

Not such as these my choice; but if there be  
 One whose clear eyes discern the powers divine  
 About his path; wise through humility;  
 In state most simple, yet too high to lend  
 His thoughts to aught ignoble—be it mine  
 To clasp him by the hand and call him friend.  
 G. A. M.

### PHYSICAL CULTURE FOR GIRLS.

AN ADAPTATION OF DR. TEMPLE'S LECTURE, FOR THOSE  
 WHO DID NOT HEAR IT.

THE double fact that St. Hilda's College is an actual existence, though as yet but a tender nursling, and that Trinity University exercises a fostering care not only over her, but also over those institutions which are occupied (we fondly hope) in training candidates for her discipline and her honors, must be our excuse for encroaching on the pages of this magazine with a few suggestions on the physical training of girls.

It seems incredible that women, with their wonderful capacity for agitating in their own behalf, with their aspirations after the bar! the pulpit!! the bench!!! (how about capital punishment, when they reach that eminence?) should have expended so little of their super-abundant energy and their far-reaching powers of thought on the physical development of those who will need iron constitutions indeed to meet the demands which they trust will be made upon them. Even in the well-known English centres of education where all other departments are arranged and executed in so admirable a manner, this subject is far from meeting with the attention it deserves and must have, if our girls are to develop into women with the power of living out their higher lives for which their education is supposed to have fitted them, or indeed of living out any lives whatever in the true sense of the word.

Many a *man* of talent has spoilt his whole career by too much unrelieved mental work at *college*, but not one in a thousand even of these has spent his school-days in the way that *every* girl, even the least studious, has spent hers. Cricket and football, with their kindred sports, are considered as essential to a boy's education as the Latin Grammar or the First Book of Euclid. Girls take exercise certainly, walking two and two one behind another, with almost as much weariness of body and mind, but without the eager anticipation to sustain them, as was felt by the "bakers' queues" which filled the streets of Paris in the days of the Revolution, and which only those who have experienced it can fully enter into. Cannot some reform in the school system be devised—the hours of study shortened, the recreations varied? Cannot our girls be looked upon as individuals, as compound beings with bodies, souls and spirits, all as yet in process of development and highly sensitive in their organization and adjustment, and not simply as vessels for the reception of unlimited quantities of information, too often unfortunately proving to be sieves which let the said information slip through even more rapidly than it is poured in.

It would be worth while trying as an experiment

whether even the intellectual results would not be more satisfactory with greatly reduced hours of study, let us say four to five a day, including preparation, instead of the seven to ten which are now exacted from most girls of fourteen or fifteen. The attention and concentration of mind which might be enforced during the shorter period, with the increased freshness and energy which would be promoted by change of employment, would make these hours far more productive in proportion to their length. With this mental work might be combined a course of housework (one of the best possible means of strengthening the muscles), cookery and needlework, and yet ample time be left for out-of-door exercise, walking, riding, boating, swimming, skating, tennis, gardening, and the study of botany, geology or entomology, not merely from printed pages, but from the living book of Nature.

Any thorough-going reform in the matter of exercise would necessarily lead to reform in the matter of dress. A ten-mile walk would injure rather than benefit a girl with ten pounds weight of skirt depending from her waist. Tennis and boating are not satisfactory pursuits to anyone whose circulation and respiration are impeded by undue compression of their respective organs, or whose muscles are superseded and consequently rendered weak and useless by artificial supports.

Such a system *might* render an extra year of school-work necessary, though we doubt whether experience would show that it was so, but we are perfectly certain that even this would be abundantly compensated for by the difference in health of the pupil, by the increased power and tone of the university work that might succeed it, and by the general ability of the girl, whose regular studies are to end with her school-days, to take up whatever work may await her, to fill her place as daughter, sister, wife or mother, with ease and pleasure to herself and with comfort to those dependent on her.

The subject may seem trifling and hardly worthy the notice of those who are occupied in developing the higher faculties of man, in increasing the distance between him and the animal, rather than in showing the points of connection between them; but when we hear a doctor of large experience and good standing gravely and advisedly make the statement that a thoroughly healthy girl of twenty is a *rare* exception, and reflect that on these very girls the future well-being of our race in such large measure depends, it is time not only to ask what is the cause of the evil, but to take active measures to remedy it. That some such plan as we have suggested would be attended with desirable results; that intellectual work itself must be better in quantity and in quality when the body of the worker is the willing and efficient co-helper of the mind, and not its despised and oppressed slave; that when that crowning educational victory is achieved and a test devised which will indicate the total weight, moral, intellectual, spiritual, of a man or woman amongst men and women, instead of merely gauging his mental achievements, the result will be seen to be even more important—can hardly be denied by any who have given the subject even a little measure of the attention it both demands and deserves.