

Balzac thought, to secure fame and fortune for each of the happy thirteen. The scheme failed.

At the age of fifty, Balzac marries a Russian lady of wealth. Shortly after he dies, from the effects of strong coffee, and overwork at night.

Correspondence.

PHYSICAL CULTURE.

MESSRS EDITORS—Some excellent remarks in your last number on the subject of an Acadia Gymnasium have suggested some additional thoughts on the above subject which I will briefly present in this paper. Modern science and indeed all experience has shown that mind and body are not separate and independent entities, while they exist together here. They are closely inter-related. That which affects the one, affects the other. That which gives vigor and freshness to thought is good health. Physical soundness appears to be an important condition to mental strength. In connection with physical weakness, may, it is true, sometimes be found, brilliancy of mind; but it is not apt to be strong and enduring. The sound mind will be found normally to co-exist with the sound body. This appears to be a general rule.

The brain is the organ of the mind. By a want of physical vigor, the brain-functions are weakened and the mind proportionally suffers. Let the nervous or digestive systems be much diseased and the mind may live in an atmosphere of constant gloom. Its energies may be lost in spite of itself. But remove the physical oppression, let the life currents flow briskly, let health come back and mark the change! Beauty and poetry are in the world then. There is ambition then, to do and dare. Hope, the fair one, replaces gloom and nerves us to think and labor.

It has been said that a man thinks through his whole body, from head to foot. A homely statement, but perhaps it has some truth in it. The character of one's thoughts may partake quite largely of the nature of all bodily conditions. Even moral courage may not as well exist in a frail body, other things being equal. If these views are not fanciful, the appeals to us for athletic culture are strong. Nature cannot easily be cheated out of her just rewards and penalties. It appears to have been ordered in the constitution of things that physical exercise should be one of the conditions of that inestimable blessing, health. Properly to recognize and comply with the physical

laws, is to put ourselves in the way of securing some of the highest good from life.

All physiological information should be warmly welcomed. All that Science which has reference to man is not to be set aside thanklessly. It proffers to us its services for reception or rejection.

Has it not occurred to our readers that the fascinating power, Beauty, is very largely an effect of *health*. It is this last which produces buoyancy of spirit. It causes sprightliness of mind. It sparkles from the countenance with magnetic warmth and fervor. With this, combine the mental and moral, and have you not the truly graceful and the lovely?

Some one has said that health is physical religion. This is an odd saying but may it not be worthy of being said? Does it not appear that a complete philosophy of man's nature should include physical culture? Cultivate the body exclusively and you have a savage. Cultivate the mental faculties exclusively and you have an unfit for the world. Cultivate both and you secure the best results. You have symmetry.

Perhaps our various Institutions of learning have not sufficiently recognized this department of education. Should it not be included in a liberal culture? When health is lost, very much else is lost with it. Education ceases to be of the same value then. The student will pore over the pages of the ancient classics, study philosophy and *even mathematics* with very commendable zeal. Yet how often does he neglect physical exercise, physical knowledge. Would not Athletics as an Election in a College Course be one of the very best for a student? If he looks to the future, if he would preserve his health, if he would enlarge the sphere of his labors, would not his choice be a wise one? The mere inhaling of copious breaths of fresh air is greatly invigorating to the wearied student. Of course a good system of Athletics would imply that all exercises should be regular and sustained, not spasmodic and hence useless.

But it may here be objected that a student has many other things to engage his attention. He has many studies to master. He perhaps must concern himself with the means of living. The objection is a very good one. It holds with other departments of effort. When we attempt to do all we should do, we find there are some rugged ways in life. We find that it is much easier to theorize than to act and fulfil. Our ideals are not easily realized. A man lives a short time in this world and discovers that there are a thousand opposing forces to be overcome, various faculties to be subordinated, dangers to be shunned although unseen, stern trials and discouragements

to be grappled with. Grand problems once viewed by him as absolute, become relative. Nevertheless, those obligations which belong to us are not less binding. Nevertheless, it is true that he who best obeys most laws is wisest, best rewarded and most truly lives. Is it not also true that in our hands are the sublimest possibilities?

But to return, however fine a mind a man may have and however strong an ambition, vigorous muscular exercise will be found to be of the greatest advantage. It will form a basis of real greatness. Many instances might be referred to in proof of this principle. A want of athletic training is one good reason why many men, having all the phrenological indications of greatness, do not really become distinguished. Other things being equal, the strongest minds, the most successful business men, the best orators are men of robust physical powers. A well balanced organism furnishes the truest type of manhood.

When the old Roman Empire was a world-ruler, the athletic power and culture of her sons were at their maximum. After, when luxury and physical degeneracy crept in, the ruder athletic prowess of the northern hordes became her conqueror. So everywhere, and in all times, do the hardier forces of bodily soundness and strength follow on the footsteps of luxurious physical declension. Thus are shown the evils of a very precocious civilization.

Respectfully,

E. M. CHESLEY.

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