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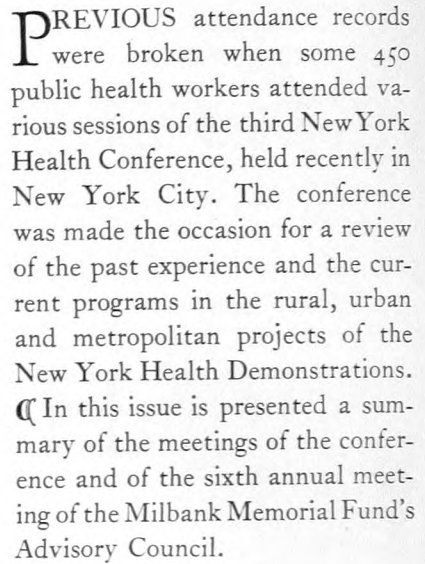
The NEW YORK HEALTH CONFERENCE
held in connection with the
Sixth Annual Meeting of the Advisory Council



HEALTH demonstrations in New York State, and particularly the New York Health Demonstrations, were discussed at the two-day health conference, held in New York City on February 23rd and 24th in connection with the sixth annual dinner meeting of the Advisory Council of the Milbank Memorial Fund. Federal, state, city, and local health agencies were among nine organizations sponsoring the sessions of the conference, the group including the United States Public Health Service; the New York State and City Departments of Health; the New York State Medical Society; the State Charities Aid Association; the Bellevue-Yorkville Community Health Council; the East Har-

lem Health Center; the East Harlem Nursing and Health Demonstration; and the Milbank Memorial Fund.

The conference was opened by John A. Kingsbury, secretary of the Fund. Presiding officers of special sessions were Surgeon-General Hugh S. Cumming, of the United States Public Health Service; Dr. Louis I. Harris, commissioner of the New York City Department of Health; Dr. Charles J. Hatfield, executive director, Henry Phipps Institute; and George F. Canfield, president of the State Charities Aid Association.



PREVIOUS attendance records were broken when some 450 public health workers attended various sessions of the third New York Health Conference, held recently in New York City. The conference was made the occasion for a review of the past experience and the current programs in the rural, urban and metropolitan projects of the New York Health Demonstrations. In this issue is presented a summary of the meetings of the conference and of the sixth annual meeting of the Milbank Memorial Fund's Advisory Council.

“The experience all points in one direction—that a community in New York City with a health center gives more and better public health service than a community without one,” said Bailey B. Burritt, general director of the New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, in discussing the local health center movement. “The advantages of health centers as distributing points for community health service in a metropolitan area, are exemplified particularly by the experience of the East Harlem Health Center,” added Homer Folks, chairman of the executive committee of the Center.

"It was the first department store of health and welfare in the City of New York," Mr. Folks continued. "It started as an experiment, but today it is as firmly established in the

thoughts and affections of the people of the Harlem district as any factor in the life of the people of that locality. The value of the cooperation of which the Center is a product seems to be reflected in the falling death rates, moving in an opposite direction to those of Manhattan as a whole."

FOR the past five years the annual death rate from tuberculosis in Cattaraugus County has been lower than the rates predicted from the experience of the previous twenty-two years. For each of the last three years the death rate from this cause has been lower than in any year of the County's previously recorded history, which goes back to 1900. Possible reasons for this decline are discussed by Edgar Sydenstricker, chief statistician of the United States Public Health Service, in an article on page 35 of this issue.

Advantages of a cooperative district nursing program, such as are operated jointly by agencies engaged in nursing service in the Bellevue-Yorkville district and in the East Harlem district were discussed by Miss Katherine Tucker, R.N., director of The Visiting Nurse Society of Philadelphia; and by Miss Mabel S. Welch, R.N., assistant director of the East Harlem Nursing and Health Service.

Willingness of people in an urban community like Syracuse to support a public health program and the results of such a program on the vital statistics of a community of this kind were discussed at a special-session over which Dr. Cumming presided. Dr. Herman G. Weiskotten, commissioner of health of the City of Syracuse, pointed out that the budget of the Syracuse Department of Health had been increased by



approximately \$122,000 during the demonstration period as compared with an increase of less than \$65,000 in the five years before the demonstration, and a similar increase had been effected in the appropriations for health work in the public schools, the budget of the Department of Public Instruction having been increased by approximately \$56,000, as compared with an increase of \$15,000 during the five-year period just preceding the demonstration. "A dollar expended for public health work is perhaps the most economical investment which it is possible for modern society to make," added



Dr. E. R. A. Seligman, professor of economics of Columbia University.

"It has been relatively easy to secure public support and the necessary appropriations from the city authorities for the development of needed public health service," added Dr. George C. Ruhland, deputy commissioner of health in Syracuse. "It is not easy, however, to secure the personnel for the building up and development of public health machinery. The supply of

trained health workers is limited; and even though all other factors are favorable, it is not wise to establish new health services or to change the form of established services more rapidly than they can be assimilated."

The growth of the Syracuse Health Department has been "somewhat like the successful bringing up of children," declared Dr. Haven Emerson, professor of public health administration at the College of Physicians and Surgeons. "We have learned simplicity, patience, modesty, the value of education, and the necessity for continuity of education."

WHAT has been learned concerning the prevention and control of tuberculosis in Cattaraugus County was described by Dr. Stephen A. Douglass, former health officer of Cattaraugus County. "It has been shown that a program for tuberculosis control such as that established in Cattaraugus will substantially increase the number of tuberculosis cases found in the community, and that it has been possible to place under medical and nursing supervision, either at home or in the sanatorium, at least two cases of active tuberculosis for each thousand of population," he said.

That it is exceedingly difficult to prevent all infection, but that it should be easy to prevent a child or adult from being exposed repeatedly to tuberculosis, was pointed out by Dr. Lawrason Brown, medical director of Trudeau Sanatorium, in the discussion of Dr. Douglass' paper. He said that increased efforts to discover tuberculosis in childhood are extremely valuable because they lead to a hunt for further sources of infection. Dr. E. R. Baldwin, director of the Trudeau Foundation, praised the progress made in the home treatment of tuberculosis in Cattaraugus County. That the facilities of the county sanatorium were utilized to the fullest extent by the public, he thought noteworthy.

The value of cattle in Cattaraugus County has increased by approximately \$1,000,000 because of the tuberculin testing and eradicating of bovine tuberculosis in that locality, according to Dr. Veranus A. Moore, Dean of the New York State College of Veterinary Medicine. Probably 5 per cent of human tuberculosis is traceable to tuberculosis in cattle, said Dr. Theobald Smith, director of animal pathology at the Rockefeller Institute.

"There is no single, large field in public health nursing, with the possible exception of industrial nursing, which is today more in need of development and study than that of

rural nursing," said Miss Jane C. Allen, general director of the National Organization for Public Health Nursing. Referring to the field practice offered in Cattaraugus County to student nurses at Teachers College, Columbia University, she said that Cattaraugus is the only place in the United States where such a complete and carefully planned rural experience is available as a part of a university course.

DR. LOUIS I. DUBLIN, statistician of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, said that in "certain diseases, such as typhoid fever, scarlet fever, whooping cough, diphtheria, diarrhea and nephritis, excellent results have been obtained in Syracuse." There was virtually no typhoid fever in the City in 1927, there being only about three deaths, and the number of deaths from scarlet fever and whooping cough was likewise very small. Deaths from diarrhea and nephritis have been reduced to about a tenth of what they were in 1917. Similarly, a notable reduction has occurred in the number of deaths from diphtheria. Tuberculosis mortality has fallen off approximately one-half and there has been a corresponding reduction in the pneumonia deaths. Study of the City's statistical records show, however, the need for more intensive work on problems presenting themselves in certain portions of the City, concluded Dr. Dublin.

It is obvious that in the promotion of public health work, cooperation of the medical profession, of public authorities and of the volunteer agencies, is absolutely necessary, said Mr. Canfield, in opening a discussion.

"We must recognize that there is a trinity of workers, consisting of the organized medical profession of the State, the State Department of Health and the voluntary organizations," responded Dr. James E. Sadlier, president of the New York State Medical Society. "In order to accomplish

COOPERATION IN PUBLIC HEALTH WORK

urged by Advisory Council of the

MILBANK MEMORIAL FUND

in a resolution adopted on February 23, 1928



The Council is composed of prominent physicians, public health administrators, educators, social workers, and economists. That 30 of its 49 members are physicians indicates that the medical profession is preponderantly represented.



WHEREAS, It is recognized that the conservation of public health is a primary concern of the State; and a regularly constituted board of health, and a staff appointed by it, is therefore a necessary part of well-organized government;

¶ *Whereas*, It is recognized that not only public health departments, but voluntary health agencies, organized medical societies and practicing physicians can contribute toward public health conservation through increasing the quantity and improving the quality of preventive and curative medical practice, as well as in other ways;

¶ *Whereas*, It is recognized, therefore, that there should be a continuously cooperative relationship of these groups with the constituted public health authorities;

¶ *Whereas*, It is recognized,

moreover, that curative and preventive medicine must be practiced by physicians licensed by the State; and that, although there are a number of minor medical procedures which may be performed by nurses, such procedures should only be performed under the direction and supervision of a licensed physician;

¶ *Whereas*, It is recognized that the responsibility for public health administration rests primarily upon the duly constituted public health officials, the success of whose efforts would be greatly enhanced by the active participation of medical and lay voluntary agencies;

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Advisory Council recommend that the Milbank Memorial Fund continue its efforts to establish the principles set forth in the foregoing recitals.

the most that we can, there should be cooperation and an interlocking of activities in such a way as to make it most effective. The doctors of the State recognize the vital need for lay organizations in public health work. To my mind, the particular field of the lay organization is manifold, but it is particularly to provide and to add to the facilities which are necessary to increase the efficiency of the practice of medicine; to be the educators of the lay people; and to raise medical standards."

Dr. Linsly R. Williams, director of the New York Academy of Medicine, recommended that voluntary health agencies and social welfare organizations engaged in any type of health activity appoint on their governing boards official delegates of their local county medical society, selected officially by the society. Not only would such representation serve to keep the society officially informed on the nature of every new project, but it would be the means of obtaining the advice and counsel of the organized medical body before undertaking a new activity. He said that this would give the medical profession an opportunity to take greater interest in public health activities and an opportunity to take the leadership in the promotion of public health work.

Dr. Louis I. Harris said that a major contribution of voluntary health agencies was in serving as vigilance committees to help the official health agency keep alert to its opportunities for service, but he believed that all of the public health work in a political sub-division should be centered in the agency officially responsible for administering the county's public health program.

Dr. Lee K. Frankel, second vice president of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, expressed the opinion that the large constructive program of disease prevention of the future, not only in New York State, but in the entire

United States, must be one of centralization of all health activities, with authority resting in the official health body.

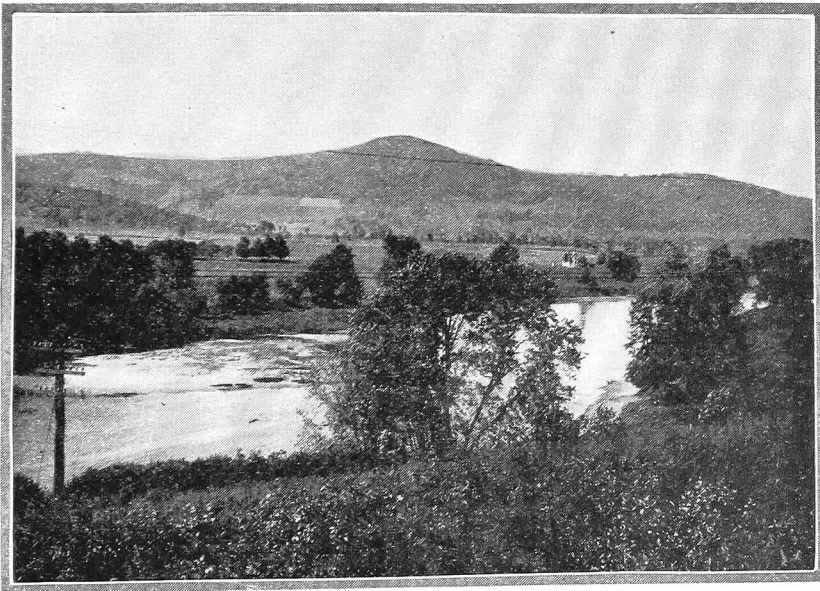
At a special meeting of the Advisory Council where this subject among others was discussed, a resolution concerning it was adopted. This is printed on an accompanying page.

THE annual dinner meeting of the Fund's Board of Directors with its Advisory Council was held on February twenty-third. Following an address of welcome on behalf of the directors, given by Albert G. Milbank, the meeting was presided over by Dr. Livingston Farrand, president of Cornell University. In discussing the New York Health Demonstrations, Mr. Folks said that he believed that they had demonstrated that "it is possible in a short period of time to recrystallize the general public interest in public health." Dr. Linsly R. Williams, director of the New York Academy of Medicine, re-emphasized the need for the active cooperation of practicing physicians in public health work. The public health outlook in the three areas of the New York Health Demonstrations was discussed by Mrs. F. R. Hazard, member of the Citizens' Committee, for Syracuse, Dr. C. A. Greenleaf, director of the County School Health Service, for Cattaraugus County and Health Commissioner Harris for the Bellevue-Yorkville district. In conclusion, Dr. C.-E. A. Winslow, professor of public health at Yale University, briefly outlined the place of voluntary agencies in the history of public health work. He said he believed it could be proven that at least three-quarters of the present public health program in this country had been established by voluntary agencies.

"The volunteer agency occupies a very significant place in the history of public health," Dr. Winslow said. "We acknowledge that the public health officer should be the ultimate judge and authority in the public health field, but the health officer who is wise, the health officer who is effective,

realizes that it is the voluntary agencies, the amateurs, who push forward for him, who supply his shock troops and attain each new point and then, if you will, turn it over to the profession.

“Sanitation, the basis of the whole public health movement, was initiated by Edwin Chadwick, a man who was in no sense a government official, but a voluntary agent in the health field,” he continued. “The basis of our enlightened communicable disease control, the foundation of the science of bacteriology was laid by a voluntary agent, Pasteur. When Dr. Hermann M. Biggs began his contributions to the cause of public health, he was a voluntary agent. It was Dr. L. Emmett Holt and the Child Health Organization of America who initiated and carried over into the educational system the teaching of child hygiene. Dr. William F. Snow and his associates in the American Social Hygiene Association established the entire modern programme for social hygiene in this country.





THE lack of official local health service affecting a large proportion of our rural population is a matter which should be given the prompt and effective attention of all who have a general interest in our nation's welfare.

—JOHN WALRATH, *President*
Callaraugus County Board of Health