

# Health

*A Journal Devoted to  
Healthful Living*

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## Editorial

### Health and Longevity of Present-Day Indians

ARE present-day Indians, a long-lived or a short-lived nation, is a question, which readers of "Health" will be curious to get an answer for. We shall in this article try to satisfy their curiosity by answering that to-day Indians are a short-lived nation and that the present generation compare very unfavourably with the other nations of the World in the matter of their health, strength and longevity. The index of good health of any country is the expectation of life of its people. Now, what is meant by expectation of life? The expectation of life is the number of years which an individual at a particular age-period expects to live. India's expectation of life at birth is 26.91 years for males and 26.56 for females. In Sweden, the expectation of life is 60.72 and 62.95 respectively. In England and Wales, it is 55.62 and 59.58. In

Germany, 55.97 and 58.82. In Japan, 42.06 and 43.20 while in the State of Travancore in our own country, it is 43.80 and 44.50. Thus British India lags behind even the Indian State of Travancore. What are the causes for this low expectation of life?

#### 1. Insanitation

The first and foremost cause is insanitation. The money spent on Public Health and Sanitation in British India is miserably low. Water-supply, drainage and conservancy are still imperfect in many of the large cities and towns in India, while these problems have not even been thought of in most of the rural areas. A few figures will be interesting and will reveal the true state of affairs in this country.

"In 1928, Germany spent 2 Rm (nearly Rs. 1-5-3) per head on the diverse items of sanitation and health.

England and Wales spent during 1926-28 nearly 1½ shillings (Re. 1) per head for the same purpose. The sanitation budget of Japan accounted for 2½ yen (Rs. 3-5-3) per head during 1927-28. For 247 million people in British India, the expenses come up to 4½ annas (4¾ d) per head".

The above figures tell their tale of apathy and disinterestedness on the part of the Government to provide for the sanitary needs of India, and the Government ought to shoulder their share of responsibility for this deplorable condition.

## 2. Mal-Nutrition or Under-Nutrition

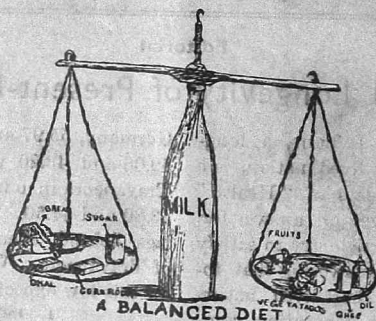
Next to sanitation comes Nutrition. India is mainly an agricultural country and the agriculturists are heavily indebted. The average annual income of a peasant according to a recent report is estimated at Rs. 30 or Rs. 2-8 per mensem. The tiller of the soil has no wherewithal to raise necessary

and nutritious crops. What is lacking in nutrition in general is "protective food-stuffs"—milk, dairy products, eggs, fresh vegetables, fruit and meat. The present economic depression throughout the world has aggravated the situation and India's condition has worsened. Nutrition plays a prominent part in the health and longevity of a nation and the League of Nations are now taking a keen interest in the matter. To solve the problem of under-nutrition, Mr. S. M. Bruce, the first delegate of Australia to the

League of Nations submitted a proposal which he described as "marrying Agriculture and Health". "Agriculture is in a bad way, the claims of health remain unsatisfied. Marry them and you save the one, and strengthen the other".

The League of Nations have given the following advice to the various nations of the world and the Indian Government must not fail to peruse, and ponder over it and solve the nutrition problem at once and without further loss of time; otherwise, the people will deteriorate more and more in health, strength and longevity, so much so, in less than a hundred years, there will only be the chaff left in our country.

"The public health demands greater consumption, not restrictions on production. Governments are spending money on keeping up prices by a policy of restriction. Let us impress upon them



that this money would be far better spent in increasing consumption. Restriction will neither save world agriculture nor improve national public health. Increased consumption will improve public health, will provide a market for agricultural produce, will create wealth. Here, then, is a first attack on a first attempt to escape from the vicious circle. We can agree to teach people what they should eat to be healthy. Governments can consider how to provide for adequate supplies of

protective foods to the unemployed and lower-paid workers. The possibilities of marketing in special areas at reduced rates can be studied, the advantages of supplementing the dietary of children by school meals and school milk distribution can be taken into account".

### 3. Poverty

The third cause for the low expectation of life in India is poverty. India's wealth was at one time the pet theme for the British Poet's pen and Milton's description of the 'wealth of Ormuz and of Ind or where the gorgeous East with richest hands showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold' is a thing of the past. It is not our purpose here to enter into a discussion of that thorny question of how India got so poor in the space of three hundred years. The cause can be summed up in three words, political, economic and social. Political and economic freedom and shaking off all slavish social customs and ceremonials may yet restore India to its pristine glory and it behoves every class and community that inhabit this vast sub-continent to sink their differences, put their shoulders to the wheels and raise them up from the mire of poverty into which India is sadly sunk, for the common weal.

### 4. Ignorance.

Ignorance is the fourth cause for the poor vitality and low expectation of life of the Indians. Poverty and ignorance, always go together. About 95% of the population of India are illiterate and consequently ignorant. The few that are literate are of the wrong type. Mr. L. N. Sahu, M.A., of the Servants of India Society, Orissa, in his paper submitted to the World Federation of Education Associations held in Denver

in 1931, has described the kind of education that is imparted to the Indian students in these terms:—

"He enters school with the obvious idea of learning. There is nothing wrong in that, but it assumes a totally different and undesirable aspect as soon as it is instilled into the youthful entrant's mind that learning is the first thing to be aimed at and that is the only thing to be aimed at. It is here that far reaching mischief is done, and it is no wonder that the quality of the products of the Indian Schools is far below the desirable standard".

We have said enough on the subject of "Education in India" in our two previous issues and we do not therefore propose to enlarge upon it here. But strangely enough, we find that in modern Persia, the same type of education is imparted to youths, as was done in Ancient India and the great oriental scholar and writer, Issa Khan Sadiq, was responsible for the educational policy of the Government of His Majesty, the Shah of Persia. For the benefit of our readers and others interested in the education of our youths, we give below the salient features of his scheme:—

"1. To create in the minds of the people a living consciousness of the past by showing the great achievements of the race during its long existence, in spite of great calamities and misfortunes, wars and struggles.

2. To train boys and girls to become good citizens of modern Persia, that is to share those ideals which are the ideals of the Nation, and to cooperate with their countrymen for the attainment of those ideals. To train the girls to be worthy mothers of

the coming generation upon whose education rests the future of the Nation.

3. To teach by precept and by example that God extends his blessings to those who have good thoughts, good words, and good deeds, which are the bases of righteousness and tolerance.

4. To teach the rural people and the tribes how to live, how to make a home, how to furnish it, how to prepare food and clothing, how to prevent diseases and to acquire health habits; in other words that 'How to live' may be more important than mere learning of the rudiments of literacy

5. In secondary schools and in institutions of higher learning and the University, the gifted youth must be trained for leadership and service in the State. They must be given a vision of Persia's place, past and present, in the world, with the ideal of leading the country in culture,

science, technology, business statesmanship, and Government to such a height as befits a progressive State.

6. In special schools those skilled workers who are to lead in their callings must be trained for vocational efficiency and must be given a sense of their responsibility.

7. The promotion of health and healthful sports must be stressed in all schools.

8. The youth must be trained to use their leisure time intelligently by aesthetic activities (paintings, songs, music, dramatics, and plays), by social activities (visiting parties, receptions competitive games, clubs), by pleasure in reading, by intellectual investigation, and by constructive activities".

We shall in the next issue deal with the other causes such as early marriage, tropical diseases &c that contribute to the low expectation of life in India.

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## A Peep in our Lying-in Rooms

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— By T. P. Tiwari, L.M.P., —  
Asst. Medical Officer, Dhamtari, C. P.

WERE it not for the manifold defensive arrangements against infection and disease made in the human body by kind Nature, the female population of our country would have been extinct long ago—such are the appalling conditions of management obtaining in our lying-in rooms. The high rate of mortality amongst the new born and their mothers is but an infinitesimal fraction of what would have been the rate had not Nature applied her protecting and intervening hand—such is the disgraceful handling of obstetrical cases

Page 64]

in our country. The time of delivery is the most critical time in a woman's life calling for utmost attention in care and nursing. It is the time when a slight neglect or a little mishandling may involve serious risks to the lives of the mother and the new born. It is therefore a matter of paramount importance that the task of conducting labours be carried out in a proper manner and by proper persons specially trained for the purpose. Looking around us however we find quite a strange state of affairs. The room selected for the purpose of lying-in is

[HEALTH, April '36

the dirtiest and smallest in the house and the attending nurse perhaps the dirtiest and shabbiest woman in the town or village. Every door and window of the room is closed against fresh air and a large smoky fire is lit in the central part of the room with the double object of keeping the room warm and of slowly burning the placenta into ashes which is superficially buried under the ground beneath the fire. To add further fuel to the already roaring flame, substances like thymol seeds and mustard are frequently put in the fire probably with the idea of purifying the air but which instead only go to irritate the tender respiratory mucosa of the unfortunate inmates of the room. The attending dai who is called in after the advent of the child into the land of mortals enters the room with the dirtiest cloth in her possession on her body. This cloth is particularly reserved for use during such occasions and is hardly if ever washed. The knife that she brings for severing the umbilical cord is generally a blunt rusty weapon untouched by water for years and probably bequeathed to her by her mother-in-law. It is with this weapon and her unwashed hands that she cuts the umbilical cord and dresses the same with a little ash. The woman after frequent and uncalled for internal examinations by sympathetic neighbours eventually gives birth to the child and is put to bed. The bed in most cases is little more than a small cot and a dirty rag. An equally dirty piece of cloth is used as a binder. The idea of pblition associated with the process of maternity is responsible for her being left alone under whole and sole care of the dai for full 6 days whose only nursing consists of frequent

changing of the binder and seeing that the woman gets no access to food or drink of any kind for at least full 72 hours. I do not know if the practice of withholding water for 3 days is common to every province of India but it is very rigidly enforced in this part of the country whatever be the season of the year. I have thus known of instances where women with a temperature of  $106^{\circ}$  have died clamouring for water during the hot months of May and June but none in the house has been moved to pour a little water down the parched dying lips. The cruelty of withholding water at a time when the woman after losing a considerable amount of blood needs plenty of fluids to replenish the loss will indeed be hard to bear.

I have depicted a faithful picture of what I have seen and known and I can assure you, gentle reader, that the story is not in the least exaggerated. Is there anything to be surprised at in the maternal and infant mortality on account of septicaemia, tetanus etc. being so high in our country? That it is not still higher is perhaps the proper thing to feel surprised at. One sometimes begins to wonder if it ever occurs to our intelligentsia that this state of affairs is a disgrace to any community that calls itself civilised and that it is imperative in the interests of India's fair name and well being that genuine attempts to introduce proper reforms in this direction are instituted forthwith. Birth of a child is a physiological process and management of normal labour is a simple affair. Room selected for the purpose should be a good sized one and free from superfluous furniture. It should be provided with a good cot and a clean comfortable bedding. Ade-

quate provision for entry of light and fresh air must be made by keeping the windows open. Fire is a needless oxygen consumer in the room and can be safely dispensed with. The attending dāi must be clean in her person and dress. She must have with her a pair of sharp scissors, a ball of thread, a piece of soap and a little Boric acid. She must keep her nails closely clipped and before proceeding to tie the cord must boil her scissors and thread piece. After washing her hands clean with soap and hot water she should tie the cord and cut it. The cut portion should then be dressed with Boric acid and wrapped in a clean piece of cloth. Sufficient number of washed and cleaned pieces of cloth should be kept ready to be used as binders and must not be used for a second time unless cleaned, washed and boiled again. These elementary principles of cleanliness are very simple and easy to grasp and there should be no difficulty in teaching the dāis to adopt them. Child welfare centres under the management of Red Cross Society are opened in large number of towns and dāis are trained in all these centres. In such

places no dāis should be allowed to practise unless they get this training and undergo a test of efficiency. In places where there are no such training centres, the task of training the dāis can be conveniently entrusted to any educated person like school master or mistress, patwari or a Revenue Inspector. The woman during the course of labour has gone through a severe ordeal and needs plenty of rest and nourishment. A member of the house must always be by her side to look to her needs and comforts. She should be given enough of light nourishment like milk, sago soups etc. from the start and water must on no account be withheld. It may be boiled and cooled if considered necessary. She should also be well protected against exposure by suitable clothings.

With the advent of these simple rules in the management of our lying-in rooms much of the misery connected with child birth shall become things of the past and let me appeal through the columns of this esteemed journal to every one of its readers that he will do his utmost to work in the furtherance of this noble cause.

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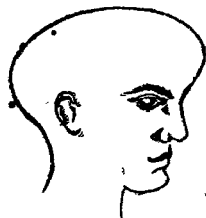
### IMPORTANCE OF WATER DRINKING

*Water in the human body acts as a medium for chemical changes, a solvent for foods, as a carrier of waste and of nutritive elements, and as a heat regulator. 'It is the most essential constituent of our diet', says Dr. John H. Musser, vice-president of the American Medical Association in 'Journal of the Missouri Medical Association' 'Deprive a man of water and he will die in from sixty to eighty hours. On account of the dryness of the air, he will succumb more speedily in Arizona, than near the ocean.—Good Health (U. S. A.)*

## PART II

### The Head and the Face

THE head is known as the crown of the body, and is the most important part, as it contains the most precious organs, such as the brain, the eyes, the ears, the nose, the throat etc. The size and shape of the head should be proportionate to the body, and should neither be unusually large nor very small. It is found in some children that the head increases rapidly, and becomes very big, this is known as the "hydrocephalus" head or (water in the head). The appearance becomes very characteristic; the



*Hydrocephalus.*

head enlarges on all sides, the forehead bulges, the eyes protrude and the face appears small. This is generally of tubercular origin. Another condition is also very prevalent amongst the poor children. It is known as "rickets" in which the head assumes a square shape and grows out of proportion to the body. This is a disease of malnutrition. These unusual shapes of the heads of children should at once be recognised and properly treated, so long as the head does not come to its usual shape and size.

The head, instead of being large, sometimes becomes very small in proportion to the body, and this is known as the micro-cephalus, or the small head. This is generally a born defect

and the children do not grow normally. The facial appearance of this type of children is also typical. The lips become thick, the tongue large and flabby, and remains projected from the mouth, which always remains open. Saliva may dribble from the sides of the mouth. The children as they grow, become dull and idiotic and develop neither bodily nor mentally. The stunted growth and the mental backwardness are described as "Infantilism" as the child although becomes old in age, remains like an infant in appearance. This retarded growth occurs from the defective function of certain organs, known as glands, which remain inside the body and is amenable to treatment. Many miserable lives can thus be saved and made useful, if these common facts are known to the lay people, but in a country where ignorance prevails, these deformed children, instead of being treated, are exhibited in public places as objects of curiosity, and for earning purpose. I have seen a hydrocephalus boy aged about 10 brought to a fair by the guardian for earning money.



*Microcephalus.*

Next to the head comes the face, which is said to be the index of health. The face indicates the health of a man, as it expresses his mind also. It has been said in the previous article that there should be a lustre of health

in the very countenance of a person. There should not be any paleness or puffiness in the face, nor a shrunken appearance. A well-nourished body will have a fair deposit of fat in the hollows of the face, such as the sockets of the eyes, the cheeks, the temples etc., and the skin over them should be smooth, with a ruddy tint over it. Even in a dark-complexioned man, a healthy tint is easily recognised, as also the opposite condition such as paleness. There should not be any unnatural pigmentation or pimples and pustules over the face.

The upper part of the head, known as the scalp, is usually covered with hair, of which there should be a healthy growth. Absence of growth of the hair is a disease, as the loss of

hair is and should be medically treated, although complete baldness is not necessarily counted as a physical defect in advanced age. Care should be taken of the hairs by washing them with soap and water, and then rubbing against their roots with some pure vegetable oil, such as the coconut, sesame or castor oil, as these oils protect and promote the growth of hair. The hair should be parted every day after bath, with a comb or brush, of one's own, as using others may bring contagion, such as dandruff, lice etc. Cleanliness of the head is as necessary as it is essential for other parts of the body, and a dirty habit may lead to the invasion of the scalp with parasites such as the ringworm or the lice, or infectious diseases like eczema.

(To be continued.)

## Food of our South-Indians

By Dr. L. R. Fernandez,

Trichinopoly.

I AM neither an astrologer nor a distant relation of one. Yet, if you tell me what you eat, I shall tell you what you are, *i.e.*, whether you are prone to be healthy or ill, long-lived or short-lived. In fact longevity and sustained good health depend to a great extent upon the nourishment we take.

It is admitted by the eminent dietitians of our country that the food of our South Indians is very defective. The chief defect is the lack of proper balance between the various proximate principles of food, *viz.*, proteins, carbohydrates, fats, mineral salts and vitamins. In our South Indian food, there is a conspicuous deficiency of

the protein element, and the overloading of the carbo-hydrate portion, as the vast majority indulges in rice-eating. The quantity of rice which the various races and communities of the South are accustomed to take tends to clog the body with an increased amount of starch, which it cannot digest. Remember that the less bulky a diet is, the more readily it is digested and absorbed. If the size of the diet is big, digestion is interfered with, because the digestive juices cannot properly get into our food and act upon it satisfactorily. Secondly, the large bulk of the food irritates and sets up very rapid movements of the bowels with the result that sufficient



time is not given for both digestion and absorption. Thirdly, fermentation is set up with its attendant discomforts. A bulky diet, moreover, is liable to bring on dilatation of the stomach. A peep into the general hospitals of the various provinces will convince you of the great percentage of patients ailing from stomach troubles in South India.

By various experiments on different communities, it has been found by Col. David McCay that 18 oz. of rice is the optimum amount per day from the point of view of absorption. As nitrogenous food is very essential for growth and tissue replacement in our organs we have to pay more attention

protein for an entire day's ration. But half this quantity of the above-mentioned foods will suffice if used to supplement other proteins of an ordinary varied diet. Three quarters of a seer of cow's milk or two hen's eggs or a duck's egg will serve equally well to supplement an ordinary day's ration. The chief draw-back of the duck's egg being the great amount of flatulence or gas it is likely to generate in some constitutions, it is better to avoid it. It is well to remember that children require proportionately more protein food daily than adults as their bodies are still undergoing construction.

The next element deficient in our South Indian diet is the proper amount



*For Power eat nuts.*

to it. Protein is the only form in which the nitrogen can be utilised in the body. Roughly for every pound of man's weight, half a gramme of protein should be taken. So for a man weighing about 120 lbs. at least 60 grammes of protein must be taken per day, *i. e.*, 20 grammes at each meal, if three meals are taken, and 30 grammes of protein per meal, if only two meals are taken as is the case with the majority of poorer classes in our semi-starved Southern India. About 5 ounces of complete protein foods as dhal, peas, cashew-nuts, almonds and grams will provide for an adult an abundance of

of fat. Fats supply the energy required for the human body. Animal fat like butter is more valuable and nutritious than vegetable fat. The chief sources of fat are cow's butter, ghee, milk, yolk of eggs, nuts and cocoanut oil. As the last mentioned may not agree with some people when used for cooking, pure and unadulterated gingelly oil (sesame oil) may be used. The amount of fat required per day is two ounces.

In addition to the proteins, carbohydrates and fats, a good proportion of mineral salts are necessary for maintaining proper physical condition. These mineral salts consist of

chemical substances such as soda, potash, lime, iron, magnesia, phosphates, iodine sulphur etc. These inorganic food salts become united within the body in definite proportion with organic matter to form the various cells of the living body. Nature provides us with these salts in vegetables, fresh fruits and cereals. More of green vegetables and fruits should be taken than our South Indians are accustomed to. The vegetables must be prepared so as not to throw away any water in which they have been cooked. In the preparation of potatoes, much nutrition is lost by peeling them and boiling them. Cereals as wheat and rice should be so prepared as to retain their mineral element which is lost in the milling process of making fine flour and polished rice. The rice water that is generally thrown away has a high nutritive value. The mineral salts are also obtained in milk as calcium phosphate, in gram and peas as phosphates, in bone-marrow as iron, and in drinking water as iodine.

No food can be called perfect unless it contains a good proportion of the vital components called Vitamins. No doubt these Vitamins are very deficient in our South Indian diet, as is proved by the preponderating Vitamin-deficiency diseases in the various provin-

ces. Recent investigations show that a lack of Vitamins results in lessened nutrition, swelling and soreness of the joints, irritation of the eyes, bleeding of the gums with looseness of teeth, together with general debility and weakness. Where shall we find these Vitamins? They are found every where. We have only to open our eyes and see. For instance, in fruits like oranges, grapes, bananas, lemons, apples, pears, pomegranates, mangoes, guavas etc; in vegetables like carrots, cabbages, spinach, turnips, ladies' finger, lettuce, potatoes, onions, beet-root etc, in milk and milk-products like cows' milk, butter-milk, curd, butter and cheese; in eggs and flesh meat like goat meat, chicken, fowl, duck, liver, kidney and brain: [for those who cannot avoid meat.—Ed. H.] in cereals like wheat, ragi, cholam, semolina, barley, unpolished rice and oatmeal. Having such a rich and resplendent source of nourishing Vitamins why should the masses still suffer from Vitamin deficiency diseases? Because of ignorance. It is to dispel the ignorance of the masses that instructive journals like "Health" which are devoting day and night to the Health Problems of our motherland must be read and digested, day in and day out.

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*Simple meals consisting of fruits, nuts, vegetables, whole grains, and dairy products, well prepared and attractively served, the combinations changed from day to day, have an ideal diet for health and efficiency.*  
—THE MADISON SURVEY.—Thir' O W.

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# MINOR MEDICINES

By T. D. Mukherjee, M.B., D.P.H.,

Burdwan, Bengal.

THERE are various systems of treatment of diseases in vogue *e.g.* Allopathy, Homeopathy, Kabiraji, Unani, Biochemic, Hydropathy, and so on. These are staunch advocates of each of these different kinds of treatment, who always follow their special systems, but there are others who are often found to take the help of other systems, according to their belief and convenience. None can be of definite opinion that one system is better than another. In these few lines I want to draw attention to the fact, that minor ailments should not be neglected, when they are easily amenable to treatment, so that the seedling may not grow to be a tree, making it difficult of eradication. To be more clear one should not neglect any disease at its onset. The progress of many diseases can be very easily checked at their beginning, but if neglected they often lead to fatal consequences, and I desire to discuss briefly in this paper the importance and some of the easiest means of dealing with such diseases. The remedies are very simple and are known almost to all if not to everybody, and in dealing with them the help of any system of medicine may be taken, and none should be exceptionally orthodox to any particular system of medicine. The medical practitioners are aware of this fact and an Allopath is often found in general practice to prescribe a homeopathic medicine and an Homeopathic doctor to prescribe a kabiraji one. I think there is no harm if any medi-

cine properly suggested leads to the cure of the ailment. One is suffering from some minor ailment and he is not willing to go to any medical man. If suggestion is given to him for some treatment he would most probably laugh and would say, that there is nothing to worry. It may be that the ailment goes away naturally after some time, but it might have been got rid of in a shorter time or without any trouble and though it was simple in the beginning, might lead to seriousness, unless its progress is checked in time by any appropriate medicine. It may be that no allopathic medicine is available near at hand, or the patient is afraid of taking any allopathic drug without consulting any physician. Certainly there is no harm in taking some other simple medicine, which may be beneficial, for checking or preventing the diseases. The following are by way of illustration, so far as allopathic system is concerned.

For simple injury or cut on any part of the body, Tr. Iodine should be applied and the part should be bandaged up tightly. If the cut be larger or the bleeding be not stopped a surgeon should be consulted. But on account of the burning sensation, due to application of Tr. Iodine, many do not like the medicine and instead, filthy matter or even dirt is applied to the fresh wound, and sometimes grave consequence follows.

For simple burn, Sodii Bicarb and Methylated spirit, or equal parts of lime water and coconut oil may be applied.

For sting of any insect, 'Sodi Bicarb and Methylated spirit may be applied.

For simple Diarrhoea, ten or fifteen drops of Chlorodyne are sometimes very helpful.

For Malaria in malarial season, ten grains of quinine, averts the attack of the fever

For simple inflammation, boric compress is very useful.

For a bad tooth or gum, Tr. Iodine paint and warm common salt solution are very beneficial.

For simple acidity, a dose of Sodi

Bicarb, one teaspoonful taken with water, often cures it.

These are a few examples of the minor medicines, which any one can use and which are very much beneficial to the sufferer.

In conclusion, I cannot but repeat that none should neglect a disease at its very onset, and some simple appliance in time would often save one from endless trouble and misery, and this appropriately illustrates the truism of the proverb, that a stitch in time saves nine and if one acts accordingly he would never have to repent the loss of a ship for the want of a nail.

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## The Need of a Cancer Hospital for Madras

By Dr. Mrs. S. Muthulakshmi Reddi,

M.B., & C.M., Madras.

CANCER has been known from time immemorial as the most dreadful of all human diseases. As its onset is insidious, being accompanied neither by pain nor by any other discomfort in its early stages, very often the patient seeks medical help only when the disease is fairly advanced and hence too late for a radical cure. The worst feature of this disease is that it kills the patient by its intense pain and acute suffering which is not equalled by any other known human ailment.

The name of Cancer has become known of late among the lay public of Madras by the recent, rather frequent, deaths of some of our prominent young men and women who became the unfortunate victims of this most cruel disease. We as medical students were taught that it was commonly a disease

of old age but in our actual practice we have seen it often to our great surprise in quite young people in whom the signs and symptoms of internal Cancer evade diagnosis and the disease is diagnosed only on the operation table when it has been found impossible to save the patient either from death or much worse from the agonising pain, a certain accompaniment of this human scourge unless it kills the patient early by profuse loss of blood or by the sudden interference of function of any of the vital organs in the body. We are glad that Madras has a good supply of radium as compared with other provinces, but unless the patient is taught to submit to early treatment, a permanent cure or relief is not possible. Therefore this disease has to be singled out from other less virulent ones and special measures

have to be devised to protect humanity from its ravages. A separate hospital for Cancer in this city or at least an additional Cancer block in each of the existing hospitals with Cancer clinics in their out-patient's is an absolute necessity in the same way as we have hospitals and clinics for Tuberculosis and Leprosy, wherein the medical students and graduates as well as the lay public will receive education and a special and separate instruction in regard to its preventive and curative methods of treatment. Such a teaching cannot be any longer postponed for a disease, the havoc of which upon the human body, cannot be described in a short article like this. Many in this city and outside are aware of the recent fatalities from this disease among the educated and the well-to-do, but we do not know how many among the ignorant poor have become its victims and die suffering unrelieved and their disease undiagnosed in ignorance and helplessness. Women, young and old, suffer most because of their colossal ignorance and their life of seclusion, natural shyness and fear to reveal their diseases and seek treatment only when their cases are advanced and hopeless. Even though the number of victims from this disease may not figure as many as those from other infectious diseases, yet the sum total of the pain and suffering caused by this disease will surpass that of all the other diseases put together. Therefore it is incumbent upon the public, profession and the state to give relief to the suffering humanity both by preventive and curative measures.

There should be established a separate and special Cancer clinic in every out-patient both in the General and in the Maternity Hospitals throughout this presidency and the Public Health Department and Health

Propaganda Boards should not only preach to the people but also publish pamphlets, as in England and other advanced countries, to educate the people on the early signs and symptoms of this disease and the need for early consultation and treatment. It is the duty of the state as well as that of the profession to broadcast and disseminate knowledge on these subjects to the poor and to the ignorant and show them the way to get relief for their suffering. We cannot any longer keep quiet and thus deny such a necessary and useful knowledge to the many that suffer and die without knowing how, when and where to get relief. We are glad that Bombay is going to have a Cancer Hospital due to the munificence and the world-famed generosity of the late Sir Dorabji Tata.

We are thankful that Madras has got a Children's hospital to commemorate the Prince of Wales, now King Edward's visit to India. If I may suggest, King George Memorial Fund which has been already ear-marked for the relief of sickness and suffering, may be devoted to the establishment of a hospital for Cancer in this city with up-to-date equipment and with research department and Cancer Clinics in every headquarters hospital wherein both early and advanced cases may find admission and doctors and students may have ample facilities to study the disease in all its varied aspects. If we in India are fortunate even a remedy may be soon found for this terrible curse of humanity as in the case of Malaria, Kalazar, Leprosy, and Tuberculosis. It is time now that a beginning should be made in this direction to tackle this most dreadful of all human ills so as to focus the attention of the profession and the public as well to bring knowledge to the door of the poor and the ignorant.

# Insanitary Habits of the City Dwellers

—By K. P. Bhat, B.A., B.L.,—

—Advocate, Madras.—

It is not an uncommon sight in most of the by-lanes and in some of the main streets also, to see a number of children sitting in a row on either side of the road near the gutters and easing themselves, and the parents, their mothers mostly, standing and watching them from the steps or verandah of their respective houses. No doubt this is an offence made punishable under the City Police Act and the parents of these children are liable to be prosecuted and fined when caught. But this seems to be more honoured in the breach than in the observance thereof, as most people who are guilty of this are not unaware of the fact that it is an offence.

Why is this so? Is it because that in most of these houses there are no latrines or privy where the children could answer their calls of nature or is it because that the elders consider that it is more convenient and even safer for the children to make them sit on the road-side and allow them to ease there and then take the children inside and wash them or is it because that the children themselves have a liking for this or probably the mothers like this kind of parading their children. It may be for any reason but certainly this is one of the dangers to the health of the city and one of the causes of its bad health.

Of course the roads are cleaned both in the morning and evening and the gutters are washed and swept; but this does not abate the nuisance as

this is a continuing public nuisance; the children come out at any part of the day and ease themselves—they having become used to it and considering it a privilege, and the mothers come out and watch their children committing this nuisance and in the meantime carry on some conversation with the neighbours or watch the traffic lest any passing cyclist or car comes dangerously near the children and knock down the little offenders. This is about children.

What about some of the older people? In the early hours of the morning as well as late in the nights one can also see some of these big burly people quietly easing on the road-side; as for urinating it is considered quite a normal thing and this nuisance can be committed at any part of the day or night and whether there is traffic or not or whether there are ladies passing by; and in whatever circumstances when they turn from the main street to a side-lane it is their prerogative and nobody can question them, though in some places sign-boards are seen notifying that those who commit nuisance will be prosecuted. In most places of course public latrines are provided for and some people are particular in getting in there only; nevertheless, passing the urine on the roadside is not considered to be an offence of any serious nature or even an offence at all by most of the people who ought to know better.

This again I consider as one of the

causes that ruin the health of the city.

A third thing one would notice is that most people consider that whatever dirt and rubbish and unwanted things there are inside the house they have simply to be collected and thrown out into the street. The house is neatly swept and cleaned and the womenfolk collect all the dirt and other old rubbish and bring them out and instead of throwing it into the dustbins provided for in most of the streets (in some streets I notice they are not found) they simply throw away on the roadside or deposit them quietly near

of the house, would be emitting that foul smell, having got stuck up in the gutters just under the steps or nearby.

Why should this be so? Is it because that these people do not realise the importance of their health or do they not realise the danger to their health and to the general health of the locality by making the surroundings so insanitary and unhealthy? Surely it cannot be said that there are no facilities and that these things cannot be avoided or that there is no way out of it and that it is a necessary evil of city life and must be put up with; only this requires proper education



*Competition between a covered and an uncovered dustbin.*

the gutters. A portion of the rubbish gets scattered all over the road by the breeze and another portion gets into the gutters and blocks the passage of other things and dirty water stagnates there and the result will be foul smell all around. And these people consider that they have cleaned their houses properly and in the evenings and mornings they also sweep and water the road in front of their houses and think that they have made their places very clean and healthy. But at the very next moment you can see the other nuisances mentioned above repeated and the rubbish thrown out

and propoganda and rousing of the civic consciousness of the people and they must be made to realise the danger that they are creating for their health by their own thoughtless actions and must be taught to avoid these things. One can say that these things have almost become the normal every day routine and almost a habit and takes some time to get them out of this.

Prosecutions of some of the offenders and punishment will not in any way, eradicate this evil completely; because these things can be taken cognizance of by the Police only when

they are committed in their presence and rarely such coincidences, committing of the nuisance and the presence of the Police officer, occur

The other more effective way is of course by education. The people must be made to realise the danger to their own health and the health of the locality by such actions on their part and how they can easily avoid these things

The health visitors of the corporation and those staff who are engaged for addressing each division on problems of health can very well concentrate on these evils pointed out above and to educate the people of each

division to discontinue these evil habits. There are many other habits which are also the causes for ruining the health of the city and I shall have occasion to refer to them in a later article.

Other organisations also which have for their object the improvement of the health of the city may co-operate in this and when once people realise that these things are a source of danger to their own health and that they can be easily avoided, they would certainly not repeat or continue these evil habits and that would mean a great improvement in the general health of the city.

## Topics of Interest from Periodicals

**Soya Bread.**—Soya beans contain little carbohydrate, much albumen and fat. Meal made from the beans is useful in the dietetic treatment of diabetes mellitus and of obesity.—*Medical World.*

**Chew your food thoroughly.**—If you chew your food thoroughly before swallowing it, any chance of your over-eating becomes less. Complete mastication, or good chewing, means better digestion and excellent exercise for your teeth.—*Medical Talk for the Home.*

**Vitamin G.**—Investigation at the University of California has shown that the prune of that state contains more vitamin G (anti-pellagra vitamin) than any other fruit. The dried prune

flesh affords half as much vitamin B as does whole wheat.—*S. in Good Health (U. S. A.)*

**Butter.**—Butter has been made and used by man for four thousand years. The Arabs were the first to discover it, purely by accident. They found fat in the milk which had been jolted about in skin bags as it was being transported on the backs of camels. At first it was not considered good for food, but was used as a medicine and an ointment. Even to-day, in Southern Europe and other warm countries, olive oil is preferred to butter as an article of food. In India, where the climate is very hot, butter is eaten; but it spoils so quickly that it must be prepared fresh every day. This is done in a very simple manner, by shaking milk in bottles.



The butter that was used twenty centuries before the birth of Christ, was semi-liquid in form and was always spoken of as being 'poured out', not as being spread on bread. It was made of sheep's or goat's milk. Only comparatively recently was cow's milk utilized for the manufacture of butter.—*Treasure Chest*.

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**Vitamin D and Sunless Days.**—After all the research spent on the vitamins it seems we are still a long way from agreement as to their sources and distribution in Nature. To take vitamin D even school children were taught that its most abundant and convenient sources were in egg-yolk and butter. Yet the pendulum seems to have swung the opposite way for the latest teaching is that we get little of it in either while that little varies widely from time to time. Then it was an article of faith with dieticians that fresh vegetables were the next best or almost preferable source of D, since no one can take much egg or butter without risking the dyspeptic penalty. And last of all, we are now told that no foods contain much vitamin D to speak of except in summer. It is all a matter of sunshine they say, the ultra-violet rays being the real source and when as in these northern climes, we get no winter sun, down goes the D content of natural food-stuffs. Dr. Harriette Chick in a Cantor Lecture on "Diet and Climate" lately gave a graphic explanation of the part played by sunshine in rickets through its changing the potential vitamin D (or ergosterol) in the subcutaneous fat into that factor, hence the need in winter time of egg-yolk and cod-liver oil for growing children. Here once more

we see how man adapts himself to climate as in the diet of the Esquimo and Arctic races, and quite as much does it show the ground for rickets, the penalty of our clouded skies, being known till recent days as the "English Disease".—*Medical World*.

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**The effect of Milk upon Metals and Metals upon Milk.**—"This investigation was undertaken at the Nebraska Experiment Station to determine the corrosive effect of milk upon copper, nickel, aluminum etc. and the effect of these metals upon milk under certain conditions.

"Copper and nickel were the only metals that corroded, and as a rule there was a heavier loss of nickel than of copper. Under an atmosphere of oxygen, copper corroded more during a 4-hr. exposure than did nickel. The weight losses of the other metals were within the range of experimental error. At 144° F an atmosphere of oxygen caused the greatest corrosion, air next, and carbon dioxide the least corrosion of stripes of copper and nickel in milk. Corrosion was less at 60° than at 144°, and the corrosion of copper at 60° was practically the same under the three atmospheres. For nickel an atmosphere of carbon dioxide at 60° caused the greatest corrosion, and there was practically no difference under the other atmospheres. Weight losses were determined from short periods of exposure. The rate of corrosion varied with the amount of surface per unit volume of milk exposed to the atmosphere. Copper was brightened and nickel darkened by exposure to milk, the intensity of discoloration being increased in an atmosphere of oxygen and long time exposure and decreased

by an atmosphere of carbon dioxide. The discoloration was also greater at 144° than at 60°

"Copper always caused a 'cappy' or tallowy flavour to develop in milk within 18 to 24 hours after exposure, and the off flavour was affected by the time of exposure and the length of storage. The flavour was greatly increased by an atmosphere of oxygen and decreased by an atmosphere of carbon dioxide. Nickel produced a metallic flavour only when corrosion was great, while the other metals apparently produced no flavour defects.—G. H. F. in *National Health Review*.

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**Snake Venom in Medicine.**—The uses of snake-venom in medicine have been well known for close on a century, and a generation has passed since Col. Elliot studied those of cobra venom in India, a research, he is understood to be continuing at the present time in connection with epilepsy. Then the accidental discovery that the substance had definite analgesic properties increased the interest in the subject and this reached its climax when French observations suggested its benefit in cancer. But all hopes in that direction proved illusory, any apparent improvement was found to be psychic, while even the analgesia was uncertain and at best, was inferior to that of morphine. More practical results were secured by Peck and Goldberger in America in treating purpura with the venom of the copper-head snake, and their success with it in hæmophilia and that of Dack in epistaxis decided the merits of the treatment. Since then Drs. Burgess Barnett and MacFarlane have made clinical trials with the venom of

"Russell's Viper," in cases of pronounced hæmophilia, in wounds, epistaxis, and dental hæmorrhage, whose dramatic results have secured for the remedy a final acceptance in therapeutics.—M. W.

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**Nutrition and Resistance to Disease.**—Reporting as medical officer of health for Stockton-on-Tees, Dr. G. C. M. M'Gonigle points out that the public now knows much more about how to live healthily than it did a few years ago but that the application of this knowledge is difficult unless local authorities continue strongly and actively to improve the environment of their populaces. He continues: "Humanity needs, in addition to a suitable maternal environment, the wherewithal to maintain individual fitness and resistance to disease. The dominant factor in the maintenance of health, the capacity for growth and the defence against disease is the nutritional state of the individual, which can only be maintained if a diet adequate in quantity and variety be available from conception, through the ante-natal period and continued throughout infancy, adolescence and maturity. Two factors are active in determining whether this optimum state of nutrition is attained or not. The first factor is that of knowledge of what to eat. Much educational work is still required to enlighten the public in this matter. Much is being done in this respect more especially in ante-natal and child welfare centres, but more is still needed. The second factor is capacity to purchase an adequate diet. Elsewhere I have written at length upon the importance of nutrition, and it is unnecessary on this occasion to recapitulate all that I have previously said.

## Laws of Health

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It will suffice to recall that such conditions as rickets, dental decay and many other conditions are nutritional in origin and can be prevented. Under nourishment and mal-nourishment are not necessarily or commonly due to shortage of food but to lack of certain essentials for an optimum nutritional state. The superiority of steel over iron for many purposes is certain but quantitatively the elements added to the iron are small in amount. Similarly the animal body built up from foodstuffs which lack adequate proportions of certain essentials, small in amount, is structurally but cast iron instead of fine steel. It has been stated that the principal cause of under-nourishment is a body unable to assimilate the food supplied to it day by day. I cannot subscribe to this statement, which is not based upon sound biological or scientific data. Under-nourishment and mal-nutrition may be contributed to by poor environment, by overcrowding, etc., but the fundamental verity remains that the dominant factor in such conditions is dietetic." Dr. M'Gonigle adds the public health service cannot by its own efforts raise the economic level of a community or cure industrial depression but that the ancillary services such as those of maternity and child welfare, unemployment insurance, public assistance and the unemployment assistance board can by a liberal and generous interpretation of their powers raise the nutritional status of certain parts of the population and so raise the powers to resist disease.—*The Medical Officer*.

1. Among the various ends of all desires,  
No inferior place our health requires.
2. It is the health that counts the most,  
And not the wealth of which we boast.
3. We can get to the goal of health,  
If we but count it as our wealth.
4. When health is the prize of a constant care,  
Of its multiple laws we should all be aware.
5. For body and mind to be equally sound,  
Learn to labour but to truth be bound.
6. Exercise can bring forth a bigger dividend,  
Than any other means we employ to that end.
7. Who eat to live, not live to eat.  
Grow to be active, if not athlete
8. Tongue and teeth when both are clean,  
One is to know his digestion is keen.
9. When we feel as well we might,  
The keen demands of appetite  
We must chew each morsel well,  
The well satisfied as taste should tell.
10. With Justice done to self and meal,  
We seldom get ill or worried feel.
11. Taking water pure and diet plain.  
From all excess we must refrain.
12. To ease appetite with simple most things,  
Ask but peasants what pleasure it brings.
13. 'Tis suitable food, not mine of health,  
That gives a sure receipt for health
14. It isn't rich food that gives one pain,  
'Tis but excess that makes him suffer again.
15. Care more for what your past experience  
Teaches  
Than to laugh at what the parson preaches.
16. There is a sovereign remedy open to all  
Which is equally efficacious to great and small.
17. 'Tis the practice of temperance and of fast,  
That brings back health and strength at last.
18. Who keeps no fast, no banquet ever enjoys,  
With health secret known, no illness, ever  
annoys
19. With occasional fast we need no drop nor pill,  
Hunger may starve but excess is sure to kill.
20. The laws of health who defy every day,  
All bad side bills as price shall pay.

Moti Ram, L.M.S. (1897) of Sargodha.

# Health Calendar—April 1936

By Mr. N. Rajaram Naidu,

23, Sivaraman St., Triplicane, Madras.

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|---------|----|--|
| Wed.    | 1  | Harvey the discoverer of the circulation of blood, born 1578                 |
| Thurs.  | 2  | The nation marches on the feet of little children.                           |
| Friday. | 3  | <i>Moharam.</i>  |
| Sat.    | 4  | Health is a greater asset than money.  |
| Sun.    | 5  | Lord Lister born 1827.   |
| Mon     | 6  | Fresh air and sunshine kill the germs of disease.                            |
| Tues.   | 7  | Why pay the unnecessary tax levied by preventable diseases.                  |
| Wed.    | 8  | Mother earth purifies filth.   |
| Thurs.  | 9  | The presence of communicable diseases must be made known to local officials. |
| Friday. | 10 | <i>Good Friday.</i>  |
| Sat.    | 11 | Houses should be always clean.   |
| Sun.    | 12 | <i>Easter Sunday.</i>  |
| Mon.    | 13 | <i>Tamil New Year's Day.</i>   |
| Tues.   | 14 | Dirt harbours Vermin.  |
| Wed.    | 15 | It is good to be merry at meals.   |
| Thurs.  | 16 | Wear loose clothing of reasonable material.                                  |
| Friday. | 17 | Good health increases our capacity to work and to be useful.                 |
| Sat.    | 18 | Spend holidays out of doors.   |
| Sun.    | 19 | Boiling renders all water safe for drinking purposes.                        |
| Mon.    | 20 | Do not throw kitchen refuse in the street.                                   |
| Tues.   | 21 | Life is only life when blest with health.                                    |
| Wed.    | 22 | A lamp uses as much air as a grown up person.                                |
| Thurs.  | 23 | Chewing promotes the flow of saliva into the mouth.                          |
| Friday. | 24 | Sickness is felt, health not at all.   |
| Sat.    | 25 | Flies spread typhoid fever : Screen against them.                            |
| Sun.    | 26 | Food should never be eaten stale.  |
| Mon.    | 27 | Cultivate total abstinence and regular habits.                               |
| Tues.   | 28 | Keep the gutters clean and free from refuse.                                 |
| Wed.    | 29 | The sleeping room should be well ventilated.                                 |
| Thurs.  | 30 | Good health is above wealth.   |
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