

had the privilege of addressing a respectable body of teachers in a county town. After the close, a young lady was heard to say she "liked it all very well except the figures." For a like reason I would suppose she would like the play of "Hamlet" better with the exclusion of the Prince of Denmark.

Doubting not that I have quite far enough trespassed on your patience in dealing with matters relating to your own position and interest, I must now entreat your extended forbearance whilst I offer a few observations bearing upon the condition and well-being of those placed under your care. I presume not one of you will decline to confess, with St. Paul, that "when you were a child you spoke as a child, you understood as a child, and you thought as a child." I also presume you will admit that the processes of speech, understanding, and thinking have their organic seat of direction in the brain. Well, what is the brain of a child like, and what degree of stress or exertion is it able, without injury, to sustain? The child's brain at birth is but an imperfectly formed or developed organ; it is very soft—no better, in fact, than semi-fluid; it acquires firmer consistence but slowly and gradually, and, like the rest of the bodily structures, it does not attain to its normal firmness and resisting capacity before adult age. It is estimated that the brain receives and circulates one-fifth of all the blood of the system. The more blood an organ receives, the more important must be its functions, and the greater its demand for developmental nutrition and unhampered action. The child's brain, from the earliest dawning of intelligence, is a very busy worker; but the child prefers that sort of work which it finds most agreeable; it skips, and plays, and laughs, and shouts, for these are all pleasant operations, and highly conducive to both its bodily and mental well-being. This is the first and far the most profitable part of a child's education; but it is not to last indefinitely. In course of time, but often far too soon and too harshly, its frolicking and skipping are interrupted, or very much curtailed, and the wayward urchin is sent to you to be turned from a restless automaton into a thinking, or perhaps a parrotting machine, with a ponderous balance-wheel, which is often very hard to start, and sometimes impossible to stop.

When I hear of a boy carrying to and from school six or eight books, in which he has to prepare at home as many lessons, I sincerely pity him, if he is dull or is a reluctant student; if he is clever and ambitious, I tremble for his prodigal discounting of future brain power. Even within our own city I could recall the names of too many who thus laid the foundation of early mental bankruptcy. The danger to clever, ambitious girls, similarly tasked or incited, is still greater. Their brain and nerve structure is finer and feebler than that of boys, and their muscular tone is kept at a lower point by their usual indoor, sedentary habits. They often display more quickness of apprehension,