

leaves school; but I think that, in all cases, education ought to be less arduous than it is in many of our girls' schools. Even if education is to end with school-life, it is better that it should end with a little knowledge thoroughly acquired, than with a confused and half-forgotten medley of many subjects. Not that I advocate speciality and depth of knowledge for girls. On the contrary, I think that the aim here ought rather to be that of generality and width—languages, elementary mathematics, geography, history, art, science, and English literature being all taught, but taught superficially, or without much detail, and in as entertaining a manner as possible. The point, however, which I desire chiefly to insist upon is this, that school-girls ought not to be made or encouraged to work beyond their strength. In most girls' schools competition runs very high; and I am quite sure that in very many cases the aim of the schoolmistress ought to be to check its undue severity, rather than to stimulate that severity by competitive examinations. I have myself known many cases of girls sitting up late, rising early, and working all day to win their coveted prizes—a state of things which is a sufficiently crying evil even in boys' schools, but which is a still worse evil in girls'—worse because the *physique* of a girl is usually less robust than that of a boy, and because the school-girl is doomed to a smaller amount of outdoor exercise.

Now if less time were consumed in girls' schools by mental work, more time would be allowed for mental as well as for bodily recreation. And, if the time thus gained were judiciously expended, I believe that, even as a matter of mental culture, more would be gained than lost. Suppose, for instance, that some time in every day were set apart for mental occupation of a voluntary kind—a good library of general though selected literature

being provided for the use of the pupils, and the cultivation of art being allowed to rank as "mental occupation." In this way the more intellectual of the pupils would be able to receive that culture which only general reading can impart, the more artistic would be able to improve themselves in their art by additional practice, and even the unstudiously disposed would find in a standard novel a kind of reading less distasteful than Euclid.

And here while treating of mental recreation among girls, I may add that school-life is the time when provision ought to be made for mental recreation in after-life. Be it observed that mental recreation is impossible unless there is a natural and more or less cultured taste for some branch or branches of mental work. Indeed the capacity for such recreation is clearly proportional to the degree of such culture—an idealess mind being incapacitated for obtaining any *variety* of ideas. Hence the great importance of width of cultured interest, and the consequent duty of the heads of schools to ascertain the mental predilections of their pupils individually, and in each case where such a predilection is apparent, to bestow special attention on its culture. If this were more generally done, I am convinced that the gain to their pupils in after-life would be enormous. We are living in a world teeming with interest on every side, but to make this interest our own possession we require a trained intelligence. It ought, therefore, to be one of the first aims of education to supply special training to special aptitudes, whereby the mind may be brought *en rapport* with the things in which it is by nature fitted to take the most interest, and in them to find a never-ending source of mental recreation. If this method were more universally adopted in girls' schools, ladies as a rule would be supplied with more internal resources of mental ac-