

MONTREAL ANTI-TUBERCULOSIS AND GENERAL HEALTH LEAGUE

REPORT OF MANAGING-DIRECTOR (DR. A. GRANT FLEMING)

The Montreal Anti-Tuberculosis and General Health League was organized last year—the legal incorporation being dated August 13th, 1924—as a voluntary health agency. Its organization was primarily an expression of the feeling that health conditions in Montreal were not entirely satisfactory, but it was far more, for it was an evidence of the desire to do something to improve the unsatisfactory health conditions; that is, to be a constructive force.

This latter fact is of importance and has a real significance, for it gives tangible evidence that there is in our city a group of people who desire, from a health standpoint, in an active way, to assist their fellow-citizens.

The membership of the League which now stands at 237 is composed of representative citizens and of representatives from various organizations. The membership was created to represent the general thought of the community, and it is expected that the members will serve to maintain a proper understanding between the general public, and their organizations and the League. Mutual understanding means team work and good results. The members have been asked to assist in securing the approval of their organizations in regard to our pure milk campaign, and also to assist in our group instruction work.

The first meeting of members after incorporation was held September 26th, 1924, when the by-laws were adopted and a managing-director was appointed. To Dr. J. Roddick Byers are due our thanks for his work as secretary during the period of organization. The office of the League was opened on October 15th, so that in an operating sense we are but five months old. You know how important the early months of life are to the baby, how rapidly he grows and how much trouble he may cause to others, if not to his fond parents. So we feel that our early months are important to our development, and we take this opportunity of thanking our patient friends for the trouble we are giving them while we are finding our place in the household of organizations in this city. Individually and as a body we have received nothing but the kindest and most helpful assistance, and it is one of the encouraging facts in our local situation that the interested people and the executives are of such a type.

Before reporting on the work undertaken and that which is in prospect, it is possibly well to remind ourselves briefly of the health situation in Montreal. Mortality figures are the only measurable factor that we have available.

During the year 1924, there occurred 9,572 deaths in this city, which gives a death rate of 14.8. This is another way of saying that out of every thousand of the population approximately 15 died during the year. So that we may better understand what this means, we may compare our city with the ten largest cities in the United States, and if we do, we will find that, beginning with Cleveland, which had a rate of 10.2, they all have a lower general death rate than ourselves, excepting Pittsburgh, which had a rate of 15.3. In other words, we are almost at the bottom of the list. The only other city of comparable size in Canada is Toronto which, measured on the same scale, would come second only to Cleveland, Toronto's rate being 10.3.