

supplied to each pupil in the dense crowd, I confess I fail to see, for nothing short of a strong motor-power could suffice to force in the required constant supply of pure air. I fear the best you can promise yourselves will be but a mitigation of the existing evil, and to secure this nothing short of compulsory legislation will prove effective. I have heard of one zealous and conscientious teacher, in a western village, being taken sharply to account by his trustees for burning too much wood and letting in fresh air to improve the ventilation of his school. These economic sages thought it was nothing short of insanity to let in cold air, and thus create a demand for more firewood. Now, to leave the matter of improvement of ventilation, as merely permissible, in the hands of such clowns, would be to consign it to predetermined infanticide. I would fondly hope that our Minister of Education will muster courage to meet this vitally important requirement of his position, by the introduction of such a measure of legislation as will compel trustees to make provision for this improvement, and all others protective of the health of teachers and scholars.

I cannot dismiss this subject without again quoting from Professor Hufeland's book another passage, which I would warmly commend to your respect; it is as follows:

"I must here remark, that a great many of the evils which attend too early study may not arise so much from exerting the powers of the mind as from confinement and sitting, and from the corrupted air of schools in which children are taught. At any rate, the weakness is thus doubled. I am fully persuaded that it would be much less injurious if children were made to perform their school business in the open air during the fine seasons; and here, at the same time, would they have before them the book of Nature, which, supposing that the pupils are capable of reading and understanding it, is much more fit and proper for their first instruction than all the books that ever were written or printed."

Whilst I listened last night, Mr. President, to your interesting details of the working of your school play section, the passage now quoted came into my recollection, and I questioned whether it would not be a very desirable improvement, so far at least as the bodily health, and perhaps also the mental vigour, of your pupils are concerned, that they "were made to perform *this* school business in the open air during the fine seasons."

In my young days I used to hear surprising accounts of the able classical and mathematical scholars taught by the hedge-schoolmasters of Ireland. Who will say that the pure air breathed by the hedge-schoolmaster's pupils contributed less to their proficiency than his tutorial competency?