

# HAMPTON TRACTS

FOR THE PEOPLE

SANITARY SERIES

No. II.

## Duty of Teachers

BY E. W. COLLINGWOOD



NEW YORK

*Published for the Hampton Tract Committee*

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182 FIFTH AVENUE

1879

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"Education is the apprenticeship of life."

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HAMPTON, VIRGINIA :

PUBLISHED FROM THE HAMPTON INSTITUTE PRESS.

1873.

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Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1878, by Eleanor W. Collingwood, in the office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

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## MAXIMS FOR HEALTH AND EDUCATION.

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O BLESSED HEALTH ! thou art above all gold and treasure; it is thou who enlargest the soul, and openest all its powers to receive instruction, and to relish virtue. He that has thee has little more to wish for! and the that is so wretched as to want thee wants everything with thee.

*Sterne.*

A SOUND mind in a sound body, if the former be to the glory of the latter, the latter is indispensable to the former.

*Edwards.*

LIFE is not to live, but to be well.

*Martial.*

THE first wealth is health. Sickness is poor-spirited and cannot serve any one; it must husband its resources to live. But health or fullness answers its own ends and has to spare, runs over and inundates the neighborhoods and creeks of other men's necessities.

*Emerson.*

HEALTH is the greatest of all possessions, and it is a maxim with me, that a hale cobbler is a better man than a sick king.

*Bickerstaff.*

EDUCATION is the apprenticeship of life.

*Willmott.*

THE sacred books of the ancient Persians say. If you would be holy, instruct your children, because all the good acts they perform will be imputed to you.

*Montesquien.*

IN this country every one gets a mouthful of education, but scarcely any one a full meal.

*Theodore Parker.*

EDUCATION commences at the mother's knee, and every word spoken within the hearing of little children tends toward the formation of character.

*Hosea Barlow.*

JAILS and State prisons are the complements of schools; so many less as you have of the latter, so many more you must have of the former.

*Horace Mann.*

## DUTY OF TEACHERS.

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The old Greek philosopher, Aristotle, said, "All who have meditated on the art of governing mankind, have been convinced that the fate of empires depends on the education of youth." More than two thousand years have passed since then, and the people to whom these words were addressed have long been forgotten; but the saying of the wise old teacher has been handed down to us, and is well worth our attention.

First, let us see in what a correct education consists, and what means are best to secure this education to all future generations of men. What course of training is best for children, to make them live good and true lives in this world, to develop all the best parts of their natures, and so prepare them for the life to come! These and many other questions arise in connection with the subject, and I think that everyone who gives it proper attention will agree in saying that there can be but one answer for them all—which is this: *Education should aim at the highest possible development and perfection of man's moral, intellectual and physical nature.* Yet if we look carefully through the schools in this country alone, we shall be surprised to find that in most cases much more attention is given to the intellect than to the morals and health. This is often the fault of parents as well as teachers, and arises from an ambitious desire on the part of one or the other, or both, to have children make great mental progress; while the fact is often lost sight of, that this object is attained at the expense of the body. So much depends on education, and so little can be accomplished in this world without it, that it is of the

greatest importance that those who are instructed should be taught in the best possible way, and receive physical as well as mental training to insure sound minds in sound bodies. If we could fully realize how closely connected the moral, intellectual and physical natures of man are, we should consider it a sin to separate them as we do; and until we can train them together we need expect nothing but a generation of "one-sided" men and women.

Of course, the first responsibility rests with parents; but next to them there is no one who can do more good for the young people of this country, or any other, than teachers. Their influence, either for better or worse, is almost inconceivable. Their words, acts and even looks are repeated by those who are brought in daily contact with them; while suggestions and good advice are often accepted with a better grace from a true, warm-hearted teacher, than they can be from anybody else.

The position of teacher is one of such immense responsibility that it should never be lightly assumed, nor taken by those who are not acquainted with human nature and the laws of health. Mere book-learning is only a small part of what a teacher should be familiar with; and I hope the time will come when parents will be unwilling to have their children placed in the charge of teachers who are unacquainted with physical laws, and unable to train the body in a systematic way.

When we consider how early children are sent to school, and for how long a time they remain there, just when the muscles and bones are developing and the little frames need most strengthening,—when we remember that the rooms in which they stay are close, and that for the time they are there they must keep still and learn their lessons in seats that are often too large or too small,—we wonder that so many come out with any degree of health. We can also understand why so many are round-shouldered, short-sighted or perhaps worse. Of

course teachers cannot do everything to counteract outside influences for ill, but they can do a great deal. And this little book is to help point out the great opportunity, two-fold in nature, that all teachers have of benefiting the public health. First—in the present, by keeping from those placed in their care all known causes of disease, and second—in the future, by teaching them to form such habits as will enable them to live healthful and long lives. They should be told that the principal necessities of a healthy existence are

PURE AIR, LIGHT, EXERCISE, REST AND WARMTH ;

and that most of the derangements of the system are caused by errors committed with regard to these.

PURE AIR.

Pure air is of such vast importance that it may well be placed first. Let us consider the subject a little. We find that the atmosphere which surrounds the earth and extends above it some miles, to be composed of two gases, mixed, but not combined, in the proportion of about 21 parts of oxygen to 79 parts of nitrogen. We also find that no matter in what part of the earth air is examined the proportions are always the same, and that no other gas is necessary to support life, though either gas taken alone would cause death. Now God has made this air just to suit our bodies, and when we take it in through the nose and it passes down into the lungs, it comes in contact with the blood ; and by a most wonderful process, it parts with its purifying properties, which enter the blood and burn up the old waste matter that would otherwise poison the system. Now when the carbon in the lungs combined with the oxygen in the air it not only destroyed the useless particles and gave out heat, but it also formed a very poisonous gas called carbonic acid gas, which is so deadly in its nature that if we were to breathe it in a concentrated form we should die in a few minutes. We can easily see therefore, that

although the air may be very pure when taken into the lungs, it is no longer so when it comes out, and should never be breathed again. Children should understand, that, although people may not be killed immediately by breathing impure air of close rooms, they are taking into their systems small quantities of poison which will lay the foundation for many diseases. It has been stated by an eminent English physician that "scrofula and consumption are diseases that arise from the want of fresh air. They are the diseases of civilized communities of people that herd together and prevent pure air from getting into their residences." There are numerous facts proving this statement, and I will tell you of an instance that is a striking illustration of it. In the Pyrenees mountains, which as you know are between France and Spain, there was once a village, built in a sort of hollow on the sides of a high hill in such a way that the houses extended around and the inhabitants could enter them only through one little opening into the village. This place was noted for the diseased condition of its inhabitants. In fact they were really dying of scrofula and consumption in the most alarming manner. Fortunately for them, however, a fire broke out in one end of the village, and those whose homes were destroyed built a better set of cottages, higher up on the hill. These houses were made so that the air could pass through, and those who went into them to live, began immediately to improve in health, much to the astonishment of those who had remained in the old place and were still suffering. The consequence was that they determined to pull down the whole village and build better cottages farther up and as far apart as possible. Now the Society of Hygiene in Paris reports this village one of the healthiest in the Pyrenees.

There are numerous stories that show the effect of crowding and bad air. The sickening one of the Black Hole of Calcutta is an instance of what impure air did in 1756, when an East Indian Nabob ordered that 146 English people, who had



become his prisoners, should be thrust for the night into a small cell used as the prison of a fortress. This room was only 18 feet long by 14 feet wide, and had only two small holes for windows. The captives were crowded so closely into the place that it was necessary to push the last one in with violence before the door could be closed, and then their anguish was terrible. The noise of their cries and struggles filled the neighborhood for a long time, but towards morning it died away, and when the prison door was opened the reason was painfully evident. Out of the 146 prisoners there were taken out 123 corpses and 23 wretched creatures who could hardly be called alive. That happened more than one hundred years ago; but only a few years ago an emigrant vessel started from Cork, in Ireland, to take a large number of emigrants to Liverpool, where a ship was about to sail. In the night a great storm arose as they were crossing the English Channel, and the captain, thinking that the sailors would be unable to do their work properly when the frightened passengers crowded the deck, sent them all below into the hold and ordered the hatches to be closed. Shut into the close place they must have suffered terribly, but their cries were either unheard or disregarded for no fresh air was given them. When the captain and his crew looked after the passengers they found to their horror that many were dead and others in a dying condition, from having breathed the same air over and over again. Now, every one who reads these stories is naturally shocked at the ignorance of the villagers in the Pyrenees, at the tyranny of the Indian Nabob, and the carelessness of the Irish Captain, but the very people who think that such things were inexcusable then, may be allowing the same poisonous gas in their own dwellings and in school-houses. Were they to give the subject sufficient attention, they might be able to trace a large part of the present ill-health of this generation to the want of fresh air.

It has been stated by those who have made the subject a

study that in every 1,000 parts of air in an inhabited room, there should never be more than 6 parts of carbonic acid gas. Now the air which we breathe, after it leaves the lungs, contains 400 parts of carbonic acid gas in every 10,000 parts, and also a bad smelling organic matter which comes from the pores of the skin. This substance may be invisible but is none the less offensive, as all decayed matter is, and it hangs about a room, condenses on the walls and furniture, giving the old "fusty" smell that a place has after it has been closed for a long time.

A very good way to see how much carbonic acid gas there is in a room, is to have standing there, an open vessel containing lime water; and as the carbonic acid gas from the lungs unites with the lime it forms carbonate of lime, which falls to the bottom of the vessel in a chalky deposit. But, though we can tell about how much of the deadly poison there is in the atmosphere, there have been no means found by which air that has been breathed can be purified in the smallest degree. Nothing can be done but to let in the fresh air, and so force out the bad. This process we call ventilation, and though one object of it may be to cool the room, the principal one is to drive away the impurities which must not enter the body a second time.

In a school-room the amount of cubic space allotted to each scholar is usually very small, and it is of the greatest importance that the air should be changed very frequently. It is also very necessary to have all outside garments hung away from the school room. In many cases the air is tainted by odors arising from clothing that has been worn, particularly in wet weather, and a little trouble and expense on the part of those who have the building of school-houses in charge, would provide a suitable entry for clothing that is not worn in school. Often in cold weather it is impossible to change the air of a school-room as often as is desirable, for fear of exposing children to injurious draughts; but when they are not there the

place can be thoroughly ventilated. To do this effectually there should always be windows that open top and bottom, on two sides of the room at least. Of course there should be ventilators besides, and I call your attention to Tract No. III of this series, entitled "Preventable Diseases," where careful directions are given that will enable any one to ventilate a room cheaply and at the same time thoroughly.

It is astonishing how little attention these things receive compared with what they deserve, and how often those who understand and try to follow out rules concerning them are laughed at and called too particular, even "fussy." It is equally astonishing how ignorant many people are on this subject, who seem to know enough on many others. How often you see a person open a window from the bottom and expect to have the room well aired, never remembering that there must be some opening at the top for the bad air to pass out, as well as one at the bottom, for the good air to come in. In order to make a current of air in a room, windows must be open at the top and bottom; the children should learn this, and the importance of fresh air and how to get it, if they learn nothing else. Let them be told that fresh air is more important than food, for without food men have lived many days, but without air they invariably die in a few minutes. But do not stop there. Show them *how* to breathe. Tell them that in order to get their lungs well filled they must lift the chest, and lower it to send the air out, and that they cannot do so by breathing just below the throat, but must make use of the great muscle, the diaphragm, that is just below the lungs. Then show them how important it is that clothing should always be loose, and tell them what the results will be of compressing the organs. A teacher must wear her own clothing properly, however, before she can teach others to do so; and often her example will influence a pupil more than any amount of talking.

Children should be taught to stand straight; to hold up the

head, with the chin down, to throw the shoulders back to keep the stomach in, and stand on both feet, not bear all the weight of the body on one. It is excellent practice for any one to walk with a good-sized book on the head, and children are benefited by practising every day, gradually increasing the weight. If all these things are taught them, they will be healthier girls and boys and better women and men than if you allow them to sit and stand in a crooked position, and they will remember longer and try harder to do as you ask them, if they are told why you require it of them. Look among the men and women around you and see how many are straight! You will be surprised to find that not more than one out of every hundred will stand or sit as he should. Is it not reasonable to suppose that the children who know most about standing and sitting will make the straightest men and women? You cannot tell how many lives will be benefited, perhaps saved, by a little care and attention to all these things, on your part, nor how many generations will be made stronger and better, by what you teach your pupils concerning these things. It is the privilege of your position as teacher, and should be regarded as a great and glorious one. Do not let it escape you, but make the most of it before it is too late.

#### LIGHT.

Next to pure air comes Light, which is so very necessary to life and health. If you want to make a plant white and tender, you tie it up and put it in a dark place; and the same rule will apply to human beings. If they are kept in dark places they will surely be pale and delicate, and droop like plants under similar circumstances. Children must have light to be healthy, and school-rooms, above all other places, should be bright and sunny; not only for the reason I have just given, but to enable children to read, write, &c., without stooping. Many cases of short-sightedness and curvature of the spine are the results of habits acquired in a badly-lighted school-

room, and teachers cannot be too careful to see that the light by which their pupils write, draw, or study, shall fall over the left shoulder, to prevent a shadow on the paper. In short-sightedness the globe of the eye is drawn out from back to front so that the images of distant objects are not brought to a focus on the retina, but in front of it. When a book is read by a dim light the muscles of the eye that adapt the focus for near objects have to be brought into great and continued action, and frequently the eye yields and is pulled out in the way I have described. A book can be read at a distance of fifteen or eighteen inches by healthy eyes, but if held nearer short-sightedness is the result. Let every teacher remember these things and take all precautions to save children from a misfortune that already prevails to an alarming extent in our schools.

#### EXERCISE.

And now I come to a subject that is of great importance, greater, perhaps, than is fully realized. It is Exercise. Exercise is needful for all who would keep in health, and particularly for children, whose muscles are constantly generating energy that must be spent in vigorous movement. It is against every law of nature to suppose that children can remain perfectly quiet for any length of time, and yet many teachers seem to consider that the one aim and end of school-teaching is to have their pupil sit like so many sticks. I have known instances where children have been punished because they were restless, whereas they were only obeying the laws of nature by relaxing the muscles that were painfully contracted by a constrained position.

It is a well-known fact that a muscle wastes which remains idle, and if by a position long continued, certain muscles are brought into action to the exclusion of others, deformity and bad habits must be the result. There is no doubt that many of the bad habits that are such a curse to young people were formed

at school, simply because proper exercise was not given at the right time. Teachers cannot be too careful to introduce calisthenics into their schools; and there can be no excuse for not doing so, as many of the exercises are very simple and can be given without music. The time spent in that way would be well employed and children would feel the benefit of such training all their lives.

And here I want to call your attention to a way in which some teachers punish children. They are sometimes compelled to stand and hold a book at arm's length, to place the finger on a nail in the floor or sit on the mop-board. Think of the barbarity of such things! I have known a teacher who compelled a boy to stand with his finger on a nail in the platform of the desk until he nearly fainted, all because he was disorderly. Now I do not excuse him for disorder, because he was old enough to know better, but neither do I excuse the teacher for not finding a better method of correcting him. How can children respect a teacher who is obliged to resort to such means in order to command their obedience? Think, also, of the example that a teacher is placing before pupils! You certainly will agree with me that such methods are barbarous and that anyone who cannot teach without using them ought to lose his position. All who think that such punishments are in accordance with any known law of health, had better try them first before obliging others to perform what will do no good and nobody knows how much harm.

Little mean ways of punishing children—such as twisting the lips for whispering, &c.,—are too much employed in our schools, and the inhuman practice of striking a child on the head has produced deafness and idiocy. I cannot speak too strongly on this subject. Anybody who boxes a child's ears may injure the brain and cause a life-long misery, and, in any case, the worst passions of the nature are aroused. Teachers, look to it, that this sin is not at your door. Learn to control yourselves before you can expect to control others.

## WARMTH.

The next subject that I want to call your attention to, is Warmth. In connection with this subject are

## FRESH AIR, CLOTHING AND FOOD.

The first we have already spoken of, and although the second and third are not under the entire control of teachers, they can be improved by advice regarding them.

Every school-room should contain a thermometer, which should be hung on a level with the pupils, not far above their heads nor near the floor, as the temperature of a room will be found to vary at different heights. The thermometer should be placed on an opposite side of the room from the stove or register, and for studying, 67°, Fahrenheit's, is warm enough. When the room is heated by a stove great care should be taken to keep the evaporating dish well filled with clear water, as a dry heated air produces a sensation of tickling all over the body, brings on a cough, and lays the foundation for pulmonary disease.

The clothing of the children should be observed, and care taken that they remove their outer garments before entering the room. In many cases where pupils cannot afford flannels and suitable clothing for the Winter, a teacher can influence those who have such things at their disposal to provide what is needed.

Of course warmth depends in a great measure on the food that is eaten; and although teachers are not supposed to furnish it to their pupils nor know exactly what they have at their tables, yet there are many valuable suggestions in regard to eating that a teacher can give to pupils. Advice will often have more force coming to them in that way than if they were to hear the same things at home.

There is one thing that must not be overlooked in connection with a school, and that is the out-buildings. First, care must be taken that there shall be nothing that can in the

slightest degree defile the mind, or offend the most sensitive nature. The morals of the pupils should be as carefully watched as the mental progress, and should the teacher find the slightest trace of immorality among the pupils, an instant co-operation with the parents should be sought, to remove an evil, which, if not rooted out at once, will grow, and produce the worst possible misery and wretchedness.

This is a subject which is too serious to be passed lightly by, and if it were to receive more earnest, prayerful attention, there would be fewer bad habits formed among children in schools. From my own observation I believe that there is more wrong doing even in primary schools than most people know of; and that because children do not understand how wonderfully and delicately they are made, and how important it is to take care of every part of their bodies, *they do from ignorance what effects their moral, physical and mental condition throughout their lives.* Constrained positions, mental pressure, close air, etc., will develop, even in little children, the germs of animal passion which grow into vices that shadow their whole lives. Children should be talked to very plainly, the girls and boys separately, and a pure minded, earnest, Christian teacher can do so in such a way that the mind will take in the wonder and beauty of the human body and will not dwell upon the lower side of nature. Nothing but the most constant watchfulness on the part of teachers in schools and parents in homes, and the closest sympathy between parents, teachers, and children, can save some children from the worst part of themselves, and as it is impossible for any one to do good individual work where the number of pupils is large, there should be more schools, more teachers, and fewer children taught together.

You will be shocked at the story I am about to tell you, and yet it is perfectly true. Not long ago, in one of the New England States, it was necessary to close a public school for some time, because the bad habits of the girls and boys were



beyond the control of the teacher. Who were to blame? The parents, the teachers, or the school committee for putting so many together? Who will answer the question, and who will find a remedy? Parents are more to blame for the wrong doing of their children in these respects than teachers can be, and yet the responsibility rests heavily on teachers, who should be keenly alive to the importance of the subject in order to do good. If the evil that so affects society could be stopped in childhood there would be purer men and women in the world; and it rests with teachers, in a great measure, to see that this is done.

In teaching, individual character should be studied with the greatest care, for what may benefit one girl or boy may be an injury to another. You remember the story of the young medical student who was called to attend an Englishman sick with fever. He prescribed chicken-broth, and the man recovered, so he made a note to the effect that fever was cured by chicken-broth. Sometime afterward he attended a Frenchman sick of fever, and remembering his former patient, ordered chicken-broth. The Frenchman died, and the student accordingly wrote in his note-book: "Chicken-broth cures an Englishman of fever, but kills a Frenchman." Don't begin as the student did, by thinking that all need the same doctoring.

Many teachers forget that all natures cannot be treated the same any more than two plants can, and by not remembering this they fail to bring out and strengthen good qualities that dull scholars often possess. It is a sad fact that the most attention is given to the "bright ones," and that those who do not shine in their studies are rather left to get on as well as they can, with the general understanding that they are too dull to learn much. It may be natural to feel more interest in those who learn readily, but it is unjust and unchristianlike nevertheless.

The duty of the teacher does not stop at securing conditions favorable for the healthy development of children, but it

should be the solemn duty of all to avert from those placed in their care, every known cause of disease. The class to which I particularly refer are those contagious diseases so common to school-going children, and which are best propagated by their congregating together at school. Teachers cannot be too particular about keeping children who have been exposed to contagious maladies from attending school. Their rules on this point should be of the strictest nature. "For in order to have a preventive measure of any real value, it should be taken when the first case occurs," and for this reason no child should be allowed to attend school while there is a case of contagious illness in his house. Moreover, children should never be permitted to return after a sickness, without a certificate from the physician who attended them, and unless the teacher feels satisfied that their return is perfectly safe for the others. It may be said that many are not sick enough to need a physician, and of course that is true. In many cases the form of a disease is very slight, but others may contract it and the results prove fatal. So that although children may appear comparatively well and be able to attend school, their coming may be dangerous for others.

In order that teachers may know what to guard against, they must be familiar with the symptoms of those fevers so common to childhood, and I shall speak first, of

#### SCARLET FEVER.

The first symptoms of this disease appear very suddenly, and generally with vomiting, especially with young children. There is great feverishness, flushed face, headache, languor and irritability. The second day a fine rash makes its appearance, first on the face and breast. There is also more or less sore throat, and the glands in the neck are swelled. In cases where the rash does not appear, a slight sore throat and a few days of feverishness are the only forms that the sickness assumes. Nevertheless, the danger of contagion is the same,

and those who take the disease may have it in its worst form. There is no stage of scarlet fever in which it is not contagious, but it is more so during the period of shedding the skin, and that begins with the recovery of the patient. During this period the skin peels off in "fine branny scales" from the body, while from the hands and feet it comes off in large flakes. There is great reason to believe that these scales are active means of communicating the disease, and that so long as the peeling continues the patient can spread the contagion. In fact, as the contagion lasts so long, even in the slightest cases, where no doctor has been called in children should be kept from school six weeks at least, and should not be allowed to return even then, unless the cleansing of the house has been thoroughly attended to, and all the clothes that were worn or used at the time have been boiled in water. No child should be allowed to return to school while there is any infected person in the house; and during the prevalence of scarlet fever all cases of sore throat should be treated as contagious. The time that elapses between exposure to the contagion and the appearance of the disease is generally under a week, so that if children continue well for ten days or two weeks after the source of contagion has been removed, and their clothing, &c., has been thoroughly cleansed, they may be allowed to return to school without danger to others. These same rules will apply to diphtheria.

#### DIPHTHERIA.

This terrible disease is generally acknowledged to be fostered by impure air arising from bad drainage, &c., and can always be distinguished from ordinary sore throat by the appearance of thick white patches in the throat, that look like the inside of a kid glove. This needs the immediate attention of a physician, as delay is fatal.

#### MEASLES.

This sickness differs from the diseases just mentioned and

obeys different laws. The symptoms are similar to those of an ordinary cold, with running at the nose, and cough. The eyes look red and watery and the child cries for no apparent reason, and very often. About the fourth day the rash appears and is darker and more purple than that of scarlet fever, and instead of being diffused over the skin, is in blotches. Before the rash comes out the danger of contagion is very great, but the sickness does not last more than three weeks. The danger in scarlet fever is, that children may be allowed to come back to school before they ought to, but in measles there is more fear that they remain in school while the disease is developing, because the nature of the disease is not recognized soon enough. If, during the prevalence of measles, you should see a child who seems to have a cold, and who cries about nothing, the safest way will be to send it home.

#### WHOOPIING-COUGH.

“Whooping-cough is perhaps the most difficult of all diseases to prevent;” for it is very easily given to others and the period of contagion lasts a long time. There is no rash to distinguish it, and for the first week or two there is no whoop, and the sickness can hardly be told from a common cold. In some cases the well-known whoop does not occur except at rare intervals. It is fortunate that this disease seldom proves fatal to children who are old enough to go to school.

Diseases of the bowels are only infectious by the discharges from them; and a child with diarrhoea should be sent home without delay.

#### SMALL-POX.

“Small-pox is fortunately less likely to come under notice than the preceding diseases,” but it will be well to know the symptoms. For ten days, or three weeks sometimes, there is violent pain in the head and back and constant shivering, and after two days the rash makes its appearance, in the form

of red pimples that are hard and most numerous on the face and about it. These change to "mattery pocks," and then a hard crust forms over them; and until these have dropped off there is danger of infection. The danger of contagion begins very early. People who have been vaccinated have often only a few spots on the face, that soon pass away after going their course; but these cases are quite as dangerous to others as the worst forms of the disease. Every child should be vaccinated as a safeguard against this most terrible sickness.

#### MUMPS.

Mumps are the swelling of the salivary glands, and the great danger in this disease, as well as chicken-pox, is taking cold. Of course, during their stages the rules for contagion apply to them, and it is hardly necessary to say that children so affected should not be allowed at school. In all cases it is far wiser to send a sick child home, than to keep it in school and by so doing run the risk of spreading a contagion. Even if a teacher is called too particular about such matters it is better to be on the safe side, remembering that, "an ounce of prevention, is better than a pound of cure."

Everything in and about a school-house should be kept perfectly clean at all times, but particular attention should be given to the subject when an infectious disease is about. At such times special heed should be given to ventilation, and from time to time the walls should be white-washed with lime. All drains should be carefully looked after, and any imperfections in them should receive prompt attention.

In such matters the teacher can do very little without the sympathy and support of those who form the school committee, and in many cases they know less about such matters than the teacher does. Of course there are noble exceptions, men and women who understand the importance of obeying the laws of hygiene, and who work with teachers to make schools and school-houses what they should be. Such men

and women are doing an incalculable amount of good, that will live long after they have left this world. But many people who are on school committees are not familiar with the laws of health, and regard a teacher who lays great stress upon the subject, and *will have* her room ventilated, etc., as a sort of monomaniac, harmless perhaps, but troublesome and expensive. This story will illustrate what I mean, and I tell it because it is true. The school-house was in New England, the school-master, one who felt that the room ought to be ventilated in winter, but hardly knew how to do so without exposing the pupils to drafts. He finally concluded to make a hole in the wall near the ceiling, and put part of a gun barrel, through, thinking that a little ventilation was better than none. Soon after one of the committee visited the school and while glancing round the room his eye rested on the hole in the wall, and he asked, "What is that?" The teacher explained what he had done, and why he had done so, thinking, of course, that his conduct would be approved, but the only consolation he received was, "Plug up that hole. Do you suppose that we can afford to buy wood enough to warm this room and out-doors too!"

Those who think that this story is exaggerated will do well to look about in country schools, talk with committees and then judge for themselves. In some cases they will find that the committee know less than the teacher; in others, that the schools are not visited and looked after as they should be, and that the teacher is holding the position, merely because he or she is willing to work for less money than one who desires good pay for the best work.

A teacher who does her work well and faithfully is never paid too much, and those who think that teaching is an easy undertaking should try the work themselves. If they realize all that it means they will soon discover their mistake.

A book might well be written upon Duty of School Committees, and it is needed. It would show that many times

they are to blame instead of teachers, who often cannot carry out their very best ideas in regard to health, because the committee never think of such things, or if they do it is in a general sort of way that does not amount to anything. So long as school-houses are planned and built in the cheapest manner, with little regard to health, in the noisiest parts of town, near a blacksmith's shop, over a store, or equally unsuitable places for study, committees ought to share with teachers the blame of failures. When School Committees study the best methods of teaching, together with the Laws of Health, when they appoint teachers who understand these things and how to put them into practice and when they are ready to give their full support to such teachers, we shall have better schools; and until then it will be uphill work for every conscientious teacher who realizes what a "duty" she has undertaken.

Before closing this little book, I want to call your attention to a habit which is almost universal among school-going children of this country. I refer to the practice of *chewing gum*. The habit is so general, and so pernicious in its effects, that teachers cannot be too careful, nor make rules too strict, in regard to its use. It is very disagreeable to see a child chewing continually, but that is only a small part of the evil. The habit is a very harmful one, as it weakens the digestive powers, and injures the whole system. It often leads to chewing tobacco when the child is older. Children should be told not only that they *must not use it*, but they should be talked to seriously and kindly about it, and made to see *why* it is bad for them. The more sensible ones will give it up, and even if the others do not stop using it out of school the teacher will have the satisfaction of knowing that she has done her best, and that her words may be remembered and heeded in after years.

I said in the beginning of this book that teachers could promote the health of their pupils through all their lives, and they certainly can if they make up their minds to take time

and trouble to find out all the little things that are wrong about those placed in their charge, and in a friendly way, make them right. If teachers never let an opportunity pass of giving their pupils information on the subject of health, and telling them what is best for them in every way, they will be doing their duty far better than if they teach them to solve the most difficult problems, and educate the mind at the expense of the body.

Here let me say a few words about written examinations and their effect upon teachers and pupils. As far as I can judge from my own experience, *I believe that it is a great benefit for pupils to answer in writing a limited number of questions that have been wisely selected*; but I think that the system can be carried too far, and not only narrow the minds of children but completely wear out the teachers. It is a disgrace to some of our Public Schools that the marking system should receive so much attention while the all important studies of Physiology and Hygiene are crowded out in consequence. Until both the latter are made *living studies* and taught practically and systematically in our schools, people will continue to grow up just as ignorant in regard to their bodies, and how to take care of them, as the majority of people are now.

When we think of the number of different studies that are taught in schools, and reflect upon the time allotted to each one, we shall be surprised to find how little attention both Physiology and Hygiene receive. It would be better to crowd out something that is not so important and devote more time to them, for certainly "The proper study of mankind is man," and nothing can benefit the human race so much.

If children recognize fresh air as a friend in their school-rooms, they will try to get it into their homes. If they see wise means used to prevent the spreading of disease they will be less likely to think that they must be sick because others are, and will not thwart our efforts at prevention. If they have always before them examples of right living and learn to



substitute warm and sensible clothing for showy garments, if they make their own health more of a study, they will be better fitted to take charge of children themselves, as in the future they will most likely have to do, in one way or another.

If children are welcomed by a kind and wise teacher into a bright school-room, made pretty and home-like by a few plants and pictures, and are there interested in their studies, they will regard the school-room as the next best place to home; and, in many instances, poor little children whose homes are so only in name, will look upon the school-room as the brightest spot on earth.

In ending, I would say that there are many teachers who feel the importance of all these things quite as strongly as I can possibly state it, but who are obliged to follow a certain course day after day, utterly at variance with their ideas of what right teaching should be. This is because those who have charge of schools, do not feel the importance of such things as much as they ought, and the teacher cannot do as she wishes without losing her position. To such teachers I extend my earnest and heartfelt sympathy, with the hope that the day is not far distant, when those who have such things in charge will interpret education in the right way.

To School Committees and teachers who have not thought of the matter seriously, I offer this book, hoping that what has been said will influence them in the right direction.

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At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the American Social Science Association, held June 8th, 1878, Prof. Pierce in the chair, it was unanimously voted, as follows:

*Resolved.* That the American Social Science Association learns with pleasure of the work undertaken at Hampton, in Virginia, to spread among the people of Virginia, and of the South in general, a knowledge of Sanitary Science popularly set forth; and that from an examination of the three Sanitary Tracts of the proposed series, viz.: *The Health Laws of Moses, The Duty of Teachers, and Preventable Diseases*, the Executive Committee of this Association is persuaded that the important work, thus undertaken, will be well performed. We would therefore commend these Tracts to all readers, at the North as well as at the South, and would recommend their wide distribution in the way best suited to promote the circulation of them.

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