

figures are readily attainable. The percentage of men in the army with perfect teeth is not greater than six. When one realizes that the soldiers represent the selection of healthy and physically efficient men, and considers further the great number of men unfit for service, it becomes evident that the average of population with sound teeth must be much lower. "In the light of these facts," continues Dr. Jessen, "there can be no doubt that the school and the army must suffer, the more so since it is now known that defective teeth favor the spread of infectious disease to a considerable degree. The struggle by the authorities against dental diseases is therefore indispensable for school and army."

The school must lay the foundation—and this is equally true in this country, where the army is replaced by the host of business men to whom health means prosperity and progress individually, and whose prosperity means national advance. It is, therefore, the duty of the municipal authorities to look very carefully to the dental conditions in the schools and to provide means for their improvement.

What the cost may be is a matter not forgotten by Dr. Jessen. In Strasburg, under the favorable conditions which reduced the expenses, the care of the examination cost the municipality a little more than twelve cents a scholar in the year 1908. "Experience has taught me," said the speaker, "that every large town must pay one mark (twenty-five cents) per annum for each school child. This average should, however, be considered the maximum for carrying out the whole scheme." In this it would seem as if the speaker had included the fitting up of the municipal dental offices. Of course, these figures cannot be accepted for countries outside of Germany where all of the elements contributing to the matter may be under higher cost.

Fundamental to the general movement for the proper care of the teeth of school children is education. The first steps are to be taken by the teacher, who must instruct the children in the importance of the part played by the mouth and teeth in the whole organism. In Germany there is now plenty of material whereby the teacher may be made competent for this work of instruction, while there are also books and wall pictures for teaching the children. In Prussia an enactment of the Depart-

ment of the Interior expressly requires that good, instructive pictures relating to the construction and functions of the human body shall be provided for every school. But instruction by itself is not the whole work, it forms only the foundation. The final aim must be everywhere dental treatment of the children, and for the poor children, this must be at the expense of the municipality. For large cities, dental infirmaries must be founded for school children. In the smaller towns it will be essential to appoint school dentists who may not be required to give their whole time to the work. Villages may find it advantageous to club together and pay a school dentist, who can go from place to place and thus create a "flying" clinic. For the smaller town a suitable room can always be found to serve for a school dental infirmary, but for the capitals, there must be a central institute with a branch establishment. Through the whole system, it is necessary to observe the children from their entrance to the school until they leave it.

The founding of school-dental-surgeries is, however, not all. The machinery is provided, but the patients are still to come. Parents and children alike are inert to novelties, especially in the way of medical treatment. The education in hygiene in the schools will be a great help, but other agencies must be invoked. Other social, beneficent institutions must exert their helpful influence. In Strasburg no child is admitted to the "holiday colony" without a certificate to the effect that its mouth is healthy while the four thousand kindergarteners are not admitted without having their teeth put in order. The same can be said of orphanages and institutions of the kind and of reformatories. As an additional argument showing the need of care of the teeth, Professor Miller, formerly of Berlin, proved conclusively that the mouth is inhabited by numerous micro-organisms, among which are many that occasion disease, such as those of tuberculosis. From an unhealthy mouth infectious diseases are not only carried down into the body, but may be coughed out or ejected and passed on to other persons. One of the most efficient means of preventing the spread of infectious disease must be to render the mouth healthy first of all. This can be obtained only for the generality of people by treatment of the teeth in the schools.