

THE AVERAGE HEALTH OF OUR GIRLS.

BY AN ONTARIO HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER.

"**T**HIR is one thing I have not told," said the honest young gentleman whose composition "On Girls" Mark Twain recently gave to the world, "Thir is one thing I have not told, and that is they always now their lessons bettern boys." The young gentleman was right, and they do a good many other things besides. Music, so we are told by competent judges, is a study to which a great deal of time must be devoted, even by those who possess a decided aptitude for it, in order that any progress may be made. But a large number of girls are expected to study arithmetic, algebra, geometry, English history, Canadian history, grammar, literature, composition, geography, spelling, book-keeping, writing, reading, French, Latin, German, hygiene, scientific temperance, chemistry, physics,—these are all I can remember just now, but it seems to me I have forgotten some of them; and then when they have studied, or tried to study, such of these subjects as the powers that be, from the Minister of Education downwards, see fit to prescribe for them, they have music to study and practise besides. And if anybody thinks that it is nothing very hard to sit on a piano-stool for an hour or two at a time, with no support for the back save atmospheric pressure, and strive to grasp scales, and intervals, and octaves, and rests, and slurs, and waltzes, and exercises, and a number of other things, then let that person remember what the old lady said, "Experientia does it." Nor is this all that girls do. All of them, except a few of the baser sort, are able to help their mothers in various things in the house, and do so; and however good and desirable and

important a thing this is (would that there were more of it), yet all these things should be counted when one comes to consider the full force of the boy's remark: "They always now their lessons bettern boys." There is another thing that girls do, they "go out." Out they go—to the toboggan-slide, to the skating rink, to the prayer-meeting, to the church festivities, to nowhere in particular, to everywhere in general, and, finally, to the party. They go out to this last a great deal. Some of them make an average of forty per season. And they come home when they are ready. That was the reason why I had the honour of receiving the following excuse (sic) for absence:

"Please excuse Maria for not being at school this morning, as she was out until three o'clock at a party, and so could not come to school so early as nine o'clock !!!"

And how do they come to school at nine o'clock? A great many of them come with white faces and weary air. By the time they have journeyed upstairs, hung up their wraps and reached their seats in the school-room they sink down with evident relief, and some of them scarcely stir from their places until it is time for them to go home. Not more than half of them can really be called well; not more than half of them bring to their work that clear and happy mind, free from the drag of bodily pains, and aches, and weariness, and weakness which it is so necessary that they should possess. I have some few statistics to offer, collected with a good deal of care. First, as to the time of retiring to rest at night. Five per cent. go to bed after midnight;