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## THE HEALTH OF SCHOOL CHILDREN.

At the recent meeting of the American Social Science Association, at De troit, the subject of *The Health of Pupils in the Public Schools* was amply discussed. The Secretary of the Health Department of the Association (Dr. D. F. Lincoln) has prepared a report of the papers read at the discussion thereon, for insertion in the N.Y. *Sanitarian*. The great importance of the subject, no less than the slight attention which it too often receives, is one reason for giving in the JOURNAL an abstract of Dr. Lincoln's valuable report. He says:—

"It was necessary in the beginning to analyze the subject, to distribute it by cutting it up into a convenient number of subsidiary subjects. Thirteen such divisions were made. The list is as follows:

- "1. Heating and ventilation.
- "2. Light—and condition of the scholars' eyes.
- "3. Seats—and deformities traceable to them.
- "4. Architectural plans.
- "5. Apparatus employed in instruction.
- "6. Gymnastics.
- "7. Condition of nervous system.
- "8. Organ of hearing.
- "9. Organs of the pelvic cavity.
- "10. Drinking water.
- "11. Sewerage and water-closets.
- "12. Commissions for scientific inspection of given school areas.
- "13. Project of a law establishing the office of medical inspector of schools.

"Having done this, we attempted to assign the several topics to suitable persons, for separate investigation and report. Eight of

the thirteen have now been assigned in a more or less complete manner. No doubt it would have been easy to get workers to do the whole, but it is possible that in so doing we should have lost more than we gained. For many obvious reasons, there was an advantage in not finishing the whole subject at a single blow; an ill selection, a confusion of principles, a hasty performance, unequal execution, irresponsible utterance of individual opinion, all had to be guarded against; and, on the other hand, the best men are not always at leisure and at our command at precisely the time we might desire them, nor, if ready to aid us, are their powers always sufficient to complete a given task within a given time. These reasons are offered as excusing what might seem our shortcoming, in not bringing forward a complete report on school hygiene this year.

"And I may add, that to our minds the subject in its various branches has assumed a size and an interest vastly beyond what it first had; and that plans of research have already come before us, which if carried out, will take several years to finish.

"On the other hand, our numbers are not large, and our working power is very much concentrated in a few points at the East, particularly in Boston, where the department was reorganized two years and a half ago. This circumstance has also its advantages, in point of administration, as you will easily infer, though it has hampered us a little in the extension of our plans.

"A subject, when assigned as already stated, remains in the hands of the person to whom it is intrusted until he expresses his wish to present it to the department committee. A meeting of this committee is thereupon called, 'for the purpose of hearing and criticising' the paper in its then form. The process of criticism, I am happy to state, is performed willingly, and is borne with great good nature by its recipient, who, at the close of the evening, takes home his manuscript and his hints, to work up into a sort of second edition of the paper.

"Then, when the paper is finally ready for the public, its natural destination is to be read before a general meeting of the association, like the present; the daily press publish more or less of it, and the 'Journal of the Association' issues it in a corrected form within two or three months. It is not unlikely that the entire series of essays and reports, extending through several years, may furnish matter suitable for publication in a connected form. But of this it is not easy to speak at present, as but a few of the essays are completed.

"Two papers have undergone the process of revision as described, and will be presented here, one upon 'School Gymnastics,' and one upon 'The Nervous System, as injuriously affected by schools.'" \* \* \*