

WHY IS IT SO?

BY M.

"My daughter is very delicate. I have been obliged to remove her from school and forbid all study." So says Mrs. — to her friend, who is asking about a school for her own children, and as I find that this delicacy with growing girls is on the increase, and that many are debarred from study on account of it—at a time, too, when each month of their school course is worth more than double what it has been at any time before—I anxiously ask, *Why is it so?*

"Too much study," "too long hours," "too little time for recreation;" all these reasons have been given as an answer, but not one of them satisfies me. The cause, I think, is deeper and more wide spread.

Look back to our own day—what time was spent in school then? I went at nine, returned home at mid-day, had an hour in which I could eat a good, wholesome dinner, then back to school till four. I never remember coming home weary, or with the prevailing headache of now-a-days; and yet the time I spent in the school-room was longer than that so spent by children now. Our fathers and mothers did the same, and it did not hurt them. Why then should "study," or "long hours," hurt girls now? The long hours do not hurt them, the study does not hurt them; but it is the home life which is so different to what we elders had, and which interferes, nay, almost incapacitates a girl for real head work.

Take the average daily life of any school-girl now and compare it with that of her mother at her age. The school-girl, or rather *young lady* of fifteen, goes to bed at near midnight, after

having spent an exhausting evening in study, or, far more likely, dancing and flirting. Her mother, at the same period of life, retired to rest before ten, and the evenings she spent were more home-like, more youthful, and far more healthful than those spent by the daughter. Is it any wonder, then, that one was able to rise at an hour sufficiently early to allow of a refreshing morning walk before breakfast, or an hour's thorough study, whilst the other drags her weary limbs to the dining room, tired out before the duties of the day have begun? Then look at the table itself. The mother eat a good, hearty breakfast of plain food, and drank sweet, fresh milk, or pure water; the daughter has no appetite to satisfy, and no time to satisfy it in even if she had the appetite. A clammy hot roll, or indigestible buckwheat pancake soaked in syrup, and a cup of strong tea or coffee, form her morning meal; and who will wonder at the lustreless eyes and pallid cheeks! The mother started off to school in good time, and walked at a brisk pace, and was not ashamed even to run, if she were in the country; the daughter leaves home a second or two before school time, dawdles along the street because it is "not lady-like to be in a hurry," reaches her class just in time to lose her marks, and feels "put out" for the rest of the day. Then come recitations which are as tame as the young lady herself. No youthful fire or enthusiasm lights up her dull eyes. How can it? Is it not "too much trouble" to exert oneself when there are none but fellow pupils to applaud; and, besides, the effect of the