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R. WILSON SMITH,
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Dangers Of Athleticism.

The Secretary of a Life Assurance Company has favoured us with a

letter which reads :

"The article in the last issue of THE CHRONICLE on the "Dangers of Athleticism" is very timely. We have just been obliged to decline two applications for insurance on two young men both of whom have first-class family histories and both of whom would have been in every respect first-class risks, but for the fact that, in each case, the heart has been permanently affected, apparently through excess in athletics. The facts point to an overtraining in connection with the same hockey team."

A very sad case of mental collapse has been made known to us, the sufferer, for life it is feared, being a young athlete of excellent prospects who was injured in a foot ball match. The violences so common in games are so needless, so opposed to the true spirit of athleticism, so full of risk, and the so-called "training" of young men is conducted with such ignorance of physiological facts and laws, that young aspirants for athletic honours need to be cautioned and advised on these matters. A young athlete, who had acquired remarkable dexterity, died suddenly in this city last week from over exertion at a gymnasium.

Gas And Electric Leakages.

An explosion of gas recently occurred at Chicago by which eleven lives were destroyed. The gas

which exploded had leaked out from a pipe or pipes laid from the street main to buildings. The escape must have been large for a building was blown up and explosions took place at every manhole in the street for some distance, the flashes of flame being exceedingly dangerous. After an exhaustive inquiry at which a number of gas engineers were

examined the jury held the gas company responsible as the leakage was found to be in the main service pipe. Though technically responsible for this calamity the gas company may be wholly free from blame as street mains are liable to breakage, or the displacement of a joint by subsidence of the ground, or some violent shock from heavy traffic. Dr. Bayles, in a paper in "Insurance Engineering," discusses the risk attendant upon the supply of gas in cities which he regards as, "the most subtle, uncontrollable, far-reaching menace to life and property of which science has any knowledge." That some leakage is unavoidable in a gas service seems indisputable. Dr. Bayles writes :

"It would seem unnecessary to pile up evidence in support of the undisputed proposition that wherever gas is distributed there is a considerable leakage. Equally unnecessary is it to further discuss the proposition that gas which escapes from mains and by one means or another gets into houses, is a source of danger to property by creating a special and indeterminate fire hazard. The questions of especial insurance interest are: Does it get into houses? If so, how? How are its fire risks measurable? What evidences are there that it is of consequence as a cause of fires? So much for the reader interested in fire insurance."

Fortunately, gas makes its presence felt by its offensive odour, which is a danger signal that should always receive instant attention, for though it may appear to arise from a trivial leakage, the odour may arise from some accumulation of gas which is dangerous. We are not disposed to agree with Dr. Bayles that, "if the present leakage of gas is irremediable the suppression of gas companies will become a public necessity." Illuminating gas has been supplied to buildings now for nearly a century; its early dangers have been largely overcome, but