and play with the minimum of administrative routine (in scoring, fetching balls and the like); it does so quite expensively but in comfortable surroundings and at any time of day or night.

One of the tests facing physical education will lie in its capacity to respond to the changes that social and economic forces seem certain to promote in the country's play and recreation. The competitive element in twentieth century man appears to encourage his sporting proclivities, but the emphasis on success, which is the

hallmark of the meritocracy, seems just as likely to reduce the participation of the chronically unsuccessful. Competition will produce greater refinements in technique and skill and, at the same time, eliminate more and more potential players. Meanwhile, the urge to sporting success is likely to find more of its outlets in activities where the physical component is less telling as, for instance, in power-boat racing. A diminution of the exercise derived from games and sports may combine with other factors to demand some highly concentrated form of home gymnastic devised for health purposes; it would be mechanised, embody its challenge in carefully graduated exertions and check these on its own built-in measuring device. In fact, a gymnastic teaching machine.

Certainly the large team games seem bound to lose some support as more pursuits become available (such as land and water skiing) which do not demand the simultaneous attendance of twenty or more other players. An extension of leisure, which diversifies the possible occasions for sport, certainly makes it no easier to bring large numbers of players together regularly at a given time, while greater economic prosperity makes more and more alternatives available. If one of the main purposes of physical education is to ensure that as many as possible continue to take exercise for as long as possible (and the evidence indicates that it should be), then its scope in schools will have to be greatly widened. This will not only undermine some of its once-cherished institutions, by the weakening of school teams, for example, but will also pose searching questions as to which of the developing

pursuits lie within the subject's bounds.

Physical education is bedevilled by such problems of definition, as Finley's comments at the head of the chapter show. They were noted at the start of this research and have cropped up from time to time during its course. The immediate problem of the subject's content leads directly into questions as to why it should promote certain activities and frown on others, and to put these questions of motivation into a historical context may bring new material to their consideration.

The Elizabethan and Stuart periods can, of course, offer no experience of physical education as a school "subject", in the modern sense. Outside the speculations of individual reformers, the most that could be hoped for was that the pupils' play and exercise would be encouraged, possibly supervised, or at least permitted. Yet, even within these limits, the period provided hints of virtually all the later motives that have been put forward in support of physical education.

There has been a persistent belief that the surest means of justification for physical education lay in its claims to promote health. Other objectives were less tangible, less demonstrable, or less likely to receive universal acceptance as desirable, and it was found through the period that the health motive was the most frequently used. It prevailed against doubtful theories on "sweating" and the "spirits"; it was misused to disguise other motives, as in Elyot's arguments for the greater healthfulness of archery over deer shooting; and it was regularly held that sound physical health would promote praiseworthy moral qualities. Concern for the health and preservation of children

has been one of the main factors in the development of school physical education, especially in the state schools. It now seems that improved diet was much more significant than deliberate exercise in bringing about the present century's great advances in child health, and it is indeed doubtful whether any limited exercise such as the school can provide will have noticeable influences on health or size. None the less, the health motive remains important in adult exercise, while self-preservation certainly makes swimming the most necessary of the subject's skills at the child's level. The attractions of the health motive remain, in its firmness of fact and its avoidance of controversy; if present medical knowledge appears to be limiting its application, especially as far as youngsters are concerned, it is also making that application more precise.

While the health motive recognisably persists, the influence of the military training which was important to the courtly tradition and its successors may seem to have entirely disappeared. Yet our school approach to physical education, particularly on the boys' side, derives directly from military methods and only a few years ago almost a third of the physical education teachers listed in "The Public and Preparatory Schools Year Book" were ex-soldiers, ranging in rank, incidentally, from lieutenant-colonel downwards. Gymnastic equipment, and even the gymnasium itself, is based upon this tradition and it is remarkable that, in spite of the great changes which physical education has undergone in the last thirty years or so, its specialist room remains hardly altered. When Swedish drill was introduced into the elementary school system, at the turn of the century, the motivation was military in only a distant

sense. There did, however, seem to be much social value in a system which might combine health with a ready conformity to commands. The subject continued to be taught until the second World War by drill-book methods, which were in sympathy with the wider educational image of the teacher-directed class and the uniform performance of set tasks, but which have since been uneasily and incompletely adapted (again particularly on the boys' side) to the newer model of the child-centred teaching situation.

The change in the internal structure of the physical education lesson has to be paralleled by an awareness of its new and more demanding role in cultural transmission. Historically, this role, as far as physical pursuits were concerned, was seldom thought important to the educational process; where it occurred was largely in the training of an elite who had to learn a certain style in performance, as in the courtly tradition, or with Locke and the Earl of Chesterfield in respect of dancing. The games and sports of the leisure class might demand practice, but they seldom received instruction save in dancing and swordplay. The community's games could, for the most part, be learned merely by living in it. Even those of the leisured class underwent only slow changes over the generations, while for humbler folk it could be virtually certain that the games they would pursue as adults would be those they grew up with as children. This no longer applies. Children will regularly play different games from their parents and, while the games themselves change more rapidly, prosperity and social mobility bring wider opportunities. Twentieth century grammar schools have long sensed their

function of aiding the movement of children up the social scale; they have generally turned to the middle class games, where a choice has offered itself. Not so long ago, in parts of Yorkshire, this was illustrated in the nice distinction found in rugby-playing secondary schools, with the grammar schools playing Rugby Union and the secondary moderns Rugby League. In a rapidly changing society this role becomes more significant and goes far beyond giving potential recruits to the middle classes from working class homes the correct repertoire of games to take with them; the physical educationist has to predict the future patterns of sport and leisure into which his pupils will have to fit.

If physical education has not wholly realised the width of its responsibilities in having to introduce pupils to the growing number of activities from which they will choose their adult recreation, it has accepted whole-heartedly a responsibility for teaching the skills of games. This appears so central to the subject's function that its comparative novelty, in the historical view, may be hard to appreciate. "Skills" appear to give the same firmness to the content of physical education as medical motives give to its purposes, and they are a necessary part of its work. Yet their very absence from such physical education as there was in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries meant that the child's play presented the greatest opportunity for the first glimmerings of child study. The teacher, hardly concerned at all with any material to be learned, could watch the youngsters' play to judge his disposition, as Locke advised, or win his affection by joining in his games, as Peacham urged. In spite of a teaching situation which

thought almost wholly in terms of the assimilation of prescribed material, or perhaps, even, because of it, there was a clear awareness of the essentially pleasurable nature of the child's play. They were never in danger of falling into the contradictions of "compulsory games".

Children's play gave important pointers to the revaluation of childhood that came first with Rousseau and the Romantics and was later reinforced by educators and psychologists. It was characteristic of the time-lag that has been found between a change in general thinking and its reflection in physical activities, that the child-centred pattern of teaching was relatively slow to appear widely in the subject most directly involved in their play. Historical factors were certainly of importance in explaining the apparent suddenness and completeness of the change when it did come. These factors include the divergence in tradition between the physical education of the two sexes in this country, for, although they both recognised a Swedish ancestry, they developed distinctive stresses, both educational and social. The physical education of girls was given little attention in our period, but such as did appear was usually directed to aesthetic ends in dancing; this persisted through the Victorian callisthenics, croquet, marching exercises and military drill, to appear again in freer form in the present century. Meanwhile, men's physical education stayed truer to the Swedish tradition, imbibing something of the public schools' games playing, but remaining quite authoritarian in method and spirit. Since, until the opening of specialist men's colleges of physical education in the 1930's, it had to draw its instructors largely from the army, this was ~~hardly~~ to be expected,

but this in itself set up another barrier between the two movements, the women having a well-established system of specialist training which (possibly because it involved a longer period of training than the usual non-graduate teacher's) had a certain social cachet about it. They were naturally not disposed to see eye-to-eye with drill instructors. In spite of this distinction, the authoritarian mode of instruction held sway until the post-war years, but then the natural, individual, expressive approach which the women had developed was found to be more in tune with current educational thinking. A comparison between the 1933 Syllabus and "Moving and Growing" illustrates the revolution. A cynical observer remarked that where they had before treated all children as if they were boys and going to be soldiers, they now treated them all as if they were girls going to be ballet dancers. This is wholesale exaggeration, but it is exaggeration of a truth.

The last paragraph is not, of course, an account of how physical education came to be child-centred, which I would not be equipped to write. It may illustrate, however, how historical factors, which apparently have little connection with the points under present discussion can none the less influence their resolution.

A good case can obviously be made out for an approach to children's physical activity which is individualised, sensitive to their needs, challenging without being formidable, and aware of aesthetic values. The history of earlier physical education, however, cannot contribute greatly to its discussion, and this reinforces the suspicion that the good case one tends to put forward for modern movement is the case, too, for

free drama. The problem of defining the scope of physical education recurs.

In the historical view, the question does sometimes arise as to whether modern physical education is not, through movement, building up a new mystique to replace an older one, now discredited. Battles are no longer won on the playing fields of Eton; the character-building qualities of games are doubted and it is hard to show how climbing rock-faces can promote powers of leadership. As Professor Peters remarks, pretending to be a leaf "conveys the impression that one is not just being trained in circumscribed skills", which is precisely what the old mystique of personality claims tried to ensure. The new phraseology seems often as question-begging as the old, although it cloaks itself in terms which may give it a longer immunity from the queries of the uninitiated. "Body mastery", "movement understanding", "building up a vocabulary of movement", and the like, will eventually, however, have to meet the same searching enquiry which threw such doubt over their predecessors.

At the conclusion of this research, I find myself wondering whether such mystique is necessary, although I realise that, in the terms of Professor Peters' argument this comes near to denying that physical education is, in fact, educational. What is needed is a dual approach to the subject's problems, the first to discover what it can demonstrably do and the second to discover what it ought to do. At the moment the first is being tackled more thoroughly than the second but, what is worse, is often being confused with it. The possibility of

teaching certain skills, or of making the child aware of its physical potential, answers no questions about their desirability.

Such answers will not be easily come by. Even with the advantages of distance and the comparative thinness of Elizabethan and Stuart physical exercise and physical education, what this enquiry has shown is, most obviously, the multiplicity of the factors which govern attitudes towards them. It can hardly be doubted that in the infinitely greater complexity of the twentieth century situation, the task of discerning significances is proportionately greater. In this complicated welter of pressures, it will be increasingly important that physical education should not lose sight of its intrinsic elements of exercise and play. In the sixteenth century men, and sometimes women, played and exercised themselves almost entirely for the pleasures such activities brought. Some elements in their pleasure, such as its cruelty, we can no longer accept, and on others, such as gambling, there will be many doubts. We might, however, perhaps envy their generally frank acceptance of the motives of their play, as far as they understood them. As Mulcaster said of fencing, it could be "warlike", "game-like" or "physic-like". They steered much clearer of pretentious explanations of their games than recent ages have sometimes done. Where physical pursuits have little justification beyond that they give pleasure and do no mental or physical harm to man or beast, it is inviting intellectual scorn to postulate grander motives for them. Where, on the other hand there is the task of propounding further ends, as there certainly sometimes will be, it must be done cautiously and

strictly, with an awareness of the many intervening influences of thought and action which, as this thesis has tried to show, flow from many and often distant sources to impinge on men's attitudes to their exercise.

Some Suggestions for Further Research.

One of the important objects of an exploratory research of this type is to map out the territory which it covers, find out what areas are relatively ~~barren~~ ^{unfruitful} and what are likely to reward further enquiry.

The concensus of previous opinion that the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were barren periods for physical education has been supported here at the level of conscious theorising, and with the obvious exceptions. The 'professional' writers on educational topics in the period are mainly significant to the historian of physical education for the lack of interest they usually show. Any continuity of opinion on physical activities of adults or children has to be deduced largely from the activities themselves and the manner in which they were pursued. The source material on which this might be done has seldom been brought into the specific contexts of physical activities and physical education and presents several possible subjects for research which would be demanding of time, but would almost certainly eventually yield results.

In the present research, such source material could obviously only be sampled. This sampling suggests that there is considerable scope for discovering more about the games and play of the past from records

of traditional festivals. The publications of the "Folk Lore Society" provide a starting point, but these have not been compiled with physical activities particularly in mind and so the information they give is incidental. Their own source, in turn, is frequently found to be a local historian, and such local histories as have been followed up here have yielded quite promising results, especially where they were backed by a good run of local press reports from fairly early in the eighteenth century. Newspapers themselves are, of course, another source which can yield effective results, as Buckley showed in his research into eighteenth century cricket. There is also the point to be made that these popular sports were still important parts of the total picture of the country's play in periods when physical education more consciously flourished; the comparative richness of Elizabethan and nineteenth century theoretical material has so far ~~over~~ kept most of the attention of historians of physical education away from this less sophisticated play. In terms of exercise and physical activity, indeed, this field has hardly been touched, in spite of the apparently quite full bibliography on sports and amusements. The existing works are often useful and usually interesting, but they reveal, for instance, little about the exercise that was being had by children who were receiving none at school.

Of those who were at school we still know surprisingly little. Individual school histories revealed enough to suggest that a more thorough exploitation of this source might be rewarding; roughly one in three of the school histories examined here gave some relevant evidence, which in terms of this topic was a highly productive result!

A narrow historical period which should yield considerable material is the Interregnum. Again the sample taken here gave promising results, both in revealing detail about the period's sporting activities and in presenting attitudes towards them. The fact that the Puritans cared about games brought them under frequent (and often official) discussion, and there is doubtless considerable evidence in, for instance, accounts of the Civil War in different parts of the country.

Some other approaches have proved barren. At the outset of this research it was hoped that there would be a considerable amount of buried material in letters, autobiographies, memoirs, diaries, and similar sources. There certainly is some, but in this period at least it proved to be very sparse and isolated; the Verney Memoirs, for instance, contain virtually nothing of relevance, in spite of their domestic detail. Moreover, the researcher's task is not made any easier by the fact that even thorough indexes often ignore the significant reference to physical training which a work may contain. There are no short cuts, and it is reasonable to suppose that material from this type of source will be brought into the context of physical education only in a very gradual and piecemeal fashion.

So far the concentration has been on source material, essentially so as this is still so little organised. On questions relating to attitudes towards physical activity and what may be called "theory of physical education", it is less easy to make hard and fast suggestions.

There is certainly the need for an overall examination of the concepts involved in discussions about physical education, though it

may yet be too soon to suggest that these be subjected to formal philosophical analysis. Philosophy, in spite of some of its contemporary claims, does tend to work within a framework of historical reference; and, in physical education, this frame of reference is hardly yet firm enough to support such an enquiry.

Where there is more apparent readiness is in the fields of the social scientists. This research has supported the conclusions of such widely different writers as Veblen and McIntosh that physical activities and physical education have clear relationships with social class and this relationship might well be systematically explored in the contemporary situation. Other enquiries which might well prove useful would be into motives for watching sport, into its financial basis and its relationships with gambling, and into moral aspects both in child development (building on Piaget's work, at a more sophisticated, older level) and in adult play.

However, these do not arise directly out of this thesis.

The relationship of physical activities and physical education with their intellectual background seemed much less precise or predictable than its connection with economic and social facts and suppositions. Further enquiries here, especially on more recent periods, could possibly give clearer indications of the processes at work. Tentative suggestions have been made in the previous chapters that the revival of physical education in the thirties had a relationship (if possibly belated) with wider intellectual attitudes; an examination of the motives behind this movement could well show how close this relationship

was. The relationship between the theory and practice of physical education and the general education field might also emerge more clearly if a research could examine the transition from the 1936 Syllabus to "Moving and Growing". The starkness of the change in policy in physical education was more apparent than in other parts of the curriculum, and such a study might reveal something of the processes and determinants of the movement from the authoritarian to the child-centred system. One suspects that the results might soon have application to another such change of emphasis.

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