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HEALTH WORK AMONG PUBLIC SCHOOL CHILDREN *in* SYRACUSE

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AT the beginning of the closing school year it was notable that the children in the Syracuse Public Schools displayed more concern in their health and fewer signs of carelessness in personal hygiene than ever before. The program for the conservation of the health of the 21,885 pupils registered during the year was carried out under the supervision of the Board of Education.

There were 14,981 physical examinations made during the calendar year, 1924. Nine school physicians devote about one and one-half hours each school day to this work; making sick calls in the different schools and recommendations to parents concerning the correction of any physical defects noted on the physical examination. Such counsel was given in the case of 5,198 children in 1924.

The present plan of health supervision calls for a complete physical examination of healthy children three times during the eight years' course. Where defects are found the child is examined each year, and in many cases oftener.

many instances, of causing a disappearance of the condition. Reports made at the end of the school year in June, 1924, showed that as a result of such treatment the goiters of 536 school children had decreased in size, and in the case of 411 other pupils, the condition had disappeared.

The testing of children in the public schools for susceptibility to diphtheria, and the administration of protective serum begun in 1922, also continues. An increase in the staff of school nurses and the employment of the chief medical examiner made it possible in May, 1924, to adopt this procedure as a regular part of the school medical inspection.

There is no question in the mind of the writer but that the additional effort made possible by funds for the Syracuse Health Demonstration, has resulted in increasing the general health and hygienic condition of the children attending school. The employment through this means of eleven additional members to our working staff has made possible more thorough physical examinations of the children; more frequent inspection for contagious diseases; more specialized effort on behalf of handicapped children; the carrying out of a more intensive oral hygiene program; increased activity directed at the prevention of goiter and of diphtheria; and more effective instruction in habits of personal hygiene.

Pupils in the Syracuse schools are instructed in the care of the teeth. Talks on oral hygiene were made to classes in 1,913 instances during the past school year.

