

SOME THOUGHTS ON SCHOOL HYGIENE.

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THE subject of School Hygiene is a very wide one—it might be the subject of a large volume, or several of them. At present I shall not attempt to cover the whole ground or even any large part of it in a synoptical way, but confine my remarks to showing the relations of the subject to the general welfare of the pupil and the teacher; and insisting on a clear recognition of the main principles, with a few practical hints. Let us, however, first consider what health and disease really are.

Suppose the individual to be born with all the natural organs in a normal state—and to be placed in circumstances favourable to the full, free, and harmonious use and development of the same, then the sum total of the exercise of all his functions may be considered as health. From this view of the subject it must appear that an infinite diversity must exist among individuals as to the degree of health they can by their organization enjoy. There is, besides, that variation from each one's best state which one calls indisposition or, again, positive illness. But it must be clear that one man's best health would be relatively indisposition in the case of another. Now the practical bearing of this point at the outset is that some persons should never attempt to be either close students or engage in a profession so trying to the organization

as teaching—especially teaching in our day. Everything now seems to be pushed to extremes. Men in all walks of life race, and the consequence is their life's race is soon run. The day of octogenarians is fast passing away. We are ambitious without restraint and we must pay the penalty. The question now with educationists and school boards seems to be not how shall such and such subjects be best taught and learned, but how much can be shown to have been written, etc., at a certain examination, after the shortest possible training, by the youngest possible pupils who have been taught of necessity, not alone by the best methods (that may have been so or not), but by the most forcible or forcing methods. Now I intend to say here, and on any other occasion, as a medical man as well as an ex-teacher, that nothing will tend to injure the health in the present day so much as the extreme forcing system at present in vogue. It will at once be concluded that a much greater amount of work, and of a much better quality can be done by those who observe in and out of school the laws of a sound hygiene; but it must also be equally strongly stated that with the most perfect observance of these laws in all respects, save the one of moderation in exertion, the result may be disastrous. You may feed and house and groom