

165

Health A JOURNAL DEVOTED TO
Healthful Living

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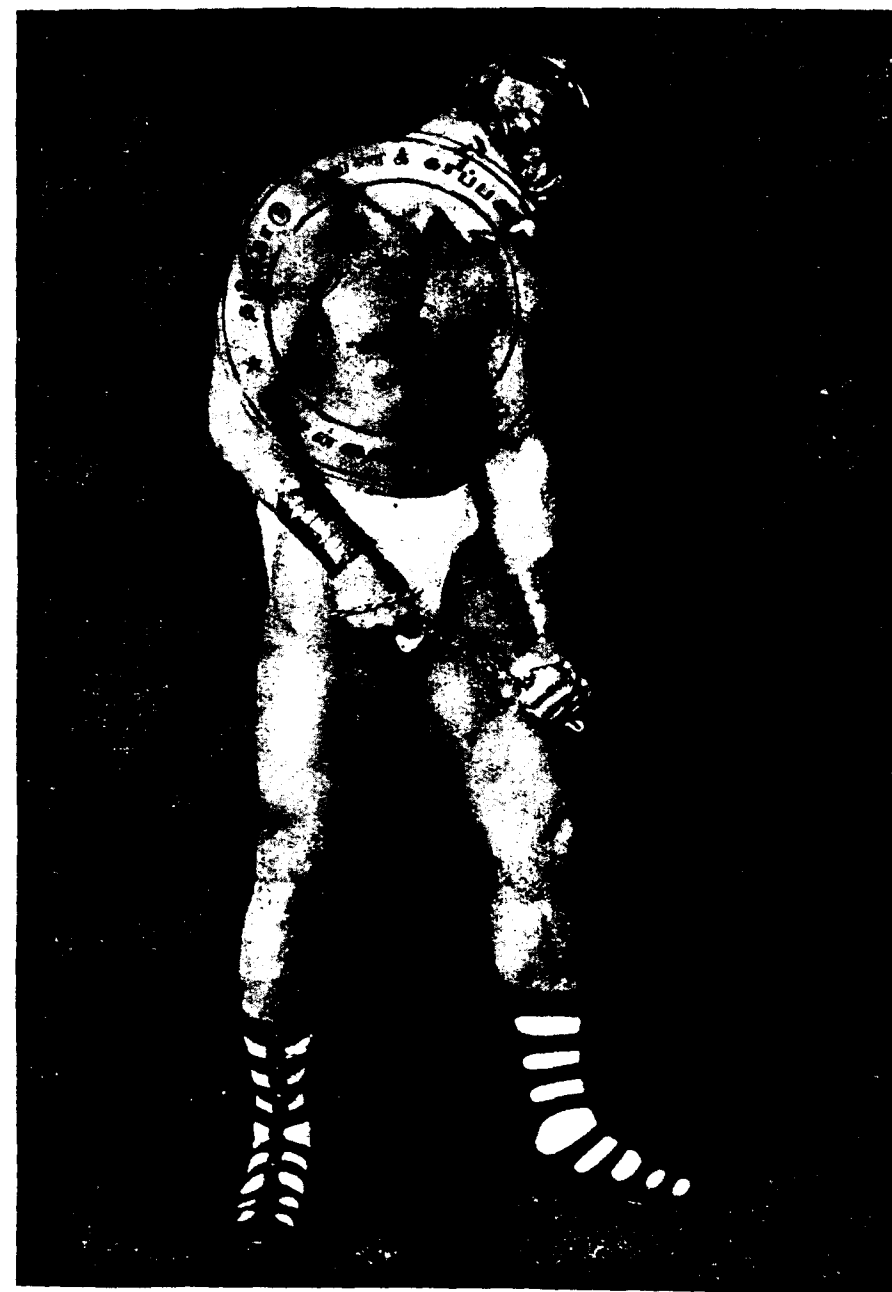
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HEALTH

A JOURNAL DEVOTED TO HEALTHFUL LIVING

EDITED BY DR. C. RAMA RAO & KRISHNA RAO, M.B.B.S.



Mr. R. M. Patel, age 19. (Member of A. B. B. M. and H. and S. League, South Africa.)
Strongest youth. Instructor of Patel's Physical Culture Club, 90, Queen St.,
Durban, Natal.

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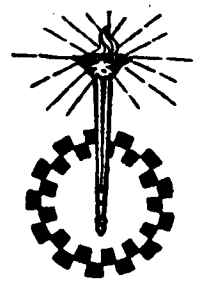
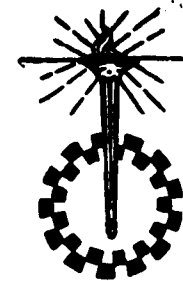
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APRIL, 1931

[No. 4

ORAL HYGIENE—THE TEETH.

"He may eat what is cooked by fire, or eat only what is ripened by time; he may either use a stone-pounder or else make use of his teeth as a pestle" (Manu-Lec. VI-S.17.)

"One should rinse (the mouth) and wash the cavities after having passed urine or ordure; So when about to recite the veda, and always when going to eat food. (Manu. Lec. V.S. 131.)

"Take soft viands first, hard butteracious food in the middle, and liquids at the end of the meals. Similarly the sweets must be taken first, then acid things and the pungent things, the last of all." (Susruta.)

"There should be no hurry over the meals and the food must be well chewed; the mouth must be well cleaned from inside and out after every meal; and the food particles must be picked out from between the teeth by tooth picks". (Susruta.)

Next to the brain, the heart and the lungs, the human body has no more important function than that of the digestion and the teeth have an importance in our lives that cannot be overstated. It requires but little thought, therefore, to convince one that such important organs as the teeth, must of necessity, have claimed attention even in the earliest times, especially as their neglect leads to such disastrous results, not only in the

mouth but also in other parts of the body.

From a study of the skull of the pre-historic man, it was discovered that he did undoubtedly suffer from dental caries (decay of the teeth), but this occurred only in old age and was never of the magnitude seen amongst more civilized peoples. For the most part his dental troubles consisted of an attrition (a wearing away of the biting surfaces of the teeth) due to the eating

of coarse food; his teeth were of stronger texture than those of the modern races and Nature, always beneficent to those who respect her laws, protected their teeth against decay and consequent pain by hardening the dentine (inner substance of the teeth) as a compensation for the loss of the enamel (outer covering of the teeth). As primitive man possessed teeth of a texture far superior to those of the people of the present time, it would not be out of place, if we record here the conclusions of Professor Alfred Owre, B.A. M.D., C.M., D.D.S., of Columbia University, who has made a special study of primitive diet. They are:—

1. It was largely of a vegetable nature and embraced much green leafy food, thereby supplying vitamins and salts.
2. It included all fresh fruits available, thereby supplying further vitamins.
3. There was no free or manufactured sugar, and people depended on naturally sweet fruits for the sugar necessary for the body requirement.
4. When animal food was eaten, that comprised not only the muscle meat but also all the other tissues and organs thus including what are now termed the vitamins and the more important elements which many civilized people discard, also as the animals had to be hunted and caught, they were not always available with the result that relatively small quantities were eaten and then generally in a raw or only partially

cooked state (again permitting greater food value to be extracted from them).

5. Small use was made of cereals, i.e., wheat, oats etc., and those which were consumed, were eaten whole.
6. There were no tinned, refined or highly concentrated foods.

Sound teeth therefore depend upon proper food and good nutrition. Taking the child first, the bad feeding of the mother before birth leaves its impress on the first set of teeth and that poor feeding of the child affects permanent set. In rickety children, the teeth are soft, badly developed, cut late and show early signs of decay. A clean mouth, good feeding, complete mastication, avoidance of the comfortor, sucking the thumb or fingers these are essential for good teeth. Proper feeding for a baby includes absence of feeding during the night. Baby should not be fed between 10 P. M. and 6 P. M. At 12 months, a baby should have eight teeth—4 Incisor teeth at the top and 4 at the bottom. He should cut his first two teeth at six months and others at intervals of 2 months. The times are not so very important so long as he begins teeth cutting early and continues steadily.

Man is endowed normally with two sets of teeth, the temporary for the purpose of meeting its needs during infancy and early childhood and the permanent intended for use during the rest of his life. The temporary, (sometimes called primary or milk teeth) 20 in number, consist of 10 in each jaw, five on either side of the middle line. Their eruption takes place between the 6th and the 24th month and they are all lost between

the 7th and the 12th year. The permanent or secondary teeth are thirty-two in number sixteen in each jaw, eight on either side of the middle line. Eruption of these teeth commences between 6 and 7 years and is completed between 17 and 21. When the first set of the permanent teeth which are called the first molars come into position between the ages of 6 and 7, their appearance is frequently overlooked, the parents believing them to belong to the temporary set. Because of this and because of the erroneous belief that temporary teeth can with impunity be neglected (which is one of the greatest possible errors), the first permanent molars which are the most important in the mouth, often become so extensively decayed as to necessitate their extraction—a condition fraught with dire consequences.

Now that a good foundation has been laid for the teeth during the expectant and nursing periods, the next point for consideration is how to maintain these in perfect condition. Breast feeding must be continued for nine months, but it must be supplemented with hard foods immediately the first of the tiny temporary teeth makes its appearance. It is suggested that the long leg-bone of a chicken in which there is no meat left should be given for the child to bite on and to prevent its falling on the floor, the bone should be tied round the neck of the child. The Hindus of Southern India at any rate do adopt such a course by giving the child a hard rice cake to bite on at about the 6th or 7th month and this is even treated as a festive occasion. But this hard cake is thrown on the floor instead of being tied round the neck or some such precaution being taken and this brings on endless trouble to the child. The

chewing of an apple is also of advantage at this stage; if encouraged, the child will use the new teeth to scrape the apple, thus, while affording them exercise, preventing from entering the mouth anything which may be too large or too hard to swallow. At three months of age or earlier orange juice can with great advantage be added to the diet beginning with a teaspoon daily and gradually increasing the quantity. The vitamins contained therein will combine with the lime in the milk to produce good teeth. When the time for weaning comes, cow's milk and other foods can be substituted for mother's milk but it is important that a preparation of solid food be given as well as a sufficiency of vegetables and fruit. The child must be taught to chew all foods thoroughly. No fluid of any kind should be given until after the solid food has been chewed and swallowed. Serious damage will result to the teeth from the eating of a pulpy mass, arising from the admixture of fluid and bread or any other such food. When teaching a child to chew, it is very important to ensure that both sides of the mouth be used equally, because if only one side be used, the teeth on the neglected side will become dirty, as food will lodge on the nonfunctioning teeth and decay will follow.

Another fact of extreme importance is the vast amount of damage which results to the teeth from the eating of too liberal quantities of manufactured sugar. Dr. Leonard Williams 'in the Science and Art of Living' says:—

"Sugar is regarded as a harmless, wholesome, nutritious substance which may be given to children in any quantity and with perfect impu-

nity. It is nothing of the sort; it is on the contrary, an article of diet which, except in the natural form is calculated to ruin the teeth and upset the digestion."

The child should be taken to a dentist at the age of two years and thereafter every six months. The temporary teeth must be carefully preserved till the appointed time and none can examine them and rectify any errors better than the dentist. It is extremely difficult to estimate the immense benefits to be derived from such watchfulness but it can be said with emphasis that they include good health and the possession of well developed teeth.

As W. H. Jones, M. D., said:

"Good teeth mean good health, good health spells happiness and an increased capacity for labour either in the mental or physical spheres. It seems a small matter to fill a small child's tooth but was it not for want of a nail that a kingdom was lost."!

For a more detailed study of the subject, we would refer our readers to the book entitled 'Those teeth of Yours' by J. Menzies Campbell, L. D. S., published by Messrs William Heinemann (Medical Books) Ltd., 99 Great Russell St, London. W. C. 1. Price 3/6 net.

We shall in the next issue discuss about dentistry in Ancient India and the relation of teeth to health and other cognate matters.

A FEW HINTS ON PERSONAL HYGIENE.

BY

Dr. M.C.A. YEMANI, L. M. & S.,

Civil Hospital, Warangal.

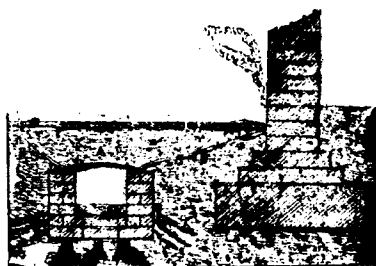
1. Try and live within your means.
2. Ventilate every room you occupy.
3. Wear clean, loose, porous clothing suited to the season, weather and occupation—clothing need not be costly.
4. In-door workers to get recreation out-doors.
5. Sleep in fresh air always; keep windows open. Fresh air, sun shine and cleanliness will keep disease at bay.
6. Hold a handkerchief before your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze and insist that others do so too.
7. Take daily bath.
8. Always wash your hands before eating.
9. Do not overeat—*meat eaters to remember this.*
10. Eat slowly but chew thoroughly
11. Eat some green vegetables and fruits daily.
12. Drink sufficient water daily.
13. Evacuate thoroughly, regularly
14. Stand, sit and walk erect.
15. Say your prayers regularly.
16. Avoid poisons and infections of venereal diseases to enter the body.
17. Keep the teeth, gums and tongue clean.

18. Work, play, rest and sleep in moderation.
 19. Don't worry, keep serene.
 20. Cultivate the friendship of wise men.
 21. Avoid self-drugging. Beware.
 22. Beware the plausible humbug of the patent medicine taker.
 23. Prohibit youngsters from taking to smoke.
 24. Give every facility to the fair sex to have recreation out-doors.
 25. Get your doctor examine you periodically.
 26. Consult your dentist at regular intervals.
 27. Take great care of your eyes.
 28. Muslims to observe the fast of Ramzan.
 29. Other Religionists to observe fast once every week.
 30. Avoid dirty thoughts, (for, a beautiful thought makes a beautiful face) talk, books and pictures.
- out rats but prevent the house from getting damp and unhealthy.
5. No room should be used for dwelling purposes unless it has one or more windows opening into the external air.
 6. Water-closets and latrines should be comfortably and completely detached from the kitchen and the living rooms.
 7. The houses should not be overcrowded as this endangers health and has been the cause of rapid spread of every infectious disease.
 8. Every house must have its well covered. *Dustbin* away from kitchen and dwelling rooms, accessible to the conservancy department or at least an old tin or empty basket is to be kept in the house as our household dustbin with a proper cover. The contents of the dustbin should be emptied regularly into the Municipal dustbin or into the refuse carts that come round to remove the town rubbish.
 9. Epidemic diseases are invariably prevalent in dirty houses, dirty villages, dirty towns and dirty cities.
 10. All refuse must be collected into the dustbin but should not be thrown about in any part of a house.
 11. Waste water and food refuse should on no account be thrown out of the doors or windows into the immediate vicinity of the houses as it will decay and become a breeding place for mosquitoes, flies, and rats; these in turn will bring malaria, cholera, dysentery, diarrhoea, enteric and plague to the house and its neighbourhood.
 12. No animals such as cows, goats, or fowls should be kept in any part of dwelling house.

HINTS FOR SANITARY HOUSES

1. Houses must be built on good soil.
2. Houses should not be built on madesites, such as tanks, swamps and hollows filled in with rubbish, stable refuse, or road and street sweepings of villages and towns.
3. Houses should be so built as to admit fresh air, light and ventilation. All windows to open into the external air. Doors and windows should be of sufficient height and size to admit fresh sun shine and direct rays of the sun during greater part of the day.
4. Pucca houses with rat proof roofs, and pucca rat proof plinths of at least 2 feet high from the crown level of the road will not only keep

13. Solid refuse from stables, and cattle sheds should not be kept collected near the house as flies breed most in such refuse. It should be immediately removed from near the dwelling houses.



A sanitarily perfect latrine.

14. Wells, latrines, and urinals should be kept very clean, as otherwise flies will accumulate, lay eggs

and breed on night soil and fly about and perch with their feet and wings smeared with dirt on articles of food and drink that lie uncovered in the house. This may give rise to outbreaks of cholera, typhoid, dysentery, and infantile diarrhoea.

15. Latrines and their surroundings must be pucca to prevent rat holes.

16. The most dangerous refuse is urine and night soil-waste products of human beings which if allowed to soak in the soil will pollute the water of a well, tank or stream even at a great distance.

17. Dirt means danger, disease and suffering.

THE BENGALLEES AND THEIR DIETS.

BY

DR. BRAJENDRACHANDRA BHATTACHARYYA, L.M.F. (BENGAL),

Austagram Charitable Dispensary, Mymensingh.

PART II.—Continued from p. 60.

Vol. IX. No. 3 March '31 'Health'

Fats or Hydro-Carbons:—Fats are composed of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen—here oxygen proves insufficient for the production of water. They, however, yield heat and force. Both the carbo-hydrate and fat yield heat, but the production of heat is more marked in the case of fats than in the case of carbo-hydrates—one gram of carbo-hydrates yields 4 calories, whereas one gram of fats yields 9 calories. But the beauty lies in the fact that fats cannot be utilised as the producer of heat without the help of carbo-hydrates, in which case fats are incompletely combusted giving rise to acetic

acid, and other katon bodies in the blood creating the condition of katosis. Another function of fats is that they participate in the production of protoplasam.

Cellulose:—Celluloses are not affected by digestive juices. They excite peristalsis and thereby the bowels move. For that reason foods rich in cellulose are laxatives. For the proper evacuation of the bowels we should take some articles of food rich in cellulose together with other food stuffs. Vegetables which we take almost daily are rich in cellulose.

Salts:—These include sodium chloride, and salts of sodium, potassium, magnesium, phosphorus, iron, calcium etc. Sodium chloride is the only source of the hydrochloric acid of the gastric juice. The blood contains sodium chloride which in virtue of its hygroscopic power keep the blood in liquid form. Calcium phosphate is an important ingredient of bones. Blood contains calcium salts and because of its presence in the blood, it (the blood) is coagulated, otherwise even a slight injury might cause severe haemorrhage causing death. Calcium salts are heart tonics, and prevent the occurrence of many diseases. When the blood is decalcified the system becomes liable to be attacked with tuberculosis. In short, the following are the uses of the various mineral salts:—

- (i) They go in the formation and repair of bony and dental tissues.
- (ii) The various internal works, e.g., the formation of hydrochloric acid, the oxygenating power of the blood etc. are facilitated by mineral salts.
- (iii) Various secretions from blood are possible because of the presence of these mineral salts, etc.

Water:—The human body contains 64% of water in comparison with other ingredients. Water keeps the blood in liquid form and maintains circulation, it helps the food to be digested and assimilated. The various chemical changes are effected by means of water. It dilutes toxins, helps their elimination. It stimulates gastric glands. The equilibrium of the temperature of the whole body is maintained by water, etc.,

So the whole-meal of the Bengalees consists of rice, pulses, fish, vegetables, mustard oil, ghee etc. But in addition to these we take some fruits, roots and tubers etc., as follows:—

(i) **Fruits:**—Mangoes, Jack-fruits, Black-berries, Oranges, Pomegranates, Papaw, Pine-apple, Plantain or Banana etc. All these are rich in Carbo-hydrates and are useful in many ways. In fact in order to preserve good health we should take some fruits daily, in addition to the whole-meal as noted above. These are rich in vitamins.

(ii) **Roots and tubers:**—Potatoes, Radish (Moola) onions etc. In Potatoes we find almost all the ingredients necessary for keeping good health. A combination of a proteid and potatoes is quite sufficient for sustaining life. Onions contain vitamins and we may get nutritive value from taking it yet it is discarded by orthodox Brahmins. It will not be out of place here to note that the students of Bengal depend mainly upon rice, potatoes, lentil, fish (in small quantity), and some vegetables. If potatoes and lentil be wanting their diet will be very deficient in nutritive value.

(iii) **Green vegetable fruits:**—Brinjal goural, pumpkin, potal, green plantain etc.

(iv) **Vegetables:**—Danta or data, palong, cabbage, cauli-flower, kalmi, etc.

Root and tuber, green vegetable fruits, vegetables etc. are rich in carbo-hydrates and are sources of vitamins.

(v) Various condiments are used in cooking. They are carminatives, stomachic, deodorants, disinfectants and flavouring agents. The above noted articles comprise the simple bill of fare of the Bengalees, especially the poor Bengalees.

HOW HEALTHY PEOPLE SLEEP.

Sir Robert Armstrong Jones has reminded us that the cessation of physical and sensorial stimuli which healthy sleep secures renovates the highest cortical centres and eliminates the waste products of functional work. But other writers have attempted to show that posture during sleep is of equal importance, and while some advise sleeping on the back, the left side, curled up, and even stretched out with the legs extended, authority is never wanting to condemn the adoption of each and every alternative. Drs. H. M. Johnson, T. H. Swan, and G. E. Weigand have succeeded in proving* that all such advice is immaterial since by their scientific observations of healthy sleepers it is certain that so far from maintaining a single position throughout the night they change from one attitude to another between twenty and forty-five times in the course of eight hours, each change being separated from the preceeding one by at least 2½ minutes. Less often than once a night does such a person lie still for as long as an hour at a time, and although individuals naturally differ, it is only hospital patients under the influence of opiates who present a "log-like" slumber, that never being the case with a perfectly healthy sleeper. The assumption that merely recommending some particular position for sleeping will enable the patient to assume and maintain it, lies at the bottom of most-medical advice on the subject, but as the present writers show it is entirely erroneous. Until lately the only possible means of noting the positions of sleep was to station a watcher in the room (of course with a light) to take notes, but such a method of direct observation is both tedious and expensive since it implies the employment of a trained and trustworthy observer. But nowadays there is an even more reliable and accurate method which the authors have been obliged to adopt as the only course to settle a very vexed question. This is the use of a motion-picture camera. It has been tried in the cases of 112 persons by the authors, the subjects being under nightly observation for periods ranging from several weeks to two years. Among them twenty-two were undergraduates, twenty near middle-age, and two children. A motion-picture camera is arranged so that it automatically takes a picture of the sleeper when he first touches the bed; a second picture one minute after he has ceased to stir; a third when he stirs again, and so on. By this apparatus ingeniously devised by Prof. S. R. Hathaway, it is possible to get as much information on 7 or 8 feet of film as on 5½ miles with the camera working continuously. The face of a "telechrone-clock" hanging beside the bed, is photographed with the sleeper

*Journal of the Medical Association.

so that it can be told to a second, for how long each posture that the sleeper maintains for at least a minute, is kept up. Illumination is provided by a 100 watt Mazda lamp; though it might be preferable to employ invisible radiation, continuous exposure to ultra-violet rays was not desired. The subjects wear a dark taffeta bandage over the eyes at first, but in three or four nights they grow accustomed to the light and are able to discard it. As they must dispense with blankets for the accurate recording of their movements, the temperature and ventilation are carefully controlled. During several past years other observers have studied the problem of motility during sleep, by attaching a pen to a part of the bed which yields to the sleeper's movements to a degree which requires so gross a change as the motion of an entire limb to displace the pen through the distance it is sought to measure, a second pen actuated once in five minutes by an electric clock giving a time record. But it is obvious that the charting of a pen-record, however interesting, can never be so graphical as a photographic representation of the sleeper's movements.

The photographs reproduced present a series of pictures showing the various positions assumed by one representative healthy sleeper during a typical night. Like most others, this subject has a repertoire of over a dozen postures, if the bed and mattress permit all, changing from one to another. But all of them maintained for any long period are *contorted*, the spinal

column in particular, being always curved laterally, and usually bowed back and twisted. Of the 33 postures illustrated some could not be maintained were the bed any narrower than 39 inches, or if it were shared with another. All the positions favoured require some supporting strain, often exerted against the shoulder or hip of one side the femur and humerus being used as props; even in the dorsal position one leg is placed so as to prevent rotation and throw the weight more to the other side, but that requiring least effort to maintain is the prone. The positions and the periods of each (omitting the less prolonged periods of impending movements of change) were in order of strict sequence: left side for 14 minutes, right 11, left 30, right 55, left 77, on the back 31, left side 56, prone 18, left side 37, semi-dorsal 23, on the back 19, left side 14, on the back 4, prone 58, right side 27, on the back 9, right side 7, on the back 11. The authors' conclusion is that the most restful night's sleep is characterised by a considerable variety of bodily positions all of them being contorted and none indicating anything like that complete relaxation of the skeletal muscular system (frequently lauded as the sleeping ideal) such as is seen in a fainting person. On the other hand, each of them appears to be adapted to the relief of irritation that was set up in the posture last assumed as well as during the activities of the day. Finally, nothing less than strapping to a frame will make a healthy person spend the night in one position as so constantly recommended.—*Medical World*,

Your body is a wonderful machine with many intricate parts that must co-ordinate for good health.

Remember there are no spare parts to the human body. At least take care of what you have.

When you hear a knock in the engine of your car you run for a mechanic—but most people have to be knocked down and carried to a doctor.

See your doctor at least twice a year.—*Good Health.*

DOCTOR TELLS HOW TO GROW OLD HAPPILY

Growing old happily is a matter of adjustment to the inevitable physical and mental changes that accompany age. The factors that make for successful adjustment are: good heredity, sound physical health and unimpaired senses, satisfactory social environment and economic independence and security, according to Doctor Clifford B. Farr, a specialist in mental hygiene, writing in *Hygiea* for October.

Mental hygiene is frequently consciously employed by persons who are entering the period of advanced life and they need no outside help or interference. Others, however, especially those who take too depressive a view of life, need advice and encouragement to enable them to spend this age period happily.

In former generations the elderly person calmly accepted the limitations of his age, regulated his life accordingly, in dress, in social diversions and

even in emotions and ideas. The opposite attitude, perhaps more frequent today, is that of the person who disregards his age as far as possible. A sensible mixture of these points of view is best, Dr. Farr advises, as both in pure culture tend to become ridiculous.

Adjustment to physical handicaps such as failing sight and hearing is not difficult to achieve in many cases, because artificial aids are within reach of all who need them. A similar adaptation to mental defects is also useful. Elderly persons do not have the ready memory of youth.

On the whole, under favourable conditions of physical and mental health and normal average environment, advanced life is not a period of undue mental hazards, but one in which we tend to make the most successful personal adjustment.—*Long Island Medical Journal.*

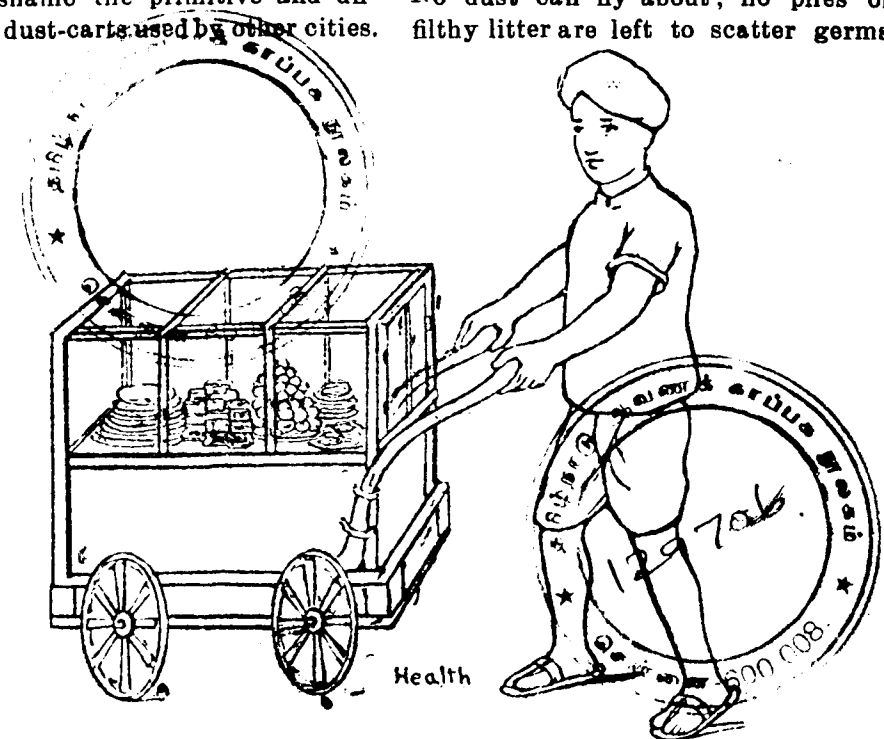
CLEAN STREETS.

Again Vienna sets the world an example in progress and good sense. The streets of that great city are kept wonderfully clean by a very fine vacuum street cleaning machine. It is a motor-truck, fitted with great brushes which whirl round and round

as the truck goes down the street, sweeping all the rubbish along with them. Just behind the brushes is an opening, above which are powerful electric fans which draw up all the rubbish into the truck. All this is done in one movement as the truck passes down the street. This method

puts to shame the primitive and unhealthy dust-carts used by other cities.

No dust can fly about; no piles of filthy litter are left to scatter germs



A glass-covered hand-cart wherein sweets are kept and taken round the streets for sale—dust and dirt-proof and a sanitarilly perfect method.

until they are gathered up by dust wagons, and it takes only one man to operate this machine—a great saving in labour.—*The Treasure Chest.*

THE SLOW PROGRESS OF CREMATION.

Out of a total of 7,898 deaths which occurred in the city of Leeds during 1929 the number of bodies disposed of by cremation was 36 or 0.46 percent. Dr. J. J. Jervis, M.O.H., has pointed out that though this represents an increase of five over the figure for 1928 it is nevertheless disappointingly small. He continues: "Why the public should continue to neglect cremation as a form, and from a hygienic point of view the best form, of disposal is hard to explain. In other parts of the country there is certainly the same

reluctance to abandon the old method of earth burial, but nothing like so pronounced as in Leeds. One would have thought that with the growth of knowledge and the ever-increasing interest taken in matters relating to the public health, the advantages of cremation over the older method of earth burial would have made a wider appeal and attracted more support especially from the better educated classes. As is usual with any reform, there is always at its inception a dead weight of ignorance, prejudice, and

sentiment to overcome before it becomes generally accepted, and progress is probably slower with a reform which has to do with the disposal of the human body after death than with one which affects the living. What the public have to appreciate is the ever-increasing difficulty of finding land in, and in the vicinity of large cities for gardens, parks, open spaces and for sites for dwelling houses, and to con-

sider whether it is in the interest of the inhabitants of these cities that so much valuable land should be devoted to cemeteries and graveyards." Dr. Jervis urges that the claims of the living are surely not less important than those of the dead, though in this country at least it is not always apparent that this is recognized.—*Medical Officer*.

VITAMINS.—THE FOOD SHIBBOLETH OF TO-DAY.

With regard to that elusive quantity—the Vitamin—it may be said quite bluntly and plainly that, despite all the talk one hears about it from "Eminent. Health Experts" in all present-day discussions on food questions the world over, *no scientist has yet succeeded in discovering its actual existence*. All that is actually known about Vitamins is that all un-cooked, and therefore unspoilt, foods contain properties invaluable to health and life which are lost when these same foods are subjected to modern foodrefining and obsolete cooking methods.

This, however, does not prove that Vitamins exist. For all that is claimed for the Vitamin is accomplished by the alkaline mineral salts also only found in their proper proportion in natural unspoilt foods, and lost through food-refining and cooking methods, with the direst results to the system.

Why then all this pother about Vitamins? This ceaseless chasing after something we can never isolate and examine the nature of? Surely it is much more sensible to concentrate our attention upon the mineral salts which we can see and know the value

of in our food, than upon hypothetical substances called "Vitamins" which we *cannot* see and only *imagine* the value of? Especially should this be the case, for if Vitamins *do really exist*, they can only do so in conjunction with the alkaline mineral salts we are speaking of, as we are told by the learned scientists who profess to know of their existence. Because when food is refined or cooked, and the natural supply of mineral salts evaporated or otherwise removed, the "Vitamins" automatically disappear also, it is stated.

RELY ON REAL FOOD

It is best, therefore, when thinking about food or when coming in contact with food problems, *not to worry about either Calories or Vitamins*, but to realise that *real food*: the food the body requires: the food Nature intended us to eat, is the natural unspoilt products of the animal and vegetable kingdoms complete with all their mineral elements, and not subjected to the demineralising, debasing, and devitalising influences of either modern commerce or haphazard, wasteful cookery!—*Harry Benjamin in 'Health for All.'*

EYE-STRAIN

It is a self-evident fact that the percentage number of individuals who wear glasses has increased during the past few decades. Much of this is due to correct treatment being obtained where formerly ignorance prevailed; but it is opportune at times to consider how far heredity or environmental conditions produce or aggravate cases of defective vision. In the annual report of Dr. J. A. Fairer, C.M.O., Leicestershire, there is a well-thought-out section by Dr. Constance Walters, assistant S.M.O. and oculist, who deals with the question of eye-strain in school children.

In the work as school oculist, Dr. Walters had noticed a certain amount of relationship between defective vision in its widest sense and insufficient lighting, overcrowding and other environmental conditions. The chronic inflammatory states of the eyelids are found to be definite results of eye-strain and, in children working in a bad light, are the outcome of uncorrected and often small refractive errors. In all cases the symptoms are improved by the subsequent prescription of glasses; but many children in schools with defective lighting would not require glasses and would be free from symptoms if the environmental conditions were satisfactory. And Dr. Walters carried out an enquiry which shows some most instructive results.

For the purpose of the investigation forty schools were selected at random; and the details were obtained in each school of the number of children, the percentage wearing glasses, the percentage suffering from eye-strain, and the

lighting and seating accommodation of the school premises. It is seen that there are seven schools which show defective lighting conditions, and four of these schools are among the first six schools with the highest percentage of children wearing glasses. On the whole it is apparent that there is a decided correlation between the higher percentage of children with defective vision and defective lighting and seating accommodation; and this is brought out more forcibly if the schools with either "good" or "defective" conditions are considered, omitting those considered "fair." The figures support the accepted view that symptoms of eye-strain tend to occur more frequently in growing children when the conditions under which they work do not afford adequate lighting and space.

The infants' schools do not show quite as high numbers of defective children, possibly because even with poor environmental conditions, the young children have been able to overcome the lack of good lighting by an extra effort of accommodation. It may be only after prolonged effort that symptoms arise. Although in addition there may be other factors at work, it is opportune that Dr. Walters has carried out her investigation; for it should be a further incentive towards reaching the ideal class-room. And it is especially welcome that the reorganisation and reconditioning which are fore-shadowed in the committee's three-year programme, will remove the defects to which the report of Dr. Walters refers.—*The Medical Officer*.

TRAINING OF SCHOOL MEDICAL OFFICERS

The German Pædiatric Association discussed at their recent meeting the position and training of school medical officers. They point out that the schools as a national institution have not only to train the pupils but also to prevent damage during school life. The appointment of school medical officers should thus be more and more insisted upon. The medical officer should alone control questions of hygiene; he must be a member of the school board and a room must be set at his disposal for his work. To be-

come a school medical officer a training of at least two years in pædiatrics is necessary. Apart from general pædiatrics a school medical officer should attend a course in school hygiene, where the combating of epidemics, the psychology and psychopathology of children, and the physiology of bodily exercise must be taught. Those appointed to the post should have an opportunity of following the progress of science by special postgraduate courses.—*The Lancet*.

RICE AND COCOANUT

The following extract from a valuable paper on "Cocoanut Cultivation and Research in Ceylon" read by Sir Marcus Fernando at the last Agricultural Conference at Peradeniya deserves wider publicity:—

Moreover, recent investigations have indicated to us the necessity of maintaining the proper proportions of the different forms of foodstuffs in a physiologically balanced diet. The cocoanut kernel, from a nutritive standpoint, is exceptionally rich in fats. The mature fruit contains over 60 per cent of fats and the rest consists of proteids and carbohydrate. Rice is wonderfully deficient in fats. Its fat content is less than one per cent and this deficiency is a serious cause of ill-health and inefficiency in a rice-eating people when not supplemented by a reasonable proportion of animal or vegetable fats. In the fresh kernel of the cocoanut we have a form of fat and nitrogenous food most appropriate to supply the deficiency of a rice diet. The low country Sinhalese consume cocoanuts very largely and are thus enabled to maintain their health and efficiency. The consumption of nuts is so large amongst them that the Goal Diet ordinarily contains half a nut a day. On the other hand, Tamil labourers on Up country estates, away from the cocoanut belt, consume very little cocoanuts with the result that they suffer seriously from those forms of ill-health

now recognized to be due to fat shortage in the diet. Both laboratory experiments, and the experience of fat shortage in Germany and Austria during and after the war go far to prove that fat deficiency is responsible to a lower resistance to microbial infections such as pneumonia, influenza, tuberculosis, dysentery, etc., and contain forms of anæmia and debility. The Food Research Committee of the Royal Society, in their 1919 report make the definite pronouncement that for prolonged and efficient muscular work, at least one-fourth of the heat units in a diet should be derived from fats. The high mortality from pneumonia and influenza even in the healthy districts of the Ceylon Uplands, the excessive infant mortality due to the lowered vitality of pregnant women and their deficient lactation after child birth, all tend to show that this dietetic is the prime cause of these evils.

The nutritive value of the kernels at various stages of maturity of nuts has not been definitely established by experiment and analysis. Here to my mind there exists a wide field for research. We have all along concentrated on copra and oil as the end products of palm cultivation. When these are a drug in the market it may be possible to utilize young nut, as feeding material for farm animals. The mature nut is too rich in fats and proteins for a well balanced diet for growing animals whereas at an earlier stage they may form a more suitable foodstuff.—*Mysore Economic Journal*.

SURPRISING TABLES OF STATISTICS. IS YOUR WEIGHT UNHEALTHY?

These tables present another surprising feature. They show that the death-rate is lower in persons said to be 20 pounds under "average weight," than it is in those of "average weight." The figures, compiled by life insurance companies, are as follows:

Mortality Rate

20lbs. under average weight ...	89 per cent.
10lbs. " " " ...	90 "
5lbs. " " " ...	91 "
Average weight mortality ...	94 "
5lbs. over average weight ...	98 "
10lbs. " " " ...	102 "
20lbs. " " " ...	112 "

Those craving more weight, please notice that this statistics show an increase in the death-rate, which obviously means a decrease in the degree of health, with every pound of weight above that given as "20 pounds under average weight."

Please note, also, that there is no truth in fact to the admonition of food manufacturers and meat packers that **THIN PEOPLE SHOULD BEWARE.** For figures, which do not lie, show that it is **FAT PEOPLE WHO SHOULD BEWARE.**

As all will agree, health and the length of the life-span are more important to human happiness than is weight, and so 20 pounds under the figure given as the average weight, should be regarded as the average weight; for it is at this weight that the degree of health must be highest, since the death-rate is lowest.

Such tables as those mentioned, are the result of an examination of 100, 1,000 or more abnormal persons, and the average weight of these abnormal persons of certain ages and heights, is carefully set down as being the average weight of a normal person, of a certain age and height.

Any fool should know that the average weight of 100, 1,000 or more normal persons cannot be the proper weight of a normal person, even though this statement disputes the doctrine of the whole medical profession. We remember, however, that the world was not flat, even though such was the teaching at one time of all educational institutions on earth.—*George R. Clements in Health for All*.

FINGER NAIL SIGN

Finger nails tell the story of a patient's winning or losing fight against tuberculosis, recent observations of Dr. A.G. Hahn at the Trudeau Sanatorium near Saranac Lake have shown.

Pitted nails were found in every one of fifty cases of active tuberculosis investigated, while 50 ex-patients and normal subjects exhibited smooth

nails. A third group, comprised of 50 cases of inactive tuberculosis, yielded only three instances of indented nails.

Downward curving of the finger nails is another symptom of lung disease, though not quite so accurate an index of its progress. Seventy-six per cent of the patients with active tuberculosis had down-curving nails, as did half of the inactive cases. Thirty per

cent of the ex-patients had retained the incurvation after a cure had been effected but none of the normal group had the peculiarity.

Extreme blueness of the finger nails is another symptom of the progress of tuberculosis. The bluer the nails the more advanced the case was usually founded to be.

Inkling of this striking correspondence between the appearance of the finger nails and the condition of the lungs was first noted by the ancient Greek physician, Hippocrates, but modern scientific methods have made possible an accurate testing of his opinion.—*Science News-Letter*.

LONDON'S DECLINING POPULATION

I have more than once emphasised the importance of the population problem, and expressed the opinion that the decline in the birth-rate which has been taking place for many years past, had not yet reached its limit. That prophecy appears to have been correct.

Dr. Kay Menzies, the Medical Officer of Health for the L.C.C., has issued his report as medical officer for the year 1929. The birth-rate for London was 15.8 per thousand as against 16.2 for 1928. This is the

lowest birth-rate ever recorded for London, and seeing that it refers to a population of about four and a half-millions, we may, I presume, take it as typical of the country at large.

When we consider that at the present national life-expectation (*i.e.*, the average age at which death occurs in England and Wales) a birth-rate of seventeen implies a stationary population within a few years, it would appear that before long our population will begin to decrease, *i.e.*, the births will fall below the deaths.—*Medical Press Circular*.

HEALTH NEWS & NOTES

Dr. Peltzer:—The world's record runner, Dr. Peltzer, says: "I do not use alcohol; it has no place in the life of those who would be fit. Nor do I use it as a doctor."—*The Indian Temperance News*.

Huge waste of corn:—It was announced in the daily papers last week that Ontario was drinking less whisky but more wine. The very same day the papers told that, out of twenty cases of "drunks" in Toronto jail cells, seventeen said they got drunk on "wine."

Here are some sad and humiliating facts: Canada spends ten times as much on intoxicating liquors as she spends on church work, including missions. While there are many families today who are not able to supply themselves with sufficient food, approximately 215,000,000 pounds of grain were used (wasted) in the manufacture of intoxicating liquors in Canada last year and this beats all former records.—*The Canadian Baptist*.

Coffee harmful to kidneys:—Some of the poisonous effects of

coffee are described by Dr. John V. Shoemaker, Dean of the Medico-Chirurgical College of Philadelphia and Professor of *Materia Medica*, in his great work on "*Materia Medica and Therapeutics*." He states that, "caffeine paralyzes the absorbing power of the convoluted tubules (of the kidney). Small doses cause irritation of the digestive tract, venous congestion and hemorrhoids."

From a dose of twelve grains (three or four cups of ordinary coffee) Doctor Pratt experienced restlessness, sleeplessness, mental depression and tremor.

Zenetz, an eminent German physician, called attention to the dangers of caffeine, asserting that three gains two or three times a day (two ordinary cups) cause rise of blood-pressure (leading to apoplexy), constriction of the chest, dyspepsia, restlessness. Zenetz has seen death result from five grains two or three times a day, caused by tetanic contraction of the heart.—*Good Health*.

Dress children by temperature:—

A child must be dressed according to the temperature of his home and his school and not according to the outside temperature, Dr. Jesse R. Gestely tells mothers in the November *Hygeia*.

A healthy active child should wear in winter cotton underwear, shoes, long stockings and a light weight suit. Then when he goes out into the cold, wraps can be piled on to meet the temperature.

Eat white bread if you like it:—

White bread is one of the most valuable of all foods, says *Hygeia* in

answer to a question from a reader in the October issue.

It is true that whole wheat bread and graham bread, containing as they do some of the bran as well as the germ of the wheat, have certain ingredients in the way of vitamins and roughage which are essential. If the bread were the sole article of diet it would be a serious loss not to have in the bread these portions of the wheat, but the properties which they possess are obtained in abundance from milk, vegetables, fruit, eggs and other foods that are in the diet of most normal persons.

White bread is much more to the taste of most persons than are the coarser breads and as a part of a mixed diet there is no reason why it should be replaced with whole wheat or graham bread.

Health Benefits of a Glass House:—

That a glass house is the healthiest place in which to live, is the opinion, based on experience, of a woman of eighty-four years of age, living at Bournemouth, England. Four years ago Miss Geraldine Fitzgerald, author of a number of books, had a glass house built in her garden. She has lived in it ever since and declares that she is not only better in health as a result, but also happier in disposition.

To a reporter of the *Daily Mail*, who visited her in her greenhouse home, which the sunshine flooded with life and warmth, Miss Fitzgerald stated that she had always been delicate and had suffered from a variety of ailments. "Now," she said, "instead of always moaning and grumbling and fearing illness, I am in better health than I

ever was. I can walk seven miles a day without feeling tired, and I am far more fit at eighty-four than I was at eighteen. This is the secret of being able to do without doctors." In

her opinion living in glass houses would eliminate many modern complaints. Cooking is done on an oil stove and candles are used for lighting.—*Good Health*.

BOOK REVIEW

Ancient Indian Fasts and Feasts:— By Rai Bahadur A. C. Mukerjee, M.A. I. E. S. Revised edition 1930. Published by Messrs. Macmillan & Co. Ltd, Madras. Price Rs. 1/8/0. pp. 251.

In this age of religious renaissance in India, any book attempting to reveal the true meaning and scientific import of the Hindu mythology will be quite welcome. One such book, the author has brought out and we are confident that it will appeal to the English-educated younger generation and redeem them from the mire of ignorance and scepticism in which

they are now plunged and help them in the solution of what may be called the Philosophy of Hindu religion. A perusal of this book will no longer leave the cynic in doubt of the usefulness of fasting as the cure for all human ills, which the Hindu religion has strictly enjoined and which Modern Medical science has strongly emphasised. The book is written in an elegant style in the English language and it may profitably be prescribed for non-detailed study for the S.S.L.C. or Intermediate examination in the various schools and colleges in India.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We gratefully acknowledge the receipt of an excellent pictorial calendar, from Nestles' and Anglo-Swiss Condensed Milk Export Co., Ltd., Madras. It portrays Lord Sri Krishna as partaking, with His consorts, butter churned from freshly drawn milk of a well-built cow fed on green grass on the meadows and in the mountain sides and illustrates the nourishing, life-giving and life sustaining qualities

of unadulterated cow's milk and milk products. It is really a calendar worthy of being hung up in the drawing room of every Indian to stimulate a strong and irresistible desire in him to feed his children always with fresh cow's milk or in its absence, a proper substitute such as Lactogen, manufactured by Nestles' with due regard to hygienic purity and standard chemical composition.

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Plates 7 and 8. The various arteries and nerves of the back and front of the human body with their relative position and relation.

Plate 9. Under surface of the brain with the various parts and origin of cranial nerves and main trunks of arteries supplying the brain also the spinal cord with the nerve roots.

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Prof. B. Suryanarayan Row, B.A., M.F.A.S., F.R.H.S. M.A.S.B., Editor the Astrological Magazine, P. O. Bettahalesoer, Bangalore, writes in his letter of the 9th Feb. 1931:—" * * * * Here allow me to congratulate you on the excellent number of articles, which your Magazine contains and which are so very useful to our countrymen. It is needless to say edited as it is by a famous practitioner like you, the Magazine deserves a place in the hands of every youth who loves health and through health, prosperity and success in business."

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