

children, and the only one to exclude was that of a tot six years old, who displayed a ringworm. The teachers know better now.

And not only have the teachers grown more expert, but the parents also are becoming both more enlightened and more vigilant. Take, for example, parasitic diseases of the head. For the first three months of the establishment of the system there were excluded 2,627 cases; whereas, for the entire year 1898, with a far greater number of schools under surveillance, there were excluded but 3,502. This education of the parents, it should be noticed, is, to a conspicuous degree, compulsory. The child excluded cannot return to school until free from disease. Yet, if the child fail to return within a reasonable time, the truant officer visits the home to know the reason why. Both parent and child are thus between two fires; and the parents, especially, find that a systematic resort to soap and water and the general cultivation of cleanly habits are the royal road to their own comfort. The children must be clean if the schools are to relieve the parents of their care.

But the matter by no means stops here. The same principle operates measurably in all cases. The parents become alive to the importance of hygiene; they wake up to the value of pure air, good water, cleanly surroundings and cleanly habits.

And here, indeed, we find what may be described as the great secondary benefit of the system, but which will undoubtedly prove, as time goes on, the benefit of the highest importance of all. The direct work is the prevention of the spread of disease; but the ultimate effect, in the education of the mass of the people, will be to prevent the origination of disease. Primarily we seek to check the transmission

of contagious diseases by dealing with the children. Ultimately, we raise the standard of health in the entire community by instructing the whole people in the modes of right living. And here I wish to point out, or rather to emphasize, the fact that the scheme of medical school inspection attains its highest efficiency and value because it is a part of a greater system—a system which has practically been developed in the sense of scientific, persistent and forcible planning within the short space of fifteen or twenty years. Beginning with the wonderful work of Lister and the practical rediscovery of antiseptic and aseptic treatment, a brilliant light was thrown over the whole field of medicine, and the great truth was manifested with all the force of a new revelation, that the secret of the health of humankind lies not so much in the cure of disease as in the *prevention* of it. From this root, indeed, we have all the growth of modern sanitation.

The statistics of our subject, from the very nature of the field, cannot show the real results of the work—for the results are negative: the prevention of contagion. Nevertheless, they are in a high degree suggestive, and serve to illustrate the scope of the work. The following are compiled from the *Quarterly Reports of the Board of Health* for 1898, the annual report not having yet been published:

The total daily attendance, taking the average, was 203,095, distributed through 230 schools.

There were examined 139,965 pupils; of these 7,606 were excluded.

The causes of exclusion were as follows:

Parasitic diseases of the head.	3,502
Contagious eye diseases	1,627
Skin diseases	703