

This instructor shall also represent the school in the High School Basket-ball Committee of the Girls' Branch.

Each class will give its list of players with two substitutes, signed by the principal to the instructor in charge of the games, who will arrange the schedule.

The games will be played in the school building, except in case there is no suitable space. In this case another space may be secured, only on the consent and approval of the principal.

Officials for the games shall be members of the Basket-ball committee, or persons approved of by the Committee and the principal.

The ball to be used in all match games shall be Spalding's official basket ball.

The Basket-ball Committee shall be composed of one instructor from each of the several high schools of the League, appointed by their principals.

All questions should be referred to the Basket-ball Committee of the Girls' Branch of the Public Schools Athletic League, 500 Park Avenue.

---

## FOLK AND NATIONAL DANCES

DR. LUTHER H. GULICK

The exhibition of folk and national dances given in Van Cortlandt Park consisted of two parts, one being presented by the children and the other by adults. This division was necessary because many of the children came from a long distance, and hence it was necessary for them to complete their part of the program early, so as to enable them to reach their homes at an early hour. The program presented by the children consisted of folk dances; that presented by the adults consisted of national dances.

This distinction between folk dances and national dances is similar to the distinction between folk music and the various national anthems. Each great people has its characteristic folk music. These characteristics are more fully worked out and presented in more adequate form by the national anthems. It is difficult to trace the origin of the folk music; so also with the folk dances. They have grown up, gradually embodying in themselves the racial characteristics not only of movement, but representing the race ideas in symbolic form, just as does the

folk music. The national anthems represent the same *motifs* elaborated under the genius of trained artists. The folk dances of a people vary in detail with every group that employs them, just as does the folk music. The national anthems and the national dances have, however, far more elaborate and uniform expression.

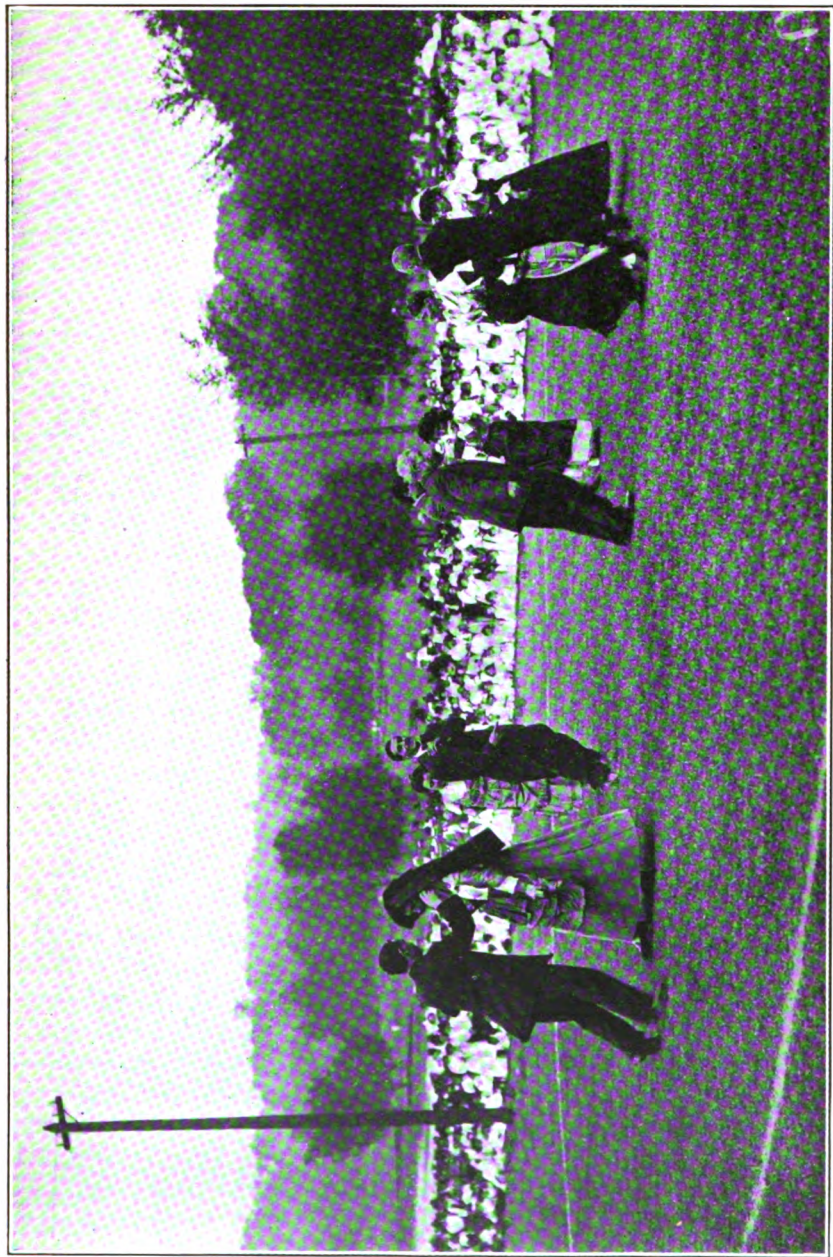
The social value of encouraging the beautiful dances of the people who come to America cannot be overestimated. These dances should be preserved, not only to keep alive the charm and grace of the people themselves, but because America needs—and needs greatly—just this contribution.

The children who took part were selected from the neighborhoods of the different colonies, and they gave the folk dances of these various nationalities. The older groups represented in part the citizens of foreign birth who cherish their native customs and are glad, in thus presenting their dances, to aid in their preservation.

While it is true that the significance of the exhibition did not lie in the special symbolism of any dance or in its historic origin, still it is interesting to note some of these meanings. Difficult as it is to trace the source of folk music, it is still more arduous to trace that of the folk dances, for music has had contributed to it far more of scholarly study than has as yet been given to dancing.

The two Italian dances presented, the Tarantella by the adults and the Saltarella by the children, well illustrate the vivacity and grace of the Italian people. The story is told that the Tarantella had its origin in the desire of the peasants of Italy to free themselves from the poison of the bite of the tarantula. It is probable, of course, that this is purely symbolic, for the dance itself expresses the spirit of joyousness in the extreme. The story, however, is that from the very great exertions of this dance a high degree of perspiration would inevitably be produced, and that by this perspiration the poison from the bite of the tarantula would be excreted. This does not account at all for the specific form which the dance takes. The Saltarella probably had its origin in the fifteenth or sixteenth century, having been then one of the most popular of the dances of the Roman court.

The Hungarian national dance, known as the Czardas or czardash or zardas, includes the assembling of the peasants to



THE TARANTELLA (ITALIAN) AT VAN CORTLANDT PARK, NEW YORK

dance and also to sing. It is thus really a song and a dance. The dance expresses the passionate intensity of the Hungarian people, the gesticulations and attitudes all being combined so as to advance from a slow measured tempo to the most rapid passages, which they call the "Fris".

The Tyrolienne takes its name from the Austrian province in which it was first known. It is performed by both boys and girls with the characteristic "jodler" and "landler" of the country youth. This dance is performed on practically all public occasions.

The Manchegas is one of the favorite Spanish folk dances, sprightly in form and motion, but lacking the finish and completed art form of the national dance, the Cachucha.

The Minuet is known in modern times more because of the music which was composed to accompany the dance than because of our acquaintance with the dance itself. It had its origin in France, probably about 1650.

The Polish dance, Mazur, was derived from the name of the people who inhabit the province of Mazovia. It is the beloved dance of the Polish people, but is also practised in all parts of Europe, even finding its way into the most aristocratic circles of Paris. It is, however, essentially a dance of the people.

The Cracoviak derives its name from the principal city of Galizia, Cracow, and is the national dance of the Polish people.

The Russian dances are so many of them characterized by large movements of the body, such as complete flexion of the knees, holding the back erect, and then springing into the air, that they are said to represent the spirit of the Russian people, which, while it soars to heaven, secures for itself power and vitality from the earth.

The Scottish Reel exhibits contrasts in essential respects with the dances of other peoples. The movements are more "definite" in a gymnastic sense. Economy of movement is everywhere evident. The contrast between the Scottish Reel and any one of the great Russian or Spanish dances gives a kind of insight into race psychology which is not revealed in any other way. The carefully regulated joy of the Scottish, their caninness, their consideration of each step before taking it, are in evident and extreme contrast to the abandon of the Russian dance, on the one hand, while, on the other, their vigor and

definiteness of movement contrast them clearly with the dances of such people as the Spaniards in their Cachucha.

The dances presented by the adults represented the nationalities to which they themselves belonged. Their presentation here is a contribution to American life and spirit, not less significant than is the economic contribution. In the past we have recognized the contributions of the various peoples from the economic standpoint, but have hitherto not recognized this contribution of an æsthetic character.

We all, young and old alike, look forward to the "occasion". It is not enough that the boy should graduate from college. There must be the commencement exercises, the stately procession, the caps and gowns, the music which expresses in its rhythm the work which has been done and the hope which lies ahead, because of that which has already been accomplished.

These school commencements are significant. They enter deep down into the very meaning of education itself. This as yet has not been adequately recognized in the activities of the playground. It is not enough that the children shall come together and shall play, shall exercise, shall strengthen their bodies and discipline their moral natures by the demands of team play, folk dancing, and the like. There needs be also the "occasion", the recognition of completion and starting afresh, the marking of epochs. It is not an exception that the physical training in schools which is carried on merely as a thing in itself is done in an entirely different way than are perhaps the self-same activities when they are being performed with reference to their presentation on an "occasion". It is not enough to say of a display of dancing that it is merely a show, a display to please the audience. It is the presentation of the completed whole. The knowledge that it is to come helps to hold the individual to the work in hand, helps to bind him in loyalty to others.

In the baseball team the boy who will not practise not only hurts himself, but hurts the team, and so is held by the team as a whole to the performance of that work which all have undertaken. So it is in the preparation of an "occasion". It may be the school occasion, some national celebration, or the playground occasion, but, whatever it is, it must be the whole that is kept in mind, and it is the whole that controls the individual.

The playground "occasion", when parents and friends and brothers and sisters all come and take part, even as spectators,



THE BABORAK (BOHEMIAN) BY A GROUP OF PLAYGROUND GIRLS. SECOND PLAYGROUND CONGRESS

constitutes one of the great factors toward the maintenance of steadiness and solidity of character.

The question is frequently asked, and justly: What place have these folk dances and games in the playground movement? If the playground movement represented merely the opportunity to the poorer children in the congested districts, the dances would have to be discussed exclusively from the standpoint of the exercise involved. Their suitability to the playground movement, however, from the emotional standpoint, as has already been discussed in the girls' work of the Public Schools Athletic League, represents a much larger idea than that which has just been indicated. It is a movement needed as much by those who have already won economic success as by those who are on the borderland and are still struggling for it. It is needed as much by those who live under the relatively isolated conditions of rural communities as by those in the congested districts of our American cities.

It is not enough to say that these plays and dances are a safety-valve, are of moral value in that they afford an opportunity for the innocent expenditure of joyous energy. They constitute, we believe, a positive moral force, a social agency, having had in the past and are destined to have in the future a great function in welding into a unified whole those whose conditions and occupation are exceedingly diverse.

The nations of the world have succeeded or failed not merely or mainly because of economic reasons. Moral and æsthetic considerations have been of equal importance. The recognition of the national dances of the various peoples not only helps the child of the stranger to sympathetically understand his own ancestral setting, but helps him also to express himself in his own relation to the new world. So our playgrounds, while they have need of gymnastic exercises, have also need of the folk dances and games.

It is possible by means of gymnastic exercise to develop all the muscles of the body, to secure all that physiological benefit which can be derived from folk dances. But there is the same difference between the performance of muscular movements for the mere sake of exercise, and that dancing which expresses an idea, a set of feelings, a social whole, as there is between incoherent shouting which exercises the vocal cords and the lungs, and the intelligent speaking or singing which portrays the soul itself.

The development of folk dancing as an art form may be easily paralleled with the development of design, although in the development of design we have a far larger amount of historic material available from which to construct the story. Of course, design—like every other form of art—has arisen in many different ways. The following, however, appears to be one of the most definitely established origins.

When in moments of leisure the early man began decorating his baskets and pottery with figures illustrating events in the chase, in hunting, or in fighting, he had presented to him a very different problem than when he had the wide expanse of the cliff or cave upon which to put his figures, because the space available for the design on the basket or pottery was both limited and definite. Accordingly, there gradually arose the use of symbolic figures which would stand for series of events. The border itself was considered. This compression of the story into a definite space was a limitation which confronted every representation of an occasion into an art product having symbolic form.

In a similar way it is believed that many of the folk dances arose. These dances symbolized the sowing of the grain in the spring, the reaping of the harvest, the pursuit of the enemy, the successful hunt, the middle age sermon. In fact, any or all of the chief events of human experience, were told not merely in words, but were accompanied by gesture and bodily expression.

The necessity of compressing events which covered long periods of time into short periods that were available for the telling of the story, did for the narrative dances exactly what the space limitation did for the design; it compelled the use of symbolic gesture in bodily movement, covering groups of activities and sets of feeling. These stories, told both by the body and word of mouth, were repeated by the various peasants through the countless ages of man's early history, until they gradually developed coherency and uniformity, each one of its own kind, the most effective form of presentation being that which would survive, as was true in the case of the folk music. Each folk dance represents, then, a long history of human activity embodied in a specific art form.

The saying was already old when quoted by Juvenal, referring to the sound mind in the sound body. It is only, however, during the past few years that the basis of neurology has been



established which permits of any coherent account of the way in which these bodily movements of the folk dance type aid toward wholesome thinking.

We are told that thinking is developed out of action, not merely action in general, but those activities that have been useful for the preservation of the race. Thus, physical training has been gradually modified to emphasize not merely all possible combinations of bodily movement, but those neurological combinations upon which intelligence rests. This may be one of the reasons for the success of that education which we believe was one of the main factors in producing the most brilliant epoch in the world's history, namely, that of Greece. Dancing then was regarded as one of the three fundamentals of education. It was not merely or mainly that the body was trained for strength, for agility, flexibility, and endurance by these dances, but that the neurological basis for wholesome thinking was thereby laid—that neurological basis upon which rests the practical coöperation of body and mind in those combinations in which man's success has been won.

This also gives us the reason why the old dances are significant from the standpoint of education, as are not dances which have been produced merely to gratify the impulse toward the beautiful and rhythmical movements. Such dances are non-symbolic. They do not represent the racially old, neurological coördinations. Folk dances give to the individual the racially old inheritance upon which wholesome thinking, as well as wholesome feeling, rests. It is not enough that people should think wholesomely and straight. It is equally important that their feeling shall be wholesome and normal.

These old dances have been selected with reference to the wholesomeness of the instinct feelings which they represent, affording to the individual in a large degree the opportunity for the expression of those feelings of joy, of triumph, and of vigor which are the heritage of the ages.

It is not only by chance that the folk and national dances are taken part in by children and adults with joy and enthusiasm, as contrasted with their feelings on taking exercise for the sake of the benefit to be derived from it. The manipulation of weights, the lonely walk for the purpose of personal health, ignore entirely this old racial setting of feeling and expression. We need, then, these old dances fully as much that they may

give the individual avenues for the wholesome expression of good feeling, as we do because they constitute in themselves excellent physiological exercise.

The national and folk dances, while interesting as a spectacle, have not been prepared and are not given primarily because of the immediate interest or beauty that may attach to them. Behind it all there lies the conviction that we in America have so far largely failed to appreciate the significance of the fête, or festival. For example, the few holidays that we already have are celebrated in ways which not only largely fail to accomplish the objects for which they were set aside, but which are in themselves a menace, and, as in the case of the Fourth of July, a positive evil from many standpoints.

It is reported from apparently trustworthy sources that more persons have been sacrificed in celebrating the Fourth of July than were fatally injured in the War of Independence itself. The following table, taken from the *Chicago Tribune's* record of the last ten years, is significant:

	DEAD.	INJURED.
1908.....	72	2,736
1907.....	58	3,897
1906.....	51	3,551
1905.....	59	3,169
1904.....	58	3,049
1903.....	52	3,665
1902.....	31	2,796
1901.....	35	1,803
1900.....	59	2,767
1899.....	33	1,742

And again, quoting from the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, we have the following table of cases of lockjaw that have lately resulted:

	DEATHS.	CASES.
1907.....	164	4,249
1906.....	158	5,308
1905.....	182	2,992
1904.....	183	3,986
1903.....	182	3,983

We are in a unique sense a cosmopolitan people. The following figures indicate the percentage of population of foreign parentage in some of our leading cities:

Boston.....	71.1
Chicago.....	77.2
Cleveland.....	75.4
Milwaukee.....	82.7
New York.....	76.6
San Francisco.....	70.4

We have welcomed the influx of the peoples of the world coming to us and carrying the burden of our work. We have failed to recognize or help them to retain those national or racial customs which are necessary to a wholesome people. We have failed to see that the maintenance of habits and traditions of joy and happiness are no less important for normal life than are habits of thrift and wholesome work. This bringing together of some of the different elements of our cosmopolitan population as such, each exhibiting to the others and to us those characteristic national dances which have grown up during the course of ages, affords a nucleus around which there may develop anew, here in America, the growth of the power to celebrate together. It is not enough to set aside a day of thanksgiving, and to provide ourselves with turkeys and mince pies as the emblems of the occasion. We all need to acquire the spirit and to learn the methods of celebration, methods that shall express in adequate symbolic form the immediate occasion.

Our poverty in this direction is indicated by the inadequacy of expression in our people when they come together for some special occasion, as, for example, in New York City after a state or national election. There are fireworks, but for most of us there remains nothing to do but to parade the streets in a hopeless tangle and chaos of people. We have few and inadequate social forms by which to express our feelings.

One of the most keenly sought-for enjoyments of those who visit the old countries is to watch the people on their holidays, holidays that are marked by the national dances, which are the most common form of art available to all the people. And yet we ourselves here in America have the same elements, the same human feelings demanding expression, the same occasion demanding adequate celebration, but no form of social habits which enables us to give suitable expression to them.

During the past two or three years, however, several most important steps have been taken. At Springfield, Massachusetts, the Fourth of July, Independence Day, was celebrated by the

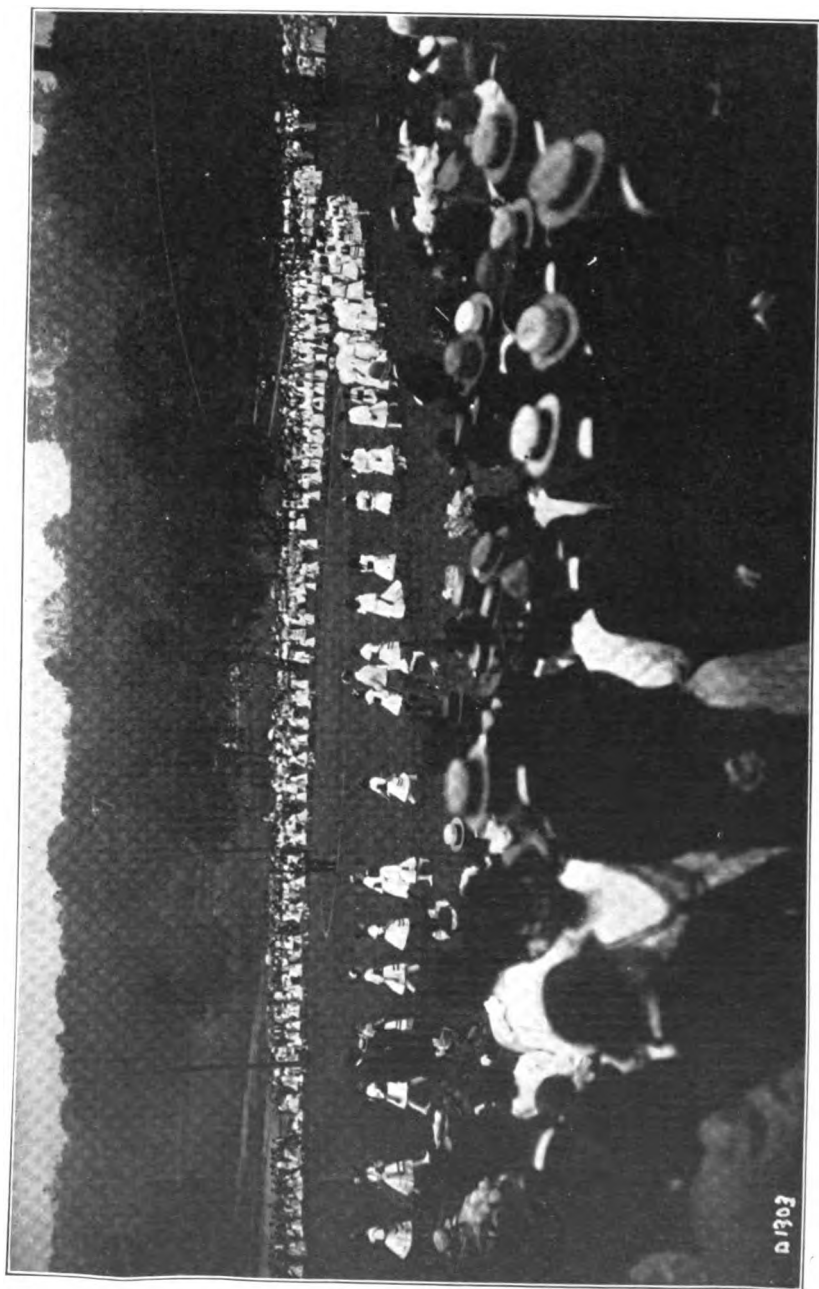
city as such. A strong committee developed a plan which gave opportunity for the participation and self-revelation of all the various elements of the city. Great processions marched, including the children from the public schools, representatives in costume of practically all the national groups in that city, each showing in some dramatic form either its own ancestral history, or some special contribution which that people had made to the world or to American life. Athletic games held in various parts of the city gave such opportunity for the expression of the city's feeling as the mere exhibition of fireworks and discharges of firearms have never done. Each nationality felt that its own contribution to the city was recognized. Rowdiness was at a discount.

In Chicago a great play festival has been held, in which large groups from the various peoples of that city came together, each giving its dances, expressing the ties with its own past, as well as uniting with the other citizens in their civic unity.

We have recognized the necessity of play for children. But the play spirit demands its recognition throughout life. The immigrants coming to this country have been made to feel that their past was not wanted. The smart young American, not understanding the traditions of the country from which his parents came, has failed to understand these national and folk dances, that with their historic traditions help greatly to tie the individual in the community to that which is wholesome in the past, as well as to express that which is necessary in the present.

The need of developing a new country has taught us the necessity of work. We have yet to learn the place of play and recreation,—not as individuals, but as social units,—for we do not live as individuals, but as parts of a social whole. These activities, these folk dances and games, in which large numbers partake, afford one of the few avenues which exist for the expression of mass feeling. The spirit of unity has developed as much by these exhibitions of common feeling as it has by the mere fact of working together. The fact that large numbers of individuals are co-workers in some industry or factory may instil a kind of unity or sympathy among them, but getting together on an occasion of freedom and expressing their joy in a dance which symbolizes the occasion operates far more effectively in bringing about this consciousness of the whole.

A few years ago, at the instigation of a strong committee,



THE HARVEST DANCE AT THE PLAYGROUND, VAN CORTLANDT PARK, SEPTEMBER 12, 1908

D 1303

the Greeks of this city presented "Ajax" as an old Greek play. The effect upon the Grecian workers of New York was astonishing. They came to be conscious of themselves as a people. It was not so much the performance done for the enjoyment of others, as it was their own recognition of each other, of their own historic past, and of its tie with the present.

During the last two or three years many of our cities and states have instituted what have been called "home weeks". This has been a more or less unconscious feeling-out for some means of developing social consciousness.

It is not by chance that the peoples of the world have developed their dances and their other means of celebrating occasions. We in America need these, for we are built of the same stuff as are the other peoples of the world. It is not entertainment that is the primary aim. That has its place. To sit in a hall and see represented on a stage that which is stirring, humorous, or tragic, has its legitimate and well-recognized place, but it does not in any way meet the need which we all possess, of community action.

The time will surely come when each city will have developed its own celebrations—when those holidays which belong to all in common shall have acquired art form in which they may be expressed.

---

## THE NEWARK, N. J., PLAYGROUNDS

MR. RANDALL D. WARDEN

The city of Newark, N. J., has a population of a little over 300,000 and maintains seventeen school playgrounds. These are under the control of the Board of Education.

Essex County, in which Newark is located, has a Park Commission which maintains playfields and outdoor gymnasiums in each of five public parks of the city.

Newark also has a Playground Commission, appointed by the Mayor, which at present maintains two city playgrounds in districts where they can be of greatest service.

Eleven years ago the Newark Educational Association, an organization of public-spirited women interested in civic reforms, undertook the establishment of city playgrounds. In 1899 this