School hygiene and diseases incidental to school life

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DISEASES INCIDENTAL TO SCHOOL LIFE

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PREFACE.

The subject of School Hygiene, on which we have endeavoured to touch in the following pages, is one of great extent and considerable complication, and the recorded materials at our disposal are both scanty and scattered. The Germans, with their accustomed industry, have accumulated much valuable information, principally statistical in character, but the very different domestic arrangements of the two countries prevent effective conclusions being drawn from such evidence. Ventilation can hardly be looked upon as their strong point; the close stove heat so universal abroad causes headache and inconveniences which are not met with here, and outdoor games are only conspicuous by their absence. Under
these circumstances, therefore, we have been obliged to depend on the writings of English authorities, supplemented as far as possible by our own experience, and in this way to construct a manual of our subject, complete, we may venture to hope, at least in form. Objection may, of course, be taken to any precise treatment of the health of schools, on the plea that the ground is already traversed by the ordinary works on physiology and hygiene, and that such special headings as we have furnished are in reality out of place. It must, of course, be admitted that school buildings must be planned on ordinary principles, and that advantage must be taken of the best science and apparatus to make their drainage and ventilation and water supply as perfect as possible. Boys, it may be said, do not differ much from men in the necessities of their dietary, or the limits within which athletic sports, whether of mind or body, may be safely indulged. But, granting all this, we are sure that masters and doctors and parents will agree with us in thinking that it is very necessary that clear and definite rules should be laid down for their guidance, and that the acknow-