

stimulating tea or coffee has worn off, and the poor girl is really languid and weary. No time for dinner at mid-day here, and the health of the daughter suffers as much from its loss as the mother's benefited by it. At about three o'clock the weary girl is dismissed; what little appetite she might have felt has disappeared or been appeased with candy. No occasion then to return home for the dinner which has been standing since one o'clock, so she either goes to her music lessons or takes a stroll with some of her companions. Her mother would have done the same thing, but she would have done it in a different manner. The one would have taken a quick walk towards the country, and her conversation would have been suited to a girl of her age; the other saunters along St. James or Notre Dame streets, discussing the exact tinge of Adolphus' budding moustache or Selina's new dress. Ah! young ladies! Young ladies! You have yourselves in a great measure to blame for your delicacy; not entirely, for you cannot alter the school hours, nor the present mode of cooking; but you can command your thoughts; you can, if you wish, fix them upon such things as will assist you in your studies, and, trust me, you will then find it much easier to prepare your task for next day, whilst Adolphus' incipient moustache will flourish as well without your supervision as with it.

After the walk comes practice or study, dinner or tea, then the evening's amusement till bed time. So it was thirty or forty years ago, but the *young lady* of to-day brings an idle, indifferent, careless feeling to the work; she studies because she *must*, not because she wishes to; "well enough to pass muster" is all she cares for, all she aims at. So with the practice; the "prettiest bits" of the new lesson receive the most attention,—and these are always the easiest—whilst scales and exercises are forgotten. The young

girl of forty years ago had been taught to devote her whole energy to her work, whatever that work might be, so she brought her full powers to bear upon both lesson and practice. The former was studied thoroughly, she wished to do her "very best;" the latter was carefully examined, the difficult passages played over and over again, and a reasonable time allowed for exercises, which were also played faithfully.

Late dinners were rarely allowed to young girls in our mother's times, and it was all the better for them, but now it is quite different; seven o'clock dinners are quite usual, and how can a girl be expected to study after that? I do not blame her for pushing aside her books, even if her action is a little quick, her tone a little peevish; but I do blame her when, instead of joining in some harmless, youthful amusement with her brothers and sisters, she throws herself into an easy chair and fixes her attention on the last new novel. There is no lack of interest now, no half-and-half measures in reading that packet of trash; her mind then goes fully to the work,—the sad work, alas, of lowering itself. Ah, mothers of Canada, there is more mental poison gathered from those novels that flood the length and breadth of our fair land, than all the sermons of our ablest divines can eradicate. Nay, more, I believe that their unnatural and exciting language and incidents are such as to account in a very great measure for one-half at least of the terrible precocity of the present day. You can trace the baneful effects of novels almost everywhere, from the parlor to the kitchen, from the castle to the cottage. Miss Mary Jones, the daughter of a worthy gentleman, refuses any longer to be called "Mary;" she must be "May" now, for Mary is no longer fashionable. She cries over the fancied distresses of an imaginary Amanda, and unknown to herself, poor girl, weakens her principles,