

- (c.) Poorly nourished children with physical deformity, such defect being generally more marked than among children in group (b), because these children lack nervous and muscular tone, and their general limpness tends to the development of physical deformities.
- (d.) Poorly nourished children, in whom the general condition of debility or anæmia is more important than the presence or absence of any particular physical deformity. This group may be disregarded in the meantime, since the treatment of the underlying condition is more important than the physical deformity itself.

The groups that vitally concern us in school-work are groups (b) and (c). Speaking generally, it may be said without fear of contradiction that group (a) is much smaller than it ought to be, and group (b) much larger. It should be possible, by well-directed efforts in physical education, to pass on the great majority of group (b) into group (a). This is the most immediate problem to be faced and the most hopeful.

*What can be done to prevent and cure these deformities?*—As the war has emphasized the importance of physical fitness, so also has it demonstrated as nothing else could have done the improvement in physical development and bodily health that is attainable by systematic exercise. The basis for a national system of physical education must be some scheme of wide scope planned to secure the even and perfect development of the body as a whole, and capable of application to all ages and both sexes. Furthermore, all other physical activities—games, sports, dancing, swimming—give their best results when superadded to this sound general training. The Swedish system of physical training meets all these requirements. It is the system adopted in the Army and Navy. It is the system at present in operation in our schools, and our aim should be to strengthen and perfect the system.

Most of the physical defects above referred to might be avoided, and many remedied, by making our present system of physical work more effective. The Swedish system of exercises depends for its good effects on the quality of the work done. With this end in view we would suggest:—

- (1.) That, as physical work of a good quality can only be carried out by efficient teachers, every possible facility be given teachers to become expert by such means as vacation training-camps, short refresher courses, and voluntary evening classes under the Physical Instructor of the district.
- (2.) That training-college students receive more systematic training in Swedish work, particularly training in teaching the Swedish exercises, and that encouragement be given to students to make this a special branch of their work.
- (3.) That Physical Instructors, limited in number as they are, concentrate their efforts more on the instruction and training of teachers than on inspection of classes. It is very noticeable that children respond at once to a keen teacher in physical as in other work, and it is to be remembered especially that the great majority of children are to be reached and benefited in their physical development through the teachers in our schools, and that they can be reached in no other way.
- (4.) That more time be allotted to physical work in our school syllabus. The present allowance of fifteen minutes daily is not sufficient for a good Swedish lesson under an inexpert teacher, although under an expert a great deal can be accomplished in the time. A better allowance would be half an hour; and we wish to emphasize the fact that this half-hour is not play-time, but a very strenuous half-hour of combined physical and mental activity. We are still very far from realizing the mental stimulus supplied by effective physical work. To secure this half-hour it may be necessary to lighten the present syllabus in other directions, but we confidently believe that the increased physical vigour and mental keenness so obtainable would more than compensate for the apparent loss of school time.
- (5.) That, wherever facilities exist, swimming should be taught, and should be an integral part of the school-work. We would like to see more schools with swimming-baths and gymnasia. We know that at present a very great deal is being done by the personal interest of teachers in the matter of open-air bathing and swimming where natural facilities exist, and we heartily endorse their efforts.
- (6.) That recognition be accorded to teachers who excel in the teaching of physical work, and that in the grading of teachers the quality of their work on the physical side be considered.
- (7.) That further effort be made through the teachers to encourage amongst the children the habit of wearing suitable clothing for physical exercises. It would be a great step forward if teachers and children alike (especially girls) were suitably clad for this work. Swedish work in clothing that in any way whatsoever hampers free movement of any part of the body loses half its efficiency. Teachers who conduct their drill classes in suitable costume openly proclaim their faith and interest in the exercises. This matter of costume is a practical point that must not be ignored if the scheme of physical education is to be sound. (See hints on clothing in circular "Suggestion to Parents.") An appropriate costume is already adopted widely by the girls in certain schools, and with the best results from the æsthetic standpoint as well as the physical.

If, in addition to the measures above detailed, the plan were adopted of having short intervals for drill or for amusement after each hour's work, group (b) would be almost non-existent.