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## EDITORIAL.

### PLAYGROUND CLASSES.

The Education Committee of the London County Council reported to that body on Tuesday that they have had under consideration the question of holding playground classes for the ensuing financial year. As such classes have now been held for three years, in connection with the elementary schools maintained by the Council, they are of opinion that the future policy should be determined. Reviewing the whole of the past action they state that the classes were established of four types—(a) Classes which form a centre for delicate children from neighbouring schools; (b) a class in which all the children are drawn from various standards in one school; (c) a class in which the pupils are drawn from a particular school, but are all in the one class, the same class being taken during the whole of the summer; (d) a class in which the pupils are drawn from a particular school only, and various classes are taken out into the open in rotation.

The most popular have proved to be classes (c) and (d), and the Council decided in 1911 that as many as possible should be of Class (d).

We should expect the effect of an abundance of fresh air to be magical on children who for the most part sleep at night in rooms where they do not have enough cubic feet of air space, and of which the windows are tightly closed. In common with all young growing things children need warmth, good food and fresh air for their rightful physical development, and it is interesting to learn that teaching in the open has had a most beneficial effect upon the children. The reports both of H.M. Inspectors and of the Council's district inspectors for the present year have been

very favourable, and the head teachers are almost unanimous that the classes should be continued.

Generally speaking, it is stated that the children are fresher, brighter, less subject to fatigue towards the end of the school session, suffer less from colds and minor ailments necessitating absence from school, there is less dulness and sleepiness, and the activity, carriage and appearance of the children have improved.

Mentally the children are more alert and grip their work better; they show more intelligence and zest in getting about their work; there is more concentration; and the greatest interest in outdoor practical work is shown. There is also a more natural form of discipline, improvement in temper and character, less irritability, more independence, resourcefulness and reliability, and friendly relations between teachers and children.

All these substantial benefits from breathing the fresh air supplied by Mother Nature, free to all, instead of the more or less poisoned compound enclosed within the four walls of the average class-room!

From the parents' point of view the playground classes are very popular. Some objections were offered at first but were quickly withdrawn, and many parents have written expressing their great appreciation. Very many state that the children's general health is better, and special mention is made of the fact that they eat and sleep better.

The Education Committee of the L.C.C. have therefore arrived at the conclusion that the experiment of conducting classes in the open has been amply justified and that an extension of the scheme would be of very great benefit. They are of opinion that it would be ultimately desirable to hold playground classes in every school where the playground accommodation is sufficient,

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