

to ten, about twenty minutes; from ten to twelve, about twenty-five minutes; from twelve to sixteen or eighteen, about thirty minutes. The total mental work daily suitable for a young person from twelve to sixteen years of age is placed at from five to six hours.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF SCHOOLS.

At a meeting of the American Public Health Association, held at New Orleans in December last, Dr. H. B. Baker, of Lansing, Mich., Sec. State Board of Health made some remarks on the Sanitary Inspection of Schools, for an account of which we are indebted to the *Canada Health Journal*.

The Sanitary Inspector should be one of the executive officers of the Board of Health, and should act with reference to general cleanliness, and especially with reference to the spread of communicable diseases. In some places it is customary to permit attendance at schools from families where communicable diseases exist, and of convalescents from such diseases, on the certificate of the family physician that it is proper and safe. Sometimes the time which has elapsed since the sickness is made to determine the return to school. I think this should not be permitted, but that the Board of Health, the health officer, or a sanitary inspector of schools, should control this whole subject, and that no convalescent from diphtheria, scarlet fever, etc., should be allowed to return to school except after all his clothing has been thoroughly disinfected, and this without regard to the time which has elapsed since recovery if the time is less than a year.

One great obstacle to progress in dealing with preventable disease in the schools, and out of the schools is the inertia of established usages of the people and of local boards of health. In many places it has long been the custom for the successful political party to appoint a board of health, and to

deny it money and other means for active work; doctors and others have accepted the situation and gone through a certain routine, which often has begun and ended with the abatement of a few nuisances, the making of a report of such feeble efforts, and then giving place to another board composed of new men from the same or from the opposite political party which repeats the same old story. For any effective work for the prevention of diphtheria in the schools, indeed for any effective public health work, it seems essential to have a new system of selecting local boards of health, and a new system of supplying them with the necessary money to carry on their work. Permit me to suggest a plan for the accomplishment of both these purposes as follows:

Let the local board of health to which was entrusted the expenditure of the money and the guardianship of the lives and health of the people of the city be of a kind essentially different from local boards of health heretofore established, let it be not an ephemeral, political body, but a permanent board made a body corporate, and selected and constituted somewhat as follows:—

“The Board to consist of a convenient number of persons (perhaps one or two from each ward), whose terms of office shall be such that not more than half shall go out of office at any one time; nomination to the office of member to be made by ballot at a citizens' caucus of persons belonging to the different political parties, and religiously pledged to the nomination of persons of both political parties in such a way that the Board shall be equally divided politically, thus insuring freedom of the Board, as a whole, from political control; the board to choose its executive officers, whose services should receive sufficient compensation to enable them to do constant and effective work. Such a Board of Health to