

duty of work—work for others, if not for ourselves—work which to be worthily done still calls for physical as well as mental strength.

What is more obvious than that in the first precious years of existence, comparatively free as they are from duties and trials, and appointed as it were for the sole purpose of outward and inward growth, every means should be used for rendering that growth strong and symmetrical? Children who breathe most constantly the fresh, pure air of heaven, who are most interested in out-of-door amusements and exercises, whose minds are employed on the living objects of nature and the wholesome useful knowledge which comes from observing them, gather thereby stores of energy that will help them to the comfortable and creditable fulfilment of whatever work falls to their share in later life.

All parents take delight in affording children such amusements as suit their age and taste; nay, when the taste does not agree with the age, nine times out of ten it is still allowed its way. Often it is hard to believe in hurtful consequences, doubly hard to resist pleading eyes and persuasive tones. But what becomes of physical education when boys and girls of twelve and fourteen, and even younger ones, are permitted to be up all night at parties, prematurely aping their elders in much that is little worthy of imitation, and this not once or twice, but frequently? Some people, sensible people too, argue that it is only by means of early association that the shyness and diffidence which are fostered by seclusion can be rubbed off in time to admit of young men and women acquiring the ease of manner and self-possession without which they can neither enjoy nor adorn general society. There is some truth in this. Girls and boys should assemble for common enjoyment occasionally, but not at night, not when mind and body ought to be at perfect rest. We may moralize indefinitely, and go on repeating to them forever the sad story of *La Femme Espagnole*; they may yet get by heart how "*Elle aimait trop le bal*," and what evil came of it; but we can not teach them to sacrifice without a pang the pleasure of the moment to the good of the future; not, at any rate, till we ourselves return to the simplicity of our fathers, and take our so-

cial amusement by day-light and in the early evening.

Young ladies and gentlemen who read the pages of *Home and School*, and to whom these words in particular are not especially addressed, but who may nevertheless glance at them, let us make our peace with you. We would no more keep you from dancing than we would stop the singing of the birds; but, if you will remark, *young birds do not sing at night; those that do, sing for the benefit of their voices or to put their children to sleep.*

Nothing is more wretched in its effects than the system of repression to which some poor children are subjected, whereby they become a prey to the small proprieties of life, and can not shake off the incubus of perpetual fault-finding and correction. It is a cruel mistake to burden a child's mind with a thousand minute rules and standing orders; it is far better for him to go wrong sometimes than to be hampered and kept from ever thinking for himself. An impetuous child will often forget and incur the blame of disobedience till he gets hardened to it; an obstinate child will rebel and become irritable; while a conscientious one grows morbid and joyless under the pressure of constant restriction. We should remember that many little things which it is requisite for a child to learn it catches much more easily from the ways and habits of those it lives among, the atmosphere that surrounds it, than from oft-repeated verbal orders and directions.

If we believe that the whole of life is an education, that from first to last it is meant to be ever a progress from lower to higher, we will not complain that with all our pains we can not fashion grown-up children, can not inspire them with the tastes nor fit them for the enjoyments that belong naturally to riper years; rather we must rejoice that the child should be still but the child, and youth only youth, else they would weary of life before the journey were half over. As it is, how often do we see the young preyed upon by a listless *ennui*, which is the more intolerable for the feeling that it ought to have no existence, that it need have none. Consciously or unconsciously, the young intelligence needs some special occupation on which to concentrate its energy and ambition, and nothing will permanently satisfy it which does not call these forth and keep