
THE HEALTH VISITORS' LEAGUE SECTION

The Community's Responsibility Toward the Child of School Age—(continued)

*Prepared by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 1 Madison Avenue,
New York City*

THE CHILD'S RIGHT TO EDUCATION

And now we come to the second real responsibility which the community has toward the child of school age. It is not enough that he be permitted to live in healthful surroundings so that his body may have a chance to grow in the way it should. His mind, too, should have an opportunity to develop.

The old English poet, Gascoigne, says that "a boy is better unborn than untaught."

It is unquestionably true that education opens the door of life to everyone of us. New worlds are discovered. Without it we travel around within a circumscribed area like a fish in an aquarium tank.

When we say "education" we naturally think at once of our school system. And it may be said here, to the credit of our American community life, that when a new settlement develops, the walls of the school structure are usually among the first to rise. The school idea is an inheritance from our first American forefathers. In his essay on Education, Emerson pays a charming tribute to our New England ancestors.

The school, however, presents a very real responsibility to the community. In order to give the children every opportunity which it was intended to provide, the curriculum offered in the schools of our community must be the curriculum accepted as the standard for the State, or by higher educational authorities such as the College Entrance Examination Boards. Too many children reach the high school and college gate only to discover that they are not adequately prepared to enter, or, if they do enter, that they must at once start with the handicap of a "condition." Much stress should, therefore, be placed on the need for investigating the curriculum of the local schools to discover whether they are giving the pupils accepted courses of study.

It may be said, in passing, that it is also the community's responsibility to see that the instructors of its children are adequately prepared through their own educational background and personal qualifications to undertake the trust that has been imposed upon them.

COMMUNITY EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

But educational opportunities are not confined to the school building. The church, the public library, the newspaper, the museum, the zoo, the community health center, the park concert, the community house—all these are important factors that contribute to the education of the growing child.

It is not unusual that the child of rare genius is very often the one who would never have developed as a great servant of mankind had it not been for the suggestions that came to him *outside of the class-room*. The fundamental training offered in the school should be supplemented with cultural opportunities outside of the school. The child may find his spirit attuned to the musical world because he has found himself at a park concert which the community in

which he lived had the wisdom to conduct. He may become a second MacMillan, discovering new facts about the earth's northland because he has had access to museums which aroused his interest in the Eskimo and the life of the Arctic regions.

Children are learning in every waking hour of the day, in schools, on the street, in the playground, in the home. And the nature of their consciously acquired and incidentally acquired education depends on the watchfulness of the community in which they live and its acceptance of responsibility for the many-sided development of the child of school age.

THE CHILD OF SCHOOL AGE—A CHALLENGE TO ANY COMMUNITY

The children of any community are its greatest bequest to that community's To-morrow. The care we give them is a real and sacred trust. With Olive J. Owen, let us hear this plea from the lips of the young children of our country :

"Protect me—ye of larger growth,
Hear my appeal ; please take my hand
And lead me safely through the days
Of Childhood into Grown-up Land."

DEAR FELLOW-MEMBERS OF THE HEALTH VISITORS' LEAGUE,

Mrs. Bellow, whom I saw at the very interesting conference on the Training of Dais, held in Lahore in the middle of November, has sent the following contribution, telling us about her work in Mardan.

Yours sincerely,
MURIEL SIMON.

An Account of Work in Mardan within Municipal Limits

Visitors to Mardan would admire the wide road beloved of lorries, which starts from Peshawar and passes through Nowshera, Risalpur, Mardan to Malakand. In Mardan itself this road definitely divides the Cantonments of Mardan with its so-called Civil Lines, from the areas owned by the Municipality and consisting principally of Becketganj, Shamganj, New Hoyti, Old Hoyti and Mardan, all the province of Mardan's Municipal Health Visitor and comprising in extent four square miles with a population of about 30,000.

The two authorities, which it defines, have also their own distinctive Heads, Income and Expenditure, both, however, have the same Indian Medical Service Officer who has charge of the Military Hospital in Cantonment as well as of the Civil Hospital of the Mardan Municipality.

The Cantonment Authorities appointed Mrs. Lyall as their Health Visitor in September, 1928 and when applied to refused to share her services with the Municipality. Her Health Centre and residence are attached to the Military Hospital under whose aid she chiefly works.

The Municipality engaged me through the Lady Chelmsford League as Health Visitor in January 24th, 1929, after sanctioning Rs. 6,000 for the expenses of the work. Help had been received from no other source.

The residences of Mardan are either of bricks plastered with mud or entirely of pucca bricks cemented and whitewashed. The Municipal Health Centre is of the latter kind, three stories in height, boasting double iron gates, standing imposingly on a wide side road between Old and New Hoyti, having the fields of