

in the large majority of the widely read books of the year. There is a dangerous element, which is sure to create impure thought and strongly tend to establish dangerous mental perversion. Our young people are now invited to feast at a literary repast that is decidedly dangerous. Some popular literature can only be described as damnable, so alluring and seductively attractive are the scenes, characters and incidents portrayed. We criticize not so much what is said as what is suggested. Many of the books that now find the largest sales, and are read by every one, are polluted by a suggestiveness that can only prove injurious by inducing an abnormal individual attention which begets a neurosis. They stimulate a curiosity which tempts while it attracts. People now seem to be losing an interest in the world's best literature. Their lives must be influenced by their reading, and the perusal of doubtful books is directly antagonistic to sound mentality. The family physician should feel it his duty to point out to parents and children how helpful are good books and how injurious are bad books. Not a few cases of mental degeneration have already been traced to the influence of improper literature, and unless a more vigilant censorship is placed upon books coming years will witness a marked increase in the number of sexual perverts. It is far from me to be an alarmist, but I feel this is a subject worthy of more strict attention.

None will deny that excess and dissipation, so frequently the excitants of mental disease in fertile soil, might be kept from those individuals who by inheritance or by developed evidence of defect or unusual susceptibility have shown the existence in themselves of limitations below the normal. The employment of women and girls in factories when insufficiently provided with hygienic and sanitary conveniences accounts for many physical wrecks. Healthy offspring cannot be expected from such frail anæmic creatures as night after night can be seen hurrying home from many factories.

Parents should regulate with zealous care the surroundings of their children during their development, and particularly insist on proper hours for rest. The susceptibilities of youth must be fully recognized. Here the importance of careful study of child character and the proper instruction of parents and teachers is again seen. When so much depends upon the school life in estimating the value of the after life of the child, how important it becomes for more attention to be given to the variability of pupils in their functional capacity. The burden must not be imposed on all alike. The child-nature must be studied and understood, and the burden and future training be regulated accordingly.

While it is so manifestly important to guard against mental degeneration in the human family, the necessity of preventing as far as possible propagation of the species must never be lost sight of. To secure