

HEALTH TALKS.

The Playground as a Factor in School Hygiene.

Editor's Note—The seeds of the playground movements have been sown broadcast. It is interesting, then, to note the nature and comparative richness of the soil into which they have fallen. The following interesting article by Mr. G. E. Johnson in Hygiene and Physical Education treats one of the largest silent revolutions that have ever gone on in the educational system.

W. G. K.

Where then shall the children bathe in the sunshine as they should, but on the playground? We do well to debar contagious diseases from our schools, but let fly over our children's clothing myriads of bacilli, while the most malignant perish in a short time in the joy and the sunshine of the playground. Few disease germs have been discovered that can survive even one hour of the streaming sun on the face of a laughing child.

EXERCISE.

I have just examined the indexes of two famous books on school hygiene and in them was no such word as exercise. But exercise is life, and the absence of it is the sure sign of death. By exercise came evolution. Exercise shaped the body, determined the vital organs, built the brain. By exercise the child takes possession of his inheritance from the race. To him it is the past, the present and the promise of the future.

But that exercise no man can dictate, no teacher devise, no scholar fully define. It comes forth unbidden from the child, declares his nature, discovers him to himself, defines his relation to his mates, shows him the world. It is his play it is himself. Can the school alone do this, be this? In the long process in which exercise shaped the body and built the brain there was determined for all time the path by which the child must come into his own. In that shortened process we call childhood, every faculty, every power, every organ that falls to receive its due exercise survives, health by so much suffers and by so much the man becomes less a man. It would require a book to speak in full of the exercises of the playground that meet the needs of health, physical, mental, moral, aesthetic, social health, for all these are elements in the health of the body, as we all have come to understand. But in many respects, in the very nature of the case, these exercises are impossible only on the playground.

AIR.

The playground is the only place where a school child gets air in the proper amount and kind, the only place where he obtains full and complete aeration of the blood. A despicable fraction of school rooms have standard ventilating apparatus, and the rooms that have do not always adequately benefit thereby. I have personally tested a score of school rooms almost under the shadow of the capitol of the State that has the best existing laws, and found the supply of air to equal the standard in only two of the rooms, and in some it fell to less than one-fourth of that amount.

As you well know, it is not only the lack of oxygen but also the presence of organic poison in exhaled air that makes ventilation so important. It is a fact noted by biologists that all animal life excretes a poison destructive to itself. This is as true of the single celled animal as of higher life. Bacteria may thrive luxuriantly for a time in culture media, but if they are not transferred to fresh culture media they pass into a period of lessened activity and finally die poisoned by their own excretions. A child's body is an accumulation of a vast number of cells each of which by its very functional activity likewise excretes products so poisonous to itself and the system generally that accumulation beyond a certain limit results in death.

Now, nature has placed more and more emphasis upon this cleansing process. If you trace the evolution of the vital organs from the single cell to man, you will find a general increase in the number of excretory organs. The newer organs have developed as supplementary to the older and all together they form a co-operative system, a weakness in any part of which places an added burden on the rest. Nature here gives no uncertain hint as to the needs of the child. Playground activities not only purify the blood through the increased activity of all the excretory organs, the lungs in the pure air of out-of-doors but stimulates the healthful preserving a well balanced system.

SUNSHINE.

"Where the sun does not go the doctor does" is an Italian proverb, quoted by Kotelman. Try as we may, we cannot get the sun sufficiently into all our school rooms, and if again we would shut it out again as soon as we let the children in to study, because we say it hurts their eyes.

Crops of Ireland.

Decrease in Average of Green Crops and Breadstuffs in 1908.

A return showing the produce of the crops and numbers of live stock in Ireland for the year 1908 was laid on the table of the House of Commons. The total net decrease in the area under corn and green crops and flax in Ireland in 1908 as compared with 1907 amounted to 40,102 acres, or 17 per cent. of the total area under these crops. This decrease took place chiefly in Leinster and Ulster, the provinces which have the largest tillage areas. The decrease in Leinster amounted to 18,141 acres, or 3.0 per cent. of the area under corn and green crops and flax in that province. In Ulster the decrease amounted to 17,610 acres, or 1.9 per cent. In Munster and Connaught the net changes in crops were small. In Munster there was a decrease of 4757 acres in corn and an increase of 1027 acres in green crops and flax, giving a net decrease of 4757 acres. In Connaught there was a decrease of 2047 acres in corn crops and an increase of 2459 acres in green crops and flax, giving a net increase of 412 acres in corn crops. The area of corn crops in 1908 amounted to 1,261,715 acres, there being in Leinster 358,841 acres, in Munster 256,259 acres, in Ulster 535,976 acres, and in Connaught 120,639 acres.

The area of wheat amounted to 36,677 acres, a decrease of 1466 acres on the area of 1907. There was an increase in the area of this crop in Leinster, amounting to 14 acres, and a decrease in the other three provinces amounting in Munster to 958 acres, in Ulster to 489 acres, and in Connaught to 33 acres.

The area of oats amounted to 1,060,301 acres, a decrease of 15,089 acres on the area in 1907. There was a decrease in the area of this crop amounting in Leinster to 2840 acres, in Munster to 1964 acres, in Ulster to 7307 acres, and in Connaught to 1978 acres.

The area of barley amounted to 154,442 acres, a decrease of 15,804 acres as compared with the area in 1907. There was a decrease in the area of this crop amounting in Leinster to 13,322 acres, in Munster to 2826 acres, while in Ulster there was an increase amounting to 187 acres, and in Connaught to 157 acres.

The area under bere was returned in 1908 as 154 acres, as compared with 185 acres in 1907. The area under rye amounted in 1908 to 8050 acres, a decrease of 818 acres on 1908 amounted to 1,008,897 acres, 1907.

The total area of green crops in 1908 was 245,549 acres in Leinster, 253,436 acres, in Ulster 353,660 acres, and in Connaught 156,252 acres.

The area of potatoes amounted to 587,144 acres, a decrease of 3854 acres as compared with the year 1907. There was a decrease of 2406 acres in Leinster, of 2310 acres in Munster, and of 487 acres in Connaught, while there was an increase of 1349 acres in Ulster.

The area in turnips amounted to 279,044 acres, an increase of 3952 acres as compared with the year 1907. There was an increase of 671 acres in Leinster, of 543 acres in Munster, of 1480 acres in Ulster, and of 1258 acres in Connaught.

The area of mangels amounted to 72,002 acres, an increase of 4992 acres as compared with the year 1907.

The area of cabbage in 1908 was 39,158 acres, an increase of 899 acres as compared with the year 1907.

The area under flax amounted to 46,916 acres, as compared with 59,659 acres in 1907, a decrease of 12,743 acres, or 21.4 per cent., the decrease in Ulster amounting to 12,739 acres.

The area under fruit in 1908 amounted to 12,145 acres, an increase of 696 acres, or 6.1 per cent. There was an increase of 603 acres in Ulster, 63 acres in Leinster, 90 acres in Munster, and a decrease of 61 acres in Connaught.

The total area of hay in 1908 was returned at 2,298,703 acres, an increase of 17,475 acres, or 0.8 per cent., as compared with 1907.

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small fraction of the exercise necessary for the health of child in this larger meaning. In the long process of the race have been tried and found good, have been refined and passed on, every organ and instinct with which a normal child is born and some yet higher function, some yet nobler conduct shall spring from their roots. Not in the school but on the playground can these deep instincts of workmanship, imitation, rivalry, co-operation, find their true and genetic expression and build more stately mansions in the soul as the swift seasons roll. These instincts calling from the depths of the child's nature are not voices calling him astray, or to delay his upward progress. They are the voices saying to him and to the race: "Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,

As the swift seasons roll, Leave thy low-vaulted past, Let each new temple, nobler than the last, Shut thee from Heaven with a dome more vast, Till thou at length art free, Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea."

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New Saints Proclaimed.

The final ceremonies in the canonization of Clement Hoffbauer, the German Redemptorist, and Joseph Oriol, a Spanish priest of Barcelona, took place at St. Peter's, Rome, on Monday, and were witnessed by a vast throng of people.

The Pontiff entered the Basilica at the head of a striking procession. He was carried in the Sedia Gestatoria and in the procession were more than twenty Cardinals and a large number of patriarchs, archbishops, bishops and members of religious orders.

Silver trumpets heralded the arrival of the Pope, who, with the assistance of the cardinal, celebrated the pontifical mass. This was followed by the proclamation of the new saints.

Taft of Irish Descent.

President Taft is of Irish stock. So says Dr. Jeffrey C. O'Connell. The Taft or Taffe family is of Norman origin. The first settlers of that name went to Ireland in 1171 and located in the County Louth. Taffe was made Baron of Ballymote province of Leinster. Sir William for his services during the wars of the O'Neils. Queen Elizabeth enriched him with lands of the McCarthy family. The Taffes have been conspicuous for many generations.

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Pope Honors Clerical Editor.

There are few soldiers of the Church so much relied upon by the present Pope as Catholic editors, and though it would be impossible for him to confer distinctions upon all, still by honoring some he complements the rest. His Holiness has had within the last few days the brief conferring upon Father Henry Clery the doctorate of theology sent to New Zealand. Dr. Clery, who has been for many years editor of the New Zealand "Tablet," has done strenuous work as a journalist, and his "History of the Orange Society" has done more to kill Orangism than all the agitations ever entered upon against that hotbed of bigotry.

While requesting this honor for his distinguished subject during his recent visit to Rome, the Bishop of

Dunedin described to His Holiness the work done by the priest-editor. Pius X. expressed admiration for his labours and immediately granted the desired distinction.

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