

(c) Excessive tension of the eyes for near objects, as when book is brought too near the eye for hours daily throughout an educational career.

(d) "Peculiarities of food, indifference to ventilation, disregard of other hygienic requirements, want of outdoor exercise, and a peculiar tendency toward a sedentary life, all of which are provocative of a certain *laxity of tissue* and want of resistance in the investing membranes which finds its expression in the eye, in a distension which is in fact myopia." (Loring.) We need not go far to show that all these conditions are largely present during school life, and it has been abundantly shown that the rapidity of development of myopia is in proportion to their presence and to the early age at which children are pressed, either by authority or natural inclination with studious habits, regardless of their optical condition.

Alarming as the facts appear to the ophthalmic surgeon, and important as is the eye in its intellectual, apprehensive, and discriminating powers, yet there is no organ in the body guarded with so little care, and strange to say, its greatest weakness is popularly counted its strength. We often see myopes comfort themselves by saying that short-sighted eyes are strong, or *healthy* eyes; on the contrary a short-sighted eye is a *sick* eye, a *diseased* eye, and is very likely, from the habits it engenders, to make a sickly body; quite as much a diseased condition is it as an hypertrophied heart and as little able to perform its functions, and we watch a case of myopia with as much interest and anxiety as you do first an hypertrophied and then a dilated heart subsequent to repeated attacks of asthma. It affects the physical, mental, and moral development of the child. The ordinary sports or plays of the campus are quite too much for him. The cricket, the base-ball, or the lacrosse have requirements beyond his range of vision, and in these he is unable to compete successfully with his fellows, so with a sense of incapacity he retires from the field where the mind gets its recreation and the body its health and seeks his pleasure and his recreation in his books. This, though at first a pastime, soon becomes a passion and he be-

comes a book-worm, engorged with much that an age of rapid printing can supply without taking time to reflect or digest what he has received. He, therefore, suffers a kind of mental dyspepsia which is, to say the least, no evidence of mental strength—a condition as foreign as possible to a true educational process which is the application of thought or the development of the processes of reason.

A fond parent encourages these so-called studious habits which become more a habit than a desire for the acquisition of knowledge, and entertain a strong hope that the future will realize brilliant literary accomplishments; but the defect of sight is operative at all times; he becomes retiring, diffident, hesitating, and cautious. His means of acquiring knowledge, through outward objects have been limited to a very narrow field, his own small field of vision. He can see all the beauty of a rose or a violet, but a beautiful landscape or the autumn tints of the forest are all a blur to him, and he knows nothing of the inspiration that comes therefrom. He can see and deal with the minutest mechanism of a watch and delight in it, but finds no pleasure in architecture; he becomes a man of details and intricacies at the expense of unity and comprehensiveness. He also judges men by their intentions at quite a disadvantage and forms wrong opinions of character. Our English language—all language—is so constructed as to be susceptible of ten times of opposite meanings by a few changes in the lines of countenance. Hence, across the table, or in a room he loses the ever-varying shades of expression that come most directly from the heart, and trusts to the ear by which he is often misguided.

Now, all this must have its effect upon the general disposition, upon the character, and the health, and though it may not affect to such an extent every degree of myope yet the majority, I am satisfied, of those who remain uncorrected, suffer more or less of these disabilities.

There are other optical defects such as hypermetropia and astigmatism which affect the individual's comfort, his health, mental attainments, and character quite as much, and on these it might be of interest to dwell as they