

care, every minute part being so admirably adapted to fulfil its particular function—the whole organization so complex in its details, and yet so harmonious as a whole, that we are lost in admiration whenever we seriously consider it; surely this beautiful creation is worthy of some thought—some regard—being bestowed upon it by us. Is it not a talent committed to our charge in order that we may improve it—that it may be perfected to its highest attainable point—and not wrapped up in the napkin of neglect? How otherwise can it be a fitting helpmeet to the indwelling mind—must not the two work in perfect accord, if we would attain a high degree of perfection in either, if we would have noble specimens of our race? Then *why is it* that we so persistently ignore the claims of the *body* to equal care and cultivation as the *mind*? It must be from want of consideration on the part of *some*, and with *others* arises from such devotion to purely mental pursuits that they have no thoughts for ought else, and this latter is no doubt caused in a high degree by the homage which is everywhere accorded, and *rightly so*, to intellectual attainments; so much so indeed that people seldom stop to enquire at what an expense of suffering such attainments are too often purchased; of which how many instances are on record;—of noble youths who having gained high academic honors, have found them but as a laurel wreath to deck their funeral bier—of *others* who have devoted themselves so entirely to abstruse studies, to the utter neglect of their health, that they have become living martyrs, and finally sunk in the unequal contest. True, *many* will say—but they have not lived in vain, they have left a glorious name behind them—to which I reply that in *some* cases no doubt the results *almost* justified the sacrifice; but in too many cases the ideas became one-sided and distorted by diseased mental action—for by uninterrupted work the mind becomes heavy—dull—and almost paralysed—and in *all* cases a certain period each day devoted to exercise would not only have saved bodily suffering, but being a means of lengthening lives valuable to their country; in fact they would have found that the time spent in recruiting their bodily vigour was actually time saved, by the additional vigour which would thereby have been imparted to their minds.

If in the case of *boys* this neglect of bodily culture is lamentable, what shall we say of *girls*? who, by the conventional rules which govern society, are debarred from taking more than the semblance of exercise—they cannot on being released from school rush to the nearest open space and play "*Ja*," "*leap frog*," "*cricket*," "*bon bah*," or any other of those games which combined with the *shouting* that invariably accompanies them, are of such immense value in atoning for the absence of any regulated system of exercise—no, poor little missie has no such chance—she must walk home in the most genteel manner possible, *perhaps*? indulging in a softened laugh with some companion—her arms carefully hugged to her side—motion of the *lower extremities* only being permitted; added to which her poor little body is in all probability fenced in by one of those instruments of death called corsets, binding up the naughty muscles that are begging and praying to be let loose, and have an opportunity of strengthening themselves—and the young lady is considered to be in a highly satisfactory condition—if she is pale and weak, that is of no consequence, she is *genteel*, and *quiet*, and is getting on so nicely with her lessons!—She suffers with all sorts of indescribable sensations, feels an inaptitude for any kind of exercise, is easily out of breath, catches cold on the slightest provocation—but no matter—of course it is the *natural thing for girls* to be delicate!

I beg leave to dispute this. I say without fear of contradiction that so far from its being the *natural thing* for women to be sickly and ailing, we need only look at *savage nations*, and *some amongst our own working classes* to see SLENDID SPECIMENS of health, strength—and endurance—which in *some* instances seems to exceed that of the majority of men; and there is no reason why the generality of women should not be models of symmetry, and with such sound vigorous health as should make life a thing to be enjoyed instead of proving—as alas in how many instances it does—one constant scene of pain and misery.

This can, however, never be the case until we institute a scheme of thorough—systematic—training and developing of the bodily powers, and until the attainment of high health is counted at *least* on a level with one of the so-called accomplishments. If some part of the four or five hours daily given to acquiring perfection as a performer on the piano, which acquirement is by the bye seldom made use of after marriage, devoted to exercise—what a life long fund of health would thereby be attained, what full rounded forms—expansive chests—straight backs—firm, well knit limbs—bright eyes—and clear complexions! How would the miserable colours of disease be lowered, and the bright exulting flag of health displayed in its place!

But so far from there being any tendency generally speaking to an amelioration of the present system, do we not find on the contrary

that all efforts are pointed towards developing the *mind* only; every method is ransacked to discover how the *brain* may be more stimulated; it is taxed unrelentingly, without considering that there is a *limit* beyond which it is in the highest degree dangerous to proceed, and not pausing to think that the soul and body, the mental and physical are so interwoven in our organization, that *one* cannot be overtasked and weakened without disordering the *other*, and that a *sound mind* in a *sound body* is a positive necessity wherever we would attain the highest results. But whilst the majority of persons are perfectly willing to admit all this in *theory*—*practically* they deny it; *some* there are who even affect to treat with superciliousness the claims of *physical education* as altogether beneath the notice of any one who would aspire to the appellation of *intellectual*: the mind—the mind—is their constant cry, tell us of intellectual pursuits—tell us of what refines the tastes, and cultivates the highest aspirations of the soul—but talk not to us of wasting time in mere muscular movements.

Such is the greeting not unfrequently accorded to *true philanthropists*, real lovers of their species, such is the reception they meet with from persons who cannot perceive the beautiful harmony which reigns everywhere in nature, by which each part is in perfect accord with another, and by which law as the Apostle so aptly expresses it, "If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it."—When that great man Ling in 1812 projected the founding of a central establishment at Lund, for carrying out his philosophical system of gymnastics, he applied to the *Minister of Public Instruction*, asking for Government support, and received for answer the following:

"There are enough of jugglers and rope dancers without exacting any further charge from the public treasury." Fortunately public opinion is more enlightened now than it was at that time; but in future years, we shall on looking back, see that we have been in quite as great a state of ignorance, comparatively speaking, as this *uninstructed officer of instruction*—but with the amount of knowledge that we actually do possess, it is high time that bodily culture be received as an honored associate and co-worker with mental culture, and not degraded to the level of a mean drudge—a tolerated nuisance—together must they proceed on their great mission of elevating the human race. As Montaigne says: "It is a soul, not a *body* only which we educate, we must not train one without the other, but must guide and lead them like a pair of horses harnessed to one shaft." Were physical education rescued from the narrow limits to which it is now consigned and encouraged to come forth in its proper dignity and full dimensions, it would, whilst adapting all exercises to the actual wants of the body, and carefully graduating them according to the capacity of the pupils, also aim at informing their minds as far as necessary, as to the beautiful organization of which they are the custodians, teaching them the laws of physiology, and impressing on their minds such a respect for them, and of the certain punishment consequent on their infraction, that to commit a physiological sin, even though not of a character to be followed by any severe consequences, would become a matter of deep regret. And is it to be supposed that pupils thus grounded in the laws of hygiene would, on becoming parents, exhibit an amount of apathy and ignorance concerning the health of their children, which they would be shocked at doing in the case of their domestic animals.

Do we not see cases where whilst the *stables* are daily ventilated, parents are perfectly contented that the *sleeping apartments of their little ones* shall be loaded with mephitic vapours, all avenues being carefully closed against the admission of the (in their cases) dreaded air.

"The night air" with its supposed baneful effects, must not visit their offspring lest it should bring with it disease and death, but the *heavy carbonic-acid-charged* atmosphere of the bed-room is never for one moment doubted; no!—the room is warm, and all is well, and yet the little sleepers unknown to their fond parents, are silently inhaling draughts of most potent poison, which lays its deadly paralyzing influence upon their young forms, and develops in their systems, diseases which it is "*so impossible to account for*!" The dear children have not done this, that, and the other, says the fond mother: "I am sure we are most particular about their diet and clothing, &c." Oh! dear, yes, of course you are as far as your knowledge extends, but dear Mr. or Madame, did you ever know a plant to flourish with a worm at its root, did you ever see a tree grow vigorously which had been stripped of its bark? and do you not know that unless you insure your little ones at all times a supply of *pure air* but especially when they are confined, as during sleeping hours, to one spot, all your other efforts will be in vain? Do you not know that for the due nutrition of the tissues it is necessary that they be constantly supplied with oxygen by means of the blood, and that without this their functional activity ceases?

But here it is proper that I should point out what I may term the philosophy of the whole matter as regards that most important