

in the number of candidates for the Swiss Army rejected on account of heart affections. This fact has been ascribed to the wave of athleticism which has spread over Continental countries in recent years. He quotes a number of authors who have pointed out the deleterious effects on the heart of injudicious indulgence in athletics during the period of growth. He considers it well established that excessive muscular work can produce chronic affections of the heart, but believes that the possibility of acute dilatation of the heart being produced in this way is open to question. He quotes authorities for and against. Those who have used the old methods of inspection and percussio as criteria, believe that acute dilatation may be brought about by physical strain, but the majority of those who have made use of X-Rays to determine the size of the heart will not admit that this is the case. The author of the review seems to favour the conclusions of the latter group, but to the present writer their subjects seem to have been poorly chosen, being trained athletes in whom the heart would naturally be able to adapt itself to sudden strain. Moreover, the use of the X-Rays itself may not be as free from practical fallacies as it is sound theoretically.

In any case the reviewer tells us that there is no reasonable doubt as to emotional causes being able to bring about acute dilatation. One case is given of a young man in whom acute heart symptoms with dilatation were caused on several separate occasions when he attempted to fight a student's duel. Two cases are given of acute dilatation of the heart among those who had to witness the horrors of the recent massacres of Jews at Odessa. In all these cases the dilatation was of short duration, lasting only a few hours.

A valuable storehouse of suggestion on the subject of emotional disturbances of the heart is to be found in one of our great English classics, Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy." He describes the symptoms, for instance, of "Maids', Nuns' and Widows' Melancholy," as follows: "The most ordinary symptoms be these, *pulsatio juxta dorsum*, a beating about the back which is almost perpetual, the skin is many times rough, squalid, especially as Aretaeus observes, about the arms, knees and knuckles. The midriff and heartstrings do burn and beat fearfully and when this vapour or fume is stirred flieth upward, the heart itself beats, is sore grieved and faints. . . . They complain, many times, says Merceus, of a great pain in their heads, about their hearts and hypochondries, and so likewise in their breasts, which are often sore." Among the cures of this complaint Burton recommends: "Sparing diet, plebotomy and physic, but the best and surest remedy of all is to see them well placed and married to good husbands in due time."<sup>2</sup>