

YEARLY REPORT
OF THE
VORORT OF THE AMERICAN TURNER BUND
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA-1871

A year of internal strife lays behind us. Germany, our old Fatherland, fought a giant battle for its simplicity and unhindered development, which was torn apart by small states and by the jealousy of neighbor countries to cause considerable worry for over a hundred years.

It fought with courage, endurance and with a conviction. Victory after victory marched along with their flag. A true and strong Germany is the result of this war. Respect and surprises are the fruits of victory. With deserving pride, we are permitted to enjoy our accomplishment of the past year. Renewed, the words of the Poet are again given to show us their meaning:

"Ruehmend Darf's Der Deutsche Sagen,
Hoehrer Darf Das Herz Ihm Schlagen,
Selbst Erschuf Er Sich Den Werth."

These happenings also have a definite influence on our National American Turner Bund; on the other hand, the influence of the German Turnerism during this battle did gain such prominence, that we take the liberty to make mention of same in this report.

The German Turner societies were the ones, who under the most oppressed condition, showed love and respect for the German Fatherland, and with great desire worked for the enlightenment and education of the masses.

The German Turner method was responsible in helping train the soldiers. Its exercising places were branches for school and military development. In the German Army, one could notice the self-confidence and the endurance of the German youth; this was a great factor in winning the Victory.

Thousands of our German Turnbrothers had taken part in the battle and many lost their lives on French soil. Among these there were many whose names had a good ring in our Turner circles and who for many years worked diligently for the advancement of our Turnerism.

Honor to their name, it is also our duty to remember these Turners. When this war started, our Vorort mailed a circular to all National Societies, to give active assistance for the wounded and widows and orphans of the fallen Turner soldiers. This request did find warm reception in all societies of our Bund. This could be noticed by the letters that were received and the money that was collected by all Turner societies.

In many places, the Turnhall, due to the real German situation, was a meeting place for patriots.

A request was made to the Executive Committee of patriotic campaign societies, to send to their Convention in Chicago, Turner Fr. Lackner, to represent the American Turnerbund. Turner Lackner was ready and willing to attend and received the following instruction from the Vorort:

1. That we are in favor to organize the contributing societies according to states.

2. To be sure that the collected funds from America will serve the needy, the Convention in order to protect the funds, should appoint men who have the confidence of the German-American citizens. The following names were proposed: Fr. Kapp, Schultze, Delitsch and Professor Virchow.

3. To establish a direct amalgamation with the Central Committee in Berlin.

4. To recommend the Turner Sanitary Corps in Darmstadt, under the leadership of Dr. Louis Buechner, for special consideration.

All proposals were accepted with careful consideration by resolutions of the Convention.

The Convention in Pittsburgh instructed the Vorort to send a representative to the Teachers' Convention held in Louisville on August 1st to 4th. The Vorort appointed Turner Prof. William Steffen from Indianapolis, Teacher L. Klemm from Detroit and F. Thurn from Williamsburgh; also delegates from the Bund with the following instructions:

1. To recommend that the schoolbooks which are published by the Vorort of the American Turners to be used as textbooks for instruction in our free German-American schools.

2. To agitate that the Teachers' Convention will recognize the German Turning as an essential factor in educating our youth harmoniously. Also to bring about that this Convention will recommend that our Turner system of bodily exercises should be made obligatory for public and private schools.

From the reports of the delegates, one can see that the Vorort can be proud of the result of the first German Teacher Convention. The report was made by Prof W. Steffen who handed in a very detailed and complete report. The Turner system was recognized, which can be noticed by Convention action, and parts of same are here given:

"The delegates of the North American Turnerbund presented the following proposals which were considered and acted upon by the Teachers' Convention:

1. The German turning is essential for a harmonious development of youth. The Convention obligates itself to see to it that all schools which come under our jurisdiction, should provide for the Turner course in the educational teaching plan.

2. Only those Turn Teachers should be appointed who hold a diploma from the Turn Teachers' Seminar or can be recommended by a Turner society as satisfactory.

3. Younger teachers of the German-American schools are urged to join a Turner Society near his residence and to take part in the Turning classes so that he could also prepare himself as a leader in Turning.

All resolutions were adopted without debate.

In the section meeting for promoting Turning in the public and private schools, of which Prof. Steffen was Chairman, the discussion was for a uniform system of free exercises and the introduction of the German Turning into our schools. These proposals will be presented to the Turnteachers, which have their meeting during the time of the next National Turnfest. The Vorort was requested at the Teachers' Convention to have a textbook produced in the German and English language after the Spiess system.

The instructions about the schoolbooks were not brought to a vote by the delegates of the Bund for various reasons. The Vorort recognized these facts, however, they will make it a point that by the second Teachers' Convention, which will take place July 31 of this year in Cincinnati, resolutions in regard to it will be introduced.

The Vorort thanked Turner Steffen for his effort and Turnteacher Anthos in Louisville for the fine exhibition of Turning by the boys' and girls' gym classes.

The planned lectures of Dr. Louis Buechner of Darmstadt, Germany, had to be dropped. The guarantee for the lecture was already signed up for two thirds of the \$5,000. This was necessary on account of the German-French war which broke out in the meantime. Dr. Buechner was Director of the Turner Sanitation Corps in Darmstadt and this duty prevented him from undertaking the trip to America, at least for the time being.

For the next season, the Vorort is hoping that this plan can be fulfilled.

A circular from May 3rd of this year, again made agitation in this regard. If the societies, who pledged a sum last year, will honor same for this year and if additional societies also sign up, it will be possible to have this lecture.

A small society can, according to the circular, be in position to have at least one lecture if members personally make contributions. We urge the societies, once more, to give careful attention to the information in the circular and report back to the Vorort, so that this undertaking can be carried out. It would be very regrettable if this could not be made a possibility due to the neglect of some societies.

Dr. Buechner is one of the outstanding representatives of the German doctrine of learning which is making its inroad into the United States.

The National Turnfest which will take place August 5th and 6th of this year in Williamsburgh, is now already the object of discussion and activity of many Turner societies. The Festival society will leave nothing undone that would help to make this Turnfest an outstanding affair. The character of the Festival can only be the type to bring honor to our National organization. The Turners themselves, will make this a great success by participating in large numbers.

The Districts and large societies, this time will also no doubt, participate in large numbers and will send a number of good Turners to participate and compete for the palms of Victory.

The Vorort makes it a point, that the ruling made by the National Convention, that every Turner who attends the Turnfest must take part in some form as an active Turner, will be strictly adhered to. Just to be a "Festbumler" is not our objective as a Turner; we all should have active participation.

The Vorort mailed a copy of the Turnfest program to all National Turner societies. It contained a description of the free exercises which are the Mass exercises of the National Turnfest. These exercises should be carefully and thoroughly practiced so that they, when all are combined, should make a very impressive spectacle for the participants as well as for the public. This should be a means to bring our Turner system before the public. It surely will make our aims known to all who come to the Turnfest. The Turnfest is the propaganda Festival for our Turnerism.

We again call attention to the theme of the literary prize contest, which were mailed by the Vorort to all societies. The complete works must be in the hands of the prize judges by July 10 if they are to receive consideration.

More detailed information about the National Turnfest is to be found in the Turnfest program. The Turnfest Committee will publish more information from time to time in our National Turnerpaper.

About the Turnteacher's Seminar, we are not in a position to give a complete report. The material for same is as yet not complete. The third course started January 15 in Chicago with an enrollment of 16 participants and continued until the end of July. After the closing of the course, we will make a complete report in regard to it. The following Turners of Chicago were appointed by the Vorort to take over the management of the Seminar: Arthur Erbe, Josef Kaufmann, A Gottlieb, Fritz Goetz, and H. Kraeuslich.

The last National Convention requested the Vorort to work out a manifestation and publish same, which would give the stand of the Bund in regard to the religious and political questions. The Vorort did not meet this request because the happenings during the past years were of such a nature that the attention of everybody was entirely given to it. This

manifestation would not receive the needed consideration at this time and the result would be a failure.

The manifestation will follow this report in a short time, in German and English. We will forward same to all societies in sufficient number so that an active program can be properly organized.

On account of the negligence of some societies and some districts, it is at this time not possible to present the statistical report. From reports so far mailed in, it can be noticed that the Bund has an increase in membership over last year.

The proposition which is pending, that the Pacific Turnerbund is contemplating to join our Bund, and the uniting of all Turner societies in Texas into a Turner district, can be received with great joy. After this unification into a strong National Turner movement, our North American Turnerbund will take on a Natural growth. There is no other group, except some lodges and secret organizations, which are so widely distributed over the entire United States. We are now organized from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, from the St. Lawrence River to the Gulf. A membership of thousands of Turners and hundreds of societies and One Bund. Who can call himself a Turner without his membership to the Bund; where is there a Turner society who can work effectively outside of the Bund?

Although the joining up of the two groups is as yet not in a formal stage, we can however feel that they belong to the Bund and we should greet them as such.

Of the report formula which the Vorort mailed to the societies in regard to the mental culture of the societies, so far only a small number have been returned. These reports show that many Turner societies had already had regular lectures during the winter months. Several small societies also had regular lectures and good participation. In the

ming statistical report, we hope that detailed information will be given in regard to it.

About the Turner activities in the gymnasium, we have no complete report as yet, because many of the questionnaires are still pending.

The publication of a German-English textbook for Free exercises, which was already ordered by the Boston Convention, is not completed as yet, although the Teachers' Convention in Louisville also repeated the request to have the Vorort take proper steps to complete this publication. The Vorort, after careful consideration, came to the decision to consider this undertaking at a later date. Such an illustrated and technical book will cost considerable. It can be estimated that the cost will exceed the income derived from it. No publisher will print same at his own expense. The Bund will no doubt have to take over the printing of same. If our Bund could have the financial means to undertake the printing at this time, it would not justify the expense. A similar undertaking of the old Turnerbund of years back, had not the expected gain and the Turner societies were compelled to contribute in a large measure to cover the expenses.

The necessity for such a publication is not so important as one thinks. Our German Turner literature has such a number of useful books that we cannot expect to produce a better one. All in all, our production could give us a more suitable exercising grouping which would be of some consideration for us. Also could serve better our way of living.

Some of our experts in this field are as yet not by any means unanimous, there must precede several general discussions about this matter, before a practical and popular textbook can be produced. Any hurried compilation would be no doubt a bad mistake and undesirable.

In Lion's "Leitfaden fuer Freieuebungen" and Ravenstein's "Volksturnbuch" and other outstanding works, we already have very good material for our Turn-

teachers and class leaders. In connection with arrangement, system and Turner language, these books are outstanding and their wide use in nearly all Turner societies speaks for their popularity. In Ravenstein's "Hand-book of Gymnastics" which is a good translation of the "Volksturnbueches," we have an instruction book in the English language, which presents to all Turnteachers and class leaders, in the field of free exercises and apparatus exercises, more than a new book issued by the Vorort could present.

In the last analysis, we would have to compete with these books which are low in cost, and are useful and practical as Turner textbooks.

The Convention of a District reprimanded the Vorort for not publishing the textbook. This action was published in the National Turner paper.

All this was done without asking the Vorort for a statement in regard to it, or without making further examinations. The Vorort could handle this reprimand only as ad acta.

We, the Vorort, will not answer anyone under such circumstances. If the interest of the Bund makes it necessary to reply, we will act. In this case, we are sure that our action was justified, and we will submit to the next Convention, our detailed report in regard to it. In the future, we would like to have it known that District Conventions should not sit as judges over the activities of the Vorort. The National Constitution shows us clearly how we can function as the executive body of the Vorort. If a district has reason to complain, let them take steps as provided in our Constitution.

We will call attention to the following list of material which can be purchased from the Vorort:

TURNER EMBLEMS

Gold
Enameled
Silver

\$2.75
.45
.25

TURNER BOOKS

Gloss - "Weibliche Turnkunst"	\$4.25
Ravenstein - "Volksturnbuch"	3.75
Ravenstein - Handbook of Gymnastics	4.50
Angerstein - "Einrichtung Von Turn Plaetzen"	3.50
Lion - "Leitfaden For Free Exercises"	.75
Dieters - "Merkbuechlein For Vorturner"	.75
Maul - "Frei-Vebungen"	.75
Angerstein & Schultz - "Knaben & Maenchenturnen"	.80
Lion - "Uebungen Des Gemischten Sprungs"	1.25

BOOKS FROM SAN LUDVIGH

"Reden und Vorlesungen"	1.50
"Vermischte Schriften"	3.00
(us Meinem Leben"	1.00
"Der Gesunde Menschenverstand"	1.00

DISTRICT DIPLOMAS

Each	.30
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The following material can be obtained by the Districts without paying for same:

Old Apparatus Charts
Turn Regulations
Prize Judges Lists
Turner Passes

New York, May 20, 1871

Signed for the Vorort

S. Spitzer, First Speaker
H. Metzner, Secretary