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"Our national health is physically our greatest national asset," says our good President. The word "physically" might well have been omitted, for individual or national life and health is the greatest possible asset, and any system of education which has for its primary object the mental training of the young at the expense, or without due regard for physical development, and without proper protection against diseases which register a certain percentage of fatalities and permanent infirmities which disqualify or handicap in the competitions of life, not only fails of its object, but is inimical to the best interests of the individual and the nation.

What does it profit a man that his sense of sight and hearing has been cultivated if he is blind or deaf from the effects of some infectious disease acquired during the process? What does it profit a woman to have attained distinction in her High School classes, if in the process, her physical development has been so stunted that she is a failure as a wife and mother? What does it profit the thousands of little children who die of preventible diseases acquired in the school room, that our nation is rich and powerful? Our national health is absolutely our greatest national asset, for a nation of invalids would soon be no nation at all.

Nature has not provided for the aggregation of large numbers in schools, tenements and hospitals. These are artificial conditions, and to minimize their evils, artificial means have been devised. If in

connection with our concentration in schools it were possible to have concentrated sunshine and concentrated fresh air, we might have less use for disinfectants and scientific plumbing; but under present conditions, it is necessary to adopt the best possible systems of ventilation and plumbing, provide play grounds where children may exercise naturally, and carefully guard against the infections which come of overcrowding. The children of intelligent parents are carefully guarded at home; but in the big public schools they come directly in contact with the children of the ignorant and careless, and are subject to the dangers of these neglected homes.

"Sanitary instruction is even more important than sanitary legislation." The above quotation appeared on the cover of all the recent issues of the bulletin of the Chicago School of Sanitary Instruction.

It was with this thought in mind that our present system of school inspection was inaugurated. To create a general interest in public school conditions, an interest that will demand better sanitation and better equipment for the physical development of the school children, as well as an adequate protection against communicable diseases, is far more important than the inspection itself. Some of the thirty physicians who are gratuitously performing this valuable public service for the current year are doing excellent work, and have already awakened co-operative interest that has reached this department through teachers and parents, and also through the Oregon State Congress of Mothers and the Womens Club of this city.

Most of our schools still use what is known as the "range" toilet, flushing automatically about twice every hour, which is in itself a nuisance. Many of our Health Wardens have condemned this system as

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to be infectious in character. Over sixty cases of scabies (itch) were detected by the inspector and excluded from one school. This disease was probably introduced by the children from one neglected home, and had it not been discovered would doubtless have gone through the entire school. In this same school a case of favus was discovered and excluded at the beginning of the term. Favus is a rare disease in this country. This case must have escaped detection at the port of entry, as it is a disease which excludes immigrants and the child had not been in this country more than a year. It is a very offensive parasitic disease, contagious and almost incurable;---and yet there are those who consider school inspection unnecessary. Had this one exclusion been the only thing accomplished during the term the work would have been justified.

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Diphtheria is the most dreadful disease of childhood, and the *from which the children should be most carefully protected* one most carefully guarded against in the schools. It lacks the one mitigating characteristic of many other infections,---one attack does not confer immunity. The Health Board of this City has recently ordered that no diphtheria quarantine be released until a negative culture has been returned. The fact that diphtheria germs linger in the throat long after a patient is apparently well, and that five or six cultures have been taken and found positive or dangerous before a negative one is returned, demonstrates the importance of this rule, and it is hoped that the rigid enforcement together with other sanitary measures in contemplation may reduce the number of cases returned from certain sections of the city that have for years developed a disproportionately large number of these cases. Indeed during the first six months of the year 1907, one section of the city produced one-third of all the diphtheria cases. In the last six months one-fifth of all cases, and for the first six weeks of this year there were no cases of diphtheria reported from the school in that section. This reduction, of course, is due to the

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change in our system of quarantine and to the vigilance of the school warden in that district.

Of the minor infections mumps have been the most troublesome this year. This disease is not mentioned among the communicable diseases in our Health Ordinance, although it is doubtful if there is any disease more communicable. Its introduction into ~~xxx~~ a school often depletes the attendance, and may interfere with the whole year's work. It is a public danger, nuisance and inconvenience, and the schools should be more adequately protected against it. Unfortunately there are many people who still regard it as a necessary evil and resent any sort of control or quarantine. Indeed one of our city officials insisted on sending his children to school while there was mumps in his house, and in one of the suburban schools the teacher acquired mumps in the city, infected her own school, and in about one month's time reduced the attendance from forty to twelve. When people in the public service deliberately do these things, it is not to be expected that others will be more careful.