

BRIEF NEWS NOTES

By EDITH M. IRVINE-RIVERA

DR. PEDRO N. ORTIZ

Accompanied by his wife and oldest son, Pedro Manuel, Dr. Pedro N. Ortiz, Commissioner of Health of Porto Rico, sailed for New York on the 17th of June for an absence of two months.

While on the mainland Dr. Ortiz is spending most of his time in New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Washington. He represents Porto Rico at three important medical meetings while north, and is studying various phases of public-health work.

The intense interest demonstrated on the part of his colleagues as to conditions in Porto Rico, as well as the hearty congratulations from them, have been most stimulating, and the Commissioner is returning to his desk with great objectives in view for the continuation of a vigorous health campaign.

HOSPITAL CARE FOR ADVANCED TUBERCULAR PATIENTS

The municipal hospital for advanced cases of tuberculosis, which has been in a deplorable condition for some time, is to be closed by order of the municipal authorities of San Juan and a new building will be constructed on the Insular Anti-tuberculosis Sanatorium grounds.

The municipality of San Juan will erect the building at a cost of fifteen hundred dollars and will also cover the expense budget for the maintenance of patients. It is gratifying to know that this old municipal hospital, badly situated and inadequate in every way, is to be done away with and that the least-remembered sufferers will be cared for under much better conditions.

THE BUREAU OF TUBERCULOSIS

A series of conferences on the prophylaxis of tuberculosis was held in the graded schools of San Juan this month by the physicians who form the staff of the Bureau of Tuberculosis of the Department of Health.

The addresses were given in simple language so that children of all ages could profit by them. They covered the following topics:

Importance of vitamins in nutrition; the need of a nutritive breakfast; the benefit of a good salad every day; the benefit of fruit in the daily menu; the daily bath as a means to good health; six glasses of water a day for each child; necessity of sleeping with the windows open; importance of outdoor exercise; importance of having at least eight hours' sleep each night; deep breathing every morning to ventilate the pulmonary vortex; ways of avoiding contagion in tuberculosis; the first symptoms of tuberculosis, and the necessity of consulting a physician immediately.

The Bureau of Tuberculosis, with the cooperation of the school authorities, expects to continue these conferences during the next school year and hold them at regular intervals. They will be planned in such a way as to be attractive to the vast number of school children who will have the opportunity to hear them.

These activities constitute a part of the program of the Bureau of Tuberculosis of the Department of Health and are one of the leading features in the educational campaign outlined by the Chief of this Bureau, Dr. José Rodríguez Pastor. The idea is to educate the rising generation in the prophylaxis of Tuberculosis and in this way diminish the high death rate from this disease.

HOME HYGIENE CLASSES

In addition to its many other activities the Porto Rico Chapter of the American Red Cross has carried out a very interesting program of classes in Home Hygiene and Care of the Sick in various parts of the Island during the past year.

At the request of the Home-Economics Department of the Department of Education, classes were conducted by Miss Cecile Carrier at the University of Porto Rico during the Summer Session last year under the auspices of the Red Cross. The teacher's salary was subsidized by the Department of Health. Forty-seven students, mostly rural teachers, had the advantages of the course and were granted the Red Cross diploma. Some of the students enrolled were working for credits accepted by the University.

In October 1925, four groups were organized in San Juan by the Red Cross. One was composed of eighteen working girls. This was a modified course. Another group of ten girls, of about the same type, was organized. These girls work part time so that they can attend school.

The Baptist Missionary School at Río Piedras, Porto Rico's University town, also requested the benefit of the Home Hygiene Classes and a group of fourteen missionary students was organized. A group of eighth-grade girls was formed at the same time in the College of our Lady of Perpetual Help. This is a private school for Catholic girls.

In February of 1926, Miss Olympia Torres, instructor of Home Hygiene and Care of the Sick, of the American Red Cross, was sent to Mayagüez and Añasco, places in the western part of the Island. An endeavor was made to have as many groups as possible, and two standard and one modified class was organized. These were adapted to the needs of rural and graded teachers.

An effort has been made to organize groups of different types so as to give the advantages of these courses of instruction to all classes of women. The idea of "prevention, rather than cure" and that "it is easier to maintain health than to regain it" has been emphasized throughout the course. In most instances it was found that the students reacted promptly and comprehended the real value of the instruction. For teachers the course was especially valuable in the teaching of physiology and hygiene and in the preparing of their outlines from the text book which often is dry and technical. The missionaries found the course of great help in their work of house to house visitation. Cases have been reported by them to the instructor in which it has been found that they were the saving link between an ignorant mother and her sick child. The change in the general appearance of the girls attending these classes has been most noticeable. They also pay more attention to their food, rest out-of-doors recreation, fresh air at night and to their health in general. Many even carry a monthly record of their weight.

Classes have been held this year at San Juan, Río Piedras, Mayagüez, Añasco and Ponce. The class in Ponce comprised a group of Girl Scouts. A total of twelve groups have been organized during the year and one hundred and twenty-one students have been granted certificates. This same course will be given again in the Summer Session of the University of Porto Rico this year and it will be required of all rural and graded teachers attending the summer school. Other towns of the Island have asked that classes be organized next September, and a strong spirit of cooperation and interest on the part of the students makes the carrying out of this program most encouraging.

MORE GRADUATE NURSES

The Ryder Memorial Hospital of Humacao, a city in the eastern part of Porto Rico, held its graduating exercises on the 8th of June. This is the first occasion of its kind held in this hospital as its training school for nurses was only started a few years ago. Of the twelve student nurses forming the training school three received diplomas which were presented by Miss Bailey, the Superintendent of the school.

This hospital was built in 1914 at a cost of \$15,000. So great was the demand for good hospital service in that part of the Island that a wing was added to the original building in 1923 which cost \$25,000, and it expects to complete its original plan this year by erecting another wing at a cost of \$20,000. Aside from this an old building has been utilized as a home for the American nurses, and a residence for the Medical Director was erected at a cost of \$3,500. In 1924 a home for the student nurses was erected which cost \$3,500 and last year a kitchen and laundry plant was erected at a cost of \$2,500.

The Ryder Memorial Hospital was established in Porto Rico by the American Missionary Association of the Congregational Church. It consists of eight private rooms ranging in price from \$10 to \$28 per week. It has thirty-two ward beds at \$7 per week, twelve of which are for men and twenty for women. There are rarely ever more than two to four beds unoccupied. The hospital endeavors to reserve one-third of its beds for charity cases and no case is refused for lack of money.

The clinic connected with the hospital is dedicated to the poorer classes. A fee of twenty-five cents is made when the case is registered. A fee of fifty cents or \$1 is charged if an extensive examination is required. Medicines are given free of charge. More than two thousand cases a month are treated, seventy-five per cent of which are suffering from anemia. An average of thirty major operations are performed per month, most of them by the hospital staff and others by surgeons of Humacao and neighboring places. The staff of the hospital consists of a resident physician, a visiting physician, a superintendent who is a graduate American nurse; an instructor for the student nurses who is also a graduate American nurse, two graduate nurses and a matron. The hospital is run on a budget of \$25,000 a year, \$13,000 of which is covered through local income and \$12,000 given by the American Missionary Alliance.

DR. HERMAN GOODMAN

The REVIEW is glad to introduce to its readers a new contributor, Dr. Herman Goodman of New York City, who was in charge of venereal Disease Control among the U. S. Troops in Porto Rico when "Las Casas" Training Camp was organized here during the period of the World War.

The article presented by Dr. Goodman this month is a study of various aspects of syphilis in tropical countries.

