

and a keener desire for approbation, than boys evince; but their mental endurance is generally in inverse proportion to their mental agility, and their love of praise may prove a very perilous allurements to mental overstrain. The period of adolescence is usually with boys an epoch of inceptive bodily and mental invigoration; in girls it is always a critical physical transition, through which they will pass with less danger the less their brain and nerves have been enfeebled by prior exertion.

Thinking is hard work; none feel that it is light except those who do very little of it. Thinking is brain work, just as walking or fighting is muscle work. The more work a muscle does the more blood is attracted to it, and the faster it wears out and parts with its constituent elements, to replace them with fresh ones derived from the blood supplied to it. All work, whether in the muscles, the brain, or any other organ or structure, causes increase of heat. This fact, as regards the brain engaged in close thinking, has been established by recent thermometric experiments. Now, a certain amount of work is necessary to the good health and due growth of every organ; but overwork necessitates overwaste, and that overwaste is accompanied by a dangerous excess of heat. These facts are now well known to physicians, especially in the form of disease called typhoid fever, in which every degree of rise in the thermometer makes the doctor tremble, and when he sees the mercury reach a certain high mark, he becomes convinced that the case will end in death. Kirke White, we are informed, used to study, sometimes all night, with a basin of cold water by his side, in which, from time to time, he dipped a towel which he wore on his burning head. He died of consumption, but also of something more, for at the last he was quite insane. I have known of some other ardent students who also were obliged thus to cool their brains. I avoid telling you where, or how, they now are.

I should like very much to learn the results of a wide series of thermometric observations on the heads of the young people who are now studying for what is called your "intermediate examination." I have heard of the nocturnal slavery of a few of these early grave, or asylum lodgment seekers, and I must say they are on the wrong road to future good health of either body or mind. As to what may be the extent or the severity of your ulterior higher examination, I am but imperfectly informed, but the little I have learned almost makes me shiver. Within the past year I was consulted by a broken-hearted and much brain-hurt young man, who had failed in his examination for a second-class teacher's certificate. On inquiring of him what were the subjects on which he had to pass, he named, if I rightly remember, twelve. Now, if he had to pass in all these, it is presumable that he also would have to teach them all, and of course his scholars would have to study them all. God help me, if I had to stand up in even a quarter of a dozen!