

Medical Inspection in the Schools of Peel County

Let me cite briefly some of the facts revealed by medical inspection of the children in the public and separate schools of the County of Peel, Ontario. I do not know another County in all Canada in which one would expect to find better health and better conditions for health. Under the direction of the District Representative of the Department of Agriculture a survey, including medical inspection and follow-up work, was carried out. There was cordial co-operation by the Women's Institutes, the School Inspector, the trustees, teachers and parents generally.

Everyone of the 77 schools, public and separate, in the County was inspected and the 2,100 children enrolled were examined. The doctor in charge was Mary Mackenzie Smith, a woman whose personality so warmed up to the children, that one little chap exclaimed in relief: "She's not a doctor, she's only a woman." The following two paragraphs are quotations from Dr. Mary Mackenzie Smith's report:

"The children as a whole enjoyed the examination, though most of them had little idea as to what it involved. Some of them told me they washed their feet, or cleaned their teeth, or had a bath that morning before coming to school. In no case did a school child resent the examination, the only possible objection coming from a little girl who said, 'Doctor, I don't want my conscience out.'

"I found 77 per cent of all the children suffering from decayed teeth and 12 per cent. who had lost the third molar or the tooth they get between the age of 5 and 7 years. Very few mothers know that this is a permanent tooth. This is a serious loss as it not only spoils the shape of the jaw but reduces the masticating capacity very greatly. When I ask the children what their fathers do with a horse whose teeth are bad, they immediately reply: 'Sell him.' Now if bad teeth are detrimental to a horse, are they not more so to a child? Can we not do something when we know the principal causes are lack of care and too much candy?"

Discovery Leads to Correction

The following five paragraphs are from the report by Mr. J. W. Stark, B.S.A., the District Representative:

"There is the boy who 'never got farther than the second book,' and is generally considered stupid—just because while he was going to school he couldn't see to read anything a foot from his eyes. And there may be a young woman with round shoulders or even a twisted back—a permanent deformity traceable to the bad seats in the old school.

"Parents can't be expected to detect these troubles until they have advanced to serious