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WHAT AN EDUCATION COMMITTEE CAN DO

(ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS).

By Members of the Education Group.

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WHAT AN EDUCATION COMMITTEE CAN DO. (ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.)

WE are spending, in the United Kingdom, something like forty millions sterling out of the rates and taxes and public endowments on our educational system, and nobody is yet satisfied with the result. On all sides critics and educational reformers are asking for this or that alteration in what we teach our children and how we teach them. The ideal system will be reached only in the ideal State. In the meantime, whilst the educationalists are discussing what sort of education we should have, the practical administrator has to carry on such schools as exist. The present pamphlet represents an attempt to supply the men and women who find themselves on local education authorities, bodies of school managers, or children's care committees, with some useful information as to how to make the schools committed to their charge more efficient. At present, it is not too much to say, nearly all the twenty thousand schools in Great Britain are quite unnecessarily imperfect. The bulk of them fall as far below the best specimens as these best specimens themselves fall short of our ideal. To bring your own particular school—taking all local circumstances into account—up to something like the standard of the best contemporary school is as useful an achievement in our own day and generation as raising the standard of the ideal.

The following pages are therefore devoted to such humdrum matters as accommodation and staffing, equipment and curriculum, pictures and scholarships. The enormously important subject of medical inspection and treatment, and the physical condition of the child, must be dealt with separately.

Accommodation.

It is incumbent upon an education authority to provide sufficient school accommodation for every child of school age within its area, but a rising standard of efficiency, together with occasional fluctuations in population, prevents this from becoming a matter of undue simplicity. During the past forty years nearly every detail of school planning has changed. A modern well equipped school has a central hall for general assembly; class rooms not less than four hundred square feet in area, to seat forty children, well lighted from the left of the pupils, well ventilated, and warmed; wide corridors; safe and efficient staircases and exits; adequate cloak rooms, where wet clothes can be dried; well provided lavatories for necessary washing; a good supply of drinking water; sanitary offices; and sufficient playground accommodation, with a portion covered for shelter in wet weather.*

* Redman's Road L.C.C. Elementary School, Stepney, London, has class rooms to hold forty pupils; ample halls, staircases, and exits; is lit by electric light; heated by low pressure hot water apparatus; and its playgrounds provide thirty square feet to each pupil.

Such a school finds no counterpart among those erected before 1870, and is far in advance of many erected before 1900. At the time when some of the older voluntary schools were built, the Education Department of the day did not insist upon receiving complete and detailed plans before sanctioning the building; and these often did not provide the eight square feet per child, including corridor and cloak room space, in the estimate which was first exacted. This provision has increased, and for some time past ten square feet in senior schools, and nine square feet in infant schools, counting only class rooms, have been enforced in all new buildings; and the demand is now made that all old buildings shall be also raised to this standard.

Hence it is not surprising to find that in its last Report (1908-9) the Board points out that in England and Wales two thousand school premises, nearly one tenth of the whole, are still unsatisfactory. Of these, six hundred and sixty have been condemned, a time limit having been given for their recognition. It is to be noted that the standard adopted by the Board in thus condemning schools is by no means a high one compared with modern ideas on school planning; and, further, that when a time limit is given, often of two or three years, during which condemned premises are allowed to continue in use, at the end of that time frequently no new building is available, and the time is extended until five or six years may elapse before satisfactory accommodation is provided, the health and efficiency of pupils and teachers alike suffering in the meantime. And such inadequate school buildings appear to be most common in the North of England.*

Some local authorities have arranged to rebuild or remodel systematically a certain number of schools each year. Thus in London a list of schools, arranged in order of urgency, has been prepared, with which it is proposed to deal at the rate of nine each year. One hundred and eighteen of the one hundred and ninety-seven council schools built 1870-80, and thirty-four of the one hundred and fifty-one built 1881-90, have so far been dealt with, leaving yet many defective buildings, some of which have been condemned in reports year after year for defects in lighting, warming, ventilation, cloak rooms, staircases, and playground accommodation, in strange contrast to the excellent provision made in new school premises.†

Of old, class rooms were built to seat from sixty to ninety pupils, often with one large room in which four or more classes could be taught together. Many such still remain, particularly in rural districts. The large room is still favored because of its convenience for purposes of Sunday school and evening meetings. One of the greatest commercial cities of the North has a non-provided school with a room eighty feet by twenty-five feet, in which one hundred and ninety children are taught in four classes. But in most districts

* Report, Board of Education, 1909.

† As the result of a careful survey by the London County Council in 1905 of the four hundred and thirty-three non-provided schools, closure was required in twenty-three cases and improvements in three hundred and forty-nine cases.

these are being gradually partitioned off, two large class rooms for sixty or seventy pupils being sometimes divided into three smaller rooms. Thus in London during 1907-8 five hundred and forty-three class rooms, with an average accommodation for sixty-seven pupils, were changed into five hundred and ninety rooms, with an average of fifty-two; but in January, 1909, there still remained one thousand two hundred rooms accommodating more than sixty pupils.

Many schools, in some districts the majority, are still unprovided with halls in which no classes are taught, now recognized as essential for efficient work under modern methods. Thus there are fourteen schools in Colchester, seventeen in York, seventeen in Burnley, fifteen in Reading, without halls. In Darwen only two schools out of twenty are so provided, and West Bromwich has none, its schools resembling in this respect the majority in rural districts.

The question of safe exits in case of fire and provision of fire alarms has come to the fore of late. Some schools would prove veritable death traps in the event of a panic. Some authorities, as London, have recently been reconstructing and providing new exits, re-hanging doors so that all shall open outwards, and providing fire alarms to ensure safety. In many districts, particularly in congested town areas, playgrounds are inadequate, giving insufficient room for adequate exercise—in one such the infants play in a continual gloom with no open air, whilst the boys play in instalments, in what is little better than an enlargement of the sanitary offices—deficiency here also adding to the difficulty of remodelling the premises where this is necessary.*

There is a general consensus of opinion that three hundred pupils is the number that can be most adequately provided for in one department, this number being large enough to admit of due classification and small enough for adequate supervision by the head teacher.

In many cases, for purposes of economy, much larger schools are administered. Some London council schools provide for five hundred and sixty pupils, and some districts in the North of England, as Burnley, have schools with more than eight hundred children under one head teacher. But higher elementary schools are restricted to three hundred and fifty pupils, and this number is the proposed limit for the new central elementary schools in London. If such a number is large enough in schools where classes are small and the premises exceedingly well equipped, there appears no reason why it should be exceeded in the ordinary schools, which are in other respects less well off.

Fluctuations in school population often cause considerable difficulty in providing sufficient school accommodation. Rapidly growing residential districts, sometimes already heavily rated, often fail to keep pace with the demand, with disastrous results. Thus, in a letter to the Tottenham Education Committee, sent in February,

* In Manchester it has recently been decided to build a new school in a corner of one of the public parks. The Edinburgh School Board has bought a large playing field for the common use of the schools with insufficient playgrounds.

1910, the Board of Education pointed out that nearly every school had too many children, that some class rooms were overcrowded to the extent of forty or fifty children, that passages and exit corridors were used for teaching purposes, and that the resulting overcrowding was bad for health and education. Such a case is fortunately extreme, though the conditions are not unknown elsewhere. On the other hand, some districts have an accommodation considerably in excess of present needs; whilst again in some large areas, with a total excess of accommodation, there may be deficiency in certain parts of the area. Thus, for example, the London Authority, with a total accommodation greater than its needs, has recently given notice of its intention to build or enlarge schools for nearly ten thousand children in East and North London, where for some time past there have been insufficient school places.*

Staffing.

In considering the question of the relative values and sufficiency of staffs the different grades of teachers now employed must be remembered.

Over one hundred and fifty-nine thousand teachers were engaged in the elementary schools of England during the year 1908-9, of whom only eighty-nine thousand were certificated, and of these only forty-seven thousand had spent two or three years in a training college and were technically known as "trained"; whilst forty-two thousand had received the certificate without having been through a training college. Of the remaining seventy thousand, nearly forty thousand have had some experience as pupil teachers, but having failed to pass the necessary examinations are known as uncertificated; whilst the remaining thirty thousand are composed of pupil teachers, student teachers, and the anomalous, unqualified class known as supplementary teachers.†

In no satisfactory scheme of education would an unqualified teacher be allowed to be responsible for the education of children, any more than an unqualified medical student is allowed to be responsible for their physical well being. In the following statistics, therefore, only certificated teachers are considered, and the average number of children in average attendance for which such certificated teacher is responsible has been taken as the best basis of comparison. In this connection, however, two points have to be borne in mind: first, that amongst these certificated teachers are included the head

* In connection with this question the Board of Education has recently published the report of a committee on the provision of school buildings which, whilst efficient, shall be less costly and permanent in structure. Report of Departmental Committee on the Cost of School Buildings (Cd. 5534), 1911.

† It is noteworthy that, excluding pupil teachers, ninety-one per cent. of the non-certificated teachers are women, often very badly paid; also that whilst so many unqualified teachers are allowed to be responsible for a class, a very large number of fully qualified young people, again mostly women, who have been trained at considerable expense to the State, have either been unable to obtain employment, or have had to accept employment as uncertificated teachers. It is said that in Lancashire alone there were recently (1910) two hundred and ninety-six certificated teachers employed as, and at the wages of, uncertificated teachers.

teachers, who are always for a part or the whole of their time engaged in administrative or executive duties, and who thus can never give their undivided attention to a class, and are often not expected to, therefore the number of pupils per certificated *class* teacher is always greater than that given; whilst, in the second place, this number is still further increased by the fact that the teacher is actually responsible for the number of children *on the register*, for the irregular, who are often the greater burden, as well as for the regular. Thus in a school of three hundred pupils in average attendance, staffed by six certificated teachers, the number of children on the registers would be about three hundred and thirty, and in a school of this size the head teacher should be entirely freed from responsibility for a class; hence the remaining five certificated teachers would be responsible for sixty-five pupils each, instead of fifty, as would appear at first glance. This needs to be borne in mind when considering the following figures.

If school provision varies at all, it might be expected to vary in proportion to the wealth of a district. The best basis of wealth comparison for school purposes is that taken by the Government, the amount yielded by dividing the total product of a penny rate for the district by the number of children in average attendance. But it should be noted that by the Special Aid Grant, which is distributed in inverse proportion to this product of a penny rate, some approach to equality of burden is attempted.

The following table gives for the years 1907-8 and 1908-9 respectively the number of adult teachers per thousand pupils in average attendance in county boroughs, boroughs and urban districts, and in rural areas under county councils, in England and Wales.*

No. of Teachers per 1,000 Children in Average Attendance

	ENGLAND							
	Certificated		Uncertificated...		Others		Totals	
	1907-8	1908-9	1907-8	1908-9	1907-8	1908-9	1907-8	1908-9
London...	23.6	24.2	1.57	1.2	0.78	0.39	25.95	25.79
County Boroughs	18.65	19.28	7.66	7.19	1.28	0.99	27.39	27.46
Bor. & Urb. Dist.	16.63	17.2	9.18	8.76	2.09	1.74	27.9	27.7
County Areas ...	14.69	15.08	10.17	10.59	7.24	6.59	32.1	32.2
WALES.								
County Boroughs	16.95	17.52	10.19	9.91	2.86	2.06	30.0	29.49
Bor. & Urb. Dist.	15.46	16.34	12.08	12.39	4.23	3.67	31.77	32.4
County Areas ...	13.34	13.89	12.65	13.17	8.65	8.51	34.54	35.57

* It may be noted that the more progressive areas maintain a certain number of higher grade or higher elementary schools, more liberally staffed than the ordinary schools. In such a district, though the average be below fifty, the size of classes may vary from twenty-five in a higher elementary school to seventy in an ordinary school at the beginning of the school year. On the other hand, nearly all authorities have a number of "supply" teachers available in case of the absence of permanent teachers, and have also some teachers of special subjects who are not technically "certificated," and do not count for staffing purposes. Thus London in 1910 had one hundred and twenty-six visiting teachers, mainly for French; three hundred and thirty-four teachers of domestic economy; and two hundred and ninety-seven teachers of handicraft under this last head.

In order that there should be one certificated teacher for every forty pupils, with a head teacher freed from responsibility for a class for every three hundred pupils, 28·3 certificated teachers for every thousand pupils would be necessary. From this table it will be seen how far we are from that quite modern ideal. But there has been steady improvement in the number of certificated teachers employed, approximating generally to '6, being lowest in the English rural areas, whilst the number of uncertificated and others tends to get less. Further, it may be noted that the quality of the teaching provision decreases as we go from county boroughs to rural districts; that Wales makes distinctly worse provision than England; and that the number of "teachers of a sort" provided is not an indication of the quality of the teaching staff, unless taken inversely.

The second table gives for certain education areas the product of a penny rate (ppr.) and the education rate for 1907-8, together with A, the number of children in average attendance to each certificated teacher, including the head teacher, and B, the percentage of certificated teachers in the total number of adult teachers employed, for 1907-8 and 1908-9 respectively. The instances given are typical of many that might be cited, and are arranged in order of column A for 1908-9.

Area	Ppr.	Rate	A		B	
			1907-8	1908-9	1907-8	1908-9
COUNTY AREAS.						
Middlesex ...	4/4	10·7	49·7	50·5	66·0	71·0
Surrey ...	5/6	10·1	55·4	56·0	49·9	56·5
Kent ...	3/4	10·9	64·7	63·3	44·7	50·8
Lancashire... ..	3/0	9·8	67·0	65·0	40·8	47·5
West Riding ...	2/8	10·4	69·0	65·1	40·4	48·5
Norfolk ...	2/4	9·0	71·1	70·2	33·8	40·0
Essex ...	2/8	11·3	75·0	73·3	39·5	44·2
Holland (Lincs.) ...	3/8	5·6	75·8	76·5	36·6	36·7
SOME WELSH TOWNS.						
Barry ...	3/4	20·8	30·8	29·3	84·2	84·4
Cardiff ...	3/2	13·9	55·7	51·5	62·4	69·3
Lewport ...	2/6	17·2	58·4	58·8	60·9	62·6
Swansea ...	2/2	19·7	64·4	65·2	53·2	53·0
ENGLISH TOWN AREAS.						
Hornsey ...	6/8	15·2	33·2	33·0	95·0	95·0
Tottenham ...	2/2	24·2	41·0	40·8	82·4	94·0
London ...	5/4	17·0	43·2	41·6	81·5	92·8
Birkenhead ...	2/10	15·5	49·3	45·9	70·4	74·6
Leyton ...	2/2	24·9	47·0	48·7	67·2	83·5
Manchester ...	3/6	14·9	51·5	49·1	56·7	61·2
Oldham ...	2/2	20·1	52·6	50·1	66·7	68·0
Stockport ...	2/4	11·2	66·0	63·2	57·6	60·5
Preston ...	1/10	7·6	68·0	66·6	50·6	54·9
Eastbourne ...	6/4	5·6	72·0	69·6	47·0	55·4
Worcester ...	2/4	10·4	71·4	70·5	38·2	46·1
St. Helens ...	1/8	10·0	76·5	71·4	42·0	46·6

Together with general improvement very considerable variation will be noticed. The counties ranged from 50·5 to 76·5 pupils per certificated teacher. There seems no reason why the Holland Division of Lincolnshire should be so poorly equipped and spend so little. In the towns, too, the teaching provision of heavily rated Tottenham and Leyton will bear comparison with that made in London and Birmingham. Nor are these two exceptional among the poorer residential districts around London. In Ilford, Leyton, East Ham, West Ham, Walthamstow, and Edmonton, the rate varied from 19·8 to 24·9 pence, and the provision of certificated teachers varied from one to forty-seven to one to fifty pupils. Wealthier Manchester is at last coming into line with them. Oldham and Preston, two towns very similar in character, afford an interesting contrast, Oldham raising an education rate nearly three times as great as Preston and providing thirteen per cent. more certificated teachers. Birkenhead and Stockport form another interesting pair, and the comparison is somewhat odious for Stockport. But if Preston and Stockport were not well equipped, wealthy Eastbourne and the dignified cathedral city of Worcester could at least cast no stones at them, whilst the poverty of St. Helens cannot justify its lack of qualified teachers. If, indeed, the head teachers of schools large enough for them to be relieved from responsibility for a class had been excluded from the computation, some of these authorities would, as already explained, make a much worse appearance. Thus in Eastbourne, excluding the head teachers of each of its twenty-five departments, there was in 1908-9 only one certificated class teacher for every one hundred and three pupils in average attendance. But Eastbourne had its reward in having one of the lowest education rates in the kingdom.*

The issue of Circular 709, which, whilst reducing the numbers of pupils for which non-certificated teachers will in future be allowed to be responsible, insists that the number of scholars on the register of a class under the instruction of one teacher shall not exceed sixty, is justified by such instances as have been, and others that could be, quoted; as is also the wish of the Board of Education that "the arrangements of certain authorities should be levelled upwards to the standard already attained, or in process of attaining, in other parts of the country, and that a more uniform observance of the fundamental conditions of educational efficiency should be secured." † But, in order to attain that, there needs to be also some readjustment of the financial burden to relieve the discrepancy between such rates as that of 24·9 pence in the pound in Leyton and that of 5·6 pence in Eastbourne. ‡

* The proportions of non-provided schools in these districts is suggestive. Oldham had sixteen non-provided out of thirty-eight schools; Preston, thirty-six out of thirty-eight; Worcester, sixteen out of eighteen; Eastbourne, ten out of thirteen; and St. Helens, thirty-three out of thirty-nine. Eastbourne is also the favored abode of a large number of proprietary schools.

† Prefatory Memorandum, Code of Regulations, 1909.

‡ Ilford in 1891, had a population of ten thousand nine hundred and eleven and an education rate of twopence; in June, 1909, its population was seventy-nine thousand four hundred and thirty-six and its education rate for 1909-10 is one shilling and tenpence in the pound. Since 1894 it has built thirteen schools, and two more are planned.

Desks.

Let us now turn to the subject of equipment of school premises. For children under six it seems to be agreed that low tables and small chairs are better than any form of desk. The children sit in small groups, six or eight at a table, and the mistress moves easily among them. These little chairs and tables can be procured from any good makers of school furniture at the following prices: chairs, two shillings and threepence to three shillings and fourpence each; tables, ten shillings to sixteen shillings, according to size.

For older children also separate seats should be used. Doctors and teachers alike agree on this point. For reasons of hygiene and of order there should be a clear space between children engaged in school work. The long benches once in use, and still used in many country schools, are therefore to be condemned. The single seat is best provided by single desks. Chairs are sometimes used with these for reasons of economy. The desk without seat costs about eighteen shillings, and the chair may be had for two shillings; while a desk with attached seat costs from twenty-two shillings and sixpence to twenty-five shillings, according to varieties of pattern. The small saving, however, effected by the use of chairs is reported to be inadvisable, since the chairs are noisy in use; and with them it is not so easy to secure that the child sits in a good position for reading, writing, or drawing. And if the growing child sits in a distorted position for four or five hours of five days in the week, the effect on his immature body is disastrous.

The cost of providing single desks for many hundreds or thousands of children is evidently a matter for serious consideration to many educational authorities. New schools can be fitted out with tables and separate chairs for baby classes, and with single desks for the standards, at no very great addition to the cost of the old fashioned and unhygienic double desks. But to "scrap" an existing supply is the difficulty of many administrators. A compromise between the worst system and the best can be found and cost lessened by desks such as the "Sheffield," in which a long slope for books is backed by separate seats at satisfactory distances from each other. These have also the merit, shared by the single desk, of preventing overcrowding. A dual desk can easily be made to seat three and a form a very indefinite number, but only one child can sit on a separate seat.

Flat desks are objectionable, because the child must bend over them to write in a position which cramps the body. This objection does not apply to the tables for babies, who do not write.

It may be well to suggest here that all desks should be cleansed once a week with a disinfectant solution.

We have made enquiries of makers of school furniture and of workmen whether it is advisable to convert dual desks already existing in a school into single ones. So far as our enquiries have gone, all authorities agree that this is not worth while. The cost, they say, of providing the necessary iron supports would amount to almost that of new single desks. The desk so made would be inferior to

the new desk made to a better pattern, and therefore it does not appear that the adaptation can generally be recommended. Local conditions, however, might make such a plan possible in some places, where the necessary labor is easily obtainable and where cost must be very rigidly calculated.

Pictures.

Every room in the school should have some pictures. Some of these are for decoration purely, since we want to give our children in the schools something of beauty and color, which unluckily many of them cannot find in their own poverty stricken homes. Others are for use in teaching, and are a most valuable aid to the teacher.

Of the first class are landscapes, reproductions of famous pictures, and photographs of statuary. A fine set of landscapes in color lithography, produced in Germany, can be had at six shillings (unframed) each. Frames with movable backs can be had, thirty-three by twenty-six inches, for three shillings and sixpence each.* Reproductions of the pictures of great artists will not only decorate the class room, but give the children the beginning of an acquaintance with the masterpieces of human achievement in beauty. One can get, for example, admirable color prints of Turner's pictures of Venice or his Fighting Téméraire, in frames, at prices varying from five shillings and sixpence to eight shillings and ninepence. Seemann's Masterpieces, published by Asher, include photographs of friezes from the Parthenon, the Venus of Milo, reliefs from the famous Baptistery Door at Florence, thirty-one by twenty-five inches, at ninepence unframed and three shillings and sevenpence framed.

The school should contain also pictures of such places and scenery as do not come within the child's own experience. Some of the lithographed color landscapes are useful in this connection, such as those of Autumn Leaves (Otto), A Daisy Field, Windermere (Luther Hooper), to be had framed at about nine shillings each. Pictures of the unfamiliar animals must be added to these. The Woodbury phototypes, seventeen by nineteen inches, three shillings and sixpence in frames, are good examples.

Little children should have the simplest pictures in their rooms, in flat color, with simple outlines, and little detail. Cecil Aldin's Friezes, Caldecott's Nursery Rhymes, are good examples of what they need. They love pictures of the domestic animals.

In every case pictures should be hung low, so that they can be easily seen by the children in the room. The more easily they can be handled and their places changed by the teacher the better. They may with advantage be moved from room to room at intervals of a few months, so that the interest of the children may be roused by new pictures in their rooms. The frames with movable backs are also very useful for the purpose of changing pictures, either as they are wanted to illustrate lessons or because the pupils are no longer interested in a picture which they know by heart.

* From Asher & Co., 13 Bedford Street, Covent Garden, W.C.

Buckinghamshire has a voluntary organization, recognized by the County Education Committee, which, on receipt of subscriptions from school managers (allowed in the yearly estimates), lends pictures to a school and changes them yearly. The number of pictures sent is proportionate to the subscription. By this excellent plan a constant variety is secured, and the interest of the children roused in the new picture on the wall. Where this plan is adopted, frames of standard sizes might be used, so that the pictures might be forwarded unframed and cost of carriage lessened. Frames should be simple; broad dark ones are generally best. White might be used for children's pictures. The frame should fit the edge of the picture itself, leaving none of the white margin visible.

Closely connected with the supply of pictures is the use of a good school lantern. Many authorities provide these, whilst some have organized loan collections of slides for use with them, of which the largest is to be found in London. Here during the past few years the lantern has become increasingly popular as an aid to teaching, while the list of slides on loan has increased from a few hundred to several thousand.

SERIES RECOMMENDED.

- Teubner Series (Asher & Co.), four shillings to six shillings, unframed.
- Voigtländer Series (Asher & Co.), two shillings and sixpence to six shillings, unframed.
- Caspari Friezes, for small children (Asher & Co.), three shillings and sixpence to four shillings and sixpence, unframed.
- Scholars' Cartoons (Haufstängl), seven shillings and sixpence, unframed.
- Britannia Historical Pictures (Arnold), two shillings and sixpence, unframed.
- Fitzroy Pictures (G. Bell, Covent Garden), two shillings and sixpence to five shillings and sixpence.
- Historical Portraits (Art for Schools Association, Queen Street, Bloomsbury, W.C.), one shilling and sixpence to ten shillings and sixpence.

These prices are generally subject to discount.

School Libraries.

A good library is an indispensable adjunct to a school. Beyond the interest and intellectual stimulus it provides, it offers also a training for the right use of leisure, not less important than training for work.

Hence it is disappointing to find how very few schools, except in the more advanced districts, are well equipped in this respect. In many no library exists. One advanced city has libraries only in eighty-eight out of one hundred and forty-four senior departments. In others there is one for the older scholars only. In some schools a library is provided, but is never used, or its use is restricted to the top class or to the most regular scholars. Even in London these

varieties may be found. That there should be books on loan accessible to every child in the school who is able to read, not merely as a reward, but as an essential part of his education, is for many a distant ideal. What, too, is often overlooked is that the books should be such as to arouse a spontaneous interest, graduated to the ages of those who shall read them, not the cast off works of the last generation, more strongly and less invitingly bound.

In London provision is made for library books for the children in Standard Three and upwards, but facilities may be extended to children below the Third Standard. For the annual replenishing of the library, expenditure is allowed at the rate of one halfpenny per head per child in average attendance up to a general limit of twelve shillings for each senior department.

But however good the school library may be, there should be co-operation with the public library. In Sheffield, in seventy-four senior departments, four thousand three hundred and seven pupils have borrowed, on an average, two thousand four hundred and eighty-five books from the public library per week. In many London boroughs also such co-operation exists. In Stepney and Poplar, for example, the teachers recommend pupils as borrowers on forms provided for the purpose, advise as to the selection of books from the special catalogue, and co-operate with the librarian in ensuring their due return and proper use.

It is evident, too, that very few authorities make any grant towards the provision of a teachers' reference library in each school; and this is, perhaps, the more necessary just where they are least often found—in the rural districts. The London authority not only does this, but is forming its own educational circulating library for the use of teachers and officers; and is, moreover, inviting the local libraries to place similar pedagogical works upon their shelves. The Surrey County Council has also a central reference library for teachers, from which books are lent to schools at the rate of one per month for each department having less than one hundred and fifty pupils, and two where there are more.

Some of the best schools, too, have formed a small reference library for the use of the older pupils, to train them in the habit of consulting larger books of reference. In some cases this can be amalgamated with the teachers' reference library.

Curriculum.

The broad outlines of the elementary school curriculum are laid out in the annual Code of Regulations,* but these permit of considerable variety of interpretation, depending mainly upon the quality of the teaching staff and the nature of the equipment provided. The latter is often the determining factor; the complaints that certain work, which would be desirable, cannot be carried out from lack of suitable rooms and appliances are very general.

* See Code of Regulations for Public Elementary Schools; also Suggestions for the Consideration of Teachers.

Of late years considerable improvements in the methods of teaching the long recognized school subjects—writing, arithmetic, English, history, and geography—have been introduced; whilst other subjects have been added to the curriculum, with the object, on the one hand, of making school life more interesting and healthful; on the other, of bringing the knowledge and skill acquired more directly into touch with life activities. Thus the teaching of freehand drawing has in the best school systems developed into brush drawing, clay modelling, and design. Nature study is becoming more general. An improved system of physical exercises has been introduced, with which often goes some instruction in personal hygiene, in swimming, and in organized games. These changes have raised another difficulty, that of the overcrowded curriculum. The solution of this problem must be found both by lessening the time given to the older subjects and by introducing a closer co-operation between subjects such as history, English, and geography, nature study and drawing, arithmetic and domestic science or handicraft, in such a way that the teaching of one may help in the comprehension of the other.

In order to provide some preparation for the more specifically after-school activities, through subjects and by methods in themselves educationally valuable to children, grants are paid by the Board of Education for satisfactory courses of instruction in cookery, laundry work, combined domestic subjects, handicraft, and, in rural districts, gardening and dairy work. But the grants paid do not cover the whole cost of such instruction even when provided with the minimum of equipment, hence the frequent lack of provision. Such subjects are usually taught at centres which children from neighboring schools attend one half day in each week, and they all involve some amount of manual as well as mental training. But they have in the past been taught without any connection with the other subjects in the curriculum, a defect which some attempts are being made to remedy. In London some centres are being allocated to the exclusive use of the pupils of one school and placed under the control of the head teacher, as in the central elementary schools; in others conferences are arranged between the heads of the contributory schools and the teachers of these special subject centres. The fact that in England, unlike America, handwork, except in the form of drawing, is usually non-existent during the four or five years between the infant school and the upper classes of the elementary school has also attracted attention of late. In many advanced schools some form of educational handwork has been introduced in those years; and, partly to encourage this, the Board of Education has recently arranged that a grant should be paid in a limited number of cases for a lighter and less expensive form of woodwork than is ordinarily practised.

HANDICRAFT.

This subject is confined to boys, and usually consists of some form of woodwork, though in some of the larger industrial areas

metalwork is included. In 1908-9 it was taught to over two hundred thousand pupils in nearly three thousand seven hundred schools in England and Wales; yet out of sixty-two autonomous counties, no satisfactory provision for its teaching had been made in eighteen, including Cornwall, Dorset, Lincoln, Northumberland, Nottinghamshire, and the East Riding. Even though the distances to be traversed present difficulties in rural districts, the table appended shows that this difficulty is not insuperable.

DOMESTIC SCIENCE.

This, for girls, more than supplies the place which handicraft fills for boys. It includes cookery, taught in 1908-9 to nearly three hundred thousand girls; laundrywork, taught to ninety-three thousand; and combined domestic subjects, comprising cookery, laundry, and housewifery, taught to sixteen thousand girls in England alone. For this last there is usually provided a cottage or flat fitted as a workman's home. Some interesting developments are taking place in these subjects. The Hull Education Committee has recently decided to provide for girls about to leave school a half time course of three and a half months, to include four weeks cookery, two weeks laundrywork, and eight weeks in an artizan's house; whilst London has established twelve domestic economy day schools, where a year's full time training is to be given to selected girls between the ages of thirteen and sixteen years. But there are still many districts where no facilities are provided for practical training in domestic subjects during school years, and few where the accommodation is sufficient to provide for all the girls old enough to profit by such training.

An essential part of domestic science is the instruction in needlework, which for many years has formed an important, and often very irksome, subject in the ordinary school course. The barbarous practice, so long continued, of forcing infants to engage in needlework drill long before the fine muscles used would have been normally developed, is fast dying out; but in many girls' schools slow and obsolete methods and unnecessarily fine stitching are still exacted. The Board of Education has recently permitted the use of the sewing machine to be taught in girls' schools, and some authorities are already providing machines for this purpose.

GARDENING.

This is almost entirely confined to rural districts. In 1908-9 twenty-eight thousand pupils were receiving instruction in England alone in twelve hundred schools, of which one hundred were in urban areas. The number of pupils had nearly doubled during the previous three years. The Board of Education, writing to the Lancashire Education Committee, recently suggested that "the work of a rural school should centre round such practical subjects as are suited to the occupations of the locality, namely, gardening, handicraft, and domestic economy; and associated with these should be subjects teaching the principles underlying the practical instruction,

such as arithmetic, drawing, and rural science." Yet there has been great diversity in the provision made for the teaching of so eminently rural a subject as gardening ; for whilst Staffordshire and Surrey headed the list in 1908-9 with one hundred and thirty-eight and one hundred and eight schools respectively receiving grants for it, Rutland had none.*

The following table gives the number of pupils who qualified for Board of Education grants in these subjects, in the various areas noted, during the year 1908-9. The ppr. (see page 6), the rate in pence, and the average attendance of pupils of *five years and over* are given for purposes of comparison. The columns refer respectively to cookery, laundry, combined domestic subjects, handicraft, and gardening, and the figure in the last column shows what percentage the sum of these forms of the average attendance. It is suggested that even though instruction in these subjects is confined to pupils over eleven years of age, this figure gives a good basis of comparison as to the extent of provision made under these heads.

As in the preceding table, considerable variations will be found, and there appears no reason why among the counties Berkshire, Northumberland, and the East Riding should be so seriously in default. Nor are these the worst. Rutland, comparatively wealthy, with ppr. 3s. 10d. and nearly three thousand pupils, earned such grants on *ten*, and rejoiced in an education rate of 3·8d., whilst the Holland division of Lincolnshire, ppr. 3s. 8d. and rate 5·6d., earned these grants on fourteen of its more than nine thousand pupils. In the town areas there are also some notable differences. Why should Manchester and Liverpool make worse provision than Reading, and West Ham eclipse the wealthier districts below it? And there are too many urban areas where no better provision is made than in Peterborough, Bury, and Dover, and some quite prepared to dispute with Dover for the privilege of being the worst. Yet improvement in the past year has been general. Surrey, London, and Manchester have increased the percentage in the last column by four, Essex by six, and Middlesex by 10·5. Some towns, however, have made little progress, and the East Riding has done worse, from '9 to '6. Fortunately it cannot do much worse.

* Among recent developments it may be noted that in 1908-9 one hundred and nine boys qualified for grants in cookery in Essex, East Suffolk, and the North Riding, and fifty-four girls in dairy work, of whom fifty were in Cornwall.

Area.	Ppr.	Rate.	Average Attendance Five Years.	No. of Pupils Receiving Grants (1908-9) in :					Per cent.		
				Cookery.	Laundry.	Domestic Subjects.	Handicraft.	Garden- ing			
COUNTY AREAS.											
Surrey	5/6	10·1	53,525	3,443	933	—	2,191	1,824	15·6	
Gloucestershire	2/6	11·3	41,696	2,015	1,042	141	1,002	892	12·2	
Essex	2/8	11·3	59,375	4,630	260	—	680	1,042	11·1	
Kent	3/4	10·9	71,979	2,406	241	—	548	664	5·3	
Lancashire	3/0	9·8	127,960	2,992	345	11	507	629	3·6	
West Riding	2/8	10·4	165,267	3,981	537	—	707	360	3·4	
Berkshire	3/4	11·5	22,664	141	—	—	90	164	1·3	
Northumberland	3/2	10·5	42,933	117	—	—	—	260	·9	
East Riding	3/8	7·5	17,768	—	—	—	—	100	·6	
TOWN AREAS (ENGLAND).											
Hornsey	7/2	15·2	6,833	776	196	54	758	—	26·1	
Reading	2/10	18·7	10,632	960	626	64	951	—	24·4	
London	5/4	17·0	604,842	40,650	33,425	7,861	57,812	20	23·1	
Birkenhead	2/10	15·5	17,876	2,122	358	—	1,368	—	21·5	
Manchester	3/6	14·9	91,100	6,368	1,209	169	7,613	14	16·8	
West Ham	1/10	22·7	50,517	3,377	2,123	—	2,710	—	16·2	
Liverpool	3/0	16·0	112,293	7,936	1,870	—	5,730	—	13·9	
Stockport	2/4	11·2	14,763	1,061	—	—	339	54	9·8	
Northampton	2/2	19·9	12,566	1,023	56	—	—	—	8·6	
Peterborough	2/2	8·8	5,292	360	—	—	—	26	7·3	
Bury	2/10	9·4	6,430	234	—	—	176	—	5·9	
Dover	2/10	11·6	5,527	180	—	—	—	—	3·3	

So far as the elementary school is concerned, the vocational value of such subjects should be subsidiary to their educational value, as giving more play to the muscular activities of childhood and, through their direct dealings with concrete matter, providing a good basis for intellectual activities. Somewhat similar in nature is the increased attention now given to the teaching of elementary science in schools—another subject often starved for lack of the necessary equipment—together with the rapid growth of late years of the nature study movement. The same spirit has entered into the teaching of other school subjects. London puts aside about five hundred pounds per annum to help in paying the expenses of pupils visiting, during school hours, places of educational interest having some bearing on the class lessons, and is prepared to expend another one hundred pounds per year towards the expenses incidental to school journeys on which, during a week or more, pupils from certain schools study the topography, geology, history, climatic conditions, etc., of some country district. All such work has its effect upon the teaching of other parts of the curriculum, the history, geography, English, mathematics. No part of the school system has felt the effects of this wider view of educational responsibility more than the infant school, within the walls of which a revolution, still uncompleted, has been silently proceeding these ten years past. But all these new developments make heavy calls upon the skill and intelligence of the teachers, and need a more generous equipment than was formerly found necessary. Hence those districts where necessary equipment is refused, or where unskilled teachers are engaged, are refusing their children a fair chance as compared with those of more favored districts, where the essentials of satisfactory preparation for modern conditions are more justly provided.

Scholarships.

No public authority had power to incur expenditure on scholarships prior to the Technical Instruction Act of 1891; the Acts of 1902-3, placing elementary and secondary education in the hands of the county and borough councils first explicitly permitted general schemes to be made. Many varieties of such are now in process of evolution. Here we shall deal in the main with scholarships open to pupils in the elementary schools, and not, as in the case of the "probationer" scholarships, earmarked for those intending to become teachers.

London (average attendance 650,554) now offers about 1,800 junior county scholarships to pupils between eleven and twelve years of age, tenable for three years, but renewable for a further two years in the case of those pupils who show ability to profit by the extension. It has been decided that, in view of the generally rising standard of attainments of the pupils in London elementary schools, no definite limit shall be placed upon the number to be awarded in future. Nor is any distinction of sex to be made; formerly girls had the preference, in 1907 by seventeen to ten, in 1908 by thirteen to ten; but it is

proposed that in future the numbers shall be approximately equal, and this year, 1910, there have been awarded 865 to boys and 846 to girls. It is to be noted that in addition to those granted by the Council there are about 325 trust fund scholarships open to competition by children in London elementary schools.

Manchester (average attendance 97,068) offers twenty junior scholarships, tenable for five years, with a varying number of bursaries of £10 per annum for two years, limited to boys of fourteen to fifteen years already in the higher elementary schools, and ten bursaries of £10 for three years awarded to pupils who have obtained foundation scholarships at secondary schools. Differentiation here, is in favor of the boys, who receive twelve of the twenty scholarships, eight of the ten bursaries, in addition to all the higher elementary bursaries. Liverpool (average attendance 117,255) offers fifty junior scholarships for two years, renewable for a third or fourth year, and equally divided between boys and girls. Ilford (average attendance 9,824) gave sixty-one scholarships in 1909. Coventry (average attendance 14,444) gives forty-five; whilst Burnley (average attendance 15,151) provides only twenty.

As examples of what is being done in the rural areas under the county councils, we may note that Lancashire (average attendance 137,791) offers 350 junior exhibitions restricted to children in the elementary schools, and 100 open junior scholarships, all tenable for four years; candidates must be between eleven and thirteen years of age. Kent (average attendance 76,840) gives 200 to boys and girls of eleven years of age. Warwickshire (average attendance 37,309) offers twenty-four, whilst Hertfordshire (average attendance 42,754) provides twenty.

Though there is some variation in methods of award the written competitive examination seems to hold general sway as yet, as for example in Lancashire. In some districts, as in Liverpool and Warwickshire and Wiltshire, this is followed by an oral examination of selected candidates, a method which is said to have given general satisfaction; but here, even more than in the written test, much depends upon the conditions under which this is carried out. In other places the head teachers of the elementary school have some power of recommendation, and it is possible that this is more often influential than printed schemes would testify. But in London the head teachers are specially instructed to send in for the written examination all boys and girls between eleven and twelve years who are working in the fifth or higher standard; the examiners, however, in conjunction with the results of this examination, consider the position of the pupil at the previous school term examination.

The amount of the grants made towards maintenance shows considerable variation, and this is a matter of vital importance, for where these are insufficient one of two things happens; either the children of poor parents fail to compete, or, should they obtain a scholarship, relinquish it long before its term has expired. The income of the parent also needs consideration, otherwise grants may go where they are not needed, or an undue proportion may go to

those who can afford to pay for extra tuition for their children preparatory to the examination. In London junior scholarships may be held by children of parents having incomes up to £300 per annum, but two-thirds of the total must go to those having less than £160 per annum. Only the latter obtain grants during the first three years of £6 per annum; for the fourth and fifth years, whilst these receive £15 per annum, those whose parents' income falls between £160 and £300 get only £10 per annum. In each case free education and books are provided.

In Manchester grants for the five years range from £10 to £20, with £2 10s. increases; but from these the ordinary fees of the secondary schools have to be paid. In Liverpool the grants made are £6, £9, £12 and £15 per annum, with free education and half the cost of books. The county (Lancashire) is, however, less generous. It gives free education up to £6 per annum, travelling expenses in excess of £1 per annum, an allowance for books not exceeding £1 per annum, and a maintenance grant only during the third and fourth years, and then strictly where circumstances render this necessary. Hence it is not surprising to hear that the scholarships are frequently relinquished. This appears also to be the case in Wiltshire, where, in addition to free tuition, £5 only is granted towards maintenance, whilst Warwickshire gives £10 in addition to travelling expenses. This last item is important in rural districts, where some pupils travel upwards of ten miles to school, whilst others are deterred by distance or difficult access from competing. In Devonshire the heads of the secondary schools have suggested the provision of conveyances to gather the pupils from outlying districts, and the authority has promised to consider any scheme to that end that may be submitted. In other places it has been suggested that lodging-houses might be registered near the schools, where pupils coming from a distance could reside during the school days of the week; but for these maintenance grants would need to be adequate if this suggestion were adopted.

The evils of inadequate grants to which reference has been made have of late become acute in relation to other classes of pupils. By Section 20 of the Regulations for Secondary Schools, 25 per cent. of free places have to be provided in all secondary schools receiving grants from the Board of Education. With these, however, there goes no financial help for the poorer pupils, for whom they were doubtless intended, towards maintenance, books, or travelling. Similarly, many of the endowed charity, or trust fund, scholarships provide only free education, or with this a quite inadequate money grant. Beyond these two classes lies another, the existence of which has called for comment in many parts of the country, made up of pupils who, on account of late development or temporary illness, or some other reason, miss the junior scholarships at the early age at which they are awarded, but whose general abilities are such as to justify the belief that they should have received one. For all these classes the London County Council propose this year to provide 300 supplementary county scholarships, graduated in value in accordance

with the income of the parent and the age of the pupil, and tenable from thirteen to sixteen years of age.*

But there has been of late a growing feeling that the education provided at the secondary schools through the scholarships above described does not meet all the requirements of the case, and some authorities have begun to provide trade scholarships for elementary school pupils.† Of such London has now 158 available for boys and 168 for girls, and it is hoped that within the next few years, after further experience has helped to solve some of the difficult problems connected with this question, some 600 will be available. These are tenable for two or three years, and carry maintenance grants varying from £6 to £15, with free education in such trades as building, engineering, book production, silversmithing, etc., for boys, and dress-making, tailoring, upholstery, millinery, etc., for girls. In addition there are 300 domestic economy scholarships granted to girls of fourteen years of age for one year—to be increased in some cases to two—with a maintenance grant of £4.‡

Medical Inspection.

The Education (Administrative Provisions) Act, 1907, has made it compulsory on all local education authorities to provide for the medical inspection of school children. The Board of Education at present requires that the examination shall include all children admitted to the school and all expected to leave during the year.§ As a rule also special cases selected by the teachers are seen by the school doctors.

Who should be appointed School Medical Officer?

The Board of Education has strongly recommended that in counties, county boroughs, and where practicable in non-county boroughs, the medical officer of health should be appointed school medical officer. The former has various responsibilities with regard to infectious diseases, school closure, and sanitary condition of schools; he is responsible, too, for the hygiene and sanitary conditions of the homes, which are of primary importance to the health of the child, but over which the school medical officer, as such, has at present no control. It is most desirable, therefore, that the two services should be closely co-ordinated, and that the chief responsibility for both should, where practicable, rest on one and the same

* The new scheme for Durham provides for scholarships in proportion of one to 3,000 of the population for pupils under thirteen years (approximately 250), and one to 20,000 of population for pupils between thirteen and fifteen (approximately thirty-five to forty), and this same number will be offered to pupils in secondary schools between thirteen and fifteen years of age.

† It is worthy of note that grants may now be made to parents of children in ordinary elementary schools to enable them to keep their children at school beyond the age of exemption from school attendance.

‡ The Gloucestershire Education Committee has since 1907 been interested in such problems and has established a craft school at Brimscombe, whilst several counties, as Dorset and Hertfordshire, offer agricultural scholarships.

§ Minute of Board of Education, June 25th, 1910 (Cd. 5231).

person. When the medical officer of health is appointed school medical officer, medical inspection is usually carried out by assistants, as at Colchester, where an assistant woman medical officer of health and school medical officer devotes her whole time to medical inspection and work in the schools.

In Hertfordshire and Derbyshire the county medical officer of health was appointed school medical officer, and the medical officer of health of each local sanitary authority assistant school medical officer, thus still further co-ordinating the work of the doctor in the school and in the home. Though the scheme is said to work well in Hertfordshire it has the drawback that medical inspection and supervision of hygiene in the schools are specialized work which the local officer may not be particularly well qualified to undertake. It is noteworthy that the tendency generally among education authorities is to abandon the system of part time in favor of that of whole time school medical officers,* and where school clinics are established at which treatment is carried out by school medical officers, the plea of monotony of work sometimes urged against whole time appointments ceases to have any force.†

It is well to appoint a duly qualified medical woman for the inspection of the girls and infants. Up the end of 1908 sixty-eight women had been appointed as school medical officers, or assistants, by local education authorities.

The Routine of Medical Inspection.

The Board of Education has issued a schedule of medical inspection, which specifies the information that should be obtained by the inspector and his assistants. This schedule is being generally followed by local education authorities with little alteration.‡

The amount of time given by the medical officer to the examination of each child varies enormously under different local authorities. At a council school in Coventry the doctor gave an average of twenty minutes per child, while in a village of Kent an average of 2.4 minutes only was allowed for the doctor's examination. It would seem, from a comparison of instances and reports, that seven to ten minutes is the time considered necessary in an ordinary way for the examination of normal cases, while longer is allowed for special cases. A shorter time than this is clearly insufficient for the prescribed stock-taking of the special conditions of teeth, nose, throat, and eyes, hearing, speech and mental condition, plus examination for any abnormal condition of heart, lungs or nervous system, even if the formal preliminaries and the weighing, measuring, eye-testing and examination as to general cleanliness are performed by school nurses or teachers.

* Annual Report for 1908 of Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education, p. 19.

† See Report of School Medical Officer, Bradford, 1908, p. 42.

‡ Annual Report for 1908 of the Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education, p. 30.

The head teachers of each department are usually present at the medical examination in addition to undertaking, in many districts, part of the preliminary work. This co-operation of the teachers though in many ways very desirable is open to grave objections in localities where the schools are not fully staffed; as, for example, in Kent, where the staffing is low and where it also appears that the briefest period is given to examination by the medical officer.

Co-operation of Parents.

There is much to be gained by having parents present at the medical examination of their children. It should be recognized that in case of a defect being discovered it is the doctor's duty to place his knowledge at the disposal of the child's parents and convey to them a realization of the conditions present. The doctor may then point out that treatment is required, but detailed consideration (e.g., the recommendation of operation for adenoids) should be left to the doctor who will undertake the case. Furthermore, though this is not part of his duties, he is sometimes able to point out simple remedies for any small ailments discovered, give hints as to the clothing, which is apt in the case of girls to be excessive in quantity and at the same time unhygienic, and give general advice as to hygiene and cleanliness. He does this whilst conducting the examination, without much loss of time, and were school clinics established where the examining doctor also administered treatment, this could be made part of his recognized duty, thereby vastly increasing the value of the inspection.

In any case, if the parent is present there is greater probability that he or she will go to the trouble and expense of carrying out treatment which the doctor's examination has shown to be required.

The majority of education authorities invite parents to attend; some further encourage them by providing a comfortable waiting place, by having children accompanied by a parent examined first, and by generally endeavoring to put them to as little inconvenience and loss of time, and to make things as agreeable to them as possible.

The percentage of parents' attendance varies very much from place to place. At a school in Lancashire none were present at the examination of their children, though all were invited. At a village in Warwickshire nearly every child was attended by a parent. In a Coventry school parents attended with their girls but not with their boys. In the county of Worcester 61 per cent. of the children examined were attended by a parent, and judging by other examples this is probably not far above the average.

Value of Medical Examination.

There can be no question as to the value of medical examination. Prevention is better than cure, and routine inspection brings to light many incipient maladies which teachers and parents had not suspected. For example, in Worcestershire cases were discovered of incipient

spinal curvature,* to correct which it is necessary the desks should be high enough and suitably placed. Cases were found of "dilated heart" due to cycling up steep hills, which became normal when on the doctor's advice this practice was given up.† Various school medical officers have found it necessary to warn parents and teachers in cases where a child was being punished for apparent stupidity or naughtiness which was really the result of disease or defective eyesight or hearing,‡ also where the condition of the heart rendered the child unfit to take part in the ordinary physical exercises,§ or to walk or run long distances, carrying a father's dinner.||

The discovery of cases of incipient phthisis in time to check the development of the disease must also be of great value.

But apart from these less common and less obvious diseases there is a vast amount of preventible ill health among school children for which, as the medical inspection has shown, nothing is as a general rule done. Adenoids, enlarged tonsils, discharging ears, deafness, sore eyes, sore heads, and defective teeth are among the ailments commonly left untreated, although they are a serious menace to the health and efficiency of the children.

When children thus suffering are medically examined, it is at least pointed out to the parents that treatment should be sought.

Medical Treatment.

The percentage of school children found in need of medical treatment who actually obtain it varies very much from district to district, according to the facilities which exist for it and the amount of trouble taken in the matter by the education authority or some voluntary society.

It is reported that in Surrey satisfactory treatment was obtained for the children by their parents in 28·3 per cent. of the cases where treatment was recommended.

In Derbyshire 63·6 sought medical advice, and of the eye cases 33 per cent. provided themselves with spectacles.

In the Lindsay division of Lincolnshire 24·8 per cent. of the children were taken to a doctor.

In several towns and counties there is evidence that the medical charities and hospitals have been largely drawn upon for treatment by school children as a result of school medical inspection, and in some districts it is said the work of the private practitioner has increased.¶

Sir George Newman states that in many districts 20 to 60 per cent. of the children requiring treatment have been treated; but satisfactory

* Annual Report of School Medical Officer for 1908, p. 64.

† Ibid, p. 37.

‡ Herts Annual Report of School Medical Officer, 1908, pp. 26-7, and Bristol Report of Education Committee, 1909, p. 63.

§ Ibid, also Manchester Report of Education Committee, 1908-9, p. 185.

|| Worcester Report of School Medical Officer, 1908, p. 37.

¶ Annual Report for 1908 of Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education, p. 34.

as it is that medical inspection should already have produced such practical results, it cannot be a matter of complacency that there are still in our schools in these districts from 40 to 80 per cent. of children known to be in need of ameliorative treatment for whom nothing is being done.

The Act of Parliament not only makes medical inspection compulsory, but also permits education authorities to make arrangements for attending to the health and physical condition of the children, subject to sanction by the Board of Education.

Examples of such arrangements already sanctioned by the Board of Education are the appointment of school nurses, the free provision of spectacles, arrangements with hospitals, dispensaries, or private practitioners, and the establishment of school clinics.

School Nurses.

It is hardly possible to over estimate the value of the school nurse, and for assistance in medical inspection local education authorities have power to appoint nurses without asking permission of the Board of Education. Many local authorities employ them specially for the examination as regards general cleanliness and condition of heads.

But as an arrangement for attending to the health of the children, the Board of Education cordially encourages the appointment of school nurses to carry out treatment "on the understanding that the nurse will act under the supervision and authority of the school medical officer."*

Sir George Newman, in his report, says: "Such matters as the antiseptic treatment of discharging ears, the maintenance of cleanliness, the treatment of sores and minor skin diseases or minor diseases of the eye, such as blepharitis and conjunctivitis, and the treatment of slight injuries, seem to fall within the scope of the school nurse."† The school nurse can furthermore do much to promote the health of the children by visiting the homes, encouraging the parents to obtain medical treatment recommended by the school doctor, and instructing the mother where home care is needed.

In certain localities, notably Worcestershire and Bradford, children absent from school are reported by the attendance officers and brought up for examination by the school medical officer; in the latter case at the school clinic. Dr. Mary Williams, in her report to the Worcestershire County Council, says: "There is considerable loss of grant from children absent from school on account of ill health, and much of this might be prevented if (a) children were not allowed to be absent unless really ill, and (b) if the parents were compelled to begin to treat the ailment causing absence so soon as the children were at home."‡ Such prompt examination is

* Annual Report for 1908 of Chief Medical Officer of Board of Education, pp. 26 et seq., 92.

† Ibid. p. 26.

‡ First Annual Report of the School Medical Officer, Worcestershire, 1908, p. 53.

further a step towards securing that in cases of serious disease the child is not being neglected, as too often happens.

Nurses as Attendance Officers.

If, as this report suggests, nurses were appointed as attendance officers, such officers would be prompt to detect cases of shamming, would see that treatment prescribed by the doctor was carried out without loss of time, and in cases of neglect could give valuable evidence in court. There seems to be no reason why such a scheme, combining the office of school nurse and attendance officer, might not be universally adopted, in rural districts as well as in the towns, with very great benefit to the children and a financial gain to the ratepayer by the increase of grant, which greater regularity of school attendance, due to prevention of both illness and shamming, would secure.

Cleansing Schemes.

At present the school nurse is employed by many education authorities to examine children's heads for pediculosis under cleansing schemes, and great reforms have thereby been achieved. In Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, and other districts, parents are warned and instructions for cleansing sent when their children's heads are found "dirty." After a certain interval each child's head is re-examined, if necessary a second and a third time, and if still dirty the child is excluded from school. If after a further period the child does not return cured, the parents are prosecuted for not sending the child to school in a proper condition. In some districts the nurses visit the homes and assist the mother to effect the cleansing.

The standard of cleanliness has by such means been greatly raised* and the much more extensive operation of cleansing schemes is called for. Rural schools often suffer from "dirty heads" as well as urban schools.† For example, in a certain rural Kentish school complaint is made that a large proportion of the children are thus infected.

In London an elaborate cleansing scheme is in operation, and up to December, 1909, had been applied to 288 schools, whereby the standard of what constitutes cleanliness was raised; and even with this more stringent standard, the percentage of children with verminous heads was reduced to 20.9. ‡

An interesting experiment was tried in the autumn of 1909 at three schools in which there were hot water baths.§

While the children were cleansed at school, the sanitary authority undertook the cleansing of home and bedding. The experiment was eminently successful, meeting with the approval of children and

* London County Council, Report of Medical Officer (Education) for 1909, p. 32.

† Annual Report for 1909 of the Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education, p. 29.

‡ London County Council, Report of Medical Officer (Education) for 1909, p. 32.

§ "Chaucer," Bermondsey; "Pulteney," Soho; Finch Street, Whitechapel. Ibid., p. 32.

parents, and in a large proportion of cases effecting what might be hoped would prove a permanent cure.

Where satisfactory cleansing stations for children are not already established, that is, stations where there is no risk of their being associated in any way with the ordinary verminous person, nor with infectious disease contacts, and where their efficient supervision is provided for, it is most convenient, effective, and economical to establish the cleansing station at the school. A hot water bath and vermin destroyer for clothing comprise the necessary apparatus.*

School Baths.

In the interests of health and cleanliness alike it is to be hoped that the example of those authorities who have installed school baths will be widely followed.

Dr. Crowley, in his report to the Bradford Education Committee, 1908, says :

"Good use is made of the six excellent school baths under the authority, and the children attend also the public baths. It is difficult to speak too highly of the value of the school swimming bath, the place and function of which is far from being sufficiently appreciated. . . . Swimming baths should be available for all school children and reserved exclusively for them. One has only to watch the children in the baths to appreciate what an excellent physical effect this form of bathing has, and swimming is one of the finest forms of physical exercise. No part of the school curriculum is more educational. . . . How valuable this may be, even for quite small children, and how educational to the mothers, may be seen in one of the school baths in the city, where the water is let down at the end of each week and the little ones splash about to their hearts' content.

"Failing the swimming bath, the shower bath, at any rate, should be available in all schools. A system of showers is inexpensive to instal, economical to work [provided there is an abundant water supply], and a large number of children can be bathed in a comparatively short time. . . .

"It is important that the part of the building devoted to the shower bath should be airy and well lighted, and the dressing room should be separated from the bath proper. Such baths must on no account be looked upon as installed for dirty children only. . . . Their effect is educational, is a mental and moral one as well as a physical, and the school bathing should be looked upon by the children as part of the ordinary school curriculum." †

At Sheffield special arrangements have been made by the Education Committee for the school children to attend public swimming baths both in and out of school hours. At Sunderland also public swimming baths are used by the boys. At Bristol nearly 4,000 boys were taught swimming during the summer of 1908. At Glasgow

* Ibid. pp. 33-36.

† Report of the School Medical Officer, 1908, to the City of Bradford Education Committee, pp. 45-6.

spray baths have been fitted in two of the schools, and in Liverpool the school children during the summer months use two free open air baths. In London children attend the public swimming baths, and a few schools have private baths of their own.

Spectacles.

Sanction for the free provision of spectacles to school children, out of the rates, was obtained in 1908-9 by twenty-one local authorities.* A large number of other local authorities are endeavoring to secure that all children in need of spectacles shall obtain them, whatever the position of the family, by means of charitable funds to supplement parents' payments. Such funds, however, as in the case of London, are apt to fall short in meeting the growing demand.

Arrangements with Hospitals.

The sanction by the Board of Education of arrangements under which local education authorities pay hospitals or other voluntary institutions for the treatment of some of the miscellaneous assortment of diseases and ailments that inspection reveals among school children, can only be regarded as a temporary expedient. There are a number of reasons why such arrangements are unjust, costly and inefficient. It is customary at hospitals to grant treatment free or at a nominal charge to the poor. But the Local Education Authorities (Medical Treatment) Act, 1909, has made it obligatory for local education authorities to make a charge for the treatment given to school children, though they need not enforce payment if the parent is unable "by reason of circumstances other than his own default," or, in other words, poverty, to pay. Under such arrangements, therefore, it comes about that instead of facilitating the medical treatment of children of school age the intervention of the Education Authority debar the parents from the benefit of the free use of the hospitals for children of school age. This hardship is now widely felt in London in consequence of the arrangements made between the London County Council and certain hospitals.

But apart from the perversion of voluntary institutions from the uses intended by their benefactors, the treatment at a large institution with its necessarily expensive upkeep is absurdly extravagant in the case of many of the minor ailments. Hospital treatment is suitable for certain diseases and operations, and for these possibly their use should be continued in the case of school children. But not only is hospital treatment expensive, but what is more important, it is usually ill adapted and inefficient for such conditions as sore eyes, discharging ears, ringworm, and skin diseases, which require not one visit, nor even a weekly visit, but treatment daily, and sometimes twice or thrice daily to effect a cure. Moreover, it is hardly possible so to organize visits to hospitals that all the cases receive immediate attention, and the danger to the health of the child, and inconvenience, loss of time, and loss of work to the parent entailed by the

* Annual Report for 1908 of Chief Medical Officer of Board of Education, p. 93.

long hours of waiting, are hardly realized by those sections of the community who in illness are attended at their homes by a private practitioner. The journeying to and fro moreover is often an expense to be considered.

School Clinics.

The best method of dealing with the minor ailments, and indeed of sorting out all cases for reference to the appropriate agency or institution, whether it be hospital, open air school, baths, free dinners, playground classes, or whatever health promoting means may be available, is the establishment at or near a school or group of schools of a health centre or clinic. Here a nurse is in constant attendance to treat sore eyes, discharging ears, skin diseases, and such ailments generally as require attention daily. A doctor is also in attendance (at regularly certain times), and all cases are kept under supervision until they are cured.

A large and expensive establishment is unnecessary and out of place for the school clinic. At the privately established clinic at Deptford, in one room dentist, doctor, and nurse all do their work, each in their own corner of the room, without in any way hindering one another. Another room serves as waiting room for a large number of parents and children, since this clinic is not on school premises, and the work cannot be carried on here during school hours. Where the clinic is on school premises and open during school hours even less accommodation is necessary.

The Board of Education has already sanctioned the establishment of clinics by various education authorities; for example, a fully equipped one at Bradford, and arrangements on a smaller scale at Brighton, Reading, Abertillery, Southampton and York (for ringworm only).* A dental clinic was established by private generosity at Cambridge, and the education authority has since taken it over.†

School dentists have also been engaged by the London County Council at Deptford, and by the education authorities at Bradford and Norwich.

At Bradford during the last six months of 1908, 841 children were treated at the clinic, 546 being cured and 295 retained for treatment.‡ The diseases at that time treated were defective vision and diseases of the eye, ringworm, pediculosis, skin diseases, and discharging ears.

The success of school clinics, where established by education authorities or by private benefaction has been most marked, and they are undoubtedly the most efficient as well as the most economical method of treatment for a large class of ailments. Their establishment should be very general.

* Annual Report for 1908 of Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education, p. 97.

† Ibid, pp. 100-1.

‡ Report of School Medical Officer for 1908, pp. 98, 99.

Ringworm.

Clinics for the X-ray treatment of ringworm should also be everywhere available in order that this disease may be dealt with in the speediest and therefore the most economical manner. The loss of grant for children absent with ringworm and their loss of education is at present considerable.

Teeth.

It is practically certain that unless special measures are taken by education authorities little will be done by parents to get treatment other than extraction for their children's defective teeth, and inspection has shown that from 20 to 40 per cent. of the children examined, except the babies' classes, have four or more decayed teeth.*

Perhaps this is the most serious of all the conditions medical inspection has brought to light, since debility, indigestion, anæmia and even phthisis are all traced to decayed teeth.

Toothbrush clubs have been established in Worcestershire† and London,‡ but we must look in the main to the establishment of dental clinics for the remedy of this state of things. At the Deptford clinic, a voluntary institution, the L.C.C. dentist already alluded to has his equipment, and is at work on certain days and hours, stopping and otherwise attending to the teeth of the children from the elementary schools of the neighborhood. A dental clinic is also to be established at the St. George's Dispensary, Surrey Row, Blackfriars, for children from the neighboring schools.

Breathing and Physical Exercises.

In the treatment of adenoids, so common in our schools, operation alone is not sufficient, but proper breathing must also be taught.§ At the school clinic established by private benefaction at Deptford a teacher is frequently in attendance to train such children, and her work has met with great success. Such teaching may also be given by an instructor who goes round to the schools and shows the teachers how to give breathing and physical exercises. Special exercises may also benefit children with a tendency to spinal curvature. But physical training should not be restricted to the ailing. Breathing and physical exercises and the cultivation of hygienic habits generally, as in handkerchief drill, are of the greatest value in promoting the health and vigor of children from the infant classes upwards, and the extension of their judicious use both as preventive and curative means is much to be advocated.

Home Conditions.

But for large numbers of ailing children no treatment by doctor, nurse or teacher will alone suffice. It is their home conditions which are at fault. Lessons to parents, and children too, as to right

* Annual Report for 1908 of Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education, p. 53.

† Worcestershire Aftercare Committee Report, p. 6.

‡ Report of Medical Officer (Education) for 1909, p. 16.

§ Report of Chief Medical Officer of Board of Education, pp. 58-9.

feeding, the value of open windows, cleanliness and such matters may do much. But there are still many to whom a different mode of living, or more nourishment than the parents can afford to give them, are essential for improvement in health.

The Open Air School.

One of the most promising of all forms of treatment for ailments and diseases such as anæmia, incipient phthisis, nervousness, malnutrition and general debility with its numerous manifestations, which doctoring alone cannot cure, is the open air school.

The idea was introduced from Germany, and the first English open air school was established in 1907 by the London County Council, who kept three such schools open in the summers of 1908 and 1909.

In 1908 open air schools were set up also at Bradford, Halifax and Norwich.

These schools were recognized under the Elementary Education (Defective and Epileptic Children) Act, 1899, thereby securing that admission shall be by the selection of the medical officer of the local education authority, that the children are taught in small classes, that hours of instruction shall be short, that the curriculum includes manual training, and that the schools can be kept open during ordinary school holidays. There might, however, be difficulties in establishing such schools permanently in number sufficient to the need under this Act.

Except in London it is not usually hard to obtain a suitable site within the area of the local education authority.

In choosing a site the main points to bear in mind are the desirability of plenty of fresh air and as much sunshine as possible, healthy soil, plentiful water supply, and pleasant surroundings; a small wood is an attractive feature in connection with some of the outdoor classes.

The buildings should be slight and airy, since the classes are held in the open air, but verandahs, sheds, or even class rooms are needed for protection in rain or strong sunshine. It is necessary to have kitchens, bathrooms, offices, and rooms for the teachers, school doctor and nurse attached to the open air school.

Desks and seats are not used so much as in ordinary schools. It is best to have single desks, and they should be easily portable. The seats or chairs must have proper backs, since most of the children are delicate.

Every child should be given some form of hammock chair for the afternoon rest which forms so important a part of the curriculum. The ordinary deck chairs sometimes used are not suitable, as they do not allow a sufficiently recumbent position.*

As regards the size of the school it seems to be generally agreed that a school for about one hundred and twenty is more economical and more generally satisfactory than several smaller ones. It is said to be a great advantage to have children of all sizes at the same

* Annual Report of Chief Medical Officer of Board of Education, 1908, p. 123.

school, provided they are sufficiently numerous for suitable classification, and with the larger school it is worth while to provide for the daily attendance of a nurse, which is nearly always required for some of the cases.

Though certificate from the school medical officer is essential for admission to open air schools under the 1899 Act, the London County Council in 1909 further limited admission by strictly requiring certain payments (from 1s. to 3s. per week) from the parents, with the result that a large number of the children selected were afterwards rejected* and their places filled by children less in need of such treatment, but for whom their parents were able to contribute.

At Bradford it was advocated that no such condition should be made, suitability for admission to be the ground of selection irrespective of the social position or ability of parents to contribute.†

At both the Bradford and London schools the children attend daily, in time for breakfast, and leave again after tea; they therefore receive three good meals. One to two hours sleep or rest in the afternoon is always insisted on. Strict cleanliness is required, and baths are usually given. It should, especially in summer, be possible to give every child a daily bath as part of the treatment. Shower baths are advocated for this purpose. It is strongly urged‡ that the children should take part in the domestic work of the school, even at the expense of some inconvenience to the adult helpers, for this and the gardening work do much to enhance the family feeling which is so desirable in a school of this kind.§

All classes are small and of short duration to avoid mental fatigue. They are usually given in the open air, and practical demonstration is much used. For example, in the geography lesson miniature rivers, lakes, and mountains may be constructed, and arithmetic is taught by the taking of actual measurements. A large part of the class time is occupied with such subjects|| as nature study, local history, geography, practical arithmetic, school journeys, physical exercises, organized games, and visits to museums, with lessons upon them. Time is also allowed for ordinary play.

All reports show the immense benefit derived by the children from sojourn in open air schools,¶ both in mental and moral tone, and in physical effect, measured by general bearing, the cure of ailments, increase in weight, and increased proportion of hæmoglobin in the blood. It was found at Charlottenburg, the pioneer of open air schools, during the first three years, that delicate children after a spell there, notwithstanding the small amount of time given to lessons, were able not only to take their proper place, but often to pass

* London County Council Report of Medical Officer (Education) for 1909, p. 87.

† Report of School Medical Officer to Bradford Education Committee, December, 1908, p. 79, etc.

‡ Annual Report for 1908 of the Chief Medical Officer of Board of Education, p. 126.

§ Ibid, p. 127.

|| Ibid, p. 124.

¶ For example, Annual Report of Chief Medical Officer of Board of Education for 1908; Report of School Medical Officer for 1908, Bradford; London County Council, Report of School Medical Officer for 1909.

their school mates on their return to the ordinary schools ; and in England the teachers testify that the results on the work are excellent.*

It appears from reports that the period for which children are kept at the open air school is not always long enough. The London County Council School Medical Officer, in his report, urges that the London schools should be kept open all the year round, as at Bradford ; and this would be an economy, as providing a number of permanent school places instead of merely temporary ones.

There are children who are unfit to attend any but open air schools and a large number whom a temporary sojourn in such schools would enormously benefit ; it is therefore to be hoped that the extension of this form of school will be rapid.

The establishment of residential open air schools in addition to the day school is also greatly needed.

Both Dr. Kerr and Dr. Crowley urge the provision also of special "tuberculosis" schools or sanatoria, which should be permanently open and carried out on open air school lines.

Another experiment is being tried by the London County Council, who have decided to maintain for three years a special tuberculosis school in connection with the Paddington Dispensary for the Prevention of Consumption, where children suffering from or predisposed to tuberculosis, or in an infective environment, or discharged from sanatoria or convalescent homes can be educated. The majority of these children are not fit to attend the ordinary schools, and all will benefit by the open windows, hygienic measures, and special adaptation of the work to their physical condition.†

Playground Classes.

So great has been the success of the open air school that experiment has been made in utilizing school playgrounds for open air classes. In the autumn of 1909 this was tried in six London County Council schools, in some cases specially delicate children being selected, in others whole standards, or all standards in rotation being taken irrespective of health conditions.

The results in both types of open air class appear to have been good.

In the case of the delicate children, the classes were arranged on lines similar to those of the open air schools, and were held continuously out of doors. Such classes are not, however, an adequate substitute for the open air school, with its organized feeding, rest, and longer hours out of doors, though considerable benefit was derived by the children.

Where ordinary classes, not selected for health reasons, as at Stockwell Road School, occupied the playground in succession, excellent results were also attained. In addition to ordinary class

* Annual Report of Chief Medical Officer to Board of Education for 1908, p. 128.

† See London County Council Minutes, March 1st, 1910, p. 465, and London County Council, Report of School Medical Officer for 1909, p. 94.

work, physical exercise and breathing exercises were arranged for. Dr. Kerr says: "The alertness and bracing effect of the day in the open was quite noticeable on the following days, and an important negative result was that the discipline of the school did not suffer in any way."* With reference to this type of playground class the report continues later: "Its special function is to act as a kind of tonic to the ordinary drawbacks of classroom work, such as the fatigue and inattentiveness resulting from a vitiated atmosphere and want of sufficient movement. The direct curative effect on delicate children is likely to be disappointing. Type D [rotation of classes] seems more suited for the boy of average or fair physical condition than for the sickly or debilitated; but one day in ten in the open air, although better than none at all, is insufficient to meet his needs. It seems preferable that each standard should have one whole day in ten rather than one session every fifth day, but it would be better still if one whole day in each week could be spent in the open air."†

Holiday Colonies.

Little has yet been done in England in the way of organizing holiday colonies which are a feature in some Continental countries, notably Sweden, where whole classes of town children, together with their teachers, migrate for part of the summer to the country. Manchester has made an experiment in this direction by establishing a country school,‡ which was opened in June, 1904, as a voluntary institution, and later taken over by the education authority. Classes of forty children are transferred to this school for a fortnight each during the summer months.

Vacation Schools.

During the summer of 1910 the London County Council have opened two vacation schools in poor districts during the holidays.

Such a school was first started nine years ago at the Passmore Edwards Settlement.

"The aim," says Miss D. M. Ward,§ "of the vacation school is twofold: (1) to draw the children out of the loafing, demoralizing life of the streets, and give them wholesome and happy occupation under an ordered, but sympathetic, control; and (2) to give them different occupations from their ordinary school work of the rest of the year. Hence our insistence on all forms of manual work, on physical exercises, dancing, and games."

The teachers at the Passmore Edwards vacation school are mainly students who have finished their course at the training college and some secondary school and kindergarden teachers and drill instructors. The classes include carpentering, cobbling, wood-work, cookery, basket making, drill, and games.

* London County Council, Report of Medical Officer (Education) for 1909, p. 92.

† Ibid. p. 93.

‡ Annual Report of Education Committee, 1908-9, pp. 74-82.

§ *The School Child*, October, 1910, p. 12.

There is great competition among the children of the neighborhood for admission to the school, which is by ticket, the head teachers of the elementary schools assisting in the selection of children specially in need of the vacation school. Some of the children have been to the school three or four years running.*

The Bristol Education Committee made a grant to a voluntary vacation school in the summer of 1908. †

Though most needed in congested centres of population, the vacation school may be a source of great pleasure and benefit to the children in rural districts also as was shown by the vacation school at Newport, Essex. ‡

School Feeding.

Among the various forms of remedial treatment school feeding takes an important place.

It has long been known that in the poor districts of our cities many children came to school in such a condition from want of food that they were quite unfit to do any lessons.

School teachers and other kindly people therefore began organizing breakfasts and dinners for the starving children. The Education (Provision of Meals) Act, 1906, enabled such local authorities as adopted the Act to provide meals for school children out of the rates so long as their expenditure did not exceed a halfpenny rate. Up to 1909-10 over one hundred local education authorities appear to have adopted the Act and drawn on the rates for school feeding, § and many other local authorities are either expending voluntary funds on this work or having their scholars fed by voluntary agencies. During 1908-9 116,840 children were reported to the Board of Education as receiving meals through the education authorities in England and Wales. ||

London, having fed a large number of children by means of voluntary funds, adopted the Act early in 1909, and during 1908-9 an average of 39,632 children were fed weekly.

Though malnutrition is frequently reported by the school doctors, this condition is difficult of diagnosis and may be due to improper feeding and other causes, as well as insufficient feeding; but it is no longer necessary to point out that there are large numbers of families where the wage earner is unemployed, or receives such low wages that it is impossible, with the most careful management, for him to feed all his children adequately. Rowntree's standard, ¶ allowing an average of three shillings for an adult and two shillings and threepence for a child for food materials, in addition to all other necessary expenses, such as rent, fuel, and

* *The School Child*, October, 1910, p. 12.

† Report, Bristol Education Committee, March, 1909, p. 21.

‡ See "Our Village Vacation School," by Mrs. Carl Meyer, in the *British Health Review*, May, 1910.

§ Report on Working of Education (Provision of Meals) Act, 1909, pp. 26-9.

|| *Ibid.* p. 21.

¶ B. Seebohm Rowntree. "Poverty: a Study of Town Life," p. 105.

clothing, is a low one, as is also the standard taken by the London County Council organizers in their report on twelve necessitous schools,* allowing fifteen shillings per week for a standard family of two adults and four children, after deducting all outgoings on rent and thrift; and it may be assumed that families whose true incomes from all sources fall below this standard are unable to obtain sufficient food. There will be few education authorities—in fact it may be asserted that there will be none—who have not children in need of school feeding by reason of poverty alone; and there are other causes which often make school meals requisite, such as distance of children's homes from the school, especially in the rural districts, absence of parents, as when the mother, whether or no widowed, goes out to work, or when the mother is dead, inability of the parents, through illness or any other cause, to prepare suitable home meals, or special delicacy of children making it advisable to allow milk or cod liver oil as an extra.

Among the local authorities who are feeding school children there is great variety in the kind of meal given and in the manner of giving it. Under the purely voluntary system it was often considered that a basin of soup on certain days in the week met all requirements.

The larger local education authorities have now for the most part drawn up menus, usually with the assistance of school medical officer or domestic economy superintendent, allowing for the best value in proteids, fats and other needful constituents, and arranging for a different meal at least on each day of the week, and usually limiting soup meals to twice weekly.

Education authorities have adopted various plans for providing their school dinners, such as arranging with a large contractor or with local caterers, or having the meals cooked on the premises where they are served. All these methods are being tried for different London schools.

But the plan which appears to be both most satisfactory and most economical, is the establishment of large central kitchens under the direct control of the education authority. Bradford, Manchester, Bristol, Middlesborough, and Bury are among the towns which have adopted this plan.

At Bristol a large kitchen and store room was adapted and equipment installed at a cost of some £344 at the end of 1908, and over two thousand dinners daily can be supplied at a total cost of three farthings each, another three farthings being expended for administration. The menus cover a wide range of variety, and are nourishing and appetizing, though it must not be supposed that a really sufficient meal can be provided without greater expenditure on food materials.

The food is distributed, usually in cans which keep it quite hot, to the different feeding centres. At Manchester and Bristol tradesmen's carts are utilized for the purpose, at Bury the corporation trams distribute the food.

* London County Council Report on "Home Circumstances of the Children in Twelve Necessitous Schools."

The children are served either in the schools, in halls or other premises hired for the purpose, or at restaurants.

The latter plan must almost invariably be condemned, as satisfactory arrangements can very rarely be made to keep the children entirely apart from miscellaneous customers, or to ensure adequate supervision both of the children and of the food supplied to them.

Feeding in mission halls, chapels, and other hired premises may be satisfactory if the hall or room is really suitable, well lighted, warmed and aired, clean and cheerful, but there are many attendant drawbacks, children often having to cross crowded thoroughfares to get to their dinners and wait about in all weathers, and moreover the halls actually used, and the attendance necessarily engaged with the halls, are too often by no means satisfactory or suitable.

Feeding on school premises does away with the drawbacks of promiscuous company, dangerous crossing of streets, and waiting about, but in many of the schools there is at present no suitable accommodation for school dinners. It may be hoped that in future dining rooms may become an essential part of the school premises and "table manners, materials provided" part of the curriculum; and in the meantime many of our schools have spacious halls where meals can with proper organization be served without interference with ordinary school work.

In addition to helpers who serve food, lay the tables, wash up, etc., supervisors should always be appointed, as the school dinner may become highly educational or thoroughly demoralizing according to the manner in which it is conducted. Wherever they are willing to assist, teachers are the best supervisors, and some education authorities, for example Bristol, have secured their co-operation, without making such service compulsory, extra payment being made for supervision of the dinners. Monitors and monitresses from among the children can hand round the food and help generally at the dinners.

To make the meal as educational and civilizing as possible clean white table cloths should be supplied. Education authorities can hardly be expected to provide flowers unless they can be grown in the school gardens, but they may encourage friends to adorn the tables with them.

Payment for school dinners can be recovered under the Act from the parents where they are able to pay, but this provision has not been largely enforced. Were arrangements made, and the dinners conducted in such a fashion that no parent could object to his child being so fed, there would probably be many well-to-do parents who would be glad to pay and so avail themselves of school dinners for their children. This is especially the case in rural districts where children come one, two or even four miles to school, and thus on five days of the week dine off the bread with jam, dripping or butter which they bring with them, and eat wandering about the playground or lanes. At Easebourne, near Midhurst, Lord Egmont provides a hot dinner at school during the winter months for children residing more than one mile from the school, and such a system

needs to be extensively adopted by rural education authorities if the full advantages of country rearing are to be enjoyed by the children of agricultural workers and rural artizans.

The Place of the Voluntary Worker.

The work of volunteers has been enlisted by many local education authorities to "arrange for the individual treatment of poor children by voluntary agencies or otherwise."* The London County Council have made it part of the duty of the children's care committees established by them "to endeavor to induce parents to obtain the advice and treatment recommended in the medical register of the school."† The Somerset County Council have utilized the district education committees for a similar purpose.‡ It is inadvisable and in the end costly to employ volunteers for work which the nurse or health visitor is alone fitted to undertake, unless the authority is able to ensure that its voluntary helpers are duly qualified by the necessary training. If trained and organized, volunteers might find a permanent place in the scheme of public assistance, and render most valuable service by giving expert advice on feeding and hygiene generally in the homes. Meantime the co-operation of the intelligent though untrained worker can be turned to account in following medical inspection, by interviewing, visiting, and re-visiting the parents, and endeavoring to overcome any prejudice, indolence or ignorance on their part which stands in the way of the doctor's recommendations being carried out. In initiating a new scheme, such as the present one to care extensively for the health of our future citizens, a large amount of patient attention to each individual case is necessary, which may well be undertaken by anyone possessed of tact and sufficient intelligence to carry out instructions. Time is thus gained for plans to mature and to receive full consideration before the official organism which may eventually be necessary for their permanent and harmonious working is completely developed.

* Annual Report for 1928 of Chief Medical Officer of Board of Education, p. 94.

† London County Council Handbook for Care Committees, p. 19, No. 1,332. P. S. King & Son.

‡ Annual Report for 1908 of Chief Medical Officer of Board of Education, p. 94.

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