

only capable of sensation and emotion. In infancy the attention and the memory are only excited strongly by things which impress the senses and move the heart, and a father shall instil a more solid and available instruction in an hour spent in the fields, where wisdom and goodness are exemplified, seen and felt, than in a month spent in study, where they are expounded in stereotyped aphorisms.

No physician doubts that precocious children, in fifty cases for one, are much worse for the discipline they have undergone. The mind seems to have been strained, and the foundations for insanity are laid. When the studies for maturer years are stuffed into the child's head, people do not reflect on the anatomical fact that the brain of an infant is not the brain of a man, that the one is confirmed and can bear exertion—the other is growing and requires repose; that to force the attention to abstract facts, to load the memory with chronological and historical and scientific details—in short, to expect a child's brain to bear with impunity the exertions of a man's, is just as rational as it would be to hazard the same experiment on the muscles.

The first eight or ten years of life should be devoted to the education of the heart, to the formation of principles rather than to the acquirement of what is usually termed knowledge. Nature herself points out such a course; for the emotions are then the liveliest and most easily moulded, being as yet unalloyed by passion. It is from this source that the mass of men are hereafter to draw their sum of happiness or misery; the actions of the immense majority are, under all circumstances, determined much more by feeling than by reflection; in truth, life presents an infinity of occasions where it is essential to happiness that we should feel rightly; very few where it is at all necessary that we should think profoundly.

Up to the seventh year of life very great changes are going on in the structure of the brain, and demand, therefore, the utmost attention not to interrupt them by improper or over excitement. Just that degree of exercise should be given to the brain at this period as is necessary to its health, and the best is oral instruction, exemplified by objects which strike the senses.

It is perhaps unnecessary to add that, at this period of life, special attention

should be given, both by teachers and by parents, to the physical development of the child. Pure air and free exercise are indispensable, and wherever either of these are withheld, the consequences will be certain to extend themselves over the whole future life. The seeds of protracted and hopeless sufferings have in innumerable instances been sown into the constitution of the child, simply through ignorance of this great fundamental physical law, and the time has come when the united voices of these innocent victims should ascend, "trumpet-tongued," to the ears of every parent and every teacher in the land, "Give us free air and wholesome exercise; leave us to develop our expanding energies in accordance with the laws of our being, and full scope for the elastic and bounding impulses of our young blood."

THE SUNBEAMS WE SCATTER.

(Concluded.)

A group of happy children clustered around the chair of Herbert Villiers on his return, after a few days of necessary absence from the home he loved. The young heir apparent, a brave, dark-eyed, but somewhat haughty-looking boy, stood at his father's right hand; the younger horn, a blue-eyed, yellow-haired darling, adorned with all the elegance a doating mother's taste could devise, had clambered to his knee; two fair girls sat upon cushions at his feet, and all shared in turn the father's caresses, laughed at the droll adventures he recited, and received with unhesitating confidence the wonderful tales which his creative imagination furnished for their amusement. At the other side of the fireplace sat a shrinking, sensitive, timid-looking child, watching the group with eager eyes, but taking no part in their conversation. As one of the merry peals of laughter ended, the elder of the two little sisters turned her head, and observed the subdued, sad look of her quiet brother. It went to her heart to think that any one could feel sorrowful when all around herself seemed so bright and sunny; and with an intuitive insight into the depths of his sensitive nature, she quickly saw what string was out of tune. Going behind her father's chair, she whispered in his ear: "Papa, why do you never talk to Wilfred?" A start, and a flush of the cheek proved that Emily had clearly revealed to the

quick eye of her parent the wrong which he had long but unintentionally done his child. "Wilfred, my boy! why do you not come to share your father's love?" The boy's eye flashed with glad surprise at the unwonted words. As he joined the group, his sister placed him on the cushion which she herself had just left; and while Herbert read in the glowing face of his child what untold wealth of love had been shut up in his heart, he reproached himself severely, and determined that never again should his Wilfred feel the want of a father's smile and blessing. Little Emily's thoughtful consideration and whispered word had proved warm sunbeams; the ice was melted for ever, and the pure waters leaped up and sparkled in their brightness.

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The sultry air of a summer afternoon had tempted its inmates to throw open the windows of an apartment, where full in view a fair young girl was seated. Her form, slight and flexile as the willow, bent languidly forward; her eye wandered heavily over the beautiful landscape which surrounded her dwelling; the shadow of grief was upon her brow; and as she touched the instrument which stood before her, the notes which she drew from it were low and plaintive. Yet more sad were the words which fell upon my ear as they were breathed by her rich voice:—

"Gay laughing voices pass me by,
And bright and sparkling eyes—
The fair, the young, the beautiful,
In all their glory rise;
But oh! my heart is far too sad
To join in that light throng,
To listen to the voice of mirth,
Or pleasure's reckless song.

"More dear to me the loneliness
Of forest, or of bower,
Than all the gay and festive scenes
Of yonder lordly tower;
Where the full pulse of joy is taught
In every breast to bound,
And the flower-crown'd cup of happiness
From lip to lip goes round.

"Alas! amid the healthful herd
I'm like a stricken deer:
For my parch'd lip no unseal'd fount
Of gladness is there near;
No breeze of heaven with freshness plays
To cool my burning brow;
No bow is seen in that dark cloud
Which stretches o'er me now."

"Blanche! Blanche! sweet friend!" exclaimed a fresh young voice as she