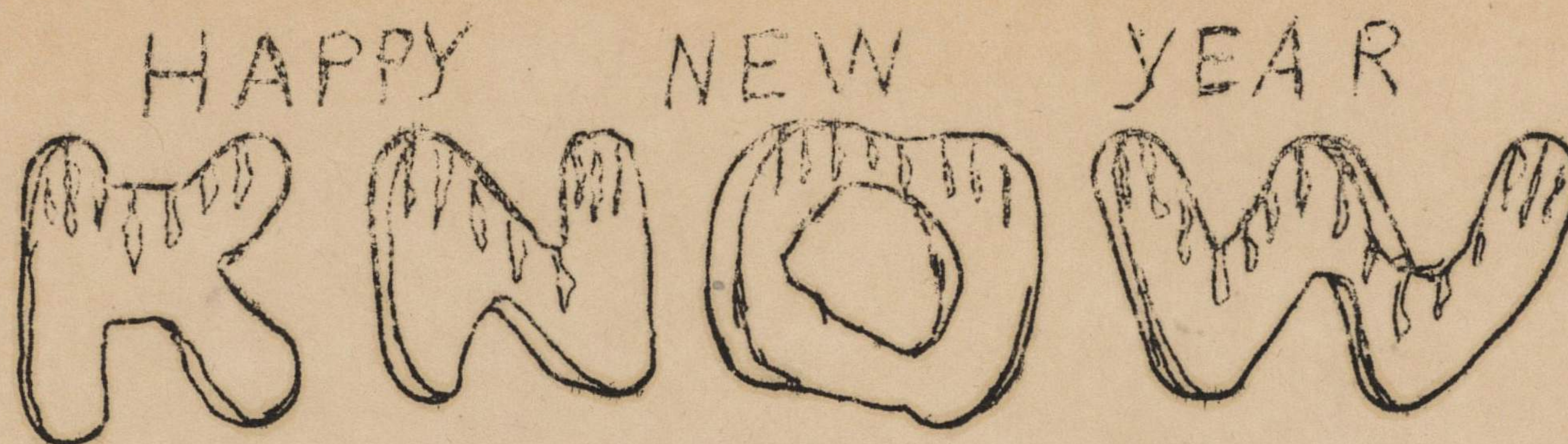


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A B O U T H E A L T H

THE DOUGLAS COUNTY HEALTH UNIT, City Hall, Massachusetts Street, at 11th, functions daily from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Come in and tell us your troubles.

NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

THE advice offered at this place last year is still good. Make your resolutions with calm deliberation and then keep them. At least one should have something to do with health.

DIPHTHERIA (Dif-not Dip)

DIPHTHERIA is an acutely infectious and contagious disease endemic everywhere. Even at the worst, it is never pandemic. This means that it is "on the people" all the time but not "all the people" have it at any time.

It is caused by the Klebs-Loeffler bacillus, but there are obscure and mystifying facts and circumstances involved that make the understanding of diphtheria and its management in the community extremely difficult. There are similar and related organisms that are not pathogenic, i.e. they do not make people sick. Some people have a natural immunity so high or great that they can carry around and occasionally scatter about virulent organisms without themselves being ill. These "carriers" are always found in every region and are the main reason why the disease is "endemic".

Very young children rarely have this disease and the mature are also practically immune though no age is entirely exempt. About half of all the mortality is in ages two to ten, the other half is widely distributed over the other parts of life. Contrary to what applies in most other contagious diseases, the incidence is greatest in the country children and the carefully exclusive well to do and least in the slums and most dense and well mixed parts of the population.

Perhaps the most characteristic of all the signs and symptoms of diphtheria is the false membrane that it causes or is part of it. In this region, few if any cases have been reported without this membrane, but careful studies of several hundred bodies, dead of diphtheria, showed that only a few over half of them had any membrane anywhere. When present, the membrane may be almost anywhere, but is most common in throat, nose and larynx. Fresh wounds, and the like are now rarely seen infected, though it is still possible.

Many people have written large books on bacteriology without getting it all told, so this paragraph does not attempt to tell it all. Let me make two points, (a) bacteria do harm by substances that are called toxins, (b) some toxins are called loose, soluble, or exotoxins,