work, overworry, and other disturbing conditions upon the readiness and keenness of our thinking, and the amiability of our dispositions.

Every teacher has surely had the experience that after a hard day's work she is not so quick in understanding what people say to her, or in solving a problem; or, in short, in comprehending any new thought. She finds also that her attention is not so well controlled, so constant; she cannot remember so readily as in the morning, for example, when she feels fresh and vigorous. At such times she is more easily irritated; things annoy her that she would pass over lightly on other occasions. The cause of these phenomena is generally said to be and truthfully enough, too, mental tiredness or fatigue; but it has never occurred to many a teacher that these same conditions may exist in childhood, and be the occasion of dulness of mind and perversity of emotional and moral nature. We all have a tendency to think the mind is entirely independent of the body, and if one is not bright and of agreeable disposition we are prone to believe the cause is purely mental,—the individual is out of joint spiritually. "There is trouble with his mind," we say, "or with his will," but hardly ever do we hear that the child has not nervous energy enough to do good intellectual work or to withstand evil temptations of various kinds.

A SIMPLE TEST.

It seems to me exceedingly important that every teacher should appreciate the marvellously intimate relation that exists between mental activity and brain and nerve conditions. A simple way by which to become convinced of this is to study one's own daily experiences. When one is sick he finds that no amount of will effort will enable him to do as good thinking, or feel as pleasantly and amiably as when he is perfectly well. After a hard year's work in school most of us realize our inability to apply ourselves to diligent study during the summer months. And so illustrations without limit might be cited to show that sickness, overwork, worry, lack of proper food, and other conditions have a marked effect upon mind and disposition, and it will be easy for all readers to note the effect of these upon themselves if they have not already become assured of their disturbing influence.

On account of the importance of this matter I wish to enter here into a little technical description of the workings of the brain in order to show the effect of fatigue upon it. In the first place, if it were possible for us to examine its surface with a microscope of such power as is found in psychological laboratories we should see that it is comprised of an infinite number of small cells which in a state of rest are full of a substance that I shall here call nerve energy. This substance is derived from certain elements in the blood, which of course are in turn derived from the food we eat. Now, it has been shown that during mental activity of any kind, whether intellectual, emotional, or volitional, some of this energy in the cells of the brain is totally changed in character, and thrown off as waste matter, through the skin and other organs of excretion. The cells which at first presented a full, round appearance seem shrunken and withered after much mental action; that is, they are in a state of fatigue. If this fatigue extends over a large part of the brain, nervous exhaustion follows, which in an extreme stage becomes nervous prostration in the adult, while in children it is spoken of as chorea, an aggravated form of which is St. Vitus' Dance, with which every teacher is probably familiar.