

“ The result of strain, if prolonged, is inevitable—feebleness of constitution, vulnerability to disease, and loss of efficiency, which will impair the whole future life of the child. Education should aim at physical and mental equilibrium, at developing body and mind simultaneously and in due proportion. The physical and intellectual dangers of over-pressure in Education are even more obvious if we consider them from the point of view of the race. As Fouillee points out, so far as the race is concerned, *a cultivated intellect, based upon a bad physique, is of little worth, since its descendants will die out in one or two generations.* By over-pressure education impairs the physical and industrial efficiency of future generations, and lowers the level of the race which it aims at elevating.

“ We cultivate the body to make it the fit bearer and ready servant of the cultured mind. ‘Body for the sake of soul’ was one of the guiding principles of Plato, and it should never be lost sight of by those dealing with the physical aspects of Education.”—ALEXANDER MORGAN.

Mr. Masfield gives expression to his philosophy of life in the following lines from his poem “Biography”:

*“Best trust the happy moments. What they gave
Makes man less fearful of the certain grave.
And gives his work compassion and new eyes.
The days that make us happy make us wise.”*

Admittedly there is danger of misunderstanding in a too ready acceptance of Mr. Masfield’s credo, but reflection will convince that wisdom and happiness were born twin, with health in very close relation. Much of present-day recreation is unquestionably unhealthy, and much of this so-called pleasure fails to amuse because, through it, happiness is not only sought but bought. Says Professor Joad:— *“The knowledge that pleasure may not be pursued directly forms part of the instinctive wisdom of the ages, which the modern world has somehow missed.”* Great, inexhaustible sources of Leisure have become neglected or distorted in use, with the result that much true happiness has gone from life. Mind and body suffer as natural consequence, sicken and lose both stamina and vigour.

The art of conversation itself has almost passed. The hurry of the moment demands a so-called “snappiness” of speech, a form of slovenliness, which creates its own slang and vulgarities, with its devastating effect upon both mind and manners.

*“Immodest words admit of no defence,
For want of decency is want of sense.”*

By “want of sense” it may safely be inferred that Mr. Dillon meant the lack of worth-while things upon which to think and to discourse. It is the mind that is empty and devoid of interests which lapses into primitiveness and re-acts without restraint to indecent impulse. Moral values are obscured and degeneration of mental and physical qualities follows fast. Socrates considered stupidity the cause of wickedness; today it is generally acknowledged that wickedness is the cause of stupidity.

*The bulk of mankind will know days when labour will become less incessant and exhausting, less material, tyrannical, pitiless. What use will humanity make of this leisure? On its employment may be said to depend the whole destiny of man. It is the way in which hours of freedom are spent that determines as much as war or as labour the moral worth of a nation. **It raises or lowers; it replenishes or exhausts.***

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“In all ages men who have had the opportunity to try every kind of life, combined with the energy and the talents to give the more exacting lives a fair trial, have seemed to reach agreement on this one point, that the only things which can give permanent satisfaction are the employment of our best faculties at their highest pitch, alternating with the recreation of the mind in music and art and literature and the conversation of our friends. Such at least has been the worldly teaching of the sages. If we may add to the recreations, the satisfaction of our instinctive need for country sights and sounds, and the opportunity for occasional solitude, omitted in the past because ours is the first civilisation in which they cannot be taken for granted, we can endorse their teaching. To such teaching we must look for the right use of leisure, and by its means alone can we escape the disastrous results of its misuse.”—C. E. M. JOAD.