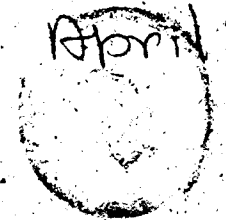


Indian Naturopath.

V. 17. No. 4. April 1946



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The Indian Naturopath

The Official Organ & Gazette of the Indian Naturopathic Association

Editor: Dr. P. Venkatramayya, N. D., D. M.

Annual Subscription Rs. 1-8-0

Vol. XVII

BEZWADA, April, 1946

No. 4

EDITORIAL

A. I. C. C. on food-problem.

We are glad to note the All India Congress Committee report and the details of the resolutions passed regarding the food problem in India. As we have already pointed out in our last issue of the Indian Naturopath the committee has resolved against the production of commercial crop such as tobacco, tamaric, coffee & tea. The excess production of cotton for export is also to be discouraged and the land allotted for it should be utilised for the production of food crop.

The necessity of taking immediate steps in repairing the old tanks and dig new ones is so great that the Government Congress or otherwise should proceed forthwith. The digging of wells is no doubt very useful but when compared with the repairing of old tanks is less costly and more lucrative. The newly raised bonds can be immediately utilised for the production of vegetables as soon as the monsoon begins. Portions nearer to the bed of the tank may be used for the production of short time grain crops such as juar and maize.

A great number of acres of land is set apart for growing tobacco for next year. Government must be on the alert and take account of all the land that is going to be used for the production of tobacco. The land is very rich and if proper steps are taken and if short time food crops such as

juar, maize, millers are sown on that land with the advent of the first monsoon large quantities of grain may be raised. The shortage that we are now afraid of will in that way be overcome. People and Government should Co-operate. Then only shall we have found a way out of this dreaded famine.

14th Return to Nature camp

We are glad to announce that the fourteenth Return to Nature Training Camp shall be held at Prakruthi Ashram Bhimavaram West Godavari District from 15th to 30th April 1946. The Andhra Naturopathic Academy will hold its classes during the session as usual. The medium of instruction will be Telugu. But for those who come in from other provinces an hour discourse will be made by Dr. P. Venkatramayya everyday and advice will be given. The text-books are as usual and same as the previous years with slight alterations. For rules details and rates for admission enquire:—Dr. K.A.N. Sarma N.D. Manager. The Andhra Naturopathic Academy Bezwada.

Madras Government on Famine.

We learn that the Madras Government in the recent budget for 1946-47 have allotted about Rs. 90 millions for the relief of forth-coming famine. The amount is very meagre when compared with the estimated gravity of the danger. Even

this small amount, we fear—a Major portion of it will be devoured by the heavy department that is appointed on that section. Only a very small proportion will be left for the actual relief work. Even that department if contaminated by bribery will be a top heavy load to the already famine stricken people of this land. People appointed for the control of the food-stuffs are not angels. Without an iron-hand of rule to control their behaviour the whole department will be failing in the proper discharge of their duties at this crisis. To be more plain there should be no bribery, no black-marketing, no under hand dealings and no profit-earning at the cost of human life. Every illegal act should be properly dealt with at proper time. Responsible people from every village and town should Co-operate with the Government for the proper collection and distribution of food stuffs. Every grain should be conserved and every hungry stomach should have its

proper share irrespective of richness or poverty. Middle class people should be encouraged with timely loans and the really poor must be helped with charity in the shape of kind and coin. God is gracious. If we can pull on a few months this way we can get our fresh crops and we will have no scarcity and deficiency. The Government takes proper steps to cancel every inch of land that is allotted for tobacco, and grow more food grains. Next year we believe there would be no more deficiency. Commercial crops such as tamaric, ground-nut, coffee & tea if replaced by articles of food by timely cultivation on the land allotted for them, we may have even surplus of food-stuffs. We can no more kill our people for the benefit of the foreign tobacco dealer and the coffee merchant. We are glad to anticipate for the coming of Congress-Government in all the Provinces to take proper steps to combat this demon of famine and save the people from its jaws.

RICE

Milled or hand-pounded? — Polished or unpolished?
Which is more Nutritious?

K. SURYANARAYANA, B.A., Naturopath.

The greatest of inventions of man is that of Fire. He rendered by its aid the substances soft and digestible which in their raw state are hard and indigestible. So, he was able to give up the food of his once reputed progenitor, the ape, and live on cooked food, though to the detriment of his physique and health. What a sad comment is the stunted, deformed, bony, timid and weak creature of the modern age on the glorious invention of man, namely, Fire! Probably, fruit and nut formed his diet while he was in a state of nature. But, after passing through several changes in his diet, the cereal and millet-eating 'civilised' man has filled the nations of the world.

Rice is the staple food of a majority of people in the Assam, Bengal, Orissa and Madras Provinces as the same or some other grains may be, for people in other parts of India and the world. Till one or two decades ago, hand-pounding paddy was in vogue everywhere in rice-eating areas and has gone out of practice with the advent of machinery. The after-noon exercise of the house-wife in the country-side disappeared with it. But the present cry is: "hand-pound your paddy". "You will derive more quantity of rice than by milling, the retention of the inner covering of the grain adding both to the quantity and the nutritive value of the rice derived". There

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is a further explanation: "Single-polished milled-rice is as good as hand-pounded rice".

In this article, we shall examine the truth or otherwise of these two statements. The inner bran is a vital part of the grain. If the rice we eat should give us vitality, this bran, the roughage, the quintessence, the cream gathered on the grain, should be retained at any cost. This is not all. There are still other vital ingredients to be taken into consideration. There is the oil-content in every grain that we eat. This should not at all be sacrificed. Above all, the water-content should be in tact. Adding water while cooking, is of no consequence, as the water formed in the process of growth only adds to the vitality of the grain. The starch is equally necessary.

Rains set in. The soil is ready to receive the seed. The seed is sown. The seedling sprouts. The elements bring up the stalk and the flower. The empty husk is formed. Milk, the essence of the elements, fills in. Earth gives the starch, the sun gives the oil, water, gives the water. Air and ether which permeate the worlds and the space beyond permeate the contents of the seed. A close texture is woven. What a co-ordinated effort on the part of the elements! The elements produce the grain and are also contents of it. They cannot be separated. If they can ever be separated, they cease to have nutritive value. Varied creation varies according to the variation in the proportions of the elements. If the food should be nutritive, the proportions should be only those produced in nature. So, the whole grain without the loss of any of its contents except the outer husk, should be eaten. The husk is only a protective sheath.

Too much of supply of water as in the Deltas reduces the oil-content, while paddy cultivated under tank irrigation, the supply of water being less, contains more oil.

The later is more nutritious than the former for that reason. The degree of vitality derived by the grain varies according to the quality of the soil in which it is produced. Saline and sandy fields impart very little vitality to the grain. The colour of the bran has a lot to do with the effect that the grain produces on the human system. It indicates the quality of the grain. Red-bran variety produces warmth, while the white and the yellow produce the opposite effect. These aspects bear separate treatment. Rice got from fresh crop is sweeter and more nourishing for the simple reason that the bran and the oil and water-content are fresh and have not diminished in bulk either, though it is rather difficult to cook such rice, for it becomes soft in the twinkling of an eye, and therefore, great care is needed in cooking it and though it sits very heavy in the debilitated stomach accustomed to eating denatured foods. This difficulty can be obviated by taking the cooking pot down the hearth when the rice is three-fourths cooked and kept on live charcoal drawn out of the hearth and spread. One's stomach proves equal to the task with a few days' trial though at first it produces a little pain in the stomach.

We cannot command fresh paddy all the year round, and so we have to preserve it. The outer husk provided on the grain by nature is intended to prevent disintegration by the elements. The elements promote life when a thing is living, but disintegrate it when life departs. Disintegration commences soon after the husk is removed. As an indication thereof, we find plenty of worms in the husked rice kept for over a month. We do not know where they come from and whither they go. They are born and thrive there. After some time both the rice and the worms, the cause and the effect, disappear leaving a little dust behind. This is all the work of

the elements. If there should be no loss in the bulk of the grain either through worms or through other disintegrating processes, it is better to keep rice in the husk. This is the surest way of preventing wastage. So, export and stocking in the form of paddy should be encouraged as far as practicable. The shorter the time of retention especially, in the form of rice, the better for health. Paddy preserved in the earth as is done in some parts of the country loses all its vitality for, the earth takes it away, while it helps to build up its vitality when the grain is on the living stalk. This variety of rice when cooked will not be greasy. It is this grease that is the vitality in the grain. So, old rice and earth preserved rice are not much nutritious. People accustomed to these varieties cannot digest easily rice from fresh paddy. The more denatured foods one's stomach is accustomed to, the weaker will one's stomach become. The best way of preserving the vitality of the grain is by keeping it in barns which are sufficiently ventilated. Unless the grain is aerated, it does not keep well. Gusts of wind also are detrimental.

Cooking in earthen pots is best for health. It does not produce any great warmth in the body, for, while the process of cooking is in progress air comes into contact with the food-contents through the pores of the pots and cools them. This is not possible when cooking is done in metallic vessels, which besides produce metallic solutions, quite harmful to the digestive organ of man. Cooking in porcelain is no good either. The human system, just as an earthen pot, has billions of pores on the skin. When these pores are active, cool air enters through them and keeps the internal temperature normal, sweating being the sign of their activity. When they close up and are too active, feverish state prevails, for the

internal temperature is kept up and not relieved. Equally so with cooking. The variety of fire employed leaves its imprint on the food cooked, kerosine, coal, coke, gas, electricity, as food-cooking fuel being extremely harmful since they produce the greatest heat possible. If food should not produce any great warmth in the body, cooking should be done on low and slow fire such as dungcakes, and jungle wood would produce. Cooked food is bound to produce some degree of warmth, for, where will the heat employed to soften foods go? We get the benefit of the effect of the five elements on the grain while it is in production. So, must we get the effect of the artificial heat employed in cooking. Artificial heat does not promote any of the component substances of the grain while on the other hand, it partly or wholly destroys them. Take a little paddy and warm it with artificial fire. It does not germinate. The life content is killed. Not so with the Sun's heat. Paddy is put in the Sun before it is sowed. It rejuvenates the grain. The run for casuarina firewood would stop if only people know what amount of heat food cooked on it, produces. It may look round and nice and break in equal parts. But a cow grazing all the day in a casuarina tope occasionally milks blood in the evening. Casuarina plantations in yards and fields do not allow any food crop to thrive. Such is the intense heat that casuarina is capable of producing. Margosa, tamarind, mango, jack, etc., firewood produces similar effect. Food cooked in cookers also produces very great warmth, for no air comes into contact with the food contents while they are in the process of cooking, though they are cooked on the low heat of water vapour. So, if the food should be healthy for us, it should be cooked on low and slow fire, cooking food contents being sufficiently aerated. Finer metals throw out baser metals alloyed with them only when

subjected to low and slow fire like the one the dung cakes produce. Air enters through every inter-space. There is here a perfect interplay of heat and cold. This miracle cannot be preformed under an intense fire with no air cooling the process. If food should be healthy such should be the heat employed. Milk boiled in earthen pots and on dung cakes tastes well. The age-honoured custom in Hindu households of cooking food for infants only in earthen pots and on dung cakes, is still in vogue in remote villages. Cooking in open yards is good, for the heat of the fire will be tempered with the cool breeze while the cooking contents receive heat and cold in good proportions. Foods cooked in heavy wind do not cook at all. All this means there should be inter-play of heat and cold on the food while cooking, one not much in excess of the other, just as in nature while a thing is in the process of development. Those plants which have a greater heat of the sun whither away while also those which have only water and no sun, putrify and die. The heat applied should not be too much for the air coming in contact, to cool. So, cooking on charcoal is also deleterious as it produces very intense heat.

Similar should be the effect, the process of making rice must produce on the grain. Any process of dehusking is bound to produce heat. There should, therefore, be a sufficient supply of cool air to quench the heat generated before the grain is parched up. An inter-play of heat and cold in such proportions as would not spoil the vitality of the grain is necessary in the process. When paddy is subjected to milling very much intense heat is produced by the operation of the mill. It is dry heat unlike that which is produced in cooking. When rice drops from the mill, it burns one's palm if one should hold it, the reason being, no air comes into contact with the grain in the

process. The grain is quite parched up. It would have opened out like a flower had there been any space in the mill to allow it. The result is the vital contents of the grain are almost burnt out. Parched peas and Bengal gram are the most devitalised stuff. They produce the greatest heat in the body, for they have been devitalised by being fried in the sand. They have lost the oil and the water content. Any parched grain is bound to produce the same effect. Similar should be the effect, the grain passing through the mill would produce. The oil in the grain disappears as also the water content. For that reason it gets glistening appearance. All the pores in it have been closed on account of the mill pressure. There is no more grease when cooked. Fold a little quantity of milled rice in a paper, it does not leave any oil marks on it, though the rice may be single-polished, and no bran is removed from it. If a little hand-pounded rice is folded in a paper, it leaves oil marks on it though it may be polished. For, while it is being hand-pounded air comes into contact with the paddy with every stroke of the pestle. The force applied also is not as much as to parch up the grain of its oil and water content, as when subjected to mill. So, in polished milled-rice both the oil and water content and the bran content, everything that constitutes life is lost. Nor does the bran dropping from the mill retain its vitality. It is tasteless to eat. But bran got from hand-pounding retains all its sweetness. The milk of cattle fed on mill bran does not contain much butter fat, for it is devoid of vitality. Flours prepared in wooden mortars with wooden pestles are sweet. Milled flours, on the other hand, are very insipid, the vitality of the grain having been destroyed under mill heat. Pickles seasoned with milled chilly powder do not preserve, for worms appear very soon, converting the whole thing into

putrid matter. What wonder is there, then, if such rice should produce beri-beri, an end disease and a host of other diseases and a host of other diseases like diabetes. But, par-boiled rice is no remedy, for, it is a devitalised stuff. If one should derive any vitality from cooked food it should not be subjected to cooking more than once. Par-boiled rice is rice cooked twice. On both the occasions water is thrown out thus removing all the vitality from the grain, a major part of it being destroyed by the double dose of artificial heat. Anything preserves while there is life in it and it is then in a state of nature. Artificial heat being only destructive of all life and vitality, stuff once boiled is no longer in a state of nature whether half boiled or three-fourths boiled. Any cooked food keeps only for a few hours; thereafter it putrefies, the process commencing even from the moment of cooking. Drying and aerating may keep the grain intact for all appearances, but the vital contents are gone for ever. For that reason par-boiled rice is more insipid when cooked than even the milled double-polished raw rice, emitting in addition noxious smell and becoming stiff. For a food to be nutritious, it should be sweet and have an inviting smell. Animals sniff their foods before they eat and they eat only those which have smell agreeable to them. That which is not agreeable to the nose is in nature not agreeable to the stomach either and therefore not conducive to health and vitality. Par-boiled rice emitting smell disagreeable to man should only mean that substances of nutritive value to man in the grain have been destroyed. Par-boiled rice is less sustaining than even the polished milled rice and therefore the nutritive value in the former is less. Persons with very weak stomachs among the raw rice eaters change over to par-boiled rice. So, it contributes to weakness and debility and not to vitality and strength.

Persons eating par-boiled rice are subject to diarrhoea and boils when they change over to raw rice, for the vitality in the raw rice throws out the intense heat that par-boiled rice has produced in the body. Whatever rice one may cook, one should not throw out the water (Kanjee).

Par-boiled double polished milled rice is, thus, the most devitalised stuff we have. The next best is the double-polished milled raw rice. But this is devoid of both the oil and the bran besides being parched up under the intense heat of the mill and is therefore not nutritious. The single-polished milled rice may be better than the double-polished, for the former has the bran content in addition, but it is much inferior even to the double-polished hand-pounded rice. For the oil and the water content, the most vital ingredients of the grain are present in the latter. Single polished hand-pounded rice is good while unpolished hand-pounded rice is best for human consumption. For, it retains both the oil, water, and bran-content in the grain though just a little bran may drop off however gentle the process may be. So one can imagine what thoughtless process it is to first subject the paddy to the huller and then hand-pound it and call it hand-pounded rice as is done in some parts of the country, for the oil content is removed in the huller and the bran-content in the process of hand-pounding, while the mill heat has quite parched up the grain. Subjecting the grain to wooden handmills also is not as good as hand-pounding, for heat is generated while milling which is not quenched by air coming into contact with it in the process as freely as in hand-pounding. The need for the interplay of heat and cold may further be elucidated. Hand-pound the paddy drawn directly from the barn or bag, it will all be broken up. Put it in the sun for a day and pound it

immediately. The same is the result. But put the paddy in the sun for a day, cool it overnight, then pound it. Much of the grain is not broken, nor is the bran separated from the grain. Grain preserved beyond the following sowing season does not germinate and therefore loses its nutritive value. Grain preserved in earth or masonry barns does not germinate. The earth takes away the vitality while masonry barns conserve heat which even though given by the sun destroys vitality. Grain preserved in bundles made of hay or in gunnies where there is free interplay of heat and cold, germinates. Grain that does not germinate is dead in nature. So, heat and cold applied in such right proportions have their marvellous effect. No life thrives in the Arctic regions where there is perpetual day or night, but the productivity of the soil is greater in Tropics where the days and nights are equal in duration. It is much more so in regions which have bright sun and rain coming in quick succession as in Ceylon and Federated Malay States.

There may be one objection to the use of rice with all the bran, for in cooking, the grain bulges out and opens up in the middle, and offends against the aesthetic sense of sight. But, this can be remedied by keeping the rice soaked in water for over an hour before cooking, which process softens the outer layer and allows the grain to bulge out without its breaking up in cooking. The process of washing the rice and throwing out the water before cooking is also bad, for the bran content is, thus, washed out. It is enough if the rice is simply winnowed before use. Water may be poured into rice and poured out after whirling the container just for a while without rubbing the grain. This may remove any pollution. Those who eat unpolished hand-pounded rice will find it very sweet to eat and cannot easily change over to milled rice.

Old people originally accustomed to eating hand-pounded rice tell us how they took years to completely reconcile themselves to the insipid milled rice, the miracle having been performed by a heavy increase in condiments and spices in their menu, purgatives coming into free use to relieve from the consequent constipation, the only circumstance in its favour being love of idleness. Often one would eat hand-pounded rice without any vehicle whatever. This added to other dietetic regulations will remove constipation, keep the body fit and energetic without any attention from a doctor. If the food has vitality, as the hand-pounded rice has, the quantity required to satiate hunger is less. If the normal ration of a man is two and a half ollocks milled rice per day, he would only require two ollocks of hand-pounded rice to satiate his hunger. This would keep him more fit and energetic than when he eats milled rice. This aspect is quite within the experience of those who are accustomed to eating hand-pounded rice. With every quantity of paddy milled which we require to feed hundred men, we would be able to feed one hundred and twenty-five men by hand-pounding the same quantity of paddy. Since they receive vital energy, they can very easily stand starvation for longer periods than the men fed on the devitalised milled rice. People eating milled rice complain of hunger at shorter intervals than those fed on hand-pounded variety.

If there be four crores of adults to be fed with rice in the Madras Province after taking away one crore of population in converting children below 12 years into adults and in deducting people partly or wholly living on millets out of the five crores of population of the Province according to the latest Census, and we have only paddy enough to feed three and a half crores by milling the same we will be able to feed all the four crores by hand-

pounding the paddy and spare food roughly for 37 lakhs in a deficit Province, where they are faced with starvation and death. What a national life saving! What an economic gain! The advantages of hand-pounded rice must be obvious now. It adds to the quantity and feeds more mouths with the same quantity besides being more sustaining and conducive to health. What an advantage in times of food shortage! Will it not pay, then, if hand-pounding paddy to the exclusion of milling is enforced at least in rural parts? Rural population being four crores and twenty lakhs, this arrangement will save four-fifths of food wastage. The revival of this cottage industry will have a far-reaching effect on the cattle wealth of the country,

for what nutrition would they not derive from the hand-pounded bran? In addition, it provides labour to the working classes on a country-wide scale. If paddy, instead of rice, be distributed in urban areas under rationing with the strict injunction that it should only be hand-pounded, all wastage will be arrested. Further, it provides occupation for the half starving servant classes, the husk and bran coming in handy to every home for cooking fuel and milch cattle.

Hand-pounding paddy is growing more food at least roughly by one-fifth of the available food without the capital and labour needed for its production, other advantages apart.

Nature Cure Movement-Onward March

By Mahatma M. K. Gandhi.

NATURE CURE TREATMENT

Nature Cure treatment means that treatment which befits man. By "man" is meant not merely man as animal but as a creature possessing, in addition to his body, both mind and soul. For such a being **Ramnam** is the truest nature cure treatment. It is an unfailing remedy. The expression **ramban** or infallible cure is derived from it. Nature too indicates that for man it is the worthy remedy. No matter what the ailment from which a man may be suffering, recitation of **Ramnam** from the heart is the sure cure. God has many names. Each person can choose the name that appeals most to him. Ishwat, Allah, Khuda, God mean the same. But the recitation must not be parrot-like, it must be born of faith of which endeavour will be some evidence. What should the endeavour consist of? Man should seek out and be content to confine the means of cure to the five elements of which the body is composed, i. e., earth, water, **akash**, sun and air. Of course, **Ramnam** must be the invariable accompaniment. If in spite of this, death supervenes, we may not mind. On the contrary, it should be welcomed. Science has not so far discovered any recipe for

making the body immortal. Immortality is an attribute of the soul. That is certainly imperishable but it is man's duty to try to express its purity.

If we accept the above reasoning it will automatically limit the means permissible under nature cure. And man is thereby saved from all the paraphernalia of big hospitals and eminent doctors etc. The large majority of persons in the world can never afford these. Why then should the few desire what the many cannot have?

Poona, 24-2-46

MY CONFESSION AND CURE

It is plain to me as it has become to some of my friends that I am incorrigible. I can learn only by my mistakes. I have just discovered myself making a mistake which I should never have made.

I have known Dr. Dinshaw Mehta for a long time. He has dedicated his life solely to nature cure of his conception. His one ambition is to see a full-fledged nature cure university established in India. A university worth the name must be predominantly for the prevention and cure of the diseases of the

poor villagers of India. No such university exists in the world. The Institutes in the West are designed more for the rich than the poor.

I feel that I know the method of nature cure for the villagers of India. Therefore I should at once have known that nature cure for the villagers could not be attempted in Poona city. But a Trust was made. Very sober Jehangirji Patel permitted himself to be a co-trustee with Dr. Mehta and me and I hastened to Poona to run for the poor, Dr. Mehta's erstwhile clinic which was designed for the rich. I suggested some drastic changes but last Monday the knowledge dawned upon me that I was a fool to think that I could ever hope to make an institute for the poor in a town. I realized that if I cared for the ailing poor I must go to them and not expect them to come to me. This is true of ordinary medicinal treatment. It is much more so of nature cure. How is a villager coming to Poona to understand and carry out my instructions to apply mud poultices, take sun cure, hip and friction sitz baths or certain foods cooked conservatively. He would expect me to give him a powder or a potion swallow and be done with it. Nature cure connotes a way of life which has to be learnt, it is not a drug cure as we understand it. The treatment to be efficacious can, therefore, only take place in or near a man's cottage or house. It demands from its physician sympathy and patience and knowledge of human nature. When he has successfully practised in this manner in a village, or villages, when enough men and women have understood the secret of nature cure, a nucleus for a nature cure university is founded. It should not have required eleven days' special stay in the Institute to discover this simple truth that I did not need a huge building and all its attendant paraphernalia for my purpose. I do not know whether to laugh or weep over my folly. I laughed at it and made haste to undo the blunder. This confession completes the reparation.

I should like the reader to draw the moral that he should never take anything for gospel truth even if it comes from a **Mahatma** unless it appeals to both his head and heart. In the present case my folly is so patent that even if it had continued for some time very few, if any would have succumbed to it. The real

villagers would not have come for relief to this Institute. But if the discovery had come too late it would have blasted my reputation for I would have lost in my own estimation. Nothing hurts a man more than the loss of self-respect. I do not know that now I deserve the confidence of my fellow-men. If I lose it I know that I shall have deserved the loss. To complete the story I must tell the reader that not a pice of the money ear-marked for the poor ailing villagers has been spent on this abortive enterprise. What shape the present Institute will now take and where and how poor men's nature cure will be tried is no part of this confession. The result of the initial mistake must not, however, be an abandonment of the new pursuit that I have taken up in the so-called evening of my life. It must, on the contrary, be a clearer and more vigorous pursuit of the ideal of nature cure for the millions if such a thing is at all practicable. Possible it certainly is.

Poona, 6-3-46.

Nature cure clinic at Uruli.

Before his departure from Uruli Mahatma Gandhi at his prayer meeting this evening exhorted the villagers of Uruli to lead a clean healthy life and turn the village into a model village. He also stressed the importance of spinning and advised the villagers to take to it.

He referred to his activities in the village during his nine days' stay there and hoped that the villagers would follow the instructions he had given them.

Shortly before the prayer meeting Gandhiji opened a small village library named after Kasturba Gandhi.

The public of Uruli have promised Mahatma Gandhi a sum of Rs. 10,000 for opening a Nature Cure Clinic in their village. A sum of Rs. 3,001 which was collected so far was handed to Gandhiji to-day and the balance will be given later.

A complement of three doctors and assistants are now stationed at Uruli under Mahatma Gandhi's instructions to carry on the work of Nature Cure which he had undertaken during his stay there.

RAMNAM, THE INFALLIBLE REMEDY.

Shri Ganesh Sastri Joshi Vaidya tells me after reading my article on Nature Cure in Harijan of 3rd March 1946 that in Ayurveda too there is ample testimony to the efficacy of Ramnam as a cure for all diseases. Nature Cure occupies the place of honour and in it Ramnam is the most important. When Charak, Vagbhat and other giants of medicine in ancient India wrote the popular name for God was not Rama but Vishnu. I myself have been a devotee of Tulsidas from my childhood and have therefore always worshipped God as Rama. But I know that if beginning with Omkar one goes through the entire gamut of God's names, current in all climes, all countries, and all languages the result is the same. He and his law are one to observe. His law is therefore the best form of worship. A man who becomes one with the law does not stand in need of vocal recitation of the name. In other words, an individual with whom contemplation on God has become as Natural as breathing is so filled with God's spirit that knowledge or observance of the law becomes second nature as it were with him. Such an one needs no other treatment.

The question that arises as to why in spite of having this prince of remedies at hand, we know so little about it and why even those who know do not remember Him or remember Him only by lip service, not from the heart. Parrot like repetition of God's name signifies failure to recognise Him as the panacea for all ills.

How can they? This sovereign remedy is not administered by Doctors, Vaidyas, Hakims or any other medicinal practitioners. These have no faith in it. If they were to admit that the spring of the Holy Ganges could be found in every home their very occupation or means of livelihood would go. Therefore they must perforce, rely on their powders, and potions as infallible remedies. Not only do these provide bread for the doctor but the patient too seems to feel immediate relief. If a medical practitioner can get a few persons to say "so and so gave me a powder and I was cured" his business is established.

Nor, it must be borne in mind would it really be of any use for doctors to prescribe

God's name to patients unless they themselves were conscious of its miraculous powers. Ramnam is no copy book maxim. It is something that has to be realised through experience. One who has had personal experience alone can prescribe it, not any other. The Vaidyaraj has copied out for me four verses. Out of these Charak's is the simplest and most apt. It means that if one were to obtain mastery over even one out of the thousand names of Vishnu all ailments would vanish.

Poona-10-3-46. M. K. G.

Why one more Burden?

"Why have I got involved in Nature Cure in the evening of my life?"—this question is being asked me by several people. Had I not enough work on my hands already? Was I not too old to take up new things? Could any one expect me to add to my existing burdens? All these are pertinent questions demanding my careful consideration. But they do not evoke any echo within me. The still small voice within me whispers: "Why bother about what others say? I have given you a colleague like Dr. Dinshah who understands you and whom you understand. You have confidence in your capacity, having followed Nature Cure as a hobby for over half a century. If you hide this talent and do not make use of it you will be as a thief. It will ill become you. Remember the teaching of the first verse of Ishopanishad and surrender all you have to Me. There is nothing that really belongs to you. Only you fancied that something was yours. It is all mine. Give it also to My creatures like the rest. It will not in any way jeopardize your other work provided only that you have cultivated perfect detachment. You have entertained the desire to live up to 125 years. Its fulfilment or otherwise should not be your concern. Yours is only to understand and do your duty and be careful for nothing." These are the thoughts that haunt me. It is my third day in this village. The number of patients who come for help is daily increasing. They feel happy and I feel happy in serving them. I am receiving the co-operation of the local people. I know that if I can enter the hearts of the people here, illness will be banished and this village will become a model of cleanliness and health. But if this does not happen, what is that to me? I have only to do the behest of the Master.

Urli 25-3-46. M. K. G.

WHAT IS NATURE CURE?

And why has it gripped Mahatmaji like this? He explained the difference between the Nature Cure system of his conception and the other systems of cure to a casual visitor who saw him at Birla House. "In the case of the ordinary method of treatment the patient comes to the doctor to take drugs that would cure him. The doctors prescribe the drug. With the relief of abnormal symptoms in the patient his function ends and with that his interest in the patient. The Nature Cure man does not 'sell a cure' to the patient. He teaches him the right way of living in his home which would not only cure him of his particular ailment but also save him from falling ill in future. The ordinary doctor or vaidya is interested mostly in the study of disease. The nature curist is interested more in the study of health. His real interest begins where that of the ordinary doctor ends, the eradication of the patient's ailment under Nature Cure marks only the beginning of a way of life in which there is no room for illness or disease. Nature Cure is thus a way of life, not a course of 'treatment'."

"It is not claimed," he explained to the prayer gathering audience at Rungta House, "that Nature Cure can cure all diseases. No system of medicine can do that or else we should all be immortals. But it enables one to face and bear down with unperturbed equanimity and peace of mind an illness which it cannot cure. If once we decide that what cannot be shared by the millions should be taboo for us, we are driven to nature as the only cure—all for the rich and the poor alike."

THE MOST POTENT WEAPON.

In the armoury of the Nature Curist Ramanam is the most potent weapon. "Let no one wonder at it," he remarked. "A noted Ayurvedic physician told me the other day, 'All my life I have been administering drugs. But since you have prescribed Ramanam as a cure for physical ailments, it has occurred to me that what you say has too the authority of Vagbhatta and Charaka.' The Recitation of Ramanam as a remedy for spiritual ailments is as old as the hills. But the greater includes the less. And my claim is that the recitation of Ramanam is a sovereign remedy for our physical ailments also."

A Nature Cure man won't tell the patient: "Invite me and I shall cure you of your ailment." He will only tell about the all-healing principle that is in every being and how one can cure oneself by evoking it and making it an active force in his life. If India could realize the power of that principle not only would we be free, but it would be a land of healthy individuals too—not the land of epidemics and ill health that we have today."

ITS USE AND LIMITATION

"The potency of Ramanam is however subject to certain conditions and limitations," he proceeded, "Ramanam is not like black magic. If some one suffers from surfeit and wants to be cured of its after effects so that he can again indulge himself at the table, Ramanam is not for him, Ramanam can be used only for a good, never for an evil end, or else thieves and robbers would be the greatest devotees. Ramanam is for the pure in heart and for those who want to attain purity and remain pure. It can never be a means for self-indulgence. The remedy for surfeit is fasting, not prayer. Prayer can come in only when fasting has done its work. It can make fasting easy and bearable. Similarly the taking of Ramanam will be a meaningless farce when at the same time you are drugging your system with medicines. A doctor who uses his talent to pander to the vices of his patient degrades himself and his patient. What worse degradation can there be for man than that instead of regarding his body as an instrument of worshipping his Maker, he should make it the object of adoration and waste money like water to keep it going anyhow. Ramanam, on the other hand, purifies while it cures, and therefore it elevates. Therein lies its use as well as its limitation."

THE DISTURBANCES.

The embers of the recent disturbances were still hot under the feet when Gandhiji visited Bombay. His first utterance before the evening prayer gathering at Rungta House therefore naturally referred to those events. It was a scathing denunciation of the policy of taking refuge in the "ambiguous middle" when the occasion required boldly speaking out and effective action.

The long deferred Shivaji Park meeting which he was to have addressed on the 9th

of August 1942, but could not owing to his arrest at the dawn of the 8th, was a much bigger affair. The audience numbered over two lakhs. But such was the excellence of the arrangements and the discipline of the crowd that Gandhiji's speech was heard amid pin-drop silence. Its theme was 'Satyagraha as the art of living and dying' and its relation to prayer.

AT URULI KANCHAN.

Gandhiji did not stay for many days in the Nature Cure Clinic at Poona on his return from Bombay. Uruli Kanchan into which Gandhiji moved on the afternoon of the 22nd inst. is a small station on the Sholapur-Poona line with a population of about 3,000. It has a railway telegraph office and a post office but no telephone. The mail and the express trains do not stop here. The climate is good, the air bracing. There is a plentiful supply of filtered water from the military camp water-works nearby. The locality grows fruits like the grape, orange and papaya in profusion.

A few days back a deputation of nearly all the leading men of the place had waited on Gandhiji at the Nature Cure Clinic, Poona, to request him to establish his proposed Nature Cure Centre for the poor there. They promised to provide enough land for the purpose and their full co-operation besides donating Rs. 10,000/- to the Nature Cure Trust for the experiment at Uruli. Shri Datar, a retired railway contractor, vacated his bungalow and offered it for Gandhiji's temporary residence.

Congregational prayer was held on the very first day at the outskirts of the village, the mass singing of **Ramadhun** being introduced here as in other places. Taking as his text the hymn that had been sung Gandhiji presented **Ramanam** to the village folk assembled there as a natural therapeutic No. 1 for the cure of bodily ailments: "In the song that we have just sung the devotee says:

'O Hari You are the reliever of the people's distress.' The promise here is universal. It is not qualified or restricted to any particular kind of ailment." He told them of the conditions of success. The efficacy of **Ramanam** could depend on whether it was or was not

backed by a living faith. "If you are subject to anger, eat and sleep for indulgence, not solely for sustenance, you do not know the meaning of **Ramanam**. Your recitation of it is mere lip service. **Ramanam** to be efficacious must absorb your entire being during its recitation and express itself in your whole life."

FIRST PATIENTS

Patients began to come in from the next morning. There were about thirty of them, Gandhiji examined five or six of them and prescribed to them all more or less the same treatment with slight variations, according to the nature of each case, i. e. recitation of **Ramanam**, sun bath, friction and hip baths, a simple eliminative diet of milk, buttermilk, fruit and fruit juices with plenty of clean fresh water to drink. "It has truly been observed," he explained at the evening prayer gathering, "that all mental and physical ailments are due to one common cause. It is therefore but natural that there should be a common remedy for them too. There is a unity of cure as there is in disease. The **Shastras** say so. Therefore, I prescribed **Ramanam** and almost the same treatment to all the patients who came to me this morning. But we have a knack of explaining away the **Shastras** in life when they do not suit our convenience. We have deluded ourselves into the belief that the **Shastras** are meant only for the benefit of the soul in the life to come, that the end of **Dharma** is to acquire merit after death. I do not share that view. If **Dharma** has no practical use in this life, it has none for me in the next.

"There is hardly anyone in this world who is completely free from ailment whether bodily or mental. For some of these there is no earthly cure. For instance, **Ramanam** cannot perform the miracle of restoring to you a lost limb. But it can perform the still greater miracle of helping you to enjoy an ineffable peace in spite of the loss while you live and rob death of its sting and the grave its victory at the journey's end. Since death must come soon or late to everyone, why should one worry over the time.

Uruli 23-3-46—Harijan.