



A CONFERENCE *on* HEALTH EDUCATION

*Staffs of the Metropolitan, Urban and Rural Health
Demonstrations Exchange Experiences*



HEALTH Education was made the subject of a conference by health workers and staff members of the three New York Health Demonstrations held in New York City on April 8 and 9, 1926. Round table discussions covered the objectives of health education, the demographic factors to be considered in shaping and directing programs of health education, the methods employed in developing such programs, and technique employable in the application of these methods.

Participation by Sir Arthur Newsholme added greatly to the interest of the discussions. Great Britain, he pointed out, is in the process of learning lessons in advertising from America. "Isolated health work can no longer be successful," said Sir Arthur at the conclusion of these sessions, "and my one regret is that I am not twenty years younger so that I might make greater use of what I have learned here."

To arouse the interest of leaders and the public generally; to impart information regarding personal hygiene, prophylaxis, and individual, family and community responsibility for health; and to secure individual and group action in addition to general acquiescence of the public at large—were

some of the texts outlined as laudable "objectives of health education." This topic, which was presented by the Chairman of the conference, Homer Folks, member of the Technical Board of the Milbank Memorial Fund, was the subject of discussion in which Dr. Herman G. Weiskotten, Commissioner of Health in Syracuse; Bailey B. Burritt, Director of the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor; Harry L. Hopkins, Director of the New York Tuberculosis and Health Association, and John A. Kingsbury, Secretary of the Milbank Memorial Fund, took part.

Charts showing the infant mortality and birth rates, the death rates and the leading causes of death in the sanitary areas comprising the Bellevue-Yorkville district of New York City were presented by Godias J. Drolet, Consulting Statistician of the Bellevue-Yorkville Demonstration, in depicting what demographic factors he thought should be considered in shaping and in directing a health education program in that area. The character of the population group, its industrial composition and hazards, economic conditions, and available health facilities were all stressed as important factors which should determine the nature of any community health education program. Dr. George C. Ruhland, Deputy Commissioner of Health of the City of Syracuse and Dr. Stephen A. Douglass, Health Officer of Cattaraugus County, presented respectively the urban and rural aspects of this topic. Edgar Sydenstricker, Statistical Consultant of the Milbank Memorial Fund, S. B. Rickards, Director of Health Education of the New York State Department of Health, and Dr. Leverett D. Bristol, Executive Officer of the Bellevue-Yorkville Demonstration, participated in the discussion.

In showing the methods applicable in approaching the several age groups of a general population, Teresa M. Fields, Organizer in Health Education, of the metropolitan



Attendance at the well-baby clinics maintained by the Syracuse Department of Health showed a large increase in 1925. A total of 10,520 visits were made by mothers and their children during the year to the 503 such clinics held.

health demonstration in the Bellevue-Yorkville District of New York City, used a chart on which she had correlated information regarding the age distribution of the population of this neighborhood, the number and causes of death in each of these age groups, and the existing avenues through which they might be reached in a health education campaign.

The importance of adapting the health message to the interests of the group for which it is intended, was stressed by Louise Franklin Bache, Assistant Director of Health Education in Syracuse. Likening a health education bureau to a "shop" with certain "wares" to "sell," Miss Bache said that success in the former activity, quite as much as in the latter, depended upon the application of certain basic principles of "salesmanship." The individual's interest in health differs



A letter on health is addressed weekly to the residents of Cattaraugus County by the County Health Officer, Stephen A. Douglass, M.D. This is in turn duplicated in the office of the Director of Health Education and dispatched to the fourteen newspapers of the County.

according to his financial standing, occupation, nationality, sex and age, she said.

John Armstrong, Director of Health Education of the Cattaraugus County Health Demonstration, emphasized the importance of using available publicity channels to promote the varied programs of the bureaus through which the general health work of the community is administered.

The value and limitations of the newspaper as a means of developing an informed and responsive public opinion, were discussed by Philip P. Jacobs, Publicity Director of the National Tuberculosis Association. Mr. Jacobs gave many suggestions for the use to this end of case and feature stories, interviews, editorials, and special pictorial supplements.

In a "clinic" on publications issued in the New York Health Demonstrations, William Edwin Rudge, of William Edwin Rudge, Inc., illustrated the importance of such fac-

tors as readability, margins, press work, binding, and selection of paper in determining the effectiveness of printed matter. Exemplifying the value of illustration and white space in arresting the attention of readers, Bertrand Brown, Assistant Secretary of the Milbank Memorial Fund, presented a cereal advertisement from a recent edition of the *Saturday Evening Post* in which approximately 50 per cent of the space was occupied by a picture to stimulate interest, 41 per cent was white space, and only 9 per cent was used for text matter.

Procedure useful in establishing and in maintaining a community health lecture service was outlined by Dr. Iago Galdston, Director, Bureau of Health Education of the New York City Department of Health. Dr. Galdston set forth many practical suggestions relating to the use of trained and volunteer speakers, the use of talks singly and in series, the

John Armstrong, Director of the Bureau of Health Education, is shown here giving a talk on health to an industrial group during the noon hour. Staff members of the local Health Department participate as speakers at meetings held from time to time in various neighborhoods of the County.





A section of the Syracuse Public Library is devoted to books on health. A list of health literature available in the Library has been distributed recently as a part of the health education activities.

building up of a clientele, means of checking up on the success of speakers and the use of literature to supplement lectures.

Dr. Donald B. Armstrong, Assistant Secretary of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, presented information of sources to which the health worker may turn for literature, posters and films available for use in a health crusade.*

There is perhaps no better way to arouse the public's interest in health than by a parade, said Miss Bache, in talking on the use of exhibits, plays, pageants and other means of dramatizing health instruction. Just as the wise clergyman

*Lists of sources of such material may be secured from the following: American Child Health Association; The American Public Health Association; The American Social Hygiene Association, Inc.; Metropolitan Life Insurance Company; National Organization for Public Health Nursing; National Committee for Mental Hygiene, Inc.; The National League of Nursing Education; National Tuberculosis Association and The Women's Foundation for Health, Inc.

A list of the health films and slides available in New York State is being prepared by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company with the co-operation of the National Health Council, and, when published, may be obtained from the National Health Council.

intersperses the story or parable in his sermon, the wise health education director adapts the dramatic method to his use in forwarding a health education program, she concluded.

Mr. Kingsbury was the principal speaker at a luncheon session devoted to a discussion of means of fostering a wider application by other communities of the methods and practices developed in the New York Health Demonstrations. "Already other communities are beginning to ask for information based on this experience," he said. "Inquiries of one kind and another are coming to us from many quarters of the globe. And as the knowledge of these projects is spread, the volume of this correspondence is increasing.

"Since our purpose in instituting these demonstrations was to help bring about a wider application of medical knowledge already demonstrated to the satisfaction of experts," concluded Mr. Kingsbury, "we are anxious to convey to our inquirers information interpretive of our experience."

In bringing the sessions to a close, Homer Folks, the Chairman, said that discussion of the schools as channels for the disseminating of health education had not been included on the program because it was thought that this topic in and of itself would warrant meetings devoted exclusively to it. Although the time allotted had not permitted consideration of this and other significant topics in this field, the conference had given a favorable impression of the volume and quality of the experience available in current work in public health education, he said in conclusion.





IF I were to select any one branch of public health work for special concentration, it would be effort calculated to promote the welfare and health of the mother and her child in early years.

—SIR ARTHUR NEWSHOLME, M.D., K.C.B.