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Increasing Rapidly in City

In

FOR NATION'S WELFARE

Play Is Essential and Leadership Alone Can Get Best From It.

Knowing his intense interest in having more and better supervised playgrounds for children, several citizens have asked J. J. Syme of the collegiate staff, to agitate a movement in favor of these through the press. Mr. Syme has responded with the following letter: responded with the following letter:
To the Editor of The Advertiser:
I have been requested by several citizens who are interested in child welfare and playgrounds, to open a discussion on the subject with a view of revivifying the movement here. It has been my pleasure to direct the playgrounds at Hamilton, where there is a splendid system in force, and I am glad to give to London any help I can. Playgrounds, as a whole, are a broad subject. Space permits me to merely touch on the benefits derived therefrom, and present as briefly as possible the main thought of the subject, namely, Supervised play in properly equipped playgrounds.

I hope that the thoughts expressed will be accepted in the same spirit as I give them, and thus help promote a wider and higher appreciation of play and of its value in education, and add somewhat to the sum of child happiness the world, especially in the city of

London. Supervision Needed. Supervision Needed.

In several sections of the city one may observe the efforts of those who in the past endeavored to establish playgrounds, but as they stand today they are a monument to the mistake of playgrounds acquired and operated without provision for supervising and directing. In all cases I know of, experience has shown that it is not desirable to establish playgrounds any faster than adequate supervision can be provided. Moreover, it shows conclusively that a dangerous tendency lies in sively that a dangerous tendency lies in the over-emphasis placed upon acquir-ing playgrounds, and the lack of em-phasis or even appreciation concerning adequate maintenance and administration after the grounds are acquired, and at the other end the relaxation of

Two Ways.

Two Ways.

Two Ways.

The playground movement is one of the desirable ways through which this demand can be met. But just a place, just a lot of land open to public use, will not answer the requirements. Experience has taught this and re-taught it. There is play that grows like a weed and never gets beyond the weed state, and it flourishes alike in the street and alley or free and easy playground. There is also play that has careful cultivation so that it becomes a useful plant. The latter kind is required to accomplish results worthy of efforts expended. Directed or supervised play is necessary.

efforts expended. Directed or supervised play is necessary.

Personal Supervision.

This means somebody whose definite duty is to direct and supervise.

Following the trail, we quickly see that this type of playground suggests something vastly more significant than the common reference to teeters and swings for little children.

The playground movement is just as much a part of the general tendency of modern people to escape from the armor

that are local and sectional in scope. All these interests should be tied up with the playground movement, and it with them, so that playgrounds might be admittedly a part of the broader purpose. Playgrounds are not a means in themselves, apart from other interests, but are just one expression of the underlying truth that has been a long time coming to be believed—that men and women are created to enjoy life, not to be slaves to their surroundings all the time; and to enjoy life, good health and physical efficiency is a fundamental physical efficiency is a fundamental need. Hence the use of playgrounds and

other open-air recreation facilities.

Planning and Thinking.

As playgrounds are likely to become a park, sooner or later, of the general scheme for civic betterment locally—to make better the appearance and living conditions of this fair city—it is important that there be comprehensive planning and clear thinking; a careful study of actual conditions, physical, economic and social, based upon the very best expert advise obtainable. It is necessary that simple means should terest. We of today must do something for the benefit of those who will live here 50 years and more from now, as well as for our own good. A great and wonderful responsibility rests on the boys of today. The war just ended has placed upon them responsibilities that we have no idea of. It is our duty



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activities are offered them that make these places attractive, and this can only be accomplished by placing them in charge of men and wemen who have a knowledge of the different kinds of games and activities that appeal to children of different ages.

A play leader or supervisor costs something, it is true, but there is danger of being penny-wise in this matter. In a city where a playgrounds costs thousands of dollars, it is poor economy to save the salary of the supervisors who could more than treble

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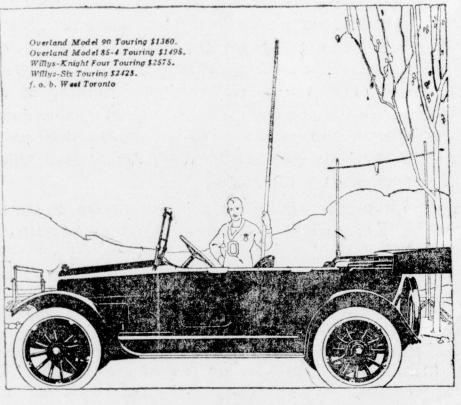
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planning and clear thinking; a careful study of actual conditions, physical, economic and social, based upon the very best expert advise obtainable. It is necessary that simple means should be found by which, by an interchange of points of view, we may get together, bring all men into common counsel, and so discover what is the common interest. We of today must do something for the benefit of those who will live here 50 years and more from now, as "Living in the onen eating."

Strength In Two Weeks' Time.

"Living in the open, eating coarse foods and leading regular lives have made blood rich in iron for these strong, healthy, rigorous specimens of manhood. that we have no idea of. It is our duty therefore, to provide motor education quite as freely and universally as we provide mental education. The play-ground movement is one of the desirable ways through which this demand can be met.

Experience in towns and cities that did not look far enough ahead teaches that an early duty of every organization interested in the playground movement. should be to secure every desirable site.

that an early duty of every organization interested in the playground movement. Space Needed—But.

What I said regarding play, I say, too, there are playgrounds, and there are playgrounds. The playground must provide interesting activities. It must have provision and space for the seasonable games. It is not enough merely to provide the grounds. If we hope to get the children to use those places that are known as "playgrounds," we must see to it that

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