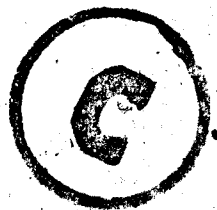


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THE FOOD FAMINE

WHILE England and other countries which are dependent for a very large proportion of their food requirements on imports have, with sufficient foresight, arranged for the proper storage of the required food-stuffs to keep the wolf from the door, we find that, in India, which required only a very small proportion of its total food requirements from abroad and which possessed all the facilities and resources for increasing food production, the position is getting worse day by day. If we are to take the statement made by the Additional Food Minister on the floor of the Madras Legislative Assembly recently seriously, it only means that famine is now on in some parts of the presidency and it is likely to spread throughout the province unless the stocks are augmented by supplies from outside. The ration of the basic food of a large percentage of the population of this presidency, rice, has been reduced to 8 oz. per adult a day, and if the allotted and expected imports do not come in time the scheme of rationing now in force will break down and the ration will have to be further reduced. That the 8 oz. of rice now allowed is hardly sufficient to keep the body and soul together in a fit condition, is a self-evident and accepted proposition which needs no further elaboration. May be the authorities may say—and they do say it—that they are supplementing this meagre supply by the addition of wheat or other

cereal. And demonstrations galore are given to show that many relishable dishes can be prepared from wheat. We do not deny that wheat possesses all the qualities now attributed to it, but those preparation are all only fitted to serve as additional ones and not to supplant the basic foodstuff—rice. Besides, wheat products are not easily digestible by many who are half-starved and ill-fed and have thereby lost their normal strength. And even to those who have still been left with sufficient bodily vigour to digest these relishable dishes of wheat as assiduously propagated by the hand-maids of government—we mean their propagandists, milk, ghee, etc., are required in sufficient quantities to make them less harmful. Even in ordinary times milk and ghee were considered luxuries by many and they were reserved only to a wealthy few—a very large proportion of the population could not even dream of them owing to their poverty. Now that the cattle wealth of the nation has been denuded owing to various causes into which we need not now enter, conditions have worsened a great deal. Unadulterated milk and ghee have become rare commodities in spite of an Adulteration Act in the statute book, and their prices have soared to such heights that they are now beyond the reach of even the middle class people who were accustomed to it, with the result that they have to go in for the adulterated stuff and spoil their health. If only the Government of

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[September, '46

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Madras have had sufficient foresight and acted in the most effective manner, the province could have been saved from the disaster which is now endangering it. The Adviser Government made a show of doing this and that to augment production, but it all ended in a colossal waste of public money without any proportionate advantage. That Government is gone, gone for ever, and it will do no good to anybody to prepare a charge sheet against them. What is wanted now is immediate action, action which will swiftly produce results. It is now some months since the Congress Ministry assumed the reins of administration in their hands in this province. We are aware that they have drawn up a scheme of procurement and distribution through a net work of Village Committees. Many of these Committees have yet to be formed, and where they have been formed we hear complaints that they have not been properly constituted, or that proper representation has not been given to this or that community. We are now told that the Parliamentary Secretaries will go into these complaints and set right things. In a country which has had village autonomy in times immemorial, there revival should be welcomed. But it would require intense effort to revive the dormant panchayat spirit in the vil-

lagers and to make them realise their oneness in matters relating to common good. But to think that these Village Committees can be made serviceable to meet the present emergency is mere moon-shine. The Ministry in Madras have, by concentrating more on this matter than they should have done, have accorded only a secondary place to the problem of increasing production. They are content with throwing the blame on the Central Government for their acts of omission and commission, viz., failure to supply the allotted quota and the diversion of foodstuffs intended for this province to other places. As has been very rightly pointed out by Mahatma Gandhi in the *Harijan*, "to look to outside sources for food supply is to invite starvation." Has it ever been made clear that India has no capacity for growing sufficient food between now and November (to meet the impending crisis)? Need a vast country like India with its teeming millions starve even if the whole world were to declare a blockade against it? What is now wanted is the laying down of a bold and effective policy and carrying it out successfully. Unless this is done, and done without delay, the Government of Madras cannot escape from the responsibility for the disaster that will overtake the Province.

WATER

Dr. K. H. Parekh, M.B., B.S.

Dhoraji, Kathiawar

BODY consists largely of water which is one of the five natural elements, namely, the Sun, the earth, the water, the air, and the space. It is a common proverb amongst us when we find a man worthless that he is wanting in water.

Water is one of the most important constituents of the body. All wear and tear of the body is effected by the help of water. Without blood plasma, which is watery, no nutrition to the tissues is possible, and no function of secretion and excretion is possible without this medium.

In order to make our diet assimilable, sufficiently large quantities of water are required. Just as digestion and assimilation cannot occur without water, the excretions of the waste products namely stool, urine, perspiration cannot occur without sufficient and continuous supply of water.

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In cholera, people suffer on account of the deficit of the watery plasma, marked by rapid and copious stools, and the most urgent remedy is the supply of water in a retentive form like hypertonic saline by way of intravenous injection.

So large and important a constituent of the body is sadly neglected by the laity. The most important element as it is to life, unfortunately enough the water is a great source of infection like typhoid, cholera, guinea worms etc.

Down from the time of ancient civilization, the Hindu scriptures are laying great stress on the sanctity of water and great sin is said to devolve on the humans who soil the river and well waters with effete matters.

[Health, Sept. '46]

Cleanliness is next to godliness. In our various activities of life, we come in contact with various unclean things, dirty matter, coal dust, mud, spittings, decomposing food-stuff and other harmful articles like snuff, gutter air, latrine and urinal discharges. So after a day's work one should change his clothes and should have a complete or partial bath. The bathing water should be hygienically clean; it should wash us completely clean, and should give us a sense of freshness. No one who uses daily such hygienic water for bathing should ever suffer from skin diseases.

Now-a-days soap has become an article of choice during bath. Unconsciously a great many people make use of the toilet soap mostly on account of its fragrance. The soap is really used to remove greasy matter from the skin, and to remove crusts of boils, etc. Now a good number of people do not use sufficient water to remove the soap which is itself very greasy, and so some caustic effect of sodium or potassium is left on the skin. This sometimes becomes the starting point of some diseases. Ringworm and eczema are the worst for the soap because one can never wash these areas clean of the soap, and consequently the ringworm and eczema go on increasing instead of healing.

Daily soap baths are also injurious to the skin. They remove the normal grease of the skin, which is normally defensive against many skin diseases. Those men who never or seldom use soap in their bath are relatively more free from skin diseases than civilized men who daily use soap in their bath. For a healthy man water is sufficient to have a clean bath. Soap or bathing powders should only occasionally be used to have a thorough cleaning. Antiseptic soaps like carbolic are decidedly harmful for healthy baths. Sea and river baths are completely hygienic. Pipe water is good, but there is something of staleness in it and there is no adjustment of temperature. Well water comes next, but that is also somewhat stale as the water cannot flow out after use. Home-baths are the most practical, but there is also some limitation to the use of water, either due to limited provision or lack of gutter system. Anyhow water is the greatest cleaning agent, and one must keep clean.

Now we come to the therapeutic uses of water. In all defensive armaments, namely, water, heat, rest, and complete fast, are the main things.

The science of hydrotherapy is well-known. Gargles, stomach-pump, enemata, nourishing as well as evacuating, irrigation of wounds, hot and cold compresses, tub-baths, spring baths, saline and glucose intravenous injections are all the scientific uses of water for various ailments. In practically all diseases we see that the stool, urine and perspiration, the three main drains of the body, are working efficiently. To correct them, when their

function is deranged, we use water either in hot or cold compress as indicated.

Similarly our diet also requires a certain proportion of water to have a good digestion. People who take comparatively a large quantity of salt take a large quantity of water. Slight acidity or alkalinity in the diet is greatly relieved by drinking a good quantity of water and made innocuous. In some toxic conditions of the body, the patient is absolutely forbidden solid diet, and only water is allowed till he is free from those conditions. In India many people observe religious fast in which they take nothing but pure boiled water. They really protect themselves from great many diseases and thus enjoy long and healthy life.

To stamp that the water is naturally holy and beneficent, we, in India, take our vows by pouring down pure water from our hands. This vow cannot be broken.

We are living in a time when man is most selfish. He has no fellow feeling and knows nothing of a healthy moral life. So we see that there is no cleanliness about us. In large towns people care only about their own cleanliness, throwing their waste things in such a way as to harm other people. There are only a few large cities where water supply is enough and drainage system is perfect. But in most other towns the drainage system is very imperfect and no cleanliness is observed.

There are people who use too much water in their baths and washings; there is no proper drainage; and so the area about them is like a continuous marsh. They suffer from malaria and other moisture diseases. This is due to the bad idea of keeping themselves clean. They throw their washings only a little farther merely to bring in more diseases. One must have water usage in harmony with the drainage facility.

The water we drink should be scrupulously clean. Where typhoid and other water-borne diseases are endemic, we should boil the water before use. In cholera times the river water must be sterilized by boiling and all wells should be sterilized with potassium permanganate.

In this era of no-caste distinction hotels, common water arrangements and unclean soda lenses, bottles, are fruitful sources of infection, and it behoves the municipalities to make necessary improvements in these things. No amount of superficial cleaning will do. Moral forces have so much weakened that no amount of legal threat can work.

Unless the man makes it his religious duty to keep clean, practical cleanliness is impossible.

Last but not the least, the water, the favour of the God Varuna, is so important to life, that no life is practically possible without rains. Let us, therefore, know and understand the advantages of its use and disadvantages from its wrong uses.

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TONSILLITIS

ITS CAUSE AND CURE

ALAN MOYLE

THE letter reprinted below is relevant to the subject of this article. I do not, therefore, make any apology for bringing it to the reader's attention. It is important, not merely from the point of view of drastic wrong treatment in one isolated instance of supposedly enlarged tonsils, but, because it is an example of what we may expect of the National Health Service of the future. It need not be the tonsils that are threatened; it might be suspected appendicitis or some other affliction, which, in the view of the appointed medical man, calls for surgical attention. Whether we desire it or not, the implication of sole authority over one's personal anatomy is there. Is it pertinent to ask to whom one's body, or any part of it, belongs? Has the State the right to such complete domination? If so, then one must obviously be very careful not to offend the minions of the State Medical Service. Here, then, is the letter for your perusal:

Medicine and the State

Sir.—A youth presented himself at my hospital ear, nose, and throat clinic with a letter received by his father from the secretary of his employers, an engineering firm on the Air Ministry Approved List. The lad had been examined by the factory doctor as a matter of routine, and the letter ran:

Dr. X reports that your son A. A. must have his tonsils removed in the near future, and he is to visit him again on 1915

If your son is not agreeable to have this operation, we will be compelled by the Factories Act to discharge him.

I carefully questioned the patient and his parent, and learnt that there was no history of illness referable to the tonsils, and that he had never lost schooling through illness; with the most thorough search I could find no abnormality.

Whether the firm would, in fact, be compelled by law to discharge an employee who refused to submit to an operation of this nature, I do not know, but I maintain that situations such as this will be an every day occurrence under State Medicine.

Ministries are interested in persons or diseases or science, but in forms and figures. The conscientious and imaginative clerk will do well; the man outstanding in medicine or surgery will find difficulties put in his way. The man whose attitude is, "Are the patient's forms all in order?" will be preferred to the doctor who constantly enquires, "Am I giving this patient the best treatment available?"

EAR, NOSE, AND THROAT SURGEON. London, S.W.

One can only thank *The Sunday Times* (London) for publishing the above letter.

Value widely debated.—Reverting to the subject of this article, however, the case for tonsillectomy is widely debated, even among

the medical profession. Naturopaths never even consider such an operation, and the reason for their unequivocal stand is that to remove the tonsils is merely to attack the symptom of disease, and not the cause. We shall explain why this is so.

The tonsils are two almond shaped bodies situated at either side of the entrance to the throat. They are composed of lymphoid tissue and their function is to cleanse the head and upper part of the body of systemic impurities and toxic matter, and in this condition they become inflamed and unable to function properly.

The tonsils become enlarged only when the rest of the body is in a toxic state. The break-down is usually due to the enormous strain thrown upon them in the body's attempts to maintain internal harmony, i.e., health. Though tonsillitis is not a systemic poisoning, it is precipitated by a chill or a lowering of the vitality due to some external agency (exposure), or some such additional strain as is imposed on the system by a series of heavy, indigestible meals. None the less, the basic toxic state must prevail at the time, or the body would throw off the poisons and the tonsils would not be affected. It is impossible for a healthy person to suffer from tonsillar trouble.

Tonsillitis means congestion. Tonsillitis is frequently traceable to over-eating, especially when refined foods and starches predominate in the diet. Drug treatment for fever is another possible cause of the inflammation. Auto-intoxication resulting from chronic constipation is yet another frequent factor. It is when the body is clogged with poisons arising from faulty elimination and from an excess of food that tonsils become enlarged. Devitalized foods, such as white bread, refined sugar, pastries, cakes, pasteurized milk and stimulating acid-forming drinks, such as tea and coffee, are the main items in the diet which lead to a lack of balance in the system. It is important, therefore, to see that the diet consists of unprocessed food as possible. Whole grains should be substituted for those made from refined flour. Home grown fruit and vegetables should be consumed as far as possible. It is necessary, in view of the constant encroachment of science upon natural laws of living and food production, to be extra careful in matters of diet and to adhere to natural foods. In this connection, raw food comes into its own, because with its use there is no further loss of vitamins and minerals such as occurs when food is cooked. Raw salads, therefore, assume a greater importance in food value, and because of the profound effects of the more efficient mastication they entail.

Food, exercise, sunlight, and fresh air are the main elements in preventing tonsillitis.

What, however, of the cure? The first principle is to stop eating. Give the body an opportunity to use its energy to promote health, instead of expending it upon the task of dealing with unwanted food material. Commence the fast by taking only diluted orange- or lemon juice. The liquid should be lukewarm, and a small quantity of honey may be added to it. The fast should be continued until the inflammation has subsided—usually a matter of from three to four days. Children need not fast as long, as their recovery is usually much speedier. If necessary, a warm-water enema should be administered to ensure a thorough cleansing of the bowels on each of the fasting days.

Following the fast.—Immediately after the fast, the diet should have the closest attention. By limiting the food in the first few days to raw and cooked fruit and vegetables, one not only avoids any disturbance of the digestive organs, but also continues the eliminative process commenced during the fast. This is a very important aspect of curative fasting. It is the alkaline fruit and vegetable elements that maintain the cleansing process which is desired. The return to fat, starches, and protein should be only gradual. For the best results, it is advisable to delay the consumption of such foods until at least four days after the end of the fast, and then to add them gradually to the diet. Wholewheat biscuits, eggs, butter, etc., are the best types of starch, protein, and fat to add at first. Honey, of course, is the sugar one should have. For a week or two after the fast it is advisable to limit the consumption of the acid-forming factors in diet.

While the fast will produce a general cleansing of the system and a consequent reduction of the inflammation, local measures are also advised. A lukewarm, saline gargle is beneficial, and a local pack to the throat and chest is also indicated. The wet sheeting of the latter should be adequately covered by a warm, thick, outer cover, such as a scarf. The reason for applying the pack to the chest as well as to the throat is that it avoids the

congestion involved in concentrating a greater blood supply in the throat, and disperses the poisons more widely for eliminative purposes. Steaming the tonsils, with the head over a bowl of hot water or by the aid of a kettle, is also useful. Bathe the steamed area with cold water after treatment, so as to stimulate the local circulation.

In many cases of tonsillitis it is advisable to enlist the aid of an expert in naturopathy and osteopathy. He or she can not only advise the best treatment for each individual case, but is also in a position to perform manipulation. Manipulative treatment will quickly reduce the enlarged glands and reinforce the other measures adopted. The correction of faulty blood and nerve supply, and the stimulation of the drainage of morbid materials, will accelerate the cure.

Bad habits of living must be corrected. It is not sufficient only to alter the diet. The skin should be made to function fully. Warm Epsom-salts baths, followed by a cool wash down, are advised in the cure of tonsillitis. The wet friction rub should be applied every day, even after a cure has been effected. A coarse towel dipped into cold water and vigorously applied to the skin is probably the most convenient method of having a wet skin rub. The lungs, too, should be used to full capacity. Deep-breathing and ether exercises should be performed in the nude to obtain the maximum benefit. It is neither necessary nor desirable to shiver; providing one is energetic in performing the exercises, there is no need to lose body-warmth.

Do not regard tonsillectomy as a light operation. The dangers of the removal of the tonsils are by no means slight. Not only is a natural organ removed from the body, thus causing more deep-seated trouble, but ear diseases, catarrh, and asthma are frequent complications which arise with tonsillectomy. Treat enlarged tonsils on natural lines, and there is no need for their removal and all the disastrous consequences of such an operation. —*Health For All*.

FATIGUE

JOHN L. NORRIS

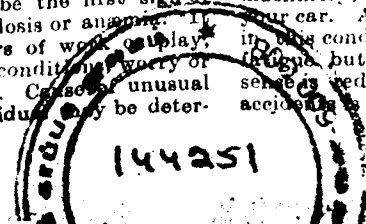
FATIGUE is the condition which exists when our ability to think and work accurately is impaired. When tired we work hard to achieve results that are easily obtained when we are rested. We make mistakes, we think less clearly and arrive at wrong conclusions. We say the wrong thing, or the right thing in the wrong way, and create misunderstandings with friends and associates. We miss the red light at the crossing or fail to see the child running to pick up his ball in the street and some one is hurt.

Unusual fatigue may be the first sign of disease, such as tuberculosis or anaemia. It may be due to long hours of work or play, inadequate rest, climatic conditions, worry or friction at home or work. Causes of unusual fatigue in any one individual may be deter-

mined only after a careful study by a physician. If you are unusually tired and find jobs difficult that were easy, see your doctor.

Fatigue causes accidents at home, work, and on the highway. In the United States more than four thousand deaths, eighteen thousand permanent disabilities, and four hundred thousand temporary disabilities are caused annually by accidents due to fatigue. Accuracy of vision, judgment of distance, and co-ordination and speed, are all diminished by fatigue. If tired, stay away from moving machinery, and especially from the wheel of your car. Alcohol beverages consumed when in this condition may reduce the feeling of fatigue, but at the same time our critical senses are reduced so that our ability to avoid accidents is still further damaged.

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Susceptibility to disease increases with fatigue. We are more likely to contract colds, pneumonia, tuberculosis or other infections if we are tired. An important factor in the cure of disease is one's vitality. If we reduce this by overworking, overplaying, by worrying, or quarrelling with our neighbours at home and at work, we open the door to disease.

Fatigue is a vicious cycle. When tired we slump in our chair, our breathing is shallow, our abdominal organs crowded, our circulation sluggish, and the accumulated toxic products of the day's living are not eliminated as they should be if we went for a walk or played table tennis.

Here is how we can control fatigue and its hazards. Get an adequate amount of sleep. Some people require more sleep than others. Most of us need eight hours of sleep a night. If ill, or under a special physical or nervous strain, we need more than our average amount of sleep. Alcoholic beverages, as we have already said, are not a substitute for rest. They may rather increase the amount of sleep required.

We must have proper amounts of foods at the right times. There is much to be discovered about nutrition, for individuals differ so much in their ability to adjust to changing circumstances. Some people are limited by allergies or disease in the variety or quantity of food that they can eat, but there are certain rules which most people can follow with profit. For best health we should have five to seven eggs a week, one serving of meat, one pint of milk, two vegetables besides or other than potato (if possible, one of these "green"), citrus fruit or juice or tomato juice, butter or its equivalent, cereal or bread, each day. Eat enough to maintain your proper weight. To eat less than that invites fatigue. Eat no more than you need to maintain that weight—we all know the sluggishness that comes after holiday dinners.

Don't celebrate every day. Mr. Five-by-Five is a sick man. To go without a meal invites disaster. Often we hear, "I just can't eat any breakfast but I'm famished by 10 o'clock." Usually people who go without breakfast are so famished by noon that they have tremors, their hands shake, they are likely to be a little short-tempered and less sure footed. They are definitely nervous to live with. Remember how uncommunicative and irritable we are before that morning cup of coffee? Don't skip any meal.

We should have recreation to break the tension of the day. Sedentary workers should plan to be physically active at frequent intervals, the year around. For office workers to take up stamp collecting as their only hobby—or recreation—isn't good management. Occasionally some of us develop a recreational programme that is as much our master as the day's work. To be recreational an activity should be the sort that can be dropped at any time, without a feeling of compulsion. This, of course, depends not so

much on the activity as on our attitude toward it.

Vacations, when we can get a complete change of scenery, are of real benefit, provided we don't try to crowd so much into them that here, too, the schedule is our master.

We should know, understand and like our jobs. Much of the work in modern industry is repetitive. Repetitive work is monotonous unless we know its importance in relation to the raw material and the finished product. A "cog in a machine" is an expression that implies insignificance. Granted that it may look like the other cogs on the particular gear—but if each cog isn't functioning properly the machine breaks down. We must know the job to do it well. We must do our jobs well to keep our self-respect. We must like our jobs to derive the most fun and satisfaction out of life. Without fun and satisfaction there is always fatigue and the tendency to have accidents.

We should know, understand and like our neighbours, at home and at work. The Golden Rule applied daily by all of us would prevent much friction by day and worry by night. It is an unconscious but universal human tendency to remove the lid from our accumulated tensions and frustrations. If faced with a seemingly impossible situation at home, if we have any authority at work our neighbours at work are likely to catch it. If our boss or neighbours at work are unreasonable, overbearing or unfair our families pay the penalty. Playing together—away from work—is a real help in this connection, for we frequently find that "the boss" when free of the job's responsibility is a human being after all.

Brief rest periods from concentrated attention at work or play reduce fatigue and accidents and increase the efficiency and quality of accomplishment. A little food eaten during these resting times is also beneficial.

Eliminate worry by providing for the storms of life through insurance, and by living within a budget that includes a savings programme. It isn't possible to avoid all worry but we can avoid much of it in this way. Of course, there are days when things are an effort. When one arises tired and remains in this condition throughout the day despite the fact that the work is slight. There are other days too when everything "clicks." When the output of physical or mental work is large, when the effort expended is

much effort in accomplishing it. These are extreme conditions under which many people live, swinging from one extreme to the other. No matter what one's pattern of life may be fatigue is a condition we all experience. Yet, the reason we are tired at any one time may be far from simple. If the condition persists too often without definite cause, see your doctor for a thorough examination. Tell him your entire story including things you may be reluctant to mention. For the manifestation of fatigue may only be nature's warning of a serious, impending illness or disease.—Hygeia.

Not a Laughing Matter

RESPONSIBILITY for the drink evil must rest in part on the American people as a whole. While a minority are outspoken against it, too many are indifferent or complacent. Some who are abstainers or practically so seem to think that the desire for alcohol is so firmly embedded in human nature that little can be done about it. Investigation has shown that many drinkers in the beginning have no overwhelming impulse to indulge in alcoholic beverages. They are what are called "social" imbibers. They have the idea that beer, wine, and whisky cement good fellowship, add to the cheerfulness of living, and banish difficulties which every one must encounter. After all "there is no harm," runs the argument, so long as moderation is observed. "Of course excess brings frightful consequences, but only a few drinkers become actual alcoholics."

Perhaps the very name of the Women's Christian Temperance Union aided in spreading such an impression. The word *temperance* might suggest limited indulgence. There is a difference between one glass of whisky and a dozen, but this does not carry the implication that there is no harm in a single drink. Abstainers never become drunkards. No one can tell in what individuals the first dram will become the precursor of thousands. According to Dr. Howard W. Haggard, who has made a special study of the subject, so-called recovery from alcoholism merely means that the victim of this disease has ceased to drink. It rarely happens that he has achieved mastery over the compulsion to tinkle. One drink and the compulsion may again dominate.

There no longer seems to be any stigma attached to the free use of alcohol which stops at actual drunkenness. Many writers of biographical material seem, in fact, to take pride

in recounting with great detail just how often they drank large quantities of wine or whisky. This is especially noteworthy in the scores of volumes written in recent years by war correspondents. They gave almost as much prominence to the fact that a bottle of Scotch whisky sold for forty dollars in Burma as to the results of an important battle. There is no sense of shame over admitting a drunken bout; rather, there is pride.

One reason why there is this complacent attitude on the part of the public is the idea that drunkenness is somehow amusing. In any collection of humorous anecdotes, there are usually a considerable number which deal with the antics and sayings of persons under the influence of liquor. The late Irvin S. Cobb, whose humorous stories have delighted millions, wrote several books of such narrations in which there are innumerable accounts of what a drunken man said or did. As a matter of fact, a man (or even worse, a woman) who has taken enough alcohol to benumb his mental faculties is not in the least a funny object. He is simply disgusting. The bleary eyes, the staggering walk and the fumbling motions should awaken only repulsion. The conversation of such a person is almost certain to be rapid, silly, or offensive, certainly not amusing.

Dr. Haggard states that reliable statistics indicate there are in the United States fifty-five million users of alcoholic beverages. Two millions of them have acquired such an appetite for alcohol that they are in danger of becoming alcoholics. Another half million have already become slaves to drink to such an extent that they have impaired their mental and physical health. The social and economic consequences are far-reaching and disastrous. Surely this is no subject to joke about.—Good Health.

Schoolroom Lighting

TO show how lighting conditions can be improved in schoolrooms, a fifth grade classroom was renovated and the lighting raised from a gloomy level of 2 footcandles to 40 footcandles.

Every factor which affects seeing was taken into consideration. The nine open fixtures containing one 100-watt and eight 50-watt incandescent bulbs were replaced with standard commercial fluorescent fixtures each containing four 40-watt fluorescent tubes. All dark wood trim were removed and replaced with white glass chalkboards, on which the chalk is used, and tackboards were covered with a light color cotton crash cloth. The dark walls and ceiling were repainted in colors which reflect the maximum amount of light back into the room, and an asphalt tile floor of light gray was installed. Dark desks were replaced with light colored furniture.

Instead of using ordinary window shades to control daylight and help provide constant

lighting levels, vertical steel louvers which eliminate excessive sky brightness were designed and installed. These louvers permit children to see the sky by turning to the side and thereby prevent a shut-in feeling; allow as much daylight as practicable to reach the dark side of the room; and require no adjustment than pulling a light trans-lucent roller indicator attached to a student monitor's desk assists in controlling the fluorescent lighting system. Normally, the needle is out of sight behind the middle portion of the indicator face, but when the daylight falls off enough so that total illumination on the monitor's desk goes below 40 footcandles, the needle appears in the left hand window. At that time the monitor turns on a switch, increasing the illumination.

This job of schoolroom modernization, undertaken by Sylva Electric Products, Inc., and considered one of the most comprehensive thus far, illustrates the trend of future classroom design.—Hygeia.

Topics from Medical and Health Periodicals

Eczema and Allergy.—Eczema may be due to many causes. These may be external and internal. Quite often, they are associated with allergic manifestations. In most cases, prolonged investigation of possible causes must be carried out before relief of this condition can be obtained. It is not a condition which can be treated satisfactorily with home remedies. Thorough investigation by a physician is always indicated.—*Hygeia*.

Foot facts.—More than one quarter of all the bones in the human body are located in the feet. Each foot has twenty-six bones. The bones provide one hundred and thirty-seven joints and articulations. There are nineteen muscles in the foot and one hundred and seven ligaments, which are strong tough fibres extending between the bones. The tendon Achilles, which is attached to the heel bone, is the strongest and thickest tendon of the human body. Your foot is a complicated mechanism. Take care of it by wearing properly fitted shoes. Without foot health there can be no body health, says the National Shoe Manufacturers Association.—*Hygeia*.

Fame and longevity.—According to Dr. Mapheus Smith, sociologist of the Selective Service system and former professor at the University of Kansas, many men pay for achieving eminence by shortening their lives. As proof of his contention, he compared the ages at which men made their first entry into "Who's Who in America" with the ages at which they died. He found that they died younger than the average. An exception is furnished by the justices of the United States Supreme Court, who on the whole live longer than other men who reach high places. This is quite understandable since they are appointed for life or until retirement and are outside the usual struggle. Dr. Smith notes that many men who have won fame died at the age of fifty years. They have the advantages of wealth, education, medical attention, and servants; but these are outweighed by strain, lack of exercise, rich food, overwork and erratic hours.

Eat less and feel better.—Good things often seem to go together hand in hand. The recommendations made by President Truman's famine emergency committee may not only make more food available for starving Europeans, but will benefit our national health. Less grain is being fed to livestock, and consequently there will be a reduction in meat production. Many Americans eat too much and are overweight. All are asked to consume less bread. Restaurants are urged to serve a single slice of bread or a roll at a meal. The substitution of fruit for pastries will be a distinct advantage from a health standpoint. Potatoes may largely replace bread. More seasonal vegetables should be served. The baking industry is asked to reduce the weight of a loaf of bread ten per

cent and to slice bread thinner. Above all, food waste should be stopped. Many southerners throw away all biscuits not eaten when hot. Stale bread often finds its way into the garbage can, although many uses for it could readily be devised.

Spinach—Friend or Foe.—The battle over spinach continues. Time was when the average mother insisted on her children eating it freely because of its iron content. Then the discovery was made that this vegetable contains a considerable amount of oxalic acid, which combines with calcium and is eliminated from the body. There was great rejoicing among the youngsters when this information led mothers to desist from their spinach crusade. Questionnaires by dietitians showed that this green was the most disliked food served to the soldiers. A research conducted by Remington and Smith, however, revealed that rats which made large use of spinach showed no calcium loss. Kohman (*Science*, Vol. 101, p. 610), reports that spinach does have the deleterious effect described, but that this can be overcome if large amounts of calcium are ingested. Other greens, such as New Zealand spinach, Swiss chard, best tops, lamb's quarters, purslane, and rhubarb leaves may contain up to ten per cent of oxalic acid on a dry weight basis. It is probable that few people eat enough of these greens to have any noticeable effect. But the old idea that spinach is necessary for good nutrition is certainly incorrect.—*Good Health*.

Sleeping pills dangerous.—American people are consuming sleeping pills at a rate of about billion doses annually and doctors are becoming more and more concerned over the obviously increasing number of persons resorting to this dangerous, unwarranted, frequently tragic form of self-medication according to Dr. R. H. Riley, Director of Maryland State Department of Health.

Attributing this new menace to the nation's health to the war, Dr. Riley said, "The emotional strains of war, and now the post-war period, with its shortages, uncertainties and problems of readjustment, all have contributed to nervous tension. For many it has been difficult to relax and enjoy the benefits of sound, refreshing sleep. Consequently, thousands have developed the sleep habit without realizing that they have been taking dangerous drugs."

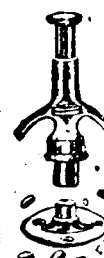
"The gravest danger lies in the fact that as an individual continues to use all inducing drugs, he requires larger and larger doses to make him sleep. Doctors warn that this may lead to serious illness, mental collapse or even death."

"Persons who have developed the sleeping pill habit should discontinue it immediately. They should seek the advice of their doctor if they find it difficult to break the habit or to go to sleep without the aid of sleeping pills."

—*Hygeia*.

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