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SUMMARY.—**EDUCATION:** Physical and Military exercises in public schools. I. Edward L. Molineux, (to be continued).—**READING:** Science: List of Entomologists in Canada.—**EDITORIAL:** Inauguration of the William Molson Hall of the University of McGill College.—**SEVENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION** in connection with the Laval Normal School.—**EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS OF SCHOOL INSPECTORS** for the years 1859 and 1860, (continued).—**MONTHLY SUMMARY:** Educational Intelligence.—**Scientific Intelligence.**—**Miscellaneous Intelligence.**

EDUCATION.

Physical and Military Exercises in Public Schools (1).

From a long and unexampled period of political and commercial prosperity we suddenly find ourselves called upon to struggle for national existence, and while a noble response from the people to the necessity of the struggle has strengthened the hand of government with an intelligent army, and developed the resources of the country, yet the occasion has laid bare defects which call for correction.

Without a standing army of any magnitude we have found our militia laws defective, and have been obliged to create ourselves a military people by the sufferings and bitterness of an experience bought on the field of active warfare.

Military necessity has compelled the loss of invaluable time in the organizing and preparing of our troops, which would not have been required had we been able to meet the rebellion at the commencement with well trained officers and an experienced and carefully drilled militia.

"The first object," says Daniel Webster, "of a free people is the preservation of their liberty:" a noble truth which must speak home to the heart of every American, and if, as it is asserted, "the future life and character of a nation is to be seen in its system of schools," then we may well listen with some degree of alarm to the warnings and unmistakable evidences by which we are surrounded, that the American race is physically deteriorating.

The question arises, was our National system of Education born such as to qualify and prepare us to maintain successfully the noble inheritance which was won by the physical energies of the men of the Revolution, and with our success in the field of intellectual culture, have we kept the physical advantages possessed by our forefathers?

Let us not mislead ourselves in this matter, but calmly look at the facts, that as a rule, our present system of Public Education is devoted solely to the mental and moral improvement of the scholars, and that the encouragements and rewards held out by

committees and teachers, stimulate to the over-exertion of the brain, and sacrifice in too many instances, the health and growth of the body.

Although great improvement has been made of late by the shortening of the time devoted to study, and by the introduction of more frequent periods of recreation, yet still little has been attempted for giving exercise and activity to the body; this important training being left to the care of parents or the pupils themselves.

Is it not too true that the increase of ill health, broken constitutions, and early deaths, among the growing portion of our population, especially in cities, warns us, year after year, that the thirst for knowledge, and the restless seeking after mental and intellectual improvement, have been bought at the expense of the vital energies of the great body of youth who through the colleges and public schools of our land?

If any one denies this, let him visit our institutions of learning, and while he may well admire the wisdom and forethought which has established our prosperity on a noble system of National Education, he can not but notice the debility evinced in the frames of so many youthful votaries of intellectual training; the exceptions making the contrast still more strikingly painful. Then let him go to the counting-house or the close confinement of some mechanical employment, where the evils from mental activity, unaccompanied by physical recreation, are yet more strongly developed. These evils assail not only the happiness of families, but the prosperity of the nation and the well-being of the race. Is this right or necessary? Can it be avoided?

The solution of these momentous questions may well engage the serious attention of the reflecting teacher, parent and patriot; and to them we assert that, *unless physical exercises are enforced upon our system of Public School education, our intellectual culture will be of little avail, and that our nationality stands in danger of sinking a prey to designing opponents.*

That enfeebled races are invariably conquered by those more powerfully developed, is proved by innumerable instances in history. That physical training was an important branch of education among the Greeks and Romans, is well known. The system inculcated by the iron-hearted Lycurgus, among the Spartan youth, was of a nature admirably adapted to fit them for all the sterner realities of life, whilst the athletic games and exercises of the youth of Rome, comprising, as it did, walking, running, wrestling, swimming, and military drill, were the means of improving, to the utmost, their physical powers. Upon reaching manhood, the advantage of this training was indicated by the robustness of form, and the constitutional vigor which enabled them to undertake labor, fatigue and hardship of every kind, with perfect indifference.

The Spartan and the Roman soldiers were by this early training, not only qualified to surmount with ease the various obstacles and difficulties incident to a state of active warfare, but they also became gifted with precision and rapidity in every movement, and each man was likewise endowed with that confidence in himself, and that unbounded reliance upon order, subordination and com-

(1) This article written by E. L. Molineux, Major and Inspector in the New-York militia, although specially intended for the United States is not without its application to our own country. *Fas est et ab hoste doceri.*