

# Hope Public Schools

By W. C. SLATER, Superintendent

This article was written by Miss Julia Larson, supervisor of Physical Culture, and will appear in the biennial report of the state department, which will be issued soon:

The purpose of education is to give to the body and soul all the beauty and all the perfection of which they are capable."

It is thoroughly conceded that the school system which does not provide for the physical as well as the mental welfare of pupils is not doing its duty. There are many features comprehended in the physical wellbeing of the school child. Having the advantages of a modern school building we have the improved methods of heating, lighting and ventilation. We consider the seating of pupils with reference to individual powers of sight and hearing. We have playgrounds that give opportunity for free and unrestrained exercise. But with these matters satisfactorily disposed of, there are still constant and necessary conditions of school life which are adverse to the physical development of pupils, and which nothing but physical exercise can counteract. These conditions lie mainly in the sedentary nature of the occupation of the pupil. As with other sedentary pursuits, three general results follow: First, the nutritive process of the body including circulation, respiration, and the digestive functions become weakened and deranged by lack of sufficient demand for their work, a demand which comes through muscular activity. Second, the conditions of school life are such as tend to cultivate and fix what has been called the fatigue position—a position in which the chest is contracted and flattened, the shoulders rounded forward, and the head and hips protrude forward. This is the typical attitude where corrective gymnastics are not taken. Third, the psychological development, which comes only, or mainly through physical activity, is weakened by these conditions. The capacity for this development is at its most susceptible period during the school years.

To counteract these results is the object of every lesson given in physical culture. Twenty minutes, the time we devote to each class, seems a short period in which to accomplish very much, but by working faithfully and systematically positive strength, development, and endurance can be achieved. We have a large assembly hall, which not being seated, is used for a gymnasium. We have four classes in physical culture each day, two grades in each class. Two classes have been conducted during the recess periods, as the teacher in charge of the physical department also teaches second grade and so cannot afford to spend too much time from her grade.

All the lessons begin with a preliminary stretching of the arms upwards and sideways to assist the body to a good standing posture from which to take the exercises that follow, and with a drill in marching, including fancy marches, fancy steps and military drills. A breathing exercise is then taken and is followed by the regular table of exercises. This table begins with work for the extremities—the arms and legs—to increase the flow of the circulation away from the central part of the body. These two exercises are then generally taken in combination, making strong muscular and postural work. In the free work, these exercises are followed by local movements as for hands or neck, and by balance movements, and the lesson closes with the heaviest exercises of all, those for the trunk of the body, working alone or in combination with other parts. In apparatus work this same general plan is followed. Our exercises are executed to piano music. More life is thrown into the work if inspired by exhilarating strains of music. In marching the step becomes lighter and more elastic. In fact, melody kindles the enthusiasm and adds new energy to the motion.

The command form of exercise is used in preference to the drill form. Drills are chiefly effective for nutritive stimulation, but are of very little value for the correction of posture or for the training of the psychological powers. Command work, by concentration of attention upon the doing of one thing at a time, and for other reasons, is the most effective for postural correction of any form of exercise. The psychological training afforded by command work, especially for motor response and inhibitive control, is also one of the strong and distinguishing features to this form of exercise. To approximate the greater nutritive stimulation of continuous

movement without sacrificing wholly, as in drills, the advantages of command work, every lesson contains in addition to separate command exercises, one or more series of two or three exercises each, generally two exercises taken separately and then in combination. These "series" exercises are taken indirect one after the other without pausing for a command between them. The series is thus equivalent to a drill, two or three exercises in length.

Having the advantages of a spacious room and the free floor space, we are supplied with light apparatus, Indian clubs, dumb bells, and wands. We alternate the free work with the apparatus work. The postural correction of the free hand work is greater than that of the apparatus. A new adjustment of the muscles, and its maintenance until correct posture becomes a habit cannot be accomplished without a conscious effort on the part of the pupil. The effort is better concentrated in free gymnastics. Apparatus work is advisable because it is more stimulating to the circulation, respiration, and other physiological processes than free work. It is also advantageous because of the greater control of the bodily powers gained in the skill required to handle the apparatus itself. All of these factors tend to increase the pleasure and interest in exercise—features of the work that are of great importance. In the lower grades, games of motion constitute a part of the lesson. Herbert Spencer says: "Happiness is the most powerful of tonics. By accelerating the circulation of the blood, it facilitates the performance of every function, and so tends alike to increase health when it exists and to restore it when it is lost." Hence the superiority of play in gymnastics.

Fröebel says: "We should not consider play as a frivolous thing. On the contrary, it is a thing of profound significance. By means of play the child expands in joy as the flower expands when it proceeds from the bud, for joy is the soul of all the actions of the age." We feel that alertness of perception, quickness of action, a keen posture sense, a high coordination and power of inhibition—in a word, a greater volitional control, and a feeling of being master of one's self, will be the result of this training.

The country schools were inspected last week and were found to be in a flourishing condition.

The Scott school is under the management of Miss Kelly who has an enrollment of 12 students. Her instruction, methods and discipline are above the average.

The Gray school is in charge of Miss Ella Nelson who has an enrollment of 10 students. Miss Nelson's methods are up-to-date and her discipline and instruction good.

Misses Mayme and Grace Smith entered our High School, coming to us from Fargo High. We greet them as a valuable addition to our Freshman and Sophomore classes. They enter the same classes here that they were in there. Our course of study compares favorably with Fargo. We believe our instruction will be equally as good and efficient.

Mr. Burke, Democratic candidate for Governor of N. D., spoke to the students Monday morning.

Perfect Spelling.  
Second Grade.

Ralph Clutter, Edward Couron, Leslie Dorrance, James Meader, Donald Warner, Rozella Beckerjeck, Alberta Graham, Eunice Iseminger, Charlotte Johnson, Hildegard Usselman.

Third Grade.—Teddie Reynolds, Percy Olson, William Hanley, Zelma Moores, Annie Meader, Jamie Iseminger, Doris Tillotson.

Fourth Grade.—Ralph Klovestad, Ura Clutter, Lyle Bowen, Alma Anderson, George Sussex, Paul Roney, John Sussex, George Couron, Esther Donahue, Frank Gallup, Joe McCoolough, Clara Stark, Edna Jones, Francis Newhouse, Lloyd Pepper, James Cassell, Zoe Baker.

Fifth Grade.—Earl Cassels, Grace Harness, Fred Ingison, Mary King, Floyd Reynolds, Ina Jefferson.

Sixth Grade.—Elsie Klovestad, Blanch Warner.