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AN ACCOUNT OF THE
DANCING MANIA OF EUROPE
AND OF
EPIDEMIC CONVULSIONS IN KENTUCKY

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I.—THE DANCING MANIA.

One of the earliest and most widespread psychological disturbances of which we have authentic records was the so-called "Dancing Mania," which made its appearance towards the latter end of the fourteenth century. It was even international in extent. This was a remarkable convulsive malady, which excited the astonishment of contemporaries for more than two centuries. While it has since been popularly known as the "Dancing Mania," it was at the time called St. John's or St. Vitus' dance on account of the Bacchantic leaps by which it was characterized, and it gave to those affected, whilst performing their wild dance, screaming and foaming with fury, all the appearance of persons possessed. It did not remain confined to particular localities, but was propagated by the sight of the sufferers