

5th. The St. John Asylum, New Brunswick, in a total of 398 men admitted, shows 2 teachers ; but in 340 women admitted, 9 teachers.

The following paragraph from the 31st page of the report for 1880 of the Utica Asylum, New York State (which I am sorry to say is among the number of those which have not distinguished the sex of teachers admitted), is certainly not uninteresting :—

"Of the 468 admissions, 4 of the persons had received a collegiate, 30 an academic, and 374 a common school education ; 2 could only read and write, 36 could read only, and 22 had received no education."

Permit me here to introduce another paragraph, which I recently met with in a city paper :—

"Ohio is going to have a Medical Commission appointed to inquire into the conditions under which scholars in public schools work. The two points most insisted on by those urging an investigation are the alarming increase of myopia, or defective sight, and the impaired nervous condition of the pupils who have passed through all the stages of public school education. These troubles are not confined to Ohio, but prevail in Ontario. One of the reasons is the attempt to teach too many subjects. In the higher classes of our public schools it is thought necessary that a lad who is destined to be a mechanic should be drilled in Latin and Euclid."

It has certainly appeared to me that of late years the number of young persons met with on our streets, wearing spectacles or eye-glasses, is proportionally very much greater than it was twenty-five years ago. As to the increase of nervous affections, I believe that fact is indisputable.

It would, then, seem, from the figures cited, that education—that is to say, of the high pressure order now prevailing among our cousins—is not a very reliable protective against insanity. Let us not, however, adopt the conclusion that ignorance is a potent preventive. It is my decided belief that a sensible, solid education, obtained without overtaxing the mental powers, and without injuring the health of the body, is one of the best preservatives of mental integrity.

I think it is impossible to make a calm survey of the facts which I have submitted to your consideration in relation to the two maladies—consumption and insanity—without coming to the conclusion that persistent mental overwork, and the wear and worry of the teacher's life, are very badly adapted to the delicate and highly susceptible nervous frame of woman. It is more than I can hope for that the observations I have felt constrained to offer will meet the approbation of that portion of my audience whom it has been my sincere purpose to benefit, for unpleasant truths are like distasteful medicines, which no honey-smearing of the edge of the cup will deprive of their repulsiveness, or will convince the sick child of their healing virtues. Not long ago I