

And this leads me to speak of our work in general up to date. We have started well; we have accomplished much; but our work has been directed more along the lines of detection of defects than that of curing. In the larger centres, such as Vancouver and Victoria, where there is concentration of children, and also facilities for treatment, the problem is not so difficult to meet; but in the unorganized districts, the rural municipalities, and in the country schools, while the physician may diagnose the trouble and the parents are notified, it is not always possible to provide the remedy. Families are isolated; families are not financially able to pay large fees for professional services, and some means must be devised whereby, if the mountain will not come to Mahomet, Mahomet must go to the mountain.

One of the crying needs is the lack of facilities for the treatment of teeth. I may say that the difficulty is a real one, especially in a large Province like British Columbia, where the population is scattered, with centres not large enough in population to warrant a dentist settling in the district.

The Department has taken up this question with the College of Dental Surgeons, with the hope of arriving at some solution whereby the services of a dentist would be available at stated periods when reports from the schools would justify some effort being made to induce a dentist to make a visit to the district. Possibly by co-operation as between the parents, the dentist, and the Government a solution will be arrived at. I can assure you that we are doing all we can to bring about a working solution of the question.

Where the working of medical inspection of schools can be helped is through the Women's Institutes. I look upon the Institutes as one of the greatest agents for good as between the Government and the people that there is in existence. This is an organized society now, well established, with definite objects and aims, and as a going concern it can use machinery to facilitate the work of the Department in respect to health matters in the Province, and more particularly in reference to the rising generation. It is a subject-matter that is dear to the hearts of all women, who look upon it as their duty, and when the incentive of duty is backed up by the personal interest which every member feels, there can be only one result; that is, to bring about at least an approach to the ideal conditions which we all have in mind. Physical perfection must and does go hand in hand with spiritual welfare. There is no use to try to uplift the morals of the rising generation if the environment is, if I may use the term, materially immoral.

Every school-house should be a model as to cleanliness, heating, ventilation, lighting, and means of recreation. No child is permitted to be unclean. The children from a school properly conducted as to health-giving conditions form healthy habits which stay with him through life. He thinks in after-life of his teeth, eyesight, and ears. He wants plenty of fresh air always. He knows that he must be clean for his own sake as well as for his neighbour's sake. He knows that the house-fly is a carrier of pestilence. He knows many things that become matters of life long habits with him, because in a well-conducted school at the age when his habits were formed he was taught by precept and example what it means to live a clean and efficient life. School hygiene is of immediate and vital interest to every community. It is part of the great business of every community in the way of making and keeping the people well. The school should be a model for the community in cleanliness and health-giving conditions.

And this we can obtain by systematic effort, by personal interest, and by the exertions of your Institutes. I would like if the Women's Institutes would consider the school-houses of British Columbia their immediate responsibility; that as members of the Institute, as taxpayers, and as citizens concerned with the welfare of the community, they should feel that it is their bounden duty to exert all their influence upon those in charge of the school buildings to keep them up to the point of discharging their duties and to see that the buildings their children use during a portion of each day are as clean and as fit for habitation as the homes that they use for the balance of the day.

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VICTORIA, B.C.:

Printed by WILLIAM H. CULLIN, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty.

1918.