

gloom, horror, and desolation reign on every hand; and this state of mind is not unfrequently mistaken for genius, from which it appears that authors, particularly poets, have a license to be as morose, as uncivil, as selfish, and altogether as disagreeable as possible, under the disarrangement of the physical system which affects them thus peculiarly.

Not long since I was favored with the perusal of a letter written by a gentleman who has established a claim to more than ordinary intellectual capacity. The whole epistle was considered rather a superior bit of composition, and among other passages I was struck with the following:—"I am dissatisfied, dull, and unhappy. On every hand I am checked and thwarted by some cursed fatality that pursues me like a fiend. I see only falsehood and treachery in my fellow-creatures, and the sadness underlying life oppresses me almost beyond endurance." A few days after, I was not surprised to learn that the writer was prostrated by a severe attack of neuralgia, caused by exposure (without sufficient wrappings) to a snow storm. Any person who has been tortured by the same fiend will readily understand the emotions which influenced the sufferer.

That genius which owes its power to beget, to a sort of hysteria caused by bodily ill-health, just as certain atmospheric lights are caused by a commingling of bad gases, is certainly a doubtful blessing to society, as well as to the possessor.

I sometimes think that three-fourths of the literature of the present day (especially the poetry) owes its existence to dyspepsia or tight boots.

But it is not only in the literary world that soundness of body is required. In every calling and position in life, a man's success and happiness are dependent upon his physical condition. It is health which renders the hardest labor endurable, and the hardest fare enjoyable. The conditions of physical health are the foundation of a nation's civilization, prosperity, and morality; and I may add, that the means of health formed an important part of the Jewish religion.

Before the age of mental power in Greece was the age of animal life, when the first care was to make man a magnificent animal, when physical weakness was considered a positive disgrace, and physical deformity was not allowed to exist, and when physical strength and endurance were regarded as the noblest virtues! After this came an age of intellect such as had never been equalled; and though, according to our teachings, those wise men were beathens, and by our plan of salvation are excluded from the joys of Heaven, who shall say that they have not an enviable immortality, inasmuch as we have heard their voices that have come down the ages in tones that shall re-echo to all eternity?

Conditions of physical health, as far as we can promote it in the school-room, and for which the Teacher is in a measure responsible—

First, Frequent change of position.

In some schools it is the custom to keep children standing during a recitation of half an hour, three-quarters, or even an hour's length. This brings a fatigue that is really painful to a strong and positively injurious to a delicate child. I do not think that children or even grown people can stand in one position without fatigue longer than ten or fifteen minutes. A lengthy recitation with pupils in a sitting position is also ill-advised, especially if the pupils be small. If the pupil's position be lounging and careless, the recitation is very apt to be the same; and yet if a child is obliged to sit upright for any length of time, the weariness of body brings on weariness of mind, which results in nervousness and often severe headache.

Second, Position in sitting, standing, and walking.

We know the inclination which pupils have to lean upon the desks in front of them, and we know also, the rounded shoulders

and contracted chests which are the results of such leaning; the cramped position rendering impossible waist breathing, which is so necessary to sound lungs, and the neglect of which is almost certain, sooner or later, to bring on heart disease, dyspepsia, or consumption.

Fatigue from standing shows itself in drooping heads and rounded shoulders, or in one shoulder elevated above the other. Continuance in these positions will at length produce positive deformity, and I think you will agree with me that physical deformity is apt to bring on mental deformity in proportion.

In walking, we have to guard against moping along, with eyes on the ground, shuffling feet, arms akimbo, and, if our pupils be boys, hands in pockets. We must seek to secure uprightness of head and chest. The body should by its muscles be moved, and our pupils must sit, walk, and stand erect. The head, the lodging of the brain, may be regarded as the seat of mental capacity, and the chest, the lodging of the heart, as the seat of moral power. Is it strange that great attention to these two should be considered necessary?

For the securing of a proper position and carriage of the head and body Professor Monroe has prescribed a set of drill exercises, which are intended to impart elasticity and strength to the muscles, while the result is ease, dignity, and grace to the limbs, whether in motion or repose.

Third, Avoiding of draughts.

Children play violently, and it not unfrequently happens that they enter the school-room when very warm, and are exposed to currents of air, by which perspiration is suddenly checked, and the result has been known to be death. Also, when overheated, they are apt to seek coolness in immense draughts of cold water, than which nothing can be more injurious.

Another cause of much suffering is cold feet, and in country school-houses this is an evil very difficult to remedy. The physician's counsel to keep the head cool and the feet warm is generally obeyed in inverse order, for while the brain is rendered dizzy and almost inactive by the heat, the feet appear to be congealing.

Besides the very uncomfortable sensation, this is very dangerous; and if, as often happens, the shoes and stockings are wet, the danger is immeasurably increased. Neglect of these trifles is often the cause of illness, sometimes of death, which is laid at the door of hard study.

THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN CALIFORNIA.

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II.

The manner in which the school funds are apportioned to the different districts is very peculiar. The County Superintendent "must ascertain the number of teachers each district is entitled to, by calculating one teacher for every one hundred census children, or fraction thereof of not less than fifteen census children, as shown by the next preceding census. He must ascertain the total number of teachers for the county, by adding together the number of teachers assigned to the several districts. Five hundred dollars shall be apportioned to each district for every teacher assigned it;" but districts having ten and less than fifteen census children must receive \$800. School money remaining after making this appropriation must be apportioned to the several districts having not less than 50 census children, in proportion to the number of census children in each district. This mode was adopted, I believe, for the sake of small districts in sparsely settled counties; but its effect is likely to be disastrous. It encourages the formation of