

IMPORTANT TO PARENTS AND TEACHERS.

(From the *Scientific American*)

We respectfully but very earnestly call the attention of our readers to the statements below. It will be seen that it is proved by a very extensive collection of facts that children learn more when they study three hours a day than they do when they study six. We have long been convinced of this from our own experience and observation, and we believe that no more important truth can be disseminated among the community.

When a child comes in fresh from his play, with the blood bounding through his veins, his brain is full of life and vigor, his ideas are all clear, and he can learn more in fifteen minutes than he can in two hours after his brain is fatigued and his whole system has become languid by confinement at his desk.

From pretty extensive inquiry we are satisfied that the present murderous system of long confinement in school is continued by a want of frankness between parents and teachers. Nearly all the parents are opposed to the practice, but it is kept up by the teachers under the mistaken idea that they will give dissatisfaction by reducing the hours of their own labor.

Not only should the gross amount of study be greatly diminished, but recesses should be more frequent. Thirty minutes is quite long enough for any young child to study, and one hour for a child of any age. The human brain is not like a steam engine that the longer you run it, the more work you get out of it. What the brain can do depends wholly upon its condition. Any person can accomplish more mental labor in one hour with the brain in a healthy and active state, than he can perform in a month when the brain is tired and exhausted.

Among the Parliamentary papers recently issued in England, are two small volumes containing some information collected by Mr. Edwin Chadwick during the recent education inquiry. Mr. Chadwick shows in these papers that the practice of long hours of teaching is a wide cause of enervation and predisposition to disease, and induces also habits of listlessness and dawdling. The half-time system is found to give nearly, if not quite, as good education as the whole time; and common sense tells us that a boy who has acquired the same amount of knowledge in half the time of another boy must have obtained a proportionately superior habit of mental

activity. It is this alertness, combined with the bodily aptitude created by drill, that gives the comparatively stunted boys of the town a preference over the strong robust lads from the coast. Good schoolmasters say that about three hours a day are as long as a bright, voluntary attention on the part of children can be secured and that in that period they may really be taught as much as they can receive: all beyond the profitable limit is waste.—Hence it is urged that part of the present long school hours be devoted to gymnastic exercises or drill, as part of the system of education, or that the half-time system be more adopted. It is a frequent complaint by runaway apprentices and vagrant children that the work to which they were first put was really very painful to them; but children, while at school, might be gradually introduced and accustomed to labor and exertion. Early physical training would remove or diminish congenital defects or bodily weakness. It is estimated that an addition of at least a fifth might be made to the efficiency and value of a boy as a laborer in after life—an addition equivalent, in the mass, to the produce of the labor of one-fifth more of population, without the expense of additional food, clothes or shelter, to maintain them. Drill is very strongly recommended by many eminent men, who give their testimony in these papers. It improves the health, the carriage, the manners, even the character; sharpens the attention, gives habits of obedience, promptness, regularity and self-restraint. Sir F. B. Head writes:—"No animal, whether on four legs or two, can be of any use in the worship of man until he has been sufficiently divested of that portion of his natural inheritance called a 'will of his own.' What's the use of a cow if she won't allow either man or maid to milk her?—what's the use of a horse if he won't put his head into a collar or suffer a saddle on his back? A system of military drill in our schools would prove so beneficial that, if once adopted, an undrilled young man, like a raw, unbroken horse, would be considered unserviceable." "I should consider a youth of double value," says Mr. Whitworth, "who has had the training of the nature of a drill; he attends to commands; he keeps everything he has to do with in a high state of cleanliness; defects are corrected, and special qualifications brought out." "We find the drilled men very superior," says Mr. Fairbairn. "They are constantly in readiness for the protection of the coun-

try," writes Lieutenant General Shaw Kennedy. "I would not," said an eminent manufacturer, "take less than £7,000 for my whole set of workmen in exchange for the uneducated, ill-trained and ill-conditioned workmen of the manufacturer opposite. The readiness of the educated man induces steadiness of work, and comparative certainty in the quality and quantity of the produce." "Why do you bespeak children from the infant school in preference to others?" an operative was asked: "Because they require less beating, and they are sooner taught," was the expressive answer. It is maintained in the papers that much more might be made of the existing means of education by a system of union and consolidation and gradation of schools, and a division of educational labor; and with improvements of this nature, and contemplating results of education in the district half-time industrial schools for pauper—schools which are emancipating children from hereditary pauperism and crime by methods of training which might be so much more widely adopted—"men like us, past the middle period of life," writes Mr. Chadwick, "might expect to see in a few years a change in the whole moral and intellectual condition of the population, as great as any change produced by improvements in physical science and art in our time."

PURE HEARTS

I think we must all admit there is nothing so beautiful as a pure heart,—a heart through which Jesus has gone as he went through the courts of the temple at Jerusalem, driving thence everything that offended,—all hatred, all malice, all jealousy, all envy, all uncleanness,—a heart whose thoughts are pure, whose desires are pure, whose affections are pure, whose motives are pure, whose purposes are pure, whose principles are pure,—a heart that is the house of the immaculate Spirit of the infinite and eternal God! O, there is nothing beneath the skies so attractive, so beautiful, so desirable, so glorious as a pure heart? If not, if candor and conscience constrain us to answer in the negative, let me ask another question,—could we have pure hearts? Are we groaning after conformity to God? Are we hungering and thirsting after righteousness?

It is not the lie that passeth through the mind, but the lie that sinketh in and setteth in it that doth the hurt.