

ance in schemes for their benefit." At the recent conference of school medical officers it was urged that more attention should be devoted to this matter of propaganda as being the essential growing-point of the work. As Sir George Newman, in his report on school medical work in England, has said, "What are school medical officers doing to prevent dental decay? What are they doing to prevent adenoids?" and so on. So long as these diseases are widespread in school-children the task of the school medical officer is unfinished. The prevalence of these diseases is proof positive that the subject of preventive propaganda has not received the attention which its importance imperatively demands.

For effective propaganda something more in the nature of a publicity campaign is required. The circulars for parents do not command public attention as a whole. Early in the year it was consequently felt that the time was ripe for *newspaper propaganda*. The editors of all newspapers of the Dominion were circularized and their sympathy and co-operation solicited in this truly national and patriotic work. At varying intervals copies of articles were subsequently issued for publication on specified dates. During the year thirteen articles were issued to nearly ninety newspapers, and I have to express the Department's appreciation of the public-spirited action of the Press in publishing these articles. The generous co-operation of the Press is of indispensable value in work of this kind.

In a task of such magnitude as the moulding of the habits of parents in regard to their children every means of approach must be used. School medical officers have been encouraged to do more lecturing-work. Lectures are of special value in bringing the medical officer into closer touch with the people and in giving opportunity for questioning and discussion. In the hands of the capable lecturer this is a most potent means of influencing public opinion and feeling. In order to make lecturing easier and more attractive some lantern-slides and diagrams have been prepared, presenting salient facts in impressive and graphic manner. With the aid of magic-lanterns and effective methods of illustration the subject can be made interesting even to the most unappreciative. Further development in this direction is required, and in this country, at any rate, the most powerful instrument of all—the cinema—has not yet been enlisted.

The school medical propagandist recognizes that his work divides itself naturally into two parts. There are on the one hand matters which are under the control of the parents, and on the other those which require action on the part of the child. Moreover, sooner or later the child supersedes the parent, and, as Professor Emmet Holt has pointed out, one of the best ways of influencing the parent is through the child. Consequently what must be largely depended upon to effect a progressive influence upon public opinion and habit is *the teaching to the children in the schools*. The school medical officer may give considerable stimulus to this work. There is undoubted value in the medical officer giving talks to school-children on the care of their health in addition to the regular lessons by the teacher. In this way, where needed, a lead may be given to the teacher. The children also are naturally inclined to be impressed by what is said by the school doctor. The medical officer, moreover, should aim at making every teacher a propagandist. It is necessary that teachers should be well informed on this subject (and with this object a booklet for teachers on the health of the child is in preparation), but it is equally important that the teachers should, as far as possible, be inspired with enthusiasm. In this the personal influence of the school medical officers with the teachers is of paramount importance. There is great value in meeting the teachers collectively at the branch meetings of the Educational Institute; medical officers should endeavour to enter into the teachers' point of view and gain their sympathy and co-operation.

As a means of further interesting the children some articles on simple matters of health were compiled for the *School Journal* (a monthly periodical which is read by the children as part of their school-work). It is understood that these articles were appreciated by both children and teachers. Illustrations were furnished in some cases. The scheme was quite an experiment, and certainly calls for further development.

In addition to the propagation of such knowledge as we already possess concerning the cultivation of health and prevention of disease, it is important for school medical officers to pursue *special inquiries* into the many problems of disease and inefficiency in relation to the school-child. In this connection Sir George Newman has said: "It should be borne in mind that the physical examination of children affords opportunity for valuable scientific work. Mere mechanical inspection may readily degenerate into a form of drudgery, and the school doctor should be watchful that his work is constructive and, as far as practicable, is applied to the advancement of knowledge. The opportunity is exceptional."

The collecting of information as to the relation of errors of infant-feeding to chest-deformity in school years; the diets of the 2 or 3 per cent. of school-children who have perfect sets of teeth; the relation of adenoids to faulty diet and catarrh; the effect of open air and sunshine upon nutrition and on the hæmoglobin content of the blood; the relation of dental disease and malformation of the chest to backwardness and general ill health; and so on, would be of considerable value and interest. There are numbers of matters about which further information is required. Moreover, the local demonstration of a particular truth in relation to the school-children of the Dominion is of exceptional value in bringing these truths home to the people. At the conference of school medical officers held early in the year the importance of this class of work was particularly stressed. At this conference papers were read and discussed by members of the staff on the following subjects: "Backward Children"; "Psychological and Intelligence Tests"; "The Country School"; "Report on a Goitre Clinic"; "Tooth-brush Drill"; "A Statistical Study of the Incidence of Goitre"; and "Child Labour."

DIVISIONS OF CHILD WELFARE AND DENTAL HYGIENE.

Being intimately connected with the work and aims of this division, the establishment of the Divisions of Child Welfare and of Dental Hygiene must be briefly referred to as developments of the