

posing as the stalwart exponent of some great reformation. Much that I shall say has already been better said and written, my object being repetition for the sake of added testimony and emphasis.

During the past two or three generations there has been in progress, amongst our people, a certain kind of questionable evolution—intellectual development somewhat out of proportion to physical force and endurance. Our grandparents were a hardy stock, well furnished physically for coping with life's difficulties. In those early days of migration from the old lands Canada was to them a far-off, unknown country, clad in its primeval forests; and, to reach its shores, they had to undertake an ocean voyage in sailing vessels often badly equipped for the stormy journey. The weak and puny dared not venture; consequently, by natural selection, Ontario was peopled with a sturdy race of pioneers blessed with great physiques, living in a primitive, natural fashion, and free from the burden of too much scholastic training. *Pari passu* with the financial advancement of the country, a gradual change has been going on in these respects; let us enquire if it is for the better.

Herbert Spencer never said a truer word than when he affirmed that "first attention should be devoted to the development of the body, and that profound erudition should be looked upon, in some senses, as of secondary importance." True education can be nothing more or less than that which prepares mentally and physically for the oncoming struggle. It is fortunate for the race that young men naturally choose for their helpmates rollicking, buxom damsels in preference to the sunken-eyed, sallow-faced slaves of knowledge. I do not for a moment seek to enter a protest against the higher education of woman; mental culture is, for her, a diadem of beauty; but too often a possession acquired at tremendous cost. None but the strongest should, in my opinion, enter on a career of study so exhaustive and exacting as the curricula of our universities set down. A head full of knowledge and a worn-out nervous system are but poor qualifications for the coming mothers of Canada's sons. We as a people are proud of our Ontario school system; that it is largely taken as a model by the Provinces of Quebec, Manitoba and British Columbia and the Northwest Territories, and has been highly commended by the foremost educationists of the United States, among them the Commissioner of Education at Washington, is a tribute to the wisdom and foresight of those who have placed able administrators at the head of this department of public affairs; but, like all things of human origin, we must not look for perfection in its details. From the physician's standpoint I humbly submit that it is handicapped with a defect of such magnitude as to alarm him who weighs well the possibilities of the future. The standards of to-day reach so far above those of a couple of generations back that evolution along the line appears to have advanced at a galloping rate. Is it not time to tighten the reins? Are not children sent to school at far too early an age to stand the fatigue of bookwork? The first seven or eight years of life should be free from care and worry and devoted exclusively to such pleasurable pursuits as shall conduce, in the highest degree, to the development of bone and muscle; for, during this period, the nervous system will have plenty to do in automatic preparation of itself for the subsequent performance of its special duties. Parents and teachers leap for joy when a five-year-old manifests his precociousness; and the nervous little monster is held up by his attenuated arms in the sight of his phlegmatic or sanguine classmates as a paragon of perfection, angelic to behold, when he should be making mud pies and wearing out his pantaloons in the physical activities of childhood.

Unless the vision be tested too much with small objects, no one can take