

TRAINING FOR ATHLETIC SPORTS.

By ROBT. H. BAKEWELL, M.D.

At the present season a few remarks on training, from the medical point of view, will not be considered out of place by the majority of my readers. The widespread—I might almost say the universal—interest taken in athletic sports in the colony, and the earnestness with which they are practised, render it necessary for those who engage in them to subject themselves to a system by which their diet, exercise, and mode of life generally are governed by very rigorous rules, which are summed up in the word training. Everybody who intends to compete with others for prizes in athletic games recognises that some kind of training is absolutely necessary if success is to be attained.

We may take it that the successful competitors in any athletic sports must be possessed either of greater quickness, greater skill, or greater strength and endurance, or of a combination of these qualities, than the unsuccessful competitors. The degree in which these qualities will be required in any particular sport depends on the character of the sport, and the kind of training required will vary accordingly. It is obvious that the kind of training required for a man throwing the hammer will differ in many important respects from that required for a boat race, or a hundred yards foot-race.

I have no intention of going into the minute of training for particular sports, as that would require a special knowledge that I do not possess. But having had a good deal to do with athletes who have consulted me medically, and having made some original researches on the effects of severe muscular exertion on the nervous and circulating systems, I propose to set down a few of the conclusions at which I have arrived after many years' observation and experience.

For success in any athletic competition worth considering in this respect, a candidate requires: 1. a sound constitution, 2. good health, and 3. superior skill in the particular sport or game.

The first and second of these conditions can only be judged of by a skilful and experienced physician. The third belongs to the trainer's domain, and is only subject to the judgment of the physician when the training appears to be so severe as to be detrimental to the general health.

Every young man who proposes to go in for any prize competition in any athletic sport should first submit himself for examination to a properly qualified medical man. I don't mean a "legally" qualified man, because there are some of "legally" qualified medical practitioners who from their youth and inexperience are quite unable to detect those slight

symptoms and early signs of constitutional disease which show to the experienced man that the patient has not a good constitution, and will break down under a severe strain.

The would-be athletic competitor should never have had the slightest symptom of consumption or any other tuberculous disease, or of rheumatic fever, or of typhoid or a severe type necessitating a long convalescence, or of any recent attack of acute disease. He should have no tendency to bronchitis, and should not have suffered from any severe attack of inflammation of the bronchial tubes, pneumonia, or pleurisy, all of which impair the capacity of the

lungs or heart. The heart, of course, should be perfectly sound as to its structure and free from any trace, even the slightest, of valvular disease. The blood, which should be examined under the microscope, should be healthy. There should be no trace or suspicion of syphilis. The kidneys should be sound, and the liver also. Functional derangement of the liver, such as are comprised in the popular term biliousness, will be cured in the process of training, and so also of the digestive organs.

The would-be athlete should be thoroughly candid in his statements to the

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KINGS COLLEGE PREFECTS, 1906.

LEFT TO RIGHT: L. B. Hutton, J. H. I. Walker, A. A. Swarbrick (head boy), J. Hudson, W. S. Hill



KINGS COLLEGE CRICKET TEAM—SEASON 1906.

TOP ROW (left to right): F. Best, H. Tressidder, D. Deffen, J. Walker, J. L. Hartland, L. Tressidder, V. Abraham, MIDDLE ROW: A. Stewart, L. B. Hutton, J. Hudson (captain), T. M. Wilson, W. S. Hill, BOTTOM ROW: C. E. Hartland, G. J. E. Young (captain), A. Darling