

an extract from a late number of the *Michigan Medical News*, on

THE PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN.

The trite saying, "the child is father of the man," is usually regarded as having reference rather to the mental than to the physical in the individual. This is unfortunate, in so far as it may have a tendency to cause undue importance to be attached to the early mental development of the child. It is to be feared, and indeed thoughtful men are becoming aroused to the fact, that there is a grave radical defect in existing methods of educating the young. So much more influence does brain wield than muscle in the affairs of men, that the error of attempting to cultivate the former to the neglect of the latter, is one into which it is quite natural to fall. While the mental is superior to the physical, it is far from being independent of it. There may be the sound body without the sound mind, but there cannot be the sound, well-balanced, self-possessed mind without perfect physical well-being. There may be mental quickness and brilliancy in the weakly body, and indeed these qualities of mind, whether in the child or in the man, are usually associated with defective physical development; but the mind whose workings are deep, and whose products are calculated to endure is that which is contained in the sound body. So true is this, that the leaders of the day, as they have been in all times, whether in science, politics or government, are men of good body.

The human animal, very strangely, receives less attention from man than do the domestic brutes. The latter have been taken from a degenerate, wild condition. And by careful feeding and judicious mat-

ing, have been developed into the noble specimens of the modern stock farm—horses, cattle, sheep, and poultry, while man himself instead of developing, physically at least, has by being left to follow the blind dictates of his own passions, retrograded from the high estate of his barbarian ancestry. The necessity of a proper mating of the male and female, to secure the best result in offspring, and the proper care and feeding of the offspring, is all the secret of good stock. Defects in the female can be overcome in the offspring by superiority in the same points in the male, and *vice versa*; the breeder who would expect a good result in any particular regard from the union of two animals, both defective in that regard, basing his expectations on some mysterious "affection," which they might have for each other, would soon find his strain running down. And yet men and women have habitually for years done this! Is it any wonder, therefore, that while the inferior animals of to-day are far advanced over those of the past, the human animal should, instead of improving, have actually degenerated? The fact that men are no worse than they are, is doubtless attributable to the improvements during the past two hundred years in hygiene and sanitary matters.

There are, however, difficulties in the way of an intelligent stirpiculture, difficulties which can only be removed by such a general diffusion of knowledge on these points as will keep men and women from falling in love with their physical incompatibles. The time of such a diffusion lies very indefinitely in the future, but against that time there is another remedy which it is largely in the powers of legislatures to apply—the proper feeding and training of the young. On general