

hundred cases out of ten thousand by the premature extinction of mind and body, causing either the death or idiocy of those subjected to the process.

Play a necessity.

It is pitiful to think what weakly, miserable, unhealthy bodies the little children in our great towns are, for the most part, preparing for themselves during the early years of life. How is it possible for them to grow up into vigorous, healthy, wholesome men and women, disobeying as they do, unconsciously and of necessity, the laws that nature has declared to be the conditions of health and strength, of physical and moral health? The blame, if blame there be, does not lie with them. They cannot help themselves. Nature's laws, if simple, are not easy to obey, even by grown people, much more by helpless childhood. Good food and plenty of it, sufficient clothing, pure air and pure water, light and roomy dwellings, are conditions of health which neither they nor their parents for them can always, or indeed often, comply with as they ought. But though, all this most sorrowfully admitted, there is one thing, and that among the most essential which Dame Nature has prescribed, that every little child ought surely to be able to get in abundance—play!

Play and plenty of it! Every child ought to have that. Nature says so, and with good reason insists upon it too; and not only so, but she does all she can to ensure their having it. The need for food, for air, for warmth, and light, and sleep, is common to all, old and young alike. These things are as necessary at sixty years of age as at six; but the need for play is pre-eminently that of childhood; in fact, it is an instinct with the young of all creatures, and is implanted in them for the wisest purposes. Every healthy young animal, whether it be lamb or kitten, boy or girl, is full of sport, and unless it is either hungry or sleepy, is pretty sure, if left to itself, to be at play in some form or other. It is just nature's way of making the growing creature take the amount of exercise that is necessary to strengthen and develop its limbs and muscles, and to give it vigor in every part; and if her dictates are disregarded, and a child is deprived of play, or compelled to smother its natural restlessness in forced inaction, it suffers for it as surely as if it is stinted in its supply of food.

If we see a child rosy and plump and firm-fleshed, with bright, eager eye, and sturdy little arms and legs, we may be sure that nature has had her own way in this respect, and that all the running and jumping, the shouting and laughing, and tumbling about which she prescribes, have been duly done. And as I have said, the reverse holds good as well. Indeed, no child, under any circumstances, can be really healthy and vigorous, or can lay a good foundation against the time to come, without an abundance of active exercise during the years of growth. Nothing can make up for the absence of this essential element in the physical education of the young; and yet what uncounted thousands there are among the juvenile street population of our large towns, to whom play, real play, is a thing impossible and unknown. If space for active play cannot be had in crowded towns, what substitute can be provided that will produce the same results? For we must remember that not only are these things necessary to a healthy childhood, but also that a healthy childhood is a condition of a really healthy and vigorous man or womanhood. If the seedling crop be poor and puny what hope is there that the harvest will wave rich and plenteous, when the men and women

of the next generation put in their sickle to reap the fruits of the culture that our society is bestowing now?

Now, where space for real play cannot be had, and children are suffering in consequence, growing up, as so many are, puny and flabby and ill-shaped for the want of it, it is quite possible to substitute other forms of active exercise which shall supply the lack, which shall help to strengthen and straighten the growing frame, and give power and capacity to the sluggish and impoverished organs, and which at the time shall not require more space than the school-room floor affords. Even the simplest drill-training can do wonders in this respect; and, well-managed, especially if some kind of rhythmic chant is associated with the various evolutions, children, both girls and boys, will learn really to enjoy it—will look upon it, in fact, as a modified form of play. Now, every School Board can do this for the children that it picks up out of the lanes and courts and back streets of our great towns; and they would do so in every case, if public opinion were but brought to bear upon the subject.

A healthy body is one of the chief conditions, not only of mental vigor, but to a great degree of moral wholeness too; and no School Board programme can be complete, though drawn up after never so strenuous a conflict, that cares for the minds and even for the morals, of the child-masses over which it has the oversight, and gives no thought to that physical frame on whose strength and soundness both mental vigor and moral wholeness have been made, by God's own decree, so fearfully dependent.—*Christian World*.

Health in the Household.

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Of late years more attention has been paid to the general health of the people than formerly, as evidenced by the multiplication of health journals representing the various schools, and all concurring upon the general hygienic rules.

Many persons go down to the grave from the need of a common knowledge regarding health, how to maintain it, or restore it when lost. On reaching the age of maturity both men and women of necessity become their own doctors, often knowing better how to treat their particularities than the physician they may call in, for what is good for one constitution is not always beneficial for another. It is at adult age that the powers of life begin to decline, and the vigor of youth is no longer available to withstand the inclemencies of the weather of life. Tell a youth that he is in danger of "catching cold" from being in a state of perspiration and becoming cool too quickly, and he will smile at such silliness. He has a thousand times before sweat and cooled off the quickest way he knew how, and still remained well. But this same youth could not repeat the experiment with impunity after he had reached adult age. A physician in his circuit for forty years rode across a marsh pond every day; but after that long period he took the fever and ague one time, his system having become adapted to it. What were the circumstances which enabled him to resist the miasmatic influences but the positive condition of his body, his youth, and his health?

Practical lessons of this kind, if heeded by those of health, and even those who are in its full enjoyment, will save many from disease and an early grave. If one has a good constitution, it is like a new hat, none the better for being banged about. The opening door to all disease is a cold. A neglected cold fixes severe chronic ailment upon the individual. Every day and every hour this