

youth as slouching, and this careless, awkward, inelegant gait is obviously the result of a want of proper physical training. Where will you find a firmer tread or better port than in the ranks of the British army? As a stranger and an American has well said, "the British soldier has the swing of conquest," he should have said rather, he appears to have the swing of conquest, but it is in reality the swing of the parade ground and the drill shed. Yet from what class are the ranks of the British army largely recruited? Why, from the very class we have now under consideration, young men engaged in rural pursuits, whose gait, as I have had ample means of witnessing, is at least as clumsy and heavy as is that of the occupants of Canadian farm lands. A few months or years under the drill instructor, converts the green, shambling, ungraceful rustic into the trim, erect, alert warrior. A wonderful metamorphosis truly, and one which would have been still more thorough had the change been effected in earlier youth. I maintain that the erect position is the normal position of man; when the body is upright, the shoulders well back, the head erect, there is more room for the lungs to perform their office, the limbs fall more naturally into position, the vital functions of every member are more regularly performed, and this erect, easy, graceful and withal natural and healthy position can be acquired by training or can be lost for want of proper culture. I deem that in one sense at least men, with few exceptions, are born equal, with like physical instincts, with like corporeal parts, which can be educated and perfected. Why then do we see one man—say at the age of twenty-five—walking like a hero of romance and another at the same age slouching like a Californian hoodlum. Because, probably one has paid more attention to physical development, or has at least not been influenced by agencies antagonistic to such, the other has neglected physical culture or has had to follow a vocation inimical to healthy physical development. It has been a recognized axiom with all great thinkers, for many centuries, that bodily training should go on concurrently with mental exercise. Montaigne, a celebrated French moral philosopher who lived in the sixteenth century, was a strong advocate of physical culture. He says: "We have not to train up a soul nor yet a body but a man, and we cannot divide him." Locke, again, the author of the *Essay on the Understanding*, advises plenty of out door exercise, with plain food, and condemns the practice of straight lacing and tight clothing. Pestalozzi and Froebel the great fountain heads of popular education combined, as you all know, intellectual culture with physical exercise in their methods of tuition; and Rousseau, in his treatise on education, says: "Nature has destined us for the offices of human life, antecedently to our destinations concerning society. To live is the profession I would teach him (alluding to a youth). Let him first be a man; he will, on occasions, as soon become anything else that a man ought to be, as any person whatever. Fortune may remove him from one place to another as she pleases; he will always be found in his place." It has thus become a recognized principle in all modern educational systems that no course of instruction can be regarded as thorough unless it includes some provisions for the exercise of the physical energies, as well as means for the development of the mental faculties. Granted, then, that physical training of some sort is an absolute necessity in our school curriculum, that the body must be developed concurrently with the mind. How shall we best effect this object?

In the consideration of Physical Education, taken in connexion with our Public School System, there are four phases of the subject which should come under discussion:—

- 1st. Position in school, sitting or standing.
- 2nd. Change of position in the school-room.
- 3rd. Systematic out-door exercise—gymnastics.
- 4th. Systematic out-door exercise—drill.

In thus dealing with the subject I pre-suppose suitable school accommodation, adequate ventilation, and every necessary appliance for at least personal comfort and healthful in-door action. I also take it for granted that when speaking of physical culture, all these influences are included in the term which combine to produce a healthy, vigorous frame with an active, graceful deportment. Assuming this much we may be readily enough led to apprehend that there are two phases of physical education, an indirect and a direct one: under the first aspect I propose to discuss Nos. 1 and 2 of my afore-named subdivisions, and under the latter, Nos. 3 and 4. But first I would like to define the term indirect physical education. It is simply this:—That positional training, which, without being *special*, is or should be conducted at all times concurrently with whatever other *special* subject of instruction may be the theme of discussion. It relates chiefly to attitude and personal demeanour in the classroom; position, in fact, when the body is absolutely quiescent, or when motion is limited to the simplest movements, made involuntarily for mere change of posture, or under the direction of the teacher for purposes of class recitation. What can be more painful to the senses of a disciplinarian upon entering a school-room, than to see one scholar sprawling over his desk like a gigantic human frog, and another huddled into a heterogeneous mass of flesh and small clothes, not unlike a sitting anthropomorphous hen. A third with legs extended or doubled under him, as the case may be, hands in the inevitable pockets, head sunk low between elevated shoulders, hair standing erect like quills upon the fretful porcupine, is contemplating with a malignant frown or a harmless stare of innocent vacuity three-eighths of a Third Reader or four-fifteenth of an authorized mis-spelling book. A fourth again with elbows on desk and head buried between hands, whose complexion eloquently though tacitly establishes the truth of at least one inspiration of Holy Writ,—“dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return,”—or to mud pies, is evidently seeking to imbibe the rudiments of knowledge as the celebrated character in Dicken's "No Thoroughfare" imbibed moisture, through his pores, situated in this case at the extremities of those necessary and often denuded joints which now make dimples in the soiled and dog-eared page before him. Let us turn to a writing lesson. How often do we see our pupils with elevated shoulders, contorted nether limbs, crooked fingers and mouths to match, eyes close to book, painfully attempting to delineate characters which they find it impossible to form aright from the very perversity of their positions? But setting the possibility of correct penmanship aside, how injurious to health must these unnatural and inelegant positions be, what habits of laziness do they engender, and of what physical evils may they not be productive,—round shoulders, weak chests, defective vision. In standing classes the same evils in varied forms may be noticed. Here we have one ambitious youth striving might and main to emulate the grace and dignity of deportment of that amiable, if unpretentious, barn-yard fowl, whose cackling, we are told, once saved the Capitol, by balancing himself on one leg. There, a girl too enamoured with her sitting place to part with it entirely clutches the cross-bar with a fond desperation, or leans with insouciant ease against the side of the desk without whose friendly aid she would certainly sink enervate and prone to mother earth. So many men so many minds, seems here to be travestied, and so many pupils so many positions is the experimental apothegm of the hour. All this is wrong and demands remedying. I think it not too much to say that something of true physical culture can be communicated at the desk or in the recitation class. Scholars should be compelled to sit naturally, gracefully and easily, and to stand erect, heels together, toes out, shoulders back and head up; such training is but a preliminary step to the gymnasium or the drill ground.

Secondly: it is the fashion, in many graded schools, to permit scholars in the advanced classes to occupy their seats without change of position, save that incidental to purely mechanical desk movement, from the time they enter the classroom till the hour arrives for them to disperse for recess, or for dismissal. Does not this fashion of itself encourage in youth an idle, slovenly, often listless and sleepy habit? Speaking for myself, I feel it burdensome to sit in the same position for two hours together. I believe many of my professional brethren—voluntary students—will have experienced the same restless longing for a stretch and walk round after an hour or two's intense application to study. What then must it be for youth, lively, mercurial, energetic youth, to be thus cribbed and doomed to durance vile? They write sitting, they read sitting, arithmetic still sitting, geography, history, etc., all sitting exercises. I think that even with our most advanced classes such a course of sedentary discipline is hardly judicious. Change is a law of nature,