

BIG HEALTH CRUSADE LAUNCHED BY ZB's

The first step in an important application of radio to a New Zealand wide campaign for better health was taken the other Sunday night, when, in his "Man in the Street" session, the Controller of Commercial Broadcasting, C. G. Scrimgeour, introduced five well-known doctors, who discussed various aspects of disease and preventive medicine.

But this was only the first step. The Director-General of Health, Dr. M. H. Watt, has authorised the setting up of a committee consisting of Dr. Muriel Bell, Government expert on nutrition, Dr. H. B. Turbott, Director of School Hygiene, C. R. Bach, of the Physical Welfare and Recreation Office, and Mr. Scrimgeour to supervise a thorough drive for health education.

Talks and round-the-table discussions on health and allied topics will be broadcast regularly, a slogan campaign will be instituted in the near future, and, in general, every endeavour is being made to promote health consciousness throughout New Zealand. A notable feature of the campaign will be the emphasis laid on healthy living and prevention of disease.

THE part played by radio in health education was an aspect of American broadcasting particularly noted by Mr. Scrimgeour during his visit to the U.S. two years ago. It was in 1921 that the United States Public Health Service first took up the dissemination of health information by means of radio, and to-day a vast stream of health news, warning, and advice is broadcast into every corner of the continent.

A comprehensive educational scheme has been approved by the American Medical Association, and in New Zealand, for instance, particularly good work is done by the Anti-Cancer Campaign Committee, which concentrates on persistent advocacy of medical treatment for the smallest trouble resembling early cancer.

Taking a broad survey of health in the U.S., the results have been striking. Expectation of life is, of course, the final test, and one of the speakers introduced by Mr. Scrimgeour went so far

gested by experience in America, and if it is only half as successful, the average New Zealander years hence will consider it well justified.

A General Approach

The broadcast, which was intended to serve as a general approach to the subject of health consciousness, featured Dr. Turbott and Dr. Bell of the Department of Health, Dr. T. H. Pettit (who is president of the Surf Life-Saving Society), Dr. Reuben McMaster, a New Zealander who has practised medicine for many years in the U.S., Dr. Guy

taking forced on us by the war, just as it had been in 1914-18.

When one saw headlines in the newspapers such as "Physical Slump—Too Few Good Cooks," it was time to look in the kitchen and see if that was true. It was time, in fact, that women made a concerted effort to find out what



DR. REUBEN McMASTER
"Disease is the real Public Enemy Number One"

Chapman, whose talks on nutrition are heard regularly over the ZB stations, and Mr. Bach of the Physical Welfare Office.

Dr. Bell, who was formerly assistant to the Professor of Physiology at the University of Otago, and last October was appointed Nutrition Expert in the Department of Health, spoke more particularly to the women of New Zealand. In this country, she remarked, we had recently been doing some national stock-taking in the matter of health, a stock-



DR. MURIEL BELL
"Time to look in the kitchen"

nutrition really meant, and that a search was made for the cause and remedy of malnutrition.

Most people, said Dr. Bell, knew that a lack of vitamin C caused scurvy, and because scurvy was rare in New Zealand it might be thought that sufficient vitamin C was already being supplied by our present diet. But when an epidemic of trench mouth broke out in Auckland some months ago, and doctors announced that it was due to a lack of vitamin C, the public as a whole remained apathetic.

Appeal to Mothers

Dr. Bell made an appeal to the mothers of New Zealand to pay more attention to the scientific planning of children's diet; to remember the wisdom of not forcing a child to eat when it was not hungry because it was sick or tired; to bear in mind that sleep was as important for adequate nutrition as it was for physical and mental development; and let children store up a supply of vitamin D by sunbathing as much as possible during the summer.



C. G. SCRIMGEOUR
Another discussion is being prepared

"I believe a new day is dawning in the interests of health," said Dr. Turbott. "Up to a point the parents of New Zealand are doing good work in looking after their children, but it is when they start school that particular attention must be paid to their health." The standard of infant care was so high that the babies of New Zealand were a credit to the country, he said. It was a few years later that the fathers could also play their part, by helping and guiding their children in health matters, supervising their diet, and generally setting them on the road to happy vital living.

Value of Swimming

Dr. Pettit emphasised the importance of physical fitness and regular exercise in the building of a fit nation, and suggested that there was no more healthy exercise than swimming. Probably no other country in the world offered such wide opportunities for swimming, and it was a blot on the national character

Apathetic N.Z. Parents

The apathy of many parents toward the health of their children was criticised by Dr. H. B. Turbott, Director of School Hygiene, in his talk in the "Man in the Street" session recently. Following medical examination, 35 per cent. of five-year-old children in New Zealand schools were found to have some physical defect that needed medical attention, said Dr. Turbott.

This in itself was serious enough, but more alarming was the fact that when the defects were pointed out to parents, only 60 per cent. of them took any action to seek remedy.

that so many adults could not swim. The only solution was to see that no child left school without being taught to swim.

"Take an interest in nutrition," said Dr. Pettit. "Learn to swim. Learn something of the way the body is constructed. Eat the right foods. Help to build a fit nation."

Dr. McMaster, who is heard regularly over the air from 12B as "The Voice

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Spencer Digby photograph
DR. H. B. TURBOTT
"Up to a Point"

as to claim that since 1890 the life expectancy of the average American had risen from 43 to 62 years to-day.

Mr. Scrimgeour's Sunday night broadcast was the first step in a campaign which will be conducted along lines sug-