

exception to the work of the kindergarten; for its essence is agreeable discipline, the training of the faculty of observation and the directing of memory in preparatory channels without forcing its exercise; in a word, it is child's play made systematic.

In the ordinary schools, homework, as a rule, is made a burden too heavy to be borne with safety—when the pupil has finished the task there remains insufficient time for rest and recreation, and it is no unusual thing to find the problems of the evening in advance of what already has been thoroughly taught. It would appear at times as though the schoolroom were transformed into a hall of inquisition for the purpose of discovering how much the pupil has failed in his home study, instead of being the place for intelligent education in harmony with the order of development of the mental faculties.

It is to be hoped, ere long, in the advanced classes of the collegiate institutes as well as in our universities, competitive examinations will cease to be so stiff that victorious combatants emerge from the conflict proud of their conquests; but, as likely as not, to fall into the hands of the doctor for repairs—sometimes too late—for often the foundation has already been laid for a neurasthenic superstructure. I am not speaking theoretically; but am setting forth those things with which, professionally, I have tried to deal.

Let us propound to ourselves the question—why is insanity, especially that of adolescence, together with kindred forms of nervous disorders, on the increase? And, having solved it to our satisfaction, let us give the community the benefit of the investigation. The emulation and everlasting strife for a place in the front ranks of society, financially and socially, constitute doubtless a potent factor; but let us not forget that this restless activity is often born of the habits engendered long prior to manhood.

Functional excess is always at the expense of defective reparative power. An extraordinary organ is the brain—a tired muscle refuses to work, an overwrought mind declines to take repose—the ploughman, after having “homeward plodded his weary way,” sinks into sweetest slumber, while the overtaxed student is, too often, the victim of insomnia with all its hideous reveries.

Someone has well said that the bulwarks of a nation consist not in strong fortresses erected on its boundaries, nor does its stability depend upon mighty navies that traverse every sea; but its security lies in the keeping of intelligent men and women who have sound and rugged bodies ever ready to repel the inroads of disease.

It is a matter for congratulatory reference that Government¹ assistance, municipal aid and private contributions, prompted by appeals from the profession and under its guidance, have dotted the land with hospitals for the reception of the poor and needy, as well as for the convenience of the opulent, and that these institutions are accomplishing a great work in the interests of all classes; but it is to be deplored that, under the guise of poverty, daily abuse is made of the privileges that philanthropic motives have provided for the deserving poor.

Here the attending physicians discharge responsible and onerous duties without hope or expectation of reward, other than that which might be expressed in Portia's words paraphrased—“Charity is twice blessed: it blesses him who gives and him who receives”; but gratuitous services to those who are quite able to remunerate are not a blessing but a pauperizing curse to the recipients.

It is stated by no less an authority than the *Medical Record* that the number of persons who received free medical and surgical relief at the hospitals and dispensaries of New York during the past year amounted to 49.7 per cent. of the entire population, and that fully 70 per cent. of this number were