

MUSCLE TONE: MUSIC, SPORTS AND THE MODERN OLYMPIC GAMES

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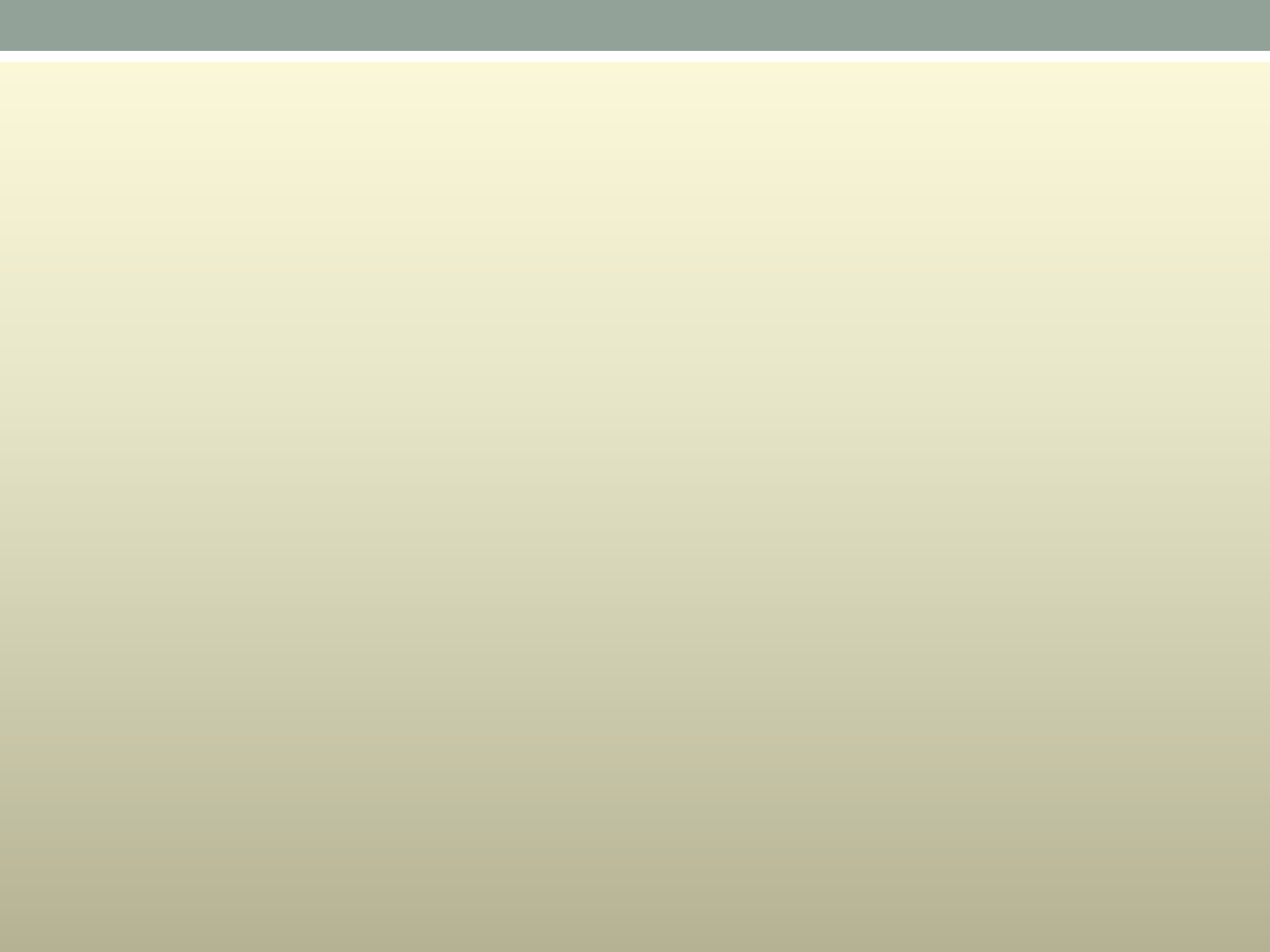
White City Stadium, London, 1908



Pierre de Coubertin

Official report from
'An Invitation to
Artists':
Conference on the
Role of Arts in the
Olympic Games,
Paris, 1906.

Unlike literature, music can provide direct support for sports. The conference passed significant resolutions on this point, stating that the basis for this fruitful cooperation is outdoor choral music. The conference, therefore, asked the International Olympic Committee to invite all athletic associations to form choral divisions – even the equestrian association (in some Russian regiments, the soldiers sing on horseback). The value of singing in respiratory development, which is very useful in most sports, has been rightly pointed out.

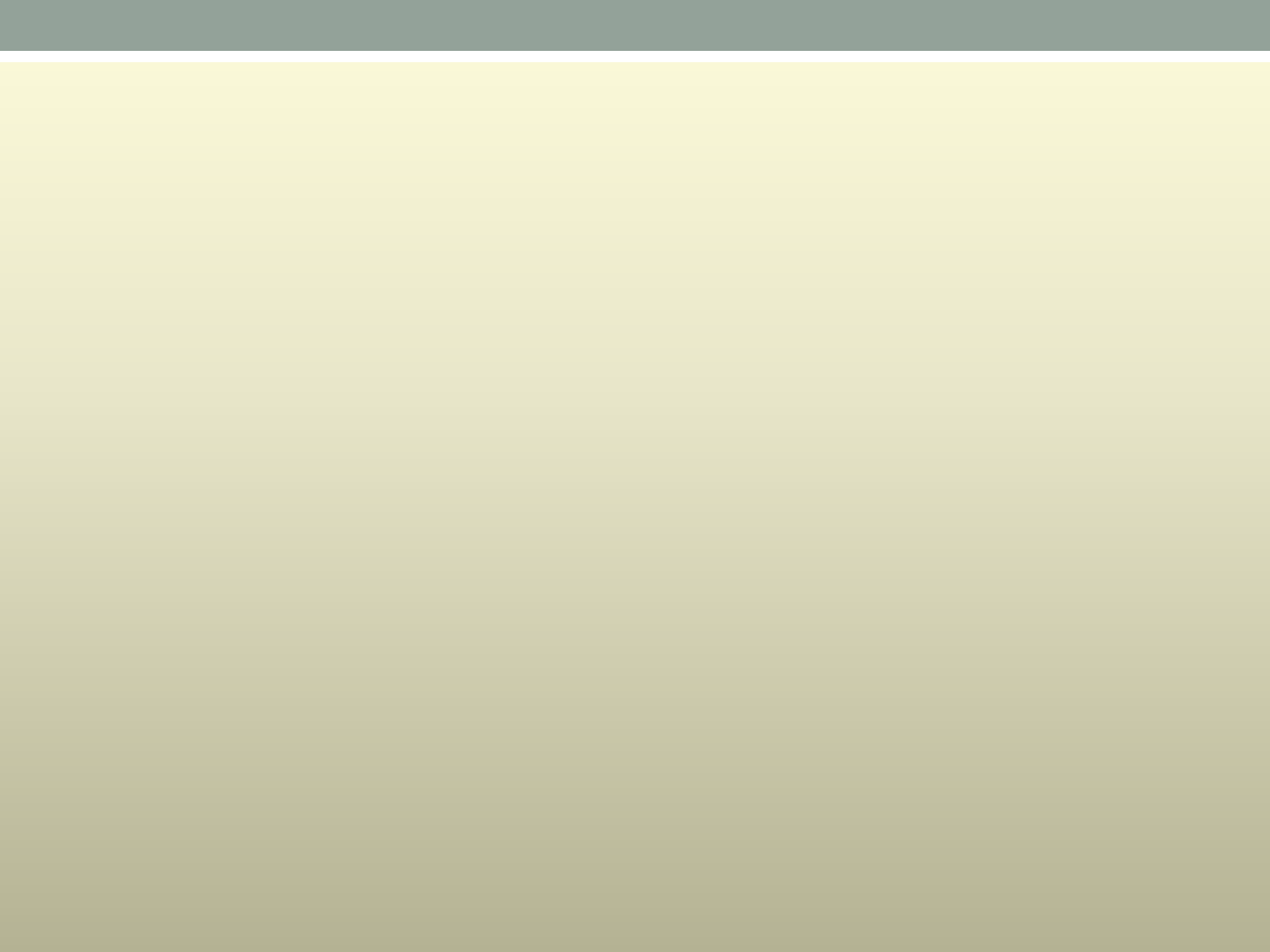


MUSCULAR CHRISTIANITY

Sophia Cicciolina [?]

*Deep Breathing
as a means of
promoting the art
of song, and curing
weaknesses and
affections of the
throat and lungs,
especially
consumption,*
1883. Quoted in
'Deep Breathing',
*Tonic Sol-fa
Reporter*, 1 July
1884.

*Please imagine us out on the sunny
side of our porch, enveloped in
warm wraps, lying upon stretchers,
inhaling the life-giving oxygen for
hours each day, thus purifying our
blood with the greatest blood purifier
– oxygen! [...] At the ringing of the
bell [each morning] the occupants
appear promptly and for hours
practice lung gymnastics,
alternating with short naps, quiet
rest, pleasant conversations,
listening to readings.*



Horace Mann

'Singing and
Health', *Tonic Sol-
fa Reporter*, 1
September 1884.

Vocal music promotes health. Vocal music cannot be performed without an increased action of the lungs; and an increased action of the lungs necessarily causes an increased action of the heart and of all the organs of digestion and nutrition. The singer brings a greater quantity of air in contact with the blood. Hence, the blood is better purified and vitalized. Good blood gives more active and vigorous play to all the organs of absorption, assimilation, and execution. The better these functions are performed, the purer and more ethereal will be the influences which ascend to the brain.

HEALTH AND MEDICINE

Henry Campbell

Respiratory Exercises in the Treatment of Disease: Notably of the Heart, Lungs, Nervous and Digestive Systems, 1898.

From the medical standpoint singing is a most important exercise, both by virtue of its influence on the respiratory movements and on the development of the lungs. [...] Such therapeutic importance do I attach to singing that I recommend it wherever opportunity affords. It is especially useful in defective chest development and in chronic heart disease. Provided the patient can sing with comfort, I know of no condition in which singing is contra-indicated, unless it be a tendency to tubercular or aneurysmal haemoptysis.

Henry Campbell

Respiratory Exercises in the Treatment of Disease: Notably of the Heart, Lungs, Nervous and Digestive Systems, 1898.

The more completely the lungs are developed, the more capacious is the pulmonary vascular system, and the less is the resistance which it opposes to the right heart, pulmonary resistance being in inverse ratio to pulmonary capacity. This fact is, indeed, instinctively taken advantage of in heart disease, in which we may frequently observe over-action of the inspiratory muscles and an increase in the mean size of the chest. Not only is the breathing area in this way increased, but the pulmonary vascular capacity also; and hence the work of the right heart is diminished. [...] It is largely through their influence on the respiratory movements that such exercises as walking (especially hill climbing), running, swimming, rowing, riding, not to mention talking and singing, are useful in heart disease.

SPORT

Anonymous

'Athletics and
Musicians',
Musical Standard,
26 October 1895.

The old idea that a singer or a violinist or a pianist should be pale and interesting, and surmounted, as to his head, with a shock of unkempt hair; that his ways should be curious and his dress bizarre; that he should be a strange mixture of a woman and a man, has gone the way of most old ideas, and is a thing of the past.

Anonymous

'Athletics and
Musicians',
Musical Standard,
26 October 1895.

*Strangely enough musicians, even
British musicians, have been in the
main a singularly unathletic race.*

*'Tis almost a cause of pity to see a
congregation of musicians and to
notice the extreme weakness of
their physique. Even those that are
strongly made by nature allow
themselves to run to seed, and the
weak become weaker still.*



Danish Gymnastic Exhibition, London, 1908