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THE EVENING TIMES AND STAR, ST. JOHN, N. B., THURSDAY, MARCH 18, 1920

DR. VINCENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH

Head of Rockefeller Foundation Heard in Excellent Address by Large Audience—Advocates Support of United Movement to Fight Disease.

The importance of establishing a modern and progressive public health programme was impressed on a large audience last evening in the Imperial Theatre by George E. Vincent, Ph. D., L.L.B., chairman of the Rockefeller Foundation. The address was given under the auspices of the local Canadian Club. His Honor Lieutenant-Governor Pugsley presided, and also on the platform were Mrs. W. E. Foster, Mrs. W. H. Shaw, Mrs. L. P. D. Tilley, president of the Women's Canadian Club, Chancellor Jones of the U. N. B., Dr. Borden of Mt. Allison, A. M. Belding and others. Sir Douglas Hazen, chairman of the Canadian Club, moved a vote of thanks and it was seconded by Dr. W. W. White, representing the medical profession. The Imperial orchestra furnished several selections.

Lieutenant-Governor Pugsley in introducing Dr. Vincent spoke of him as representing the greatest public health institution in the world, and said that it was a splendid thing to accumulate wealth to put it to such a noble use in safeguarding the human race. He said the Foundation had given to Canada \$5,000,000 for research work and public welfare. His Honor referred to the debt which the people of St. John owed to the Women's Canadian Club and its energetic president, Mrs. Tilley, for introducing to it the distinguished speaker. Dr. Vincent in the opening part of his address aroused a hearty laugh when he stated that his subject was a league of nations, not the League of Nations, which was unique in that no reservations had been suggested, no question raised

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as to voting, and that America was part of the league and American money was being expended. It was a league of South American States to combat yellow fever.

Then in a very amusing manner he described how, forty years ago, a doctor had suggested that a mosquito was responsible for the carrying of yellow

fever, how he had been ridiculed, and how tests had been made to see if clothing carried the infection and had proved that it did not. He described the herding of those who voluntarily exposed themselves to infection by mosquitoes and died in proving that the infection could be carried by mosquitoes. He related how General Gorgas had

become interested in the extermination of yellow fever and had become the head of a commission under the Rockefeller Foundation, which had made a survey of the districts infected by the disease and had discovered Guayaquil, in Ecuador, to be the most virulent centre. Following this discovery the Foundation sent a Japanese scientist to continue investigations in Guayaquil and he had by diligent search discovered the supposed microbe and made a serum which had proved efficacious. Next a practical man, Dr. Connor, was sent by the Foundation and working from the information already amassed had succeeded with the help of the public authorities in discovering a means of exterminating the mosquito by doing away with all open water where the larvae could be deposited, accomplishing this finally with the aid of fish that ate the larvae. Dr. Connor had succeeded in bringing the cases of yellow fever down from eighty-six in one month to zero, and General Gorgas, seeing as a not impossible vision the total elimination of yellow fever, had planned to fight it in other countries which have received infection.

Dr. Vincent said that this romantic story was to him a symbol of the work of the Foundation and was significant in showing that there was no such thing as private death because health, disease and gloom, which brought disease, must affect the whole community. He looked forward, he said, to the time when doctors would be occupied in keeping people well and not in rescuing them from the effects of carelessness, when disease would be prevented not cured. He deplored the general lack of interest and ignorance of public health and said that those he had asked in St. John were not able to give him any information as to the death rate statistics for the city, a matter that should be of real interest and general knowledge.

As public health, he said, was a matter belonging to the whole community and to public health was not doing its duty unless it was aiding public health, Dr. Vincent went on to outline a programme for public health work. Such a programme must first control environment through thorough inspection of water and milk, through an efficient system of reporting and quarantine of dangerous disease, and next through inspection, such as the inspection of schools, not merely to catalogue ailments but with a view to having those ailments remedied either at the expense of the parents or at the public cost. In this connection Dr. Vincent spoke of what has been done for the inspection of schools in North Carolina, where expert surgeons are employed and surgical hospital treatment given at the schools. He mentioned also Jacksonville, where every child, rich or poor, is inspected by a municipal health representative, an official welcome, as it were. This inspection was enforced and rigid because no person could be sick to himself alone, but since individual health affected general health it was concern of the public. The last aspect of inspection work for the discovery of defects which he spoke of was the work of the visiting nurse.

The next essential to a public health programme he referred to was housing. No matter what the expense Dr. Vincent declared good housing was demanded for public health. Food, exercise and mental attitude were also factors of importance to be dealt with. For remedying the mental attitude which bred disease, public health must include a scheme of community recreation and the providing of playgrounds.

Co-operation Needed. Public health was not to be dealt with by separate organizations, it could only be effectively dealt with through the co-operative planning of all the citizens. In making this statement Dr. Vincent said that he understood it was proposed to launch an anti-tuberculosis campaign in St. John. Such a campaign supported by the whole community was essential to care for the sufferers from the disease but the very fact that sanatoria were necessary was in itself a condemnation of the community since tuberculosis was a preventable disease and it had not been prevented.

Speaking of the value of the health centre and the visiting nurse Dr. Vincent said that a health centre was the central dynamo for the new public health work. It would be the means of educating the public and convincing it of the importance of public health measures. The process of interesting the citizens must be slow and painful but it could be made sure and steady.

Touching on the part which literature could play in a public health campaign Dr. Vincent told of the beguiling pamphlets that had been devised by the French to aid the Rockefeller foundation in its anti-tuberculosis campaign in France. There, not only had beautifully illustrated and interesting literature been used to create public sympathy, but games and entertainments for the children had been found most useful in spreading information and creating interest.

That war had shown the number of physically defective to be alarmingly great Dr. Vincent said had been the means of bringing a firmer resolve to the people that a strong and efficient programme of public health should be developed with the new community spirit, the betterment of conditions for all and not for the few that all might have the opportunity to lead useful and happy lives. Science which had developed the skill to the destruction of human life was now seeking to advance healing and working to save and not to destroy. It was to work for the good of the nation and the betterment of mankind.

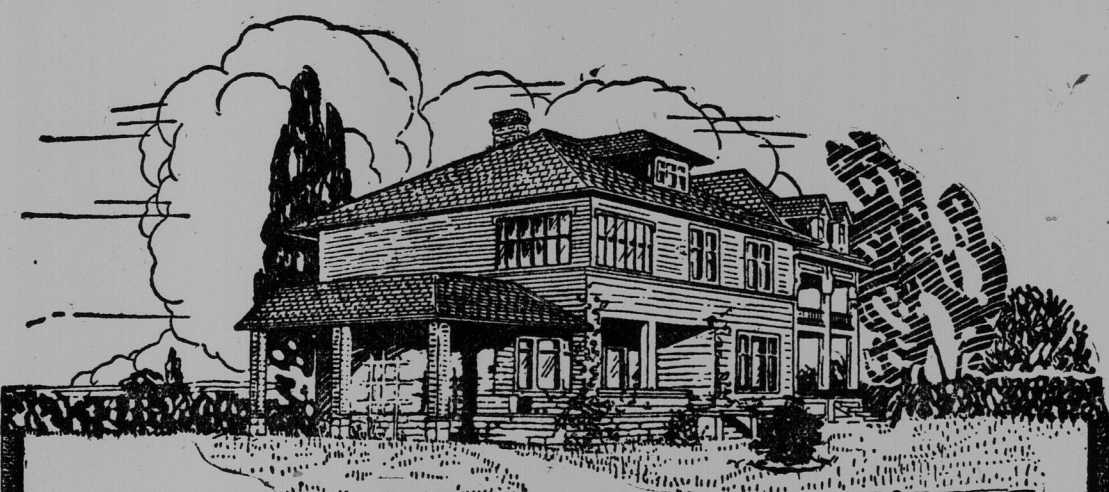
Hearty applause and frequent laughter had punctuated Dr. Vincent's address, marking appreciation of his points driven home with keen wit. At its conclusion Sir Douglas Hazen spoke of the genuine delight and pleasure which the address had afforded the audience and said that the marvellous results of the intelligent exercise of preventive medicine in fighting yellow fever must inspire every citizen with the sense of duty to do all in his power by modern methods to aid in the stamping out of disease.

Sir Douglas moved that a vote of thanks be given Dr. Vincent. Dr. W. W. White as a member of the medical profession seconded the motion, expressing appreciation of the munificence of the Rockefeller foundation in broadening and deepening the foundation of medical research. He also spoke of the satisfaction felt at the contemplated execution of the fund in power in Canada. Hon. Mr. Pugsley tendered the thanks of the meeting to Dr. Vincent and a standing vote was offered.

CREW ALL SAVED.

Early this morning the following cheering dispatch was received from St. John's (Nfld.): "The crew of the British steamer 'Tewksbury,' which was wrecked last night in St. Mary's Bay, has landed safely at Peters River, according to messages received here. The crew, which consisted of forty-one men and two women, left the ship in two lifeboats. The ship was broken up by the heavy seas.

Among the crew saved was Frank Christie, brother of Mrs. M. Donovan, of 249 Waterloo street, a wireless operator on board the ship.



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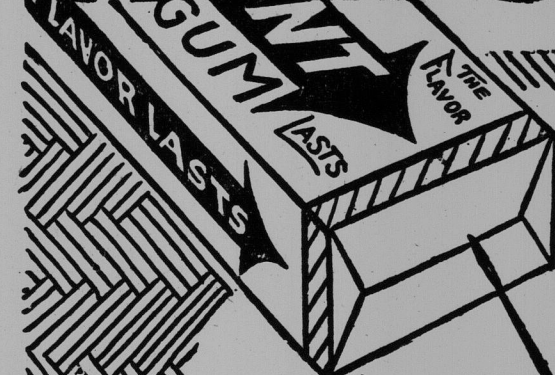
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