

you are aware is the seat of the nervous system. To it is entrusted the guardianship and direction of all the processes of life whether the involuntary ones such as those of breathing - the action of the heart, or the voluntary ones, that is those controlled by the will. It may be considered as a central telegraph office over whose wires the nervous messages are sent to and received from all parts of the body. More important than this, it is also the organ of thought and the seat of our intellectual life. It grows and is developed with the body and partakes of all its changes, and as in childhood the body is soft and tender, so the brain of the child is a crude soft pulp, undecided in type, pliant and impressible. As the years roll on, and when subjected to proper and not undue exercise it increases in strength and becomes able to stand the pressure of adult life. But if in early youth it is subjected to severe or long continued strain not only is it itself likely to be permanently injured in power and capacity but the body as well will suffer in sympathy. The connection between the brain and the body is so intimate, and the condition of the one so dependent on that of the other that "a healthy mind in a healthy body" is a truism which has been observed and quoted for ages. In fact healthy and properly developed minds cannot exist in unhealthy and imperfectly developed bodies, and the converse that a diseased body accompanies a diseased brain holds equally good.

Accordingly, as the brain plays so important a part in the human economy, it becomes us then to consider carefully, not what it will stand in the way of pressure, but what means are best adapted to ensure its due cultivation and, at the same time, to ensure good, strong, and healthy bodies. The body is, after all, the source of power to the mind, and if its vital force is weakened in any manner the mind must suffer too.

The question now presents itself. Does our educational system in any way interfere with proper physical development? And in reply I would say that unless in judicious hands it is very apt to do so. Year by year, with all its paraphernalia of promotion, entrance, intermediate, primary, and final examinations, it is becoming more and more of the hot-house or forcing order. Cram is, in many instances, the order of the day, and this forcing process is attended in many instances with positive injury both to the body and mind. Every student can recall instances which have come to his own knowledge in which either body and brain has given way, and if in the case of advanced youth such consequences result from excessive mental application, in earlier youth how much greater the danger of it. This is seen in a marked degree in the case of precocious children in whose case the desire for advancement has been encouraged rather than repressed, and who, when a certain degree of mental development is reached, seem to stick there. These are generally found to possess little vitality and are usually the ones who sink under the assaults of disease, their powers of resistance being weakened by their excessive mental application.

Injudicious teachers aided and abetted and often forced by still more injudicious parents also do harm in prescribing excessive homework. In many instances it is positively painful to meet boys and girls coming from school at the hour for dismissal carrying a slate, exercise book, and a small library of text-books; while it may be allowable in the case of the elder pupils to give a little homework, yet leading educationalists and physiologists are almost unanimously of opinion that the 5½ hour limit of brain work should in no case be exceeded in the case of the senior pupils, while for the juniors it is considered to be too much. The close confinement in a more or less impure atmosphere, the enforced quiet, and the necessary restraint are both unnatural and injurious to the child's health, and mind and body both suffer.

Allow me to finish with the following quotation from Herbert Spencer, whose work on "Education," to which I must confess myself largely indebted, should be in the hands of every teacher:—

"Considering the regime as a whole its tendency is too exacting, it asks too much and gives too little. In the extent to which it taxes the vital energies it makes the juvenile life much more like the adult than it should be. It overlooks the truth that, as in the infant, the expenditure of vitality in growth is so great as to leave extremely little for either physical or mental action, so throughout childhood and youth growth is the dominant requirement to which all others must be subordinated.

"Perhaps nothing will so much hasten the time when body and mind will both be adequately cared for as a diffusion of the belief that the preservation of health is a duty. Few seem conscious that there is such a thing as physical morality. \* \* \* The fact is that all breaches of the laws of health are physical sins. When this is generally seen, then, and perhaps not till then, will the physical training of the young receive all the attention it deserves."

### SKEAT'S ETYMOLOGICAL DICTIONARY.\*

Nothing but a careful study of, and a lengthened acquaintance with this admirable work will afford the English scholar an adequate idea of its true value to the student. Professor Skeat takes very high rank in the rapidly growing school which has done within the past few years so much for scientific study of the English language. It is matter for amazement that the work of studying English as the ancient languages have for generations been studied, has been so long postponed and that it should have been begun in Germany instead of in England. The works of Maetzner, Koch, and Edward Mueller have done more than show Englishmen the way; they are still the great magazines of information on early English, and even Professor Skeat is constrained to say that "if the writers of some of the current 'Etymological' dictionaries had taken Mueller for their guide, they might have doubled their accuracy and halved their labour." Those who cannot possibly have access to the works of these German philologists in the original, and those who are deterred from using them by the number of errors in the translations, will hail with delight such a work as this by Prof. Skeat, which, compared with the voluminous "Woerterbuch" of Maetzner is a perfect *multum in parvo*.

It would be absurd to attempt to give here any detailed sketch of the plan of this dictionary which in part form is already to some extent familiar to many students and teachers of English. A few extracts from the preface will suffice to give an idea of the general character of the work:—

Each article begins with a word the Etymology of which is to be sought \* \* \* After the word comes a brief definition merely as a mark to identify the word. Next follows an exact statement of the actual (or probable) language whence the word is taken, with an account of the channel or channels through which it reached us. Thus the word 'Canopy' is marked '(F.,—Ital.,—L.,—Gk.) to be read as, French, from Italian, from Latin, from Greek; that is to say, the word is ultimately Greek, whence it was borrowed, first by Latin, secondly by Italian (from the Latin), thirdly by French (from the Italian), and lastly by English (from French).

\* \* \* After the exact statement of the source follow a few quotations. These are intended to indicate the period at which the word was borrowed, or else the usual middle English forms. \* \* \*

A chief feature of the present work, and one which has entailed enormous labour, is that whenever I cite old or foreign words from which any given English word is derived or with which it is connected I have actually verified the spellings and significations of these words. \* \* \* In the case of verbs and substantives (or other mutually related words) considerable pains have been taken to ascertain and to point out whether the verb has been formed from the substantive, or whether, conversely the substantive is derived from the verb. This often makes a good deal of difference to the Etymology. \* \* \* It is also proper to state that with many articles I am not satisfied. Those that presented no difficulty and took up but little time, are probably the best and most certain. In very difficult cases, my usual rule has been not to spend more than three hours over one word. During that time I made the best I could of it and then let it go. I hope it may be understood that my object in making this and other similar statements regarding my difficulties is merely to enable the reader to consult the book with greater safety, and to enable him to form his own opinion as to how far it is to be trusted.

One remark in Prof. Skeat's preface is worthy of being quoted entire for the hint it contains to those who feel disposed to write for publication:—

It is common for writers to throw the blame of errors upon the printers, and there is in this a certain amount of truth in some instances. But illegibility should also receive its fair portion of blame; and it is only just to place the fact on record, that I have frequently

\*An Etymological Dictionary of the English Language. By the Rev. Walter W. Skeat, M.A., Erlington and Bosworth Professor of Anglo-Saxon in the University of Cambridge. New York, Macmillan & Co.; Toronto, Willing & Williamson Toronto.