

than to cheer up all the teachers in the midst of their difficulties:

### THE CURRENT TEACHER

Teaching is a noble profession.

A selfless teacher toiling uncomplainingly, diligently, honestly in abnegation makes ours a happy world.

At break of dawn, this meek moulder of man's character faces the day with renewed faith and enthusiasm in his noble mission to develop moral character and enlighten the youth of the land.

At dusk, when the day's work becomes a prelude to another, a teacher smiles with pride and in solid contentment — for he has unselfishly contributed his just share to the cause of PUBLIC SERVICE.

In the deep silence of night, he burns his oil for the next lesson plan that will forge man's primitive instincts on the anvil of learning and equal opportunity.

Within the four walls of the classroom, he radiates wisdom, understanding and cheerfulness. By destiny, he is a maker of future citizens.

And like the Savior, unswayed by misgivings, "unawed by opinion, unseduced by flattery, undismayed by disaster," a cheerful teacher leads a full life of love, courage and Christian hope.

A teacher has every reason to be cheerful.

He has a beautiful soul. He has a divine mission to accomplish.

All honor to him!

## Education Through Medical And Dental Services\*

VENANCIO TRINIDAD



I CONSIDER IT a great honor and a rare privilege to address this convention of district health officers, city health officers, and school dentists of the Bureau of Health. At the outset, allow me to congratulate those who conceived the plan of this convention because, for the solution of any difficult problem that may beset an organization, for the reconciliation of conflicting views and opinions, and for the adequate consideration of projects for improvement, there is nothing better than

a conference at which the men and women concerned may have an opportunity for a free exchange of ideas and experiences upon which they can draw for the necessary incentive in their effort to ensure the growth and progress of their profession or the service to which they belong. This is especially true in a democracy where decisions regarding courses of action are arrived at through deliberation and discussion of the members rather than through dictation and imposition of a few.

\* Speech delivered at the Convention of School Physicians and School Dentists.

Since we are all working together for one common objective, which is the improvement of the health of the people in general and that of the children in particular, it is desirable that we learn to know and understand one another. Hence, desirability, if not the urgency, of this conference.

I yield to no one in my appreciation of the nature of your work. It is a highly important work, and it is precisely because of this recognition on my part of the value of the service which you are rendering that I would consider myself remiss in the discharge of my duties if I did not grasp this opportunity to say a few points for the further improvement and strengthening of the medical and dental services in our public schools.

The first point that I should like to discuss is, **How could we make the medical and dental services educational?** To my mind, these services provide our pupils and students with almost unlimited opportunities and situations for "learning through doing." But desirable learning will not occur unless the students know what they are doing and what is being done for them. In the matter of health examination, for example, such processes or procedures as vision and hearing tests, examining the heart by the use of a stethoscope, standing in front of the X-ray apparatus, and others will have real and significant educational value to the pupils only if the physicians would take time to explain what these procedures mean. Of course, this should be done as much as possible in the language of the

child and in terms of his experiences.

Our aim should be not only to note defective conditions and to correct them but also to give words of encouragement. If a child, for instance, is well-nourished, he should be told so; he will certainly be flattered and happy to know that such is the opinion of the examining physician. If a child has sound and clean teeth, he should be complimented by the school dentist. If he has been vaccinated against smallpox, cholera-typhoid-dysentery, etc., some sort of recognition should be given him as well as the parent if the latter is present. On the other hand, if there are defects noted which need correction, such information or medical advice as is necessary should be presented in a clear, simple, and friendly manner.

The dissemination of facts relating to health is really a valuable educational feature of the medical, dental, and nursing procedures. Yet, it must be said that there is even greater value in the attitudes developed. Attitudes refer to the feelings which motivate behavior. All too often an individual acts according to his feelings and not necessarily according to his intelligence. Indeed, these school health services should be, and can be, one of the child's most important experiences at school. On such experience may depend his progress, his educational and social adjustments, and his future health and happiness.

The second point that I should like to take up is, **How can close cooperation among the health workers be maintained?** Since we

are all working together for one common objective, which, as I have said, is the improvement of the health of the people in general and that of the children in particular, it is desirable that we learn to know and understand one another. The effectiveness of a school health program will depend partly on careful planning and partly on the due recognition of the interrelationships among the health personnel and of the vital strategy of cooperation. Cooperative efforts, however, should be based on sound principles. For it has been proved by actual experience that the best system can be wrecked by indifference or an uncooperative spirit, while the worst can be made to function through exercise of a genuine desire to work together.

In any organization that employs a large number of people, the proper coordination of effort is an absolute necessity if effective results are to be expected. Our three groups of health workers — the physicians, the dentists and the teacher-nurses — can and should work together in close cooperation in order to avoid any possible dissipation of energy. I need not stress the fact that, invariably, far better results can be obtained when the different units of the service pull together than when they work independently of one another. And for the different units in our present setup to be able to pull together, each has to understand and appreciate the role and function of the other groups. Each service has its own part to play in carrying out the health program of the schools, but in so doing its work it should have the fullest

measure of appreciation of the functions of the other groups. It is believed that frequent conferences and consultations among the health workers in each province will go far toward removing any misunderstanding or indifference which may exist, and will undoubtedly be conducive to greater harmony and cooperation.

The third point that I should like to bring up before you is, **How can proper public relations be achieved?** It should be obvious that any service which depends for its growth and development, and even for its very life, upon the goodwill of those who support it, must maintain satisfactory relations with everyone concerned. The question may be raised as to what we mean by public relations. Viewed as a condition, the term refers, I believe, to that state of affairs in which the people who are maintaining a given service are satisfied with it because the persons who are charged with the task of running it are able to convince the patrons — the parents in this case — that they are doing efficient work and are able to get along with people. Viewed as an activity, the term refers to the act of bringing to the attention of the people who are supporting the service the needs and conditions, as well as the accomplishments, of that service. This is but another way of saying that the service must be interpreted properly in order that its value will be better appreciated by the public and the support given it continued, if not increased.

The dissemination of information on the objectives, activities,

achievements, and problems of the Medical and Dental Services is, however, only one aspect of a good public relations program. Equally imperative is the need on our part to feel all the time the public pulse, so that we may know the reactions of the people to the existing program of the Medical and Dental Services; what they think of the program and of the manner in which it is being conducted; and whether they are satisfied with the work or otherwise feel that the support that they are giving to it is yielding the results expected. This knowledge is necessary if we are to make our program effective in meeting squarely the demands and needs of the school children. We can hardly justify any program of public service, such as the Medical and Dental Services, which is not sensitive and responsive to the demands and needs of its clientele, which, in this case, are the pupils and students whom we seek to serve.

There are various ways of interpreting the medical and dental services to the people. One is by direct explanation. This may be either verbal or written — that is, the physicians and dentists can explain to the people the main objectives of the service and the steps being taken to attain those objectives, or they may send releases to the newspapers from time to time for the benefit of that portion of the public which cannot be reached by spoken or written word.

Another method is by demonstration. Actual demonstration may be given so that the parents can see with their own eyes the nature of the service their chil-

dren are getting. But the best media of public relations are the teachers and students. Satisfy them by means of efficient service, and no one need worry how the medical and dental services will be regarded by the public which furnishes the money for its operation and maintenance. Remember that there are more than 85,000 teachers in the public schools alone, and a more compact and intelligent group than they you cannot find. And as far as the pupils are concerned, you can be sure that they themselves will tell everybody in their homes about the splendid attention which they are getting from our physicians and dentists and about the high quality of work these are doing. The net result of all these is that the prestige of the service will be immeasurably enhanced.

Now that I have given those points, let me congratulate each and everyone of you. Despite the fact that being in the government service will not bring you a fortune, you have chosen to pursue your present tasks. For you realize, I take it, that there are satisfaction in life that are far more elevating than those resulting from the mere accumulation of wealth, not the least of which is the consciousness of having consecrated one's life and energies to the service of our people — specifically, of having helped in building up the health and physique of our children so that they will be in condition to do their part as citizens of our young republic. And so may I close by wishing you every measure of success in your deliberations.