

"Absence of occupation, is not rest;
A mind quite idle is a mind distressed."

Surely no truer words were ever penned. The child's chief occupation, in fact, to quote a paradox, his chief work is play. He reaches his greatest perfection by being a healthy animal and he can become a healthy animal in one way only; by having plenty of active exercise in the open air. I do not think it necessary to further emphasize the absurdity of depriving the city child of his chief occupation and then expressing surprise that he falls into wrong-doing, but hasten to place before the reader the results achieved by that great foe to idleness and juvenile crime—the public playground.

What Others Say

Some time ago I sent a circular letter to various cities in the United States where they have had playgrounds in operation for a number of years; among other questions, I asked what effect these play centres had in preventing juvenile crime; the following are the replies I received:—

S. J. Barrows, Commissioner International Prison Commission,
New York—

"In reply to your enquiry, from the standpoint of the prevention of crime, we consider playgrounds for children of the greatest importance. When the kitchen gardens were established on the west side of New York, in one of the worst sections of the city for youthful disorders, a distinct change for the better was noticed by the police in a few months. I consider playgrounds for children are of the greatest importance as measures for the prevention of crime."

Howard Bradstreet, Secretary, New York Parks and Playgrounds
Association—

"It is noticeable, in the ten assembly districts in this city in which there is least juvenile delinquency, there are more than twice as many playgrounds under park and school boards as in the ten districts showing the most juvenile delinquency."

Washington Playground Association—

"We believe we have raised the standard of physical efficiency of the children. We also find that the training which we have given in honesty, obedience and courtesy and the power of co-operation, would be hard to measure in terms of money."

J. Lee, Vice-president of the Playground Association of America—

"The police are favorable to the playgrounds, also the school-