

hundred persons in our land to-day, at least an average of ninety-five are sick and prematurely old, are dying before their time. Our habits of living beget many diseases, that are sapping away the power ruling him at its will, his intellect is crowded forward until it has far outgrown the weak and poorly developed body. This can not sustain stress of an active cultured mind under the rule of such an ambition. Recourse must be had to some outside influence to tone up the body's weak energies, and, little by little, the young man accustoms himself to resort to stimulants in his hours of efforts until, after a time, the base appetite is fixed upon him, and the young man of intellect and promise sinks into the hopeless debauchee before he even dreams of danger.

Surely there is a great mistake in our plan of living and a greater mistake in our plan of education. Where is a better place to begin to live healthfully, and to teach others so to live, than in the school-room wherein habits of thought and of living are formed that cling to us throughout our lives?

Are our schools performing their mission in doing all they can to teach our youths to live properly and healthfully, so that they can go forth at graduation, strong and vigorous, ready for life's battles? Ask the young men and women in our college halls to-day, get your reply from the thousands of newly-made graves that contain the buried hopes of fond teachers and bereaved home circles, or, more forcibly still, get your answer from the puny, consumptive faces of scholars, who barely escape with their lives, who have gone forth, not to bless the world, but to burden society and friends with their brief, perhaps useless, lives.

The scholar should learn how to live, as well as what to do while he lives. Of what account is the most liberal education to the invalid, the consumptive, the prematurely old?

Now comes the practical question, wherein do our schools lack in the training they afford?

They fail to give the student a thorough knowledge of himself. Very true he gets a good idea of his bodily structure, the general functions of its organs, the exact number of bones and muscles, the mechanical uses of each; but of the great question of his powers and weaknesses, of the question how to relate himself to persons and things about him, to live the most happily and successfully, of the question how to save or waste his vital force, of all these, not a word of advice does he receive, indeed, it is all a chance, this physical life, and woe and suffering to that one who ignorantly steps beyond the path of law and right living.

Granting it to be the mission of schools to teach people how to live, the question arises, how can our district school-teachers benefit their scholars, in this respect? They are with them but three or four months in the year, they have them but six hours in the day—have no control over their habits of life, or of person. Three things the teacher can do, each of which will have its effect. He can introduce the study of Physiology and Hygiene into the school-room, thus acquainting the scholars with the mechanism of their bodies. The teacher should be a student beyond the mere text-book, not everything is found written down in text-books that a teacher should impart. Habits of life, habits of thought, must be instilled into the scholars' minds, which only the true teacher can impart.

Teachers should be examples of real healthful living; teachers should be reformers by inquiring into and obeying all the laws of their physical life, and thus giving force and zest to their precepts by real consistent example.

Not all good comes from scholars' associations with each other. Secret and pernicious habits are contracted, habits that in thousands of cases have been effectual in dragging down promising boys and girls into the lowest depths of misery and suffering. Parents fail to detect this decline, or if they do, they cannot guess its origin; friends know gradual not how to interfere; of all others, the teacher is best fitted to speak the words of warning that shall save the boy or girl from premature weakness or death. The subject of food, of healthful dieting, has been laughed at, jeered at, and ridiculed only to gain ground among our people, until the more intelligent and thoughtful are beginning to accept the reform in food as they are also that of dress. Plain healthful food, warm healthful dress, simple natural habits, all these, with a body well trained and cultured, free from disease and dissipation, will afford a fitting abode for the active, well-cultured intellect of the present age. The school is the place to train the scholar in all these requirements, because the mass of the people, young and old, are groping in the dark yet, on many of these questions. Schools should be beacon lights to warn the youth of the many dangerous places that threaten them. The teacher, if a teacher, should be so thoroughly posted on all question of physical endurance, that he can instruct his scholars as to the care of their bodies, the saving of their vital power, and the certain effects that must follow irregular habits of any kind.

One course pursued brings happiness and health, another suffering and sickness, one brings prosperity, another adversity. Learning

these from experience, from research and from reason, we can not fail to impart instruction in a science outreaching all others in its effects, as it excels all others in its unchanging exactness. The health reformer in the school is working for his community, his country, his kind, inasmuch as he is working to improve and strengthen mind, soul and body.

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3. NECESSITY OF VENTILATION.

Pure air and plenty of it is a necessity of our being.

The old botanists tell us that a plant can live and thrive on an atmosphere of carbonic dioxide, but we, not being plants, would soon breathe our last. Our grandfathers told us of the pure air of the old-fashioned log school-house, with its immense fire-place and huge back-logs, scorching the face, while freezing the back.

It is not reeking with obnoxious vapours and unsavory smells, for the wide chimney carried them all away to be scattered to the four winds of heaven. The instruction was poor but the air was good.

After the log school-house was torn down, there came a generation of tight boarded houses, with red hot stoves. There was no huge chimney to take away the smell of roasting apples, old boots and shoes, and scorching clothes.

Into a small room were often crowded fifty scholars, and on a cold afternoon the air became positively abominable. Here were bred fevers, consumption, scrofula, rheumatism and many of the "dispensations of Providence" that followed. The results are not at all obliterated, but linger in the constitutions of the men and women of to-day, for the curse of foul air descends even to the third and fourth generation.

But do not say that things are changed now, and that ill-ventilated school-houses are all burned up or remodelled. See what the *Lima Recorder* of a recent date says: "The school-house of the village district-school in this town, besides being altogether too small to accommodate the children of the district, is in a woful condition as regards ventilation, and should be looked to immediately. No adequate means have been provided for properly ventilating it, and after the school has been in session an hour or so, the air is wholly unfit for human beings to breathe. Lately, we have heard of numbers of cases where the children have been taken with vomiting, while many others have gone home with headaches or other ills contracted in the close, foul, or poisonous atmosphere. This is a matter that demands the prompt attention of the people, for we believe, this school-house is undermining the health of the children who are confined in it, and that a long train of ills will result if it is allowed to remain as it is."

Lima is a beautiful village in the Genesee Valley, with a flourishing seminary, and fine churches, and surrounded with a sober, industrious and intelligent community, but they do not think they are sustaining a hot-bed of disease in their midst. Let them take off a part of the roof, arrange ventilating flues, lower the window from the top, do something to arrest this disease-breeder. It would pay to close the school, and send the children out into God's pure air awhile, giving them a chance to grow up strong and hearty.

An old-fashioned minister was preaching in a tight, unventilated church, in which by some means a window was left partly open. A good deacon during the sermon closed it. The minister stopped, and turning to the deacon, said in solemn tones, "If I were preaching in a jug I believe you would put the cork in."

We are abating this nuisance somewhat but it would not be difficult in New York or Chicago to find school-houses filled with children, in which the air is not fit to be breathed. Several school-rooms in New York last winter, were pronounced by the health officer to be unfit for human beings to live in.

But it is not only from stoves and foul breath that the poison comes. In our cities there rise from the sewers gases which should pass away, but like unwelcome visitors come back, and the trouble in this case is, we do not smell the most poisonous of them. Bad smells are not as injurious as smells that do not smell at all. Such gas comes from cess-pools and other abominations, the mere suggestion of which makes us turn sick.

Now to make our children live in such poison is not a part of civilization; it belongs to barbarism.

It is time our city and school officers looked into this matter and remedied it. Darkness still lingers, and in more places than we think.

Foul air and foul gases are ruining the health of our children. —*National Teachers' Monthly*.