

Medical Science. The Memoirs of Sir Ronald Ross, late of the I. M. S. are a revelation. He worked against almost insuperable odds and won.

"Mosquitos transmit it" discovered Ross, playing a lone hand. To-day, the League of Nations, following his lead are investigating Mosquito and Malaria.

The Malaria Commission spent nearly five months in India last year, not in the cold season, but in the actual malaria season, and they visited areas, where people would not go for the good of their health, by any means. We await their findings with interest.

"Mosquitos transmit it." Malaria has been advanced as a cause of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. Alexander's armies went forth conquering and to conquer. They returned to Italy, Malaria-ridden. It robbed them of their "pep." They infected the mosquitos and the mosquitos bred merrily in the Italian marshes. Thereafter went forth conquering hosts, not of men, but of mosquitos.

The part played by mosquitos, during the construction of the Panama Canal is too well known to require describing here. Millions in money, and countless lives were lost.

Who shall say that the mosquito (*Anopheles*) has not earned every right to consideration in the deliberations of The League of Nations?

RURAL HOSPITALS AS HEALTH CENTRES

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THE last United States census, taken in 1920, shows a rural population of over 51,000,000 or about 2.8 per cent less than the urban population. In the Survey of October 15th, 1928, we read "More than 80 per cent of the rural population is as yet unprovided with official local health service 'approaching adequacy'."

These limited health facilities of the vast rural districts is one important obstacle to the better distribution of the nation's total population. Surprising facts are revealed when a comparison is made between urban and rural health reports. The magnitude of this nation-wide health problem is evident when we realize how the progress has been in the last fifteen years.

The rural hospital is one of the most valuable aids in the solution of this difficult problem; these small hospitals when adequately staffed, and equipped with facilities for prompt and accurate diagnosis and treatment,

serve as health insurance provisions for their respective areas. The different agencies engaged in the extension of health service to rural areas, are already increasing the limited number of such hospitals.

The type of rural hospital most valuable to this health project brings us to the subject we have for discussion to-day, the rural hospital as a health centre. First in order of consideration, we will take the rural public hospitals found in the seventeen states where laws providing for such county hospitals have been passed. The first such law was enacted in Iowa in 1909, and though the War delayed the movement somewhat, the present number of county rural hospitals has greatly increased the value of the health program of their respective counties.

Such hospitals, supported by taxes and subject to political control, cannot give what the community hospital does give to the people of the area it serves. The reason is obvious, the people assume the hospital responsibility in response to a community need which they understand. This direct relation to the hospital from its beginning and the following continued support, prepare them to learn more and more of the health value of its service to the community. With this growing knowledge there is found an increased intelligent use of the hospital and its different services.

The friendliness of the community hospital is no small detail, but rather a very important asset; community persons as patients and their families learn health lessons under impressive surroundings, and the necessary personal contacts greatly add to the value of the future of this work.

A close relation between the hospital and the health program of the widely scattered public schools is an important factor for consideration. Just here we might picture those little schools spread over our great country, many of them as yet the only possible centres for health in their localities. We see them, the splendid work of the many hundred county and local public-health nurses. Those nurses are the persons who would gladly see these schools become sub-stations for a central health service station, a community hospital. They are the persons who can appreciate how such a connection between school and hospital will afford the present children the opportunity of acquiring a very high estimate of the hospital's value to their health and to the health of those about them. Such an attitude of our coming generation would mark an important constructive phase toward the future service of rural community hospital.

As it functions, both with regard to in-patients and out-patients the hospital proves its value to the health of all served. The group work of the medical men results in benefit to the present and future patients and to themselves in their work.

For rural nurses group effort is an inspiration even if only in the form of regular hospital contacts and conferences. The corrective work for children comes early to the attention of all. The good laboratory and isolation service provided a valuable check on communicable disease. Then, as well the community problem of venereal disease can like communicable disease be assumed by the hospital. Its facilities which make possible earlier diagnosis and treatment of cancer and organic disease form an increasingly important part of its service. Efficient care of accidents in this day of travel is another of its health provisions.

Yet leading the others is the maternity service. The problem of the pregnant mother without medical attention at birth cannot be solved without this hospital service. The present hundreds of rural nurses doing infant welfare work will gladly welcome the establishment of more community hospitals with their facilities for pre-natal, maternity and post-natal services.

In the rural homes, the care of the sick and the attention to the convalescent is not only a pressing need but a remarkable teaching opportunity. The hospitals with nurses for home follow-up and bedside work are able to give complete health service to their communities, but the usual way of meeting this need is by close co-operation between county and local public health nurses and the hospital.

One outstanding example of the rural hospital health centre is the Greater Community Hospital in Creston, Iowa. Here, beginning with a five bed hospital there was gradually developed such a large health project that the hospital has become a modern medical centre, large numbers of doctors and nurses get their preparation for future work, while serving a very considerable area surrounding the present large hospital. Some years ago, in an address given before the American Hospital Association, Dr. F. E. Sampson, the Superintendent, pointed to the underlying principles of their organization. He said, "the co-operative participation of community forces in behalf of community health, is the key to the rural health problem. County Medical Society team work in co-operation with public health nursing in agricultural sections will demonstrate the necessity for hospital facilities and the average rural community will do its part." The steady growth and development of the Greater Community Hospital is a story of co-operation that includes the community, the medical and nursing group, and all local and county health agencies.

The part the rural community can do in getting the hospital established is too frequently not adequate, and many such communities need assistance. The Commonwealth Fund has a Division of Rural Hospitals and the Duke Endowment has a Hospital Section; both were fairly recently created to help with this rural hospital problem. The hospitals with

which they are connected will, in the next few years, have an opportunity to work out more definite ways by which hospitals can serve as health centres for their communities.

The community hospital health centres in our Southern mountain districts grew out of the public health work beginning often with a single public health nurse and a distant church group of interested workers. The health needs have been recognized in such convincing manner by the nurses' ability that the work itself has gradually developed and to-day we have such examples as the Holman Hospital in Altapass, North Carolina. These hospitals make a strong personal appeal because of the necessary missionary character of their work for communities otherwise unable to finance such an undertaking.

In closing, I would like to leave with you the words of Dean Goodrich at the Hospital Association meeting several years ago. She had summarized the community needs of the different services in the hospital and concluded by saying "all these things demand that the hospital of strategic importance in health problems, function either as a health centre within a given area, or at least as a definite link in the chain of health activities required for a community health project."

For me she has clearly visualized the rural hospital in the first sentence which I will repeat ; "all these things demand that the hospital of the strategic importance in health problems function as a health centre within a given area."

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WOMEN'S INDIAN ASSOCIATION

By I. FRODSHAM

"WHEN you receive a real benefit and help, SHARE It": and lest any member of the Trained Nurses' Association of India should be as ignorant as I was until a few months ago concerning the great work being done by the Women's Indian Association I would seek to share with such a one some of the good things I derived from the All-India Women's Conference, January 20th-24th held at Bombay.

To understand the work done there, let us first consider the *objects* of the Association. They are :—

- (1) To present to women their responsibility as daughters of India.
- (2) To help them to realise that the future of India lies largely in their hands ; for as wives and mothers they have the task of training, guiding, and forming the characters of the future rulers of India.
- (3) To band women into groups for the purpose of self-development and education and for the definite service of others.