

HEALTH

ESTD. 1923

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PUBLIC HEALTH

BENIGHTED though it was once called, Madras had never been one in the strict sense of the term. It has always stood in the vanguard in many a matter, and in some it has taken the lead. Madras is the first province in the whole of India which placed on the statute book a comprehensive Act relating to Public Health. Before the pioneer of the measure could implement the terms of the Act and bring about an improvement in the situation, he had to quit, along with his other colleagues from the Government, on grounds which are well-known to the public and which it is unnecessary for us to dilate here. That Government was followed by an Adviser Regime with H. E. the Governor at the head, under Section 93 of the Government of India Act. It held full sway over the Province for a period exceeding a quinquennium. Except that it sought the aid of some of the penal provisions of the Act in respect of some matters to suit its own ends, it ignored the existence of the Act in other matters, with the result that the position has deteriorated considerably during this period. To add to this, the exigencies of the war created an abnormal situation, resulting in the lack of supply of foodstuffs which are absolutely necessary to maintain the health of the people at the proper level. Rationing of the essential foodstuffs had to be resorted to, and gradually the ration had to be cut down to a very low level. The Under Secretary

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of State might boast in the House of Commons that by the adoption of the strictest measures of rationing, South India has pulled through a critical period. But at what cost? The health of the people has fallen down considerably, and to add to this many an action of the Government has worried the people beyond measure, that the position has considerably worsened. While countries like England which have to depend entirely on imports to meet their food requirements, had so ably managed things that the Minister for Health can boast in Parliament that the health of the people had considerably improved during war time, we, in South India, who have many granaries, have been reduced to this pitiable and unenviable position. We are now told that the Government have under contemplation a proposal to increase the basic quota of the staple food of the people of the Province, i.e., rice, though not to the original level, at least to the level in which it was kept for some time last year. The news is most welcome, but unless serious steps are taken to recover the lost ground, the increase in the basic ration alone will not solve the problem. The minimum calories required for a person to keep his body fit has been fixed by nutrition experts, and even if the basic ration is increased to the medium level, it will be far, far below that standard. To add to this, the wastage caused by the supply of foodstuffs of bad quality, is

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something alarming and must be rectified, if any real improvement is to be effected. More than these, public health measures should be vigorously enforced and sound education on matters relating to public health should be imparted to men, women and children

alike. We have, on a previous occasion, mentioned the lines on which this work should be carried on, if it is to produce results. The responsibility is entirely that of the Government's, and we can only hope that it will be realised and acted upon.

FOOD AND BODY

Dr. V. Lakshmi Narayana Rao.

Ast. Health Officer, French Rocks.

Purpose of food.—All living beings require air, water and food for their survival. But air and water are natural things. Whereas food is to be earned. Then why animals require food? Food is the fuel for the body. It has in it the vital things which are required by the body. Food is required for the upkeep of the body and for the maintenance of the body temperature.

Then the question of the quantity of food required per head is another question. This depends upon the climate, age, sex and the work turned out by the person. People living in colder climate require more food than the people in hot climate. Men require more food than women, but pregnant woman require more food as she has to nourish her baby and so on.

The food produces heat and this heat is measured in terms of calories.

Composition of food.—Body requires the following six proximate principles, for being healthy, in requisite quantities. They are: (1) Water; (2) proteins; (3) fat; (4) carbohydrates; (5) mineral salts; and (6) vitamins. Our food is to be cooked properly, taking care that there is no loss of the above proximate principles. The methods in which the proximate principles are lost are: (1) over-cooking; (2) polishing; (3) rejecting the skin of certain fruits which are vital to the body; (4) using baking soda; (5) throwing away the kanji, and; (6) rat and other insects. If we are careful in cooking our food so that not much loss is incurred the body gains much.

Water.—Nothing much is to be said about water as every body knows well that it is very important for man or any animal. The instinct for water is thirst. But even without thirst we must take sufficient quantity of pure water. Impure water is always dangerous as it produces many a disease such as Cholera, Typhoid, Dysentery, etc.

Proteins.—Major portions of the body is made up of proteins. This is found both in animal and vegetable foods. Therefore one of the most important constituents of food is proteins. This not only helps body growth but produces strength in the body.

During the growth period of the body, requires more food to cope with growth, repair and strength. After the growth period body requires food for only two purposes *viz.*, repairs and strength. That is the reason why children require more food than adults in the form of proteins.

All food grains contain proteins. In them wheat has the maximum and rice the minimum. Horse gram, Bengal gram, peas all contain proteins in sufficient quantities. Vegetables and fruits have little protein.

Milk, and mutton contain more of proteins. The animal proteins are better than vegetable proteins because they are easily digestible. This is the reason why milk is an important food for children as it contains proteins which are easily digested and absorbed by the body.

Fat.—This produces heat in the body. Oils and butter contain more fat. Indians, as a whole, consume less fat.

Carbohydrates.—This gives strength to the body. This is found almost in all food stuffs. Sugar and honey contain more of carbohydrates. Potatoes, sweet potatoes and flour contain more of carbohydrates.

Salts.—The salt content of food is little but every part of the body requires salts. The important salts are calcium salts, iron salts, and phosphorus salts.

Calcium salts.—Bones are formed of calcium salts. Teeth require calcium salts for development. If there is a deficiency of calcium salts the heart's action is impaired, there will be rigidity of muscles and minor injuries which may end fatally. Growing children, pregnant and lying-in-women require more of calcium salts. Among ordinary food milk contains a larger quantity of calcium. The others are greens. Rice is the staple food for nearly 50% of the people in India. Rice contains lesser quantity of calcium when compared to ragi, so people whose staple food is rice must use along with it some amount of ragi also.

Iron salts.—Blood contains "Haemoglobin" which gives the red colour to the blood. This is an important constituent of blood. This

carries O₂ from the lungs to all parts of the body and brings back CO₂ to the lungs for excretion. This haemoglobin contains iron. If the food we take is deficient in iron there will be no formation of haemoglobin. There will be formation of blood also in the body always side by side. There will be loss of blood also due to various causes as malaria, hook worm disease etc. So if sufficient quantity of iron is not taken man will be a victim for anaemia. Women suffer most from anaemia than men. So the iron content of their food should be sufficiently higher.

To overcome the difficulty of anaemia our diet has to be properly planned. Rice contains lesser quantity of iron. If we take always with rice, vegetables, greens, fruits which contain a higher percentage of iron, we will be giving our body the requisite quantity of iron. Along with this we may take mutton, liver, eggs and fish which are rich in iron.

Vitamins.—These are most important things the body needs along with proteins, fats, etc. Much is written about vitamins, but it is not possible to discuss every aspect of them in this small article.

The daily requirement of vitamins for the body is very little. But even this is not taken at times which leads to ill health which may end fatally. There are five vitamins, *viz.* Vit. A, B, C, D and E.

Vitamin A.—This keeps the body healthy and is utilised by the eyes and skin. Deficiency of this causes "Keratomalacia" which ends in blindness and "Night blindness". The skin becomes dry.

Vitamin A is found in plenty in milk, curds, butter, ghee, liver and liver oils. Among the vegetables it is found in greens. Spinach contains more of vit. A. They should be fresh and clean. Among fruits, mango, pappaya, tomatoes, jack-fruit, oranges contain this vitamin.

Vitamin B.—This is a group of vitamins. There are many varieties in it as Vitamin B₁, B₂ etc. Deficiency of vitamin B₁ causes "Beri beri" characterised by loss of strength in the lower extremities, partial paralysis and generalised swellings of the body. The disease is common in countries where staple food of the people is rice.

Deficiency of vitamin B₂ causes "Pellagra". But this is uncommon in Indians. But still the ulcers in the mouth and tongue are at times caused by deficiency of vitamin B₂.

Vitamin B₁ is found in plenty in unpolished rice, eggs, yeast, and parboiled rice.

Vitamin B₂ is found in plenty in milk, eggs and fish. Greens also contain B₂ to a certain extent.

Vitamin C.—Deficiency of this causes "Scurvy" characterised by swellings of the gums, pain in joints. Vitamin C is found in plenty in fresh fruits, fresh greens and fresh mutton. Nellikai contains much of vitamin C. If the fruits are dried the vitamin C contents in them are destroyed. Boiling also destroys vitamin C. If boiled in uncovered vessels

vitamin C is completely destroyed. Children taking boiled milk or tinned milk get a small quantity of vitamin C. So, for such children it is better to give a few ounces of fruit juice every day in addition to the milk.

Cereals when dried lose their vitamin C content. So to get the vitamin C content they are to be germinated and used.

Vitamin D.—This strengthens the bones of the body. Deficiency of this causes "Rickets" in children and "Osteomalacia" in adults. This disease causes bending of bones.

Ordinary food contains a larger quantity of vitamin D. Fresh milk, butter, ghee, white of egg and Cod liver oil contain plenty of vitamin D. Also the body can manufacture its own vitamin D with the help of sun rays. People living in tropics need not be troubled for vitamin D as the effect of sun's rays gives them enough vitamin D. Especially females are at times confined indoors thereby giving no room for the benefits for sun's rays. These effects of lack of vitamin D commences in ladies from their first confinement as the child for its use takes away vitamin D from the mother. Therefore the weaning period should be as short as possible. So the main treatment for lack of vitamin D is to take Cod liver oil, Shark liver oil, milk and milk products. This can also be remedied by exposing a part of the body for the sun's rays for some time.

Vitamin E.—This is found in wheat germ, peas, liver, milk and vegetable ghee. This can digest fat. Lack of vitamin E causes sterility in case of men and in the case of women there is impaired growth.

So the matters which need attention are:—

(1) Enough proteins are to be consumed daily to assist the growth and repair of body.

(2) Enough carbohydrates and fats are to be consumed to give warmth to the body.

(3) To check the skin and eye diseases enough vitamin A has to be taken.

(4) To check "Beri beri" enough vitamin B₁ is to be taken.

(5) To check some of the eye diseases, ulcers of mouth and lips enough vitamin B₂ is to be consumed.

(6) To check "Scurvy" enough vitamin C is to be taken.

(7) To check "Rickets" enough vitamin D is to be taken.

(8) To check sterility and assist the proper growth of the child in the womb enough vitamin E has to be taken.

(9) Enough of calcium salts to be consumed to strengthen the bones.

(10) Enough of iron salts to be taken to assist the formation of new blood.

(11) Hand-pounded rice must be used as it is superior to polished rice.

(12) Milk, millets, fruits, vegetables and grains must be used along with rice and wheat as they do not contain all the proximate principles the body requires.

(13) Too much of sugar should not be used as it spoils the teeth.

(14) Milk to be taken in large quantities as it contains all the proximate principles.

(15) Pure water is to be taken in sufficient quantities.

Prevention of Heat-Stroke

TEN PRECAUTIONS

HEAT-stroke occurs as a result of prolonged exposure to the intense heat of the sun or to any heating atmosphere as that of an engine room having a very high temperature. The term heat-stroke is used to designate cases of disease directly caused by excessive heat. Heat-fever, heat-shock, and heat-cramp are three different forms of heat-stroke. ("Tropical Medicine" by Rogers and Megaw 2nd Ed. 1935) and all of them are destructive to human life. Detailed description of them will be out of place here in this short note. However, the incidence of this fatal condition can be greatly reduced if due attention is paid to some simple preventive measures which have been simply pointed out below:—

- (1) Moderation in food and alcohol should be a rule on hot days.
- (2) Avoidance of muscular exertion in very hot weather is essential.
- (3) Use of loose and light clothing. Warm and tight clothing interfere with heat loss.
- (4) Exposure to intense heat should be avoided as far as practicable.
- (5) Intake of plenty of water is an useful precaution.
- (6) Avoidance of overcrowding and bad ventilation.
- (7) Use of fans or 'punkha'.
- (8) Protection of the head and neck from

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the sun's rays by an umbrella or a large helmet or a 'topee'. The rays enter also laterally through the eyes, these can be efficiently prevented by dark glasses having side-pieces (*B. M. Journal*, Nov. 9, 1940, p. 656).

(9) A large wet towel spread over the body (the abdomen and the chest must be avoided) and limbs will give great relief especially if a fan plays on the towel during trying hot weather. (Rogers and Megaw).

(10) Use of common salt and citreous fruits. —Rogers and Megaw have recommended saline drink containing ten grains of common salt to the pint as a preventive measure against heat-cramp which may be caused by depletion of the blood chlorides due to excessive sweating in hot weather. Some research workers believe that vitamin C (Ascorbic acid) is also lost to some extent through sweat. (*Health* April, '45, p. 31). Hence the juice of lemons, oranges, tomatoes etc., which are rich in vitamin C may be advantageously added to this saline drink.

References:

1. Rogers and Megaw—Tropical Medicine.
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3. *Health*, April, 1945.

HEALTH and FITNESS

Morris Fishbein.

THE great victories which were won by American troops all over the world were not won by men who were physical weaklings. In the great war the American soldier proved himself to be a competent fighter. He represented a selection of the best physical specimens our nation developed.

The available facts and figures show that the American people are today the healthiest people in the world. Our sickness and death rates are among the very lowest of all the great nations. Nevertheless, there are still evidences of physical deficiencies in some of our population which are capable of prevention and in some instances of correction. The men who were rejected by Selective Service because they could not meet the highest physical or mental standards established for military service by any army could in a good many instances have been made physically fit had the abilities that medicine has to offer been made available to them from the time of their conception until they came before the Selective Service board. Many registrants were pampered and soft and in need of physical conditioning. It is folly for a nation as wealthy and efficient as ours to fail in its utilization of what medical science has to offer for developing a nation that is physically fit.

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Not every person who is mentally or physically unfit can be benefited. There are defects that are not preventable. Perhaps 1,500,000 of the 4,000,000 who were rejected could not have been freed of their disabilities nor been greatly benefited by the application of medical facilities. Nevertheless, 2,500,000 could have been made more effective in the occupations which a good many of them filled satisfactorily in civilian life.

Fitness is a state of mind and body in which the tissues have power and efficiency. A program of physical fitness includes the teaching of good personal hygiene. This in turn means enough sleep, the right kind of ventilation proper nutrition, controlled exercise and rest periods, mental hygiene and recreation. The person who is fit has a great deal of what the sports writers call "bounce." His mind and body are resilient and elastic. He recovers promptly from minor bruises to his tissues or his personality.

Chief among the causes of rejection of the men classified as 4F's were such disqualifying defects as missing limbs, deformities present at birth and obvious disabilities resulting from illness or injury. These accounted for 10.5 per cent of rejections, which nevertheless did not wholly disqualify these men for proper places

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in industry. Some of them played professional football or baseball through the four and one-half years of war.

There were 16.6 per cent rejections for mental disease and 13.8 per cent rejections for mental deficiency. Great numbers of men called psychoneurotic for military purposes have returned to civilian life and are today adequately filling many positions in our civilian economy.

Correctable or capable of prevention are such conditions as syphilis, which disqualified almost 7 per cent; conditions affecting the heart, 6.5 per cent; ruptures, 5.7 per cent, and neurologic defects, 5.1 per cent. Defective vision, hearing and teeth accounted for 5 per cent, 3.9 per cent and 0.9 per cent of the rejections respectively. Underweight and overweight were together responsible for 1.5 per cent of rejections.

These figures are not absolutes. They should not be held as indicating a degenerate and decrepit nation. They represent instead merely a guide to the perplexed as to the areas in which application of what medicine has to

offer can still further improve the fitness of the nation. Improvement of physical fitness must begin even before birth with proper prenatal care, extend through infancy with an immunization program that might prevent infectious diseases of childhood and their crippling complications, and go on through the nursery and kindergarten where sound habits of nutrition begin to be established, carry through grade school, high school and college in which sound instruction in health habits and physical activities, including competitive sports, would be integrated in the curriculum. Finally, when the boy or girl has left school, there must be continuing participation in healthful living, sports and recreational pastimes to maintain the physical fitness that the schools have established. The development of such a program demands a nation-wide participation and depends for its success on the co-operative efforts of physicians and all of the accessory medical professions, physical educators, health educators, industries and the general public.

—The Hygeia.

The Health of the Nation

THE British Medical Association has published a short handbook for the people, called "Charter for Health." The book was produced by a committee, of which Sir John Boyd Orr was chairman. The names and brief descriptions of the members of the committee are given in the preface—a small point, but an important one, for it relieves the book of the dullness and suspicion of anonymity. Some may feel that this production is poaching on the preserves of the Central Council for Health Education, and others may see in it a veiled political counterblast to the National Health Service Bill, but we look upon it as a popular guide to health, and find it pleasing, for it avoids talking down to the people from authority and aiming above the average intellectual level. The committee was much influenced by the Peckham experiment, but it does not mention it specifically. As there is nothing in the book with which any authority on health will disagree, our criticism of it will be directed only to what it reveals of the present state of preventive medicine. This is, perhaps, not quite fair to the committee's production, but we are sure all our readers will be as pleased with the work as we are, so it requires no commendation from us.

Preventive medicine is concerned with the prevention of disease by means within our possession—it is specific. It varies in efficiency from that pertinent to rabies which locally has been exterminated, to diphtheria which can be reduced 95 per cent., to typhoid which theoretically can be reduced almost if not quite to zero, and to most infectious diseases which we to some extent control. Most human diseases, apart from infections and deficiencies, are beyond prevention at present because our knowledge of their aetiology is insufficient for specific action. Improvement of health is another matter, for

though, of course, full health is impossible in the presence of disease, a low level of vitality without recognisable disease is not only possible but widespread. Improvement of health is the application of human physiology; it is not directly concerned with pathology.

"The major environmental causes of preventable disease are shown to be poverty, bad housing, malnutrition, and ignorance." This assumes there is another cause of disease—to wit, faulty genetic constitution. Here, there is the possibility of prevention by eugenics, but so far as individuals already conceived are concerned the genetic element is unalterable. So for this purpose, the words *major environmental* are unnecessary. In the sentence quoted, the word *ignorance* applies to lack of knowledge of what is known. We are more interested in the ignorance of the unknown, for our main business is to reduce it. Poverty, bad housing, malnutrition, etc., are matters within human control, and if we really wished to do so, we could abolish the lot. The extent to which they operate as causes of ill-health must not, however, be exaggerated. Their influence is generally gauged, as it is in this book, by the comparison of the main vital statistics of the five economic classes of modern society. Much caution is required in making deductions from these statistics, for of the many factors which determine to which class any family belongs, disease, ill-health and mental poverty are amongst the most important. Indeed before we accuse poverty of being a cause of ill-health, we must uncover the causes of poverty. There is no disease which does not occur in all classes—or rather at any economic level, for there are no real social classes on Britain—so the essential causes of disease are not to be found in economics. This does not mean that raising the standard of living

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above the poverty line would not materially improve the health of the community, but it would not of itself do much to abolish disease.

A table, showing the expectation of life at various ages since 1910, shows the material increase of expectation at birth from 51.5 years for males, and 55.3 for females in 1910-12, to 58.7 for males, and 62.9 for females in 1930-32. The increase is for all ages below 60, but after that there has been no increase. We may accept that the span of human life is limited and that females have an average

span of about four years longer than that of males, but not that the expectation at advanced ages is necessarily unalterable. For until recently we have made little effort to control the diseases which destroy the aged. On the whole we know fairly well what can be done to promote health and limit disease with present medical knowledge, and what we have discovered should determine international policy. But we must not rest, though we must admit that the attack on the great unknown becomes increasingly difficult as it recedes before us.—*Medical Officer.*

CHILDREN'S HEADACHES

ALTON GOLDBLOOM

"When the child was grown it fell on a day that he went out to his father to the reapers. And he said unto his father, my head, my head. And he said to a lad, carry him to his mother (II Kings, IV: 18 and 19)."

THE above Biblical quotation gives a graphic description of a severe headache in a small boy, apparently followed by loss of consciousness; probably an attack of sunstroke. It is an example of one of the many causes of headaches in young children. Headaches in children present the same difficulties to the physician that they do in adults, because of the numerous and widely dissimilar conditions that may cause them. They may be anything from "headaches of convenience" to brain tumors.

A young child may, and often does, imitate his parents. He may be quick to grasp the value of the excuse of headache as a means of escape from an unpleasant or undesirable task. Just as the mother may plead a headache in order to avoid a social function, so may the child plead a headache in the face of a task which he fears may be too difficult or which may prove distasteful. It is an escape headache. This was well demonstrated in the case of an adolescent girl who was unequal to the tasks of schoolwork. She did not possess the mental equipment necessary to compete successfully with her comrades in the higher grades. She had headaches. Tests of her intelligence quickly demonstrated her incapacity, and removal from school immediately cured her headaches.

One of the better-known causes of headaches in children is eye strain, particularly astigmatism. Gross defects in vision may be evident by simple tests, but astigmatism can be discovered only by special means. Proper eye examination by a qualified ophthalmologist should therefore be the first step in attempting to solve the problem of headaches in young children.

Another important cause of headaches is anemia. Physicians who deal extensively with children encounter many instances in which simple blood examinations, hemoglobin and red cells, will quickly solve the problem of headaches in an adolescent child. Relief of the headaches is successfully accomplished through adequate treatment of the anemia.

Exposure to sun and to glare may cause severe, temporary headaches: in northern climates in winter, this is not infrequently found in children who play outside on bright days. These children must have their eyes protected by plastic or unbreakable goggles. Poor ventilation and noxious gases may also cause headaches in children.

Children often complain of headaches on arising in the morning and from naps. These headaches may represent a need for sugar. Some children use their sugar more rapidly than others; some need more in their diet. This need may express itself in headaches, relieved by taking something sweet. We have come a long way from the days when people believed that sweets were "bad" for children. We know that actively playing children need extra sugar just as a briskly burning furnace needs extra coal. Many such headaches have been quickly relieved or prevented by the judicious administration of sugar at the proper times.

These are a few of the causes of headaches in children which may be regarded as not associated with serious diseases. Of course these are highly important and deserve careful investigation and intelligent treatment. There are other causes of headache, however, of much more serious import; we might attempt to consider a few of these in order to indicate that headaches must never be treated lightly and that in all instances of persistent or recurrent headaches in children, intelligent and careful search must be made for the underlying cause.

Migraine is a common disorder among adults that shows strong familial tendencies and often manifests itself in the children. The manifestations may often be those of abdominal pain and vomiting; but not infrequently the children of parents suffering from migraine may also have headaches. In younger children the abdominal symptoms may predominate, only to be replaced by headaches as the child approaches puberty. We have learned a little more about migraine

in recent years, and are perhaps coming a little nearer to an understanding of the problem. Some drugs, certain types of diet, and other means have been used in an attempt to combat this trying disorder.

Migraine has two first cousins; one is allergy. A small number of children, indeed adults too, have been relieved of their symptoms with the removal from their diet of certain foods to which they were sensitive. The other first cousin is epilepsy. With proper means of investigation it can be shown that some individuals suffering from migraine have the same type of abnormal "brain waves" that is found in epilepsy. Great progress has been made toward relief of epilepsy, and migraine which is of this type will often also yield to the same form of treatment.

Persistent headaches when accompanied by unsteady gait, vomiting, without nausea or failing vision are symptoms that cannot be lightly regarded. Tumors of the brain, old hemorrhages, cysts and chronic lead poisoning may give these symptoms. These are the graver causes of headaches in children, and must be treated without delay. Persistent headaches in children following a head injury no matter how many months or years before, demand the same urgent attention. Such symptoms cannot be left to chance, nor may they be palliated by home remedies; they require the intelligent attention of a competent neurologist.

Acute illness that begins with high fever may cause headaches. They are symptoms of scarlet fever, and occasionally of measles, chickenpox, and even German measles. In the first day or two of mumps, headaches may be quite severe, in fact they may be caused by a form of meningitis that not infrequently accompanies the onset of mumps. So, too, at the beginning of typhoid fever headaches may be quite severe. The headache in all these diseases usually occurs in the first few hours and lasts no longer than a day or two. Forms of meningitis naturally cause severe headaches, but it is hardly the function of parents to familiarize themselves with the symptoms of all such diseases. They must

only realize that such headaches require medical attention, and sometimes urgently.

The kidneys cannot be disregarded in any consideration of headaches in children, for headaches often accompany severe kidney disorders as they do in adults. Here again sage medical advice is needed for solution of the problem.

It should be evident, then, that headaches in young children may result from a wide variety of causes; so wide, in fact, that it may require consummate medical skill and wise judgment to ferret out the cause in each particular instance. Headaches are not just symptoms that can be treated with headache tablets or with purgatives. Headaches may be the warnings of deep seated disease, requiring anything from changes in diet to brain operations for their alleviation. Headache is a symptom of trouble, and not the trouble itself. The progressive physician, with the facilities of the modern hospital, is prepared to cope with the vexed problems of headaches in children.

Often too the child psychiatrist may be of help. The nose and throat doctor, the eye doctor, the neurologist, the neurosurgeon, the psychiatrist, and the pediatrician, singly or together, may be the ones to bring relief through proper diagnosis. Headaches are not to be neglected or set aside without the advantages of a full investigation into the underlying causes. They are certainly not to be treated with headache tablets, except for temporary relief and then only on the advice of the family physician. All the problems of headaches are not readily solved, but many are; and not a few of these are cured by prompt and intelligent treatment. Many types may be neglected beyond the hopes of successful relief, as in some forms of brain disorders, unless promptly recognized and successfully treated. Here the nose and throat surgeon will find a sinusitis, the eye doctor will discover astigmatism, another child will be found to have migraine and still another some deep seated brain disorder; all manifested by headaches. Few other problems require such concerted action from the various branches of the medical profession.—*Hygeia.*

Common Cold

Dr. Richard C. Smith in the *Public Health Symposium*, a column appearing in the *Oak Leaf*, voice of the USNH, Oakland, Calif., had this to say about the common cold:

Catarrhal fever, coryza and acute rhinitis are synonyms for the common cold which in all probability is a combination of two diseases. The first stage, lasting a day or two, is caused by a minute organism of the virus family. This stage is mild and is characterized by a feeling of indisposition, chilly sensations, a generalized aching, slight fever and stuffiness and running of the nose. The virus invades the cells of the mucous membrane or lining of the nose, sinuses, throat and bronchi causing swelling, redness and a secretion of a thin irritating fluid. In this stage the mucous membranes are very susceptible to secondary infection by bacteria, including varieties of staphylococci, penumococci and several others

which are usually present in the respiratory tract of healthy individuals, but which do not cause diseases because the uninjured cells are resistant to them.

The secondary invaders begin their activities after the virus has broken down the barriers—the symptoms become worse and depending upon the ability of the body to withstand the invasion and the disease producing strength of the bacteria which varies a good deal, the individual either gets well or develops complications. These include tonsillitis, laryngitis, bronchitis or even pneumonia.

Dr. Smith gives no specific treatment. All treatment, he states, is directed toward relief of the symptoms—he did have this to say, "Perhaps the greatest contribution of modern civilization to the relief of colds is cleansing tissue."

Topics from Medical and Health Periodicals

The menopause—It is pointed out by Dr. C. C. Saraiya (*Journal of the Indian Medical Association*, January, 1946) that for the relief of menopausal symptoms it is best to give large doses of oestrogens first, and later, when the symptoms have been controlled, to diminish the dose gradually. As a rule this treatment is not necessary for more than four to six months. All symptoms occurring at the menopause are not, however, due to it. There may be ordinary medical diseases, such as high blood pressure. Then, again, it is well to bear in mind that irregular vaginal bleeding may be due to malignancy and not be merely menopausal.—*Medical World*.

Beer produces cirrhosis of the liver.—Brewers advertise beer as the harmless drink of moderation, but records of the Geneva Medical Clinic show that it may cause cirrhosis of the liver. Statistics of the institution for ten years reveal that although there were three and a half times as many male as female alcoholics admitted to the clinic for treatment, thirty-one per cent of the patients suffering from cirrhosis were women. This indicates that the liver glands of the female are less resistant to the poisons which cause cirrhosis than those of the male. Alcoholism is the chief cause of this disease. Many years of drinking are necessary to produce the condition. Digestive disturbances appeared in a majority of the cases after the development of the cirrhosis. These must therefore be considered as secondary and not causative. It has been found that where cirrhosis is due to dietary deficiency, it is made much worse by the drinking of alcohol.—*Good Health*.

Hard work and meat.—The old idea that a hardworking man must have meat and plenty of it has no basis in the science of physiology, says Dr. Leonard A. Maynard, director of the School of Nutrition at Cornell University. He requires no flesh foods if he eats peanuts or soybeans. The difficulty is that the notion handed down by our ancestors, and promoted by the packing and livestock interests, is persistent and is abandoned with reluctance. Eating has its psychological side which cannot be overlooked. Education is needed to dispel traditional errors. Meat rationing has been a first step toward enlightenment; another will be the curtailment in livestock production now adopted by the Government. It is to be expected that scientific truth will eventually prevail.—*Good Health*.

Diet of pregnant mother affects baby.—The relation between the diet of the pregnant mother and the physical condition of the infant at birth has been the subject of elaborate tests by Bertha S. Burke and associates of the Harvard School of Public Health

(*Journal of Nutrition*). They observed 216 pregnant women from average middle class families. The importance of proper diet for the expectant mother is well shown by the fact that all stillborn infants, most of whom had congenital defects, and all premature and functionally immature infants were born to mothers whose food during pregnancy was very inadequate. In only one case did a mother who had been properly fed give birth to a baby in poor physical condition.—*Good Health*.

Urinary frequency in women.—Dr. J. A. Lazarus (*New York State Journal of Medicine*, March 1, 1946) considers that increased frequency of micturition in women may be due not only to causes arising in the uterus and adnexa, the gastro-intestinal tract, the nervous and the endocrine systems, but also to the influence of foods, drugs and allergens. Thus it may be due to food indiscretions, to over-much tea or coffee drinking, or even to food allergy. Many women who suffer from increased urinary frequency are allergic to certain foods. Patients should be closely questioned as to food sensitivity in such cases when no other cause can be found to account for this troublesome symptom.—*Medical World*.

Big cities safest for babies.—In Portland, Oregon, deaths among white infants in the first year of life were in 1940 at the rate of 25.4 per 1,000 of live births. If this rate had prevailed throughout the entire United States, there would have been a saving of 40,000 babies in the year, according to the *Statistical Bulletin of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company*. This large number of children was sacrificed needlessly, as it has been demonstrated that proper medical care and training of mothers will cut down infant mortality to the figures attained in Portland. These advantages are more easily available in urban than in rural regions. In cities of 100,000 or more of population, the mortality of white children in 1940 was 36.1 per 1,000 live births, as against 45.9 in country districts. The worst showing was in towns and villages of 2,500 to 10,000, where the rate was 50.2, or forty per cent higher than in the big cities. It is explained that in large communities there are better medical, hospital, and nursing facilities, more centers of instruction for mothers, and better water, milk and food supplies than in small towns.—*Good Health*.

A motorist had twins born to him, a friend said. "What are you going to call them?" "Oh, I don't know," the motorist replied, with a gloomy frown. "Kate and Lubricate I expect."

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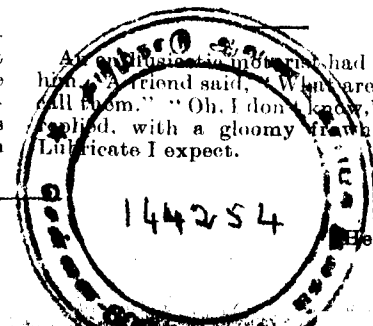
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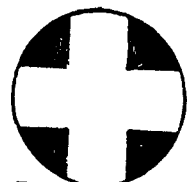


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