

relations. There is this peculiarity in the nerves that have their seat in the spinal marrow: they are composed of two classes—nerves of motion and nerves of sensation,—which extend to every part of the system. These nerves are constantly brought into action in all kinds of exercise, and, as the muscles compose so large a portion of the body, these nerves are very abundant; the motor nerves are indispensable to anything like healthy organization. It is by the use of these agents that motion and life are kept up in the body.

Suppose, now, that for a series of years the individual takes but little physical exercise; these motor nerves soon lose their strength and power, and the balance between the nerves of motion and sensation is destroyed. And not only this, but, as the nerves centering in the spinal marrow lose in vitality, while the activity of the nerves centering in the brain and ganglia is constantly increasing, the balance of power between these different *classes* is also destroyed. Whenever this balance or harmony of function is once lost it is not easily regained. As the strength and power of these *voluntary* nerves become much lessened from inactivity, the individual is subjected more and more to the influence of the nerves of sensation, which have been over-exercised, and not unfrequently become morbid and irritable. The ganglia, the sympathetic nervous system, under whose influence the organs of the body grow and live, will share also in the undue activity imparted to the other centres by the inaction of the muscular system. No description or language can express fully the terrible effects of these changes in the nerves from a healthy and normal state to one artificial and diseased.

Many girls may go through the whole course of education—the high school, the seminary, and the college—may shine as scholars in every de-

partment of learning; but what can we say of their constitutions—of their physical stamina? Has not the mind or brain been educated too much, altogether, at the expense of the body?

These evils are of such a character that physicians only can judge fully of their nature and extent. It is a fact that there has been, within twenty or thirty years, a great increase of diseases among New England women, of such type and character as could originate only from an excess of nerve tissue or the want of a well-balanced organization. Headaches, and neuralgia in all its diversified forms, hysteria and neuroses in great variety and intensity, have multiplied. Some of these complaints are accompanied with excruciating pain and long suffering, as they are found difficult to treat and almost impossible to cure. When a person of an intense nervous temperament breaks down in health, the invalid condition is apt to continue months or years, and sometimes for life. With such an organization, combined with a want of physical stamina, medicines and sanitary agencies do not so readily afford relief; neither can we call to our aid so fully the recuperative powers of nature. There is no class of complaints so complicated in their nature, so obstinate in treatment, and so doubtful of cure, and at the same time accompanied with so much suffering, as nervous diseases.

There are one or two features connected with this extreme development of nerve tissue which call for special notice. It happens not unfrequently, with persons possessing this organization, that when all their wants are not gratified, when overtaken with disappointment, or overcome by trials, the nervous system becomes irritable and morbid; the disposition and temper of mind are at the same time changed. Without sufficient muscular force, or the control of the voluntary