

THE HEALTH VISITORS' LEAGUE SECTION

The Health Game

Having but lately received the names of the members of the Health Visitors' League, and therefore having nothing to report of your work this month, would you mind if I tell you a bit about my work?

For seven years I did Public Health Nursing in America so I feel that altho I do not know you personally that I am one of you, and that we shall be friends.

Four years ago, school nursing was begun in a number of the mission schools of North India by Miss Fernstrom, a member of the Health Department of the Mary Wilson Sanatorium (Tubercular) in Rajputana, of which Dr. Kipp is the Superintendent.

When Dr. Kipp saw the girls, too many times in the third stage of Tuberculosis when recovery is impossible, coming into the Sanatorium from our schools she realized that something must be done to prevent the awful waste of life and the untold suffering and sorrow, not only of the patients themselves, but of their families as well. Knowing that this dread disease is not only preventable but curable if discovered in time, she determined that a beginning be made to train India's sons and daughters in the ways of Health just as they are being trained for efficiency along other lines. She knew that India needs women who are not only developed mentally and spiritually but physically as well, and that this would not be possible unless we begin teaching children in the schools how to play successfully the Game of Health.

This Game of Health may be played in different ways. The Anti-Tuberculosis Association has outlined a Health Program for Schools, called the Modern Health Crusade, and it is this Crusade that the Health Department has put into operation in fifteen schools.

The Crusade work for third, fourth, and fifth classes has been translated into Roman Urdu and typed copies are available for use, along with the Manual which explains just how to carry on.

In explanation I cannot do better than give you a page from this Manual.

"The Modern Health Crusade is a system of training in Health and graded Health Habits, in which the child is given chivalric titles of Page, Squire Knight, Knight Banneret and Knight Banneret Constant, for the carrying out of eleven health rules at least fifty-four times a week out of a possible seventy-two for a period of thirty weeks for each title. Recognition for having thus carried out the rules is given every ten weeks.

Assuming that the Crusade work is started in the third class, the following scheme would be carried out—

THIRD CLASS—FIRST YEAR—"PAGE"

First.—After one or two months of Health teaching and the telling of Knight stories,

(a) The child in a proper ceremony (see Page ceremony in this pamphlet) is made a Page in the Health Army of India.

(b) The child is given a dark blue ribbon to be worn on the left arm.

(c) The child's name is recorded on the Roll of Health Knighthood.

(d) A blue star is placed after his name in Page column of Roll of Health Knighthood.

(e) Child is given a score card with the first eleven Health Rules which he as a page is to carry out each day.

Second.—After a period of ten weeks if he has carried out the rules at least fifty-four times out of a possible seventy-two, there is placed a mark with coloured crayon or ink in the proper column (first column of first year) on the Roll of Health Knighthood.

Third.—After another period of ten weeks if he has carried out the rules satisfactorily

(a) He is given the title of First Class Page.

(b) a small bow of light blue ribbon to be worn on the left shoulder.

When recognition is given for work done it may be done in conjunction with a Health program and before the whole school."

When we, as travelling school nurses, go into a school besides the physical examination of each child, we visit the Hygiene classes, go over the Roll of Health Knighthood, pupil's note-books, health posters and score cards to see if all is running smoothly.

The teacher must KNOW whether or not her children are carrying out the Health rules given on the score cards, and see that day by day these are honestly marked. This marking is done during class time. This is possible if the teacher is really interested in the work. If we go into a school and find every card marked almost or quite perfect, we know that nothing of permanent value is being done and that a new start must be made.

We try to encourage those in charge of schools, teachers, nurses and pupils to strive for 100 per cent. Health, and to make the Health Game attractive.

The children know that if they do not properly clean their teeth or stand straight, etc., that we will discover the fact in the physical examination, and they will not have the honor of receiving the Certificate of Health given to the one or two most physically fit in their school for the year.

It is most interesting, year after year, to see the children grasping the idea that their bodies are the temples of God, and trying to keep them fit.

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