

[Cutting from the Lancet for 6 August 1927 showing an "Ancient Roman statuette exemplifying a case of achondroplastic deformity"].

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ANCIENT ROMAN STATUETTE EXEMPLIFYING A CASE OF ACHONDROPLASTIC DEFORMITY.—Love of the grotesque and deformed is very apparent in ancient art. We find large numbers of representations of the dwarfs, buffoons, idiots and other morbid types that were the pets of royal courts and wealthy families from Egyptian times onwards. The fashion was at its height in Rome during the early Empire, and there are many statuettes, such as the one here reproduced, which show that certain of the dwarfs were examples of achondroplasia: some of these were employed as gladiators by the emperor Domitian. The bronze statuette of an achondroplastic dwarf here illustrated carrying a *strigilis* was found at Pompeii. The element of caricature noticeable in certain details of this example does not interfere with the correct portrayal of the nature of the arrested development to which the dwarfism is due. Representations such as this mark the entrance of pathology into art, and the pioneers of this movement may be said to have justified the step they took by having paid regard to the science of anatomy, for “does not Nature obey laws in her deviations? . . . Is a hunchback made by merely curving his spine, or a bandy-legged person simply by twisting his feet, or a dwarf only by shortening his stature?”

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