

1912

Speeches/Documents

Title: A Study of Physical Education

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Date: April 1917

Source: MSW vol VI

Description:

Our nation is wanting in strength. The military spirit has not been encouraged; The physical condition of the population deteriorates daily. This is an extremely disturbing phenomenon. The promoters of physical education have not grasped the essence of the problem, and therefore, their efforts, though prolonged, have not been effective. If this state continues, our weakness will increase further. To attain our goals and to make our influence felt are external matters, results. The development of our physical strength is an internal matter, a cause. If our bodies are not strong we will be afraid as soon as we see enemy soldiers, and then how can we attain our goals and make ourselves respected? Strength depends on drill, and drill depends on self-awareness. The advocates of physical education have not failed to devise various methods. If their efforts have nevertheless remained fruitless, it is because external forces are insufficient to move the heart....

If we wish to make physical education effective, we must influence people's subjective attitudes and stimulate them to become conscious of physical education. If one becomes conscious of the problem, a programme for physical education will come easily, and we will attain our goals and make our influence felt as a matter of course..

1. AN EXPLANATION OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

Physical education helps to maintain life. East and West differ in their interpretations of it. Chuang Tzu followed the example of the cook, Confucius drew on the lesson of the archer and the charioteer. In Germany, Physical education has gained the greatest popularity. Fencing has spread all over the country. Japan has bushido. Moreover, recently, following the traditions of our country, judo has developed there to an admirable degree. When we examine these examples, we see that they all begin with the study of physiology.

2. THE PLACE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN OUR LIFE

Physical education complements education in virtue and knowledge. Moreover, both virtue and knowledge reside in the body. Without the body there would be neither virtue nor knowledge. Those who understand this are rare. People stress either knowledge or morality. Knowledge is certainly valuable, for it distinguishes man from animals. But wherein is knowledge contained? Morality, too, is valuable; it is the basis of the social order and of equality between ourselves and others. But where does virtue reside? It is the body that contains knowledge and houses virtue. It contains knowledge like a chariot and houses morality like a chamber. The body is the chariot that contains knowledge, the chamber that houses virtue. Children enter primary school when they reach the proper age. In primary school, particular attention should be paid to the development of the body; progress in knowledge and moral training are of secondary importance. Nourishment and care should be

primary, teaching and discipline complementary. At present, most people do not know this, and the result is that children become ill, or even die young, because of studying. In middle and higher schools, stress should be placed equally on all three aspects of education. At present, most people overemphasize knowledge. During the years of middle school, the development of the body is not yet completed. Since today the factors favouring physical development are few, and those deterring it numerous, won't physical development tend to cease? In the educational system of our country, required courses are as thick as the hairs on a cow. Even an adult with a tough, strong body could not stand it let alone those who have not reached adulthood, or those who are weak. Speculating on the intentions of the educators, one is led to wonder whether they did not design such an unwieldy curriculum in order to exhaust the students, to trample on their bodies and ruin their lives.... How stupid! The only calamity that can befall a man is not to have a body. What else is there to worry about? If one seeks to improve one's body other things will follow automatically. For the improvement of the body, nothing is more effective than physical education. Physical education really occupies the first place in our lives. When the body is strong, then one can advance speedily in Knowledge and morality, and reap far-reaching advantages. It should be regarded as an important part of our study. Learning has its essential and its accessory parts, and affairs have their end and their beginning. To know what is first and what is last will bring one closer to the proper way. [From 'The Great Learning', one of the four Confucian classics]. This is exactly what I intend to say.

3. PREVIOUS ABUSES OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND MY METHOD FOR REMIDYING THEM

The three forms of education are equally important; students hitherto have paid much attention to moral and intellectual education but have neglected physical education. The unfortunate consequence has been that they bend their backs and bow their heads; they have 'white and slender hands' [from Nineteen old Poems, a famous collection of poems of the Han dynasty]; when they climb a hill they are short of breath, and when they walk in water they get cramps in their feet. That is why Yen Tzu had a short life, and Chia I died young. As for Wang Po and Lu Chao-lin, the one died young, and the other became a paralytic. All these were men of high attainments in morality and knowledge. But there comes a day when the body cannot be preserved. and then morality and wisdom are destroyed along with it. Only the men of the North are able 'to lie under arms and meet death without regret'. [From The Doctrine of the Mean, one of the Confucian classics]. In the regions of Yen and Chao there were many heroes, and martyrs and warriors often came from Liangchow. At the beginning of the Ch'ing dynasty, Yen Hsi-chai and Li Kangchu practiced both the literary and military arts. Yen Hsi-chai travelled over a thousand li (about 0.5 km.) to the north of the Great Wall to learn the art of fencing. He contended with brave soldiers and won. Hence he said: 'If one lacks either the literary or the military arts, is this the true way?'... As far as we, students are concerned, the installation of a school and the instruction given by its teachers are only the external and objective aspect. We also have the internal, the subjective aspect. When one's decision is made in his heart, then all parts of the body obey its orders. Fortune and misfortune are of our own seeking. 'I wish to be virtuous, and lo, virtue is at hand.' [From the Confucian Analects.] How much more this is true of physical education! If we do not have the will to act, then even though the exterior and the objective are perfect, they still cannot benefit us. Hence, when we speak of physical education, we should begin with individual initiative.

4. THE UTILITY OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Because man is an animal, movement is most important for him. And because he is a rational animal, his movements must have a reason. But why is movement deserving of esteem? Why is rational movement deserving of esteem? To say that movement helps in earning a living is trivial. To say that movement protects the nation is lofty. Yet neither is the basic reason. The object of movement is simply to preserve our life and gladden our hearts. Chu Hsi stresses respect, and Lu Chiu-yuan stresses tranquillity. Tranquillity is tranquil, and respect is not action; it is merely tranquil. Lao Tzu said that immobility was the ultimate goal; the Buddha sought quiet and methods of contemplation. The art of contemplation is esteemed by the disciples of Chu and Lu. Recently there have been those who, following these masters, have spoken of methods of contemplation, boasted about the effectiveness of their methods, and expressed contempt for those who exercise, thereby ruining their own bodies. This is perhaps one way, but I would not venture to imitate it. In my humble opinion, there is only movement in heaven and on earth....

One often hears it said that the mind and the body cannot both be perfect at the same time, that those who use their minds are deficient in physical health and those with a robust body are generally deficient in mental capacities. This kind of talk is also absurd and applies only to those who are weak in will and feeble in action, which is generally not the case of superior men. Confucius died at the age of seventy-two, and I have not heard that his body was not healthy. The Buddha travelled continually, preaching his doctrine, and he died at an old age. Jesus had the misfortune to die unjustly. As for Mohammed, he subjugated the world holding the Koran in his left hand and a sword in his right. All these men were called sages and are among the greatest thinkers...

Physical education not only strengthens the body but also enhances our knowledge. There is a saying: Civilize the mind and make savage the body. This is an apt saying. In order to civilize the mind one must first make savage the body. If the body is made savage, then the civilized mind will follow. Knowledge consists in knowing the things in the world, and in discerning their laws. In this matter we must rely on our body, because direct observation depends on the ears and eyes, and reflection depends on the brain. The ears and eyes, as well as the brain, may be considered parts of the body. When the body is perfect, then knowledge is also perfect. Hence one can say that knowledge is acquired indirectly through physical education. Physical strength is required to undertake the study of the numerous modern sciences, whether in school or through independent study. He who is equal to this is the man with a strong body; he who is not equal to it is the man with a weak body. The division between the strong and the weak determines the area of responsibilities each can assume.

Physical education not only enhances knowledge. it also harmonizes the sentiments. The power of the sentiments is extremely great. The ancients endeavoured to discipline them with reason. Hence they asked. 'Is the master [i.e.. reason] always alert?' They also said: 'One should discipline the heart with reason.' But reason proceeds from the heart. and the heart resides in the body. We often observe that the weak are enslaved by their sentiments and are incapable of mastering them. Those whose senses are imperfect or whose limbs are defective are often enslaved by excessive passion, and reason is incapable of saving them. Hence it may be called an invariable law that when the body is perfect and healthy, the sentiments are also correct

Physical education not only harmonizes the emotions, it also strengthens the will. The great utility of physical education lies precisely in this. The principal aim of physical education is military heroism. Such objects of military heroism as courage, dauntlessness, audacity, and perseverance are all matters of will. Let me explain this with an example. To wash our feet in ice water makes us acquire courage and dauntlessness, as well as audacity. In general, any form of exercise, if pursued continuously, will help to train us in perseverance. Long-distance running is particularly good training in perseverance. 'My strength uprooted mountains. my energy dominated the world' [from a poem attributed to Hsiang Yu] — this is courage. 'If I don't behead the Lou Lan, I swear I will not return' — this is dauntlessness. To replace the family with the nation — this is audacity. ' [Yu] was away from his home for eight years, and though he thrice passed the door of it, he did not enter' [reference to Mencius] — this is perseverance. All these can be accomplished merely on the basis of daily physical education. The will is the antecedent of a man's career.

Those whose bodies are small and frail are flippant in their behaviour. Those whose skin is flabby are soft and dull in will. Thus does the body influence the mind. The purpose of physical education is to strengthen: the muscles and the bones; as a result, knowledge is enhanced, the sentiments are harmonized, and the will is strengthened. The muscles and the bones belong to our body; knowledge, sentiments, and will belong to our heart. When both the body and the heart are at ease, one may speak of perfect harmony. Hence, physical education is nothing else but the nourishing of our lives and the gladdening of our hearts.

5. THE REASONS FOR DISLIKING EXERCISE

Exercise is the most important part of physical education. Nowadays students generally dislike exercise. There are four reasons for this: (1) They do not have self-awareness. If a thing is to be put into practice, one must first take pleasure in it. One must understand in detail the whys and the wherefores. To know in detail the whys and the wherefores is self-awareness. People generally do not know the interrelation between exercise and themselves — or they may know it in general terms but not intimately.... (2) They cannot change their long-established habits. Our country has always stressed literary accomplishment. People blush to wear short clothes. [The mode of dress of the swordsmen of King Wen of Chao, according to a chapter of the Taoist classic Chuang Tzu.] Hence there is the common saying, 'A good man does not become a soldier'.... (3) Exercise has not been propagated forcefully... (4) Students feel that exercise is shameful. According to my humble observation, this is really their major reason for disliking exercise. Flowing garments, a slow gait, a grave, calm gaze — these constitute a fine deportment, respected by society. Why should one suddenly extend an arm or expose a leg, stretch and bend down? Is this not strange? Hence there are those who know well that their body needs exercise and, moreover, wish very much to do so, but they cannot. There are those who can exercise only with a group, not by themselves, and those who can exercise in privacy but not in public. In short, all this is due to feelings of shame. All four of these are reasons for disliking exercise. The first and the fourth are subjective, and changing them depends on ourselves; the second and third are objective, and changing them depends on others: 'What the superior man seeks is in himself' [Analects], that which depends on others is of lesser importance.

6. THE METHODS OF EXERCISE SHOULD BE FEW

Tseng Wen-cheng washed his feet before going to bed and walked a thousand steps after meals, benefiting greatly from this method. There was an eighty-year-old man who was still healthy. On being asked how he maintained his health, he replied, 'I don't eat hearty meals, that's all.' Nowadays the methods of exercise are very diverse, more than I can count. But although there may be several score or even several hundred, 'A branch in the forest is sufficient for the bird to lodge in, and if it drinks at the river it does not drink more than what its stomach can hold.' [From Chuang Tzu] We have only this body and only these senses, bones, viscera, and veins. Even though there are several hundred methods of exercise all of them are aimed at improving the circulation of the blood. If one method can accomplish this, the result of a hundred methods is the same as that of one. Therefore the other ninety-nine methods can be dispensed with. 'Our eyes can see only one thing at a time; our ears can hear only one sound at a time.' [From Hsun Tzu, a Confucian 'realist']. To employ a hundred different methods to train the muscles and the bones only disturbs them....

7. THE POINTS TO WHICH WE MUST PAY ATTENTION WHEN WE EXERCISE.

We should have perseverance in all things. Exercise is no exception. Suppose there are two men who exercise. One practices and then stops, the other is unremitting in his practice. There will certainly be a difference in the results. First of all, perseverance in exercise creates interest. In general, that which is at rest cannot set itself in motion; there must be something to move it. And this something can only be interest....

Interest arises from unremitting daily exercise. The best way is to exercise twice a day — on getting up and before going to bed — in the nude; the next best way is to wear light clothes. Too much clothing impedes movement. If one does this daily, the idea of exercise is continually present and never interrupted. Today's exercise is a continuation of yesterday's exercise and thus leads to tomorrow's exercise. The individual exercise periods need not be long; thirty minutes are sufficient. In this way, a certain interest will naturally arise. Secondly, perseverance in exercise can create pleasure. Exercise over a long time can produce great results and give rise to a feeling of personal value. As a result, we will be able to study with joy, and every day will see some progress in our virtue. Our heart is filled with boundless joy because we have persevered and obtained a result. Pleasure and interest are distinct. Interest is the origin of exercise, and pleasure its consequence. Interest arises from the action, and pleasure from the result. The two are naturally different.

Perseverance without concentration of mind can hardly produce results. If we look at flowers from a galloping horse, even though we may look daily, it is like not having seen them at all. If one person's heart follows a swan in the sky, he cannot compete with the person who has meanwhile been studying carefully. Hence one should concentrate all one's effort on exercise. During exercise, the mind should be on the exercise. Idle and confused thoughts should all be put aside....

The superior man's deportment is cultivated and agreeable, but one cannot say this about exercise. Exercise should be savage and rude. To be able to leap on horseback and to shoot at the same time; to go from battle to battle; to shake the mountains by one's cries, and the colours of the sky by one's roars of anger; to have the strength to uproot mountains like Hsiang Yu and the audacity to pierce the mark like Yu Chi — all this is savage and rude and has nothing to do with delicacy. In order to

progress in exercise, one must be savage. If one is savage, one will have great vigour and strong muscles and bones. The method of exercise should be rude; then one can apply oneself seriously and it will be easy to exercise. These two things are especially important for beginners.

There are three things to which we must pay attention in exercise: (1) perseverance, (2) concentration of all our strength, and (3) that it be savage and rude. There are many other things that require attention. Here I have merely indicated the most important ones.....