

We have also foot ball, base-ball and other minor sports that claim their share of patronage from the young men of this city. They are all good, health-giving pastimes when properly indulged in and not abused. The indulgence in these sports has several objects in view, two of which are the most important, viz., pleasure and health. Without the first, you cannot well have the other. The exercise should be of a nature to give pleasure, to be in harmony with the mental operations, a certain buoyancy of mind being required to give effect to muscular action. Without this you will not experience the amount of benefit you should. Now, among the great number of young men who are members of the different clubs of this city, how many are able to undergo the same amount of athletic exercise. Supposing there are 4,000 young men, members of the different clubs, how many of them would you find constituted alike. I venture to say, you would find very few of them exactly alike in physical strength and temperament; some you would find enjoying the best of health, possessed of strong muscular strength, who do not feel the daily fatigue of business very much, and who are quite able to join in the snow-shoe tramp in the evening, or practice at lacrosse in the early morning. Others again, you would see enjoying good health, but of a more delicate build, and not possessed of the animal spirits of the former to fully surmount all the worries of the day. Think you, that those who belong to this class are as well able for the snow-shoe tramp across the mountain, as it is now practised, or the lacrosse exercise as the former. Others again, you would see possessed of indifferent health, with irritable temperaments, who are worried by the slightest thing going wrong, and when evening comes are tired out; still, the longing for companionship and the idea that all or any kind of athletic exercise does good, they also join some club, and their courage makes them attempt to do as much as their more favored companions. Perhaps, they succeed, and they earn the plaudits of their friends as being plucky individuals. Plucky young fellows, they, no doubt are, but how much benefit to health has been derived from this strained exercise. It is more particularly on this point I wish to say something, to point out, if possible, in my humble way the dangers to be avoided.

To be able to indulge in athletic exercise in a manner to obtain all the possible benefit that is to

be derived from it, a young man, unaccustomed to it, and who is employed in a sedentary occupation, as three-fourths of our young men are, must begin by degrees and work his way systematically along, until he feels that he is able to perform feats with ease that would have previously distressed him.

Some may reach this point very easily and in a short time, and when they have done so are fine specimens of manhood, but is this the case with all? Others will reach it, after a longer course of training, and if it has been carried out with prudence, will be improved by it, but there will be a majority who will never be able to reach the excellence of the first class, and who, by persistence in a system of over-training, will do themselves permanent mischief. Some of you, who are veterans in athletic exercise may smile and say you have heard all this before: well, perhaps, you have, but you may be more surprised when I tell you that a strong man may over-train, or commit some act of imprudence in his exercising that may prevent him ever having grey hairs. Often have I gone into houses in this city, when on my rounds, and have seen cups and medals adorning the side-board, won in this or that sport, and have asked, where are the winners? Some are prematurely aged, broken down in fact, and subject to palpitations of the heart; others are dead, some of them having died suddenly? Others again, and they are in the minority, still retain their vigor, because whatever they did in the way of training was done with prudence and system.

I read some time ago of a noted athlete of an American university dying suddenly from heart disease, and of the plaudits passed upon him by the press, but not one word of warning as to the cause of his heart disease, which was nothing else than prolonged excessive training. To this also may be ascribed the death of Renforth, with which you are all familiar. Our own city furnishes examples as well, and such have occurred in my own and the practice of my medical friends. I venture to say that if the different athletic clubs would examine their statistics for some years past, and see who were their prize winners and what was their condition at the present day, they would find I am not speaking too strongly. They would find the majority dead, from a sudden death, or dead from a short illness, and that only the minority were living. They would find this minority divided into two classes, a large and a small one. The large one would consist of some who were