

these grafts were made at the bedside of the patient, and not on the operating table. The usual sterilising measures were taken. The wound was washed out with a bacteriological swab and dusted with penicillin-sulphathiazole powder before the graft was placed in position; the wound was then dressed with a saline-gauze, cotton-wool pressure dressing. This dressing was not changed for at least 48 hours and was usually left untouched for four days.

Skin which has been stored for about three weeks is normally used, but skin which had been stored for 63 days was found to be unchanged and could have been used without difficulty. The thinner the grafted skin, the quicker it grew on to the wound: the skin was freshly vascularised from beneath.

The latest experiment made in Britain on the storage and use of skin have shown that, after about three weeks, the new skin graft grows on to the wound thus sparing the patient in many cases, from further operations and, at the same time, reducing the length of his stay in hospital.

Joseph Kalmer.

### *Health Visitors' Page:*

## The Health of Your State is the State of Your Health

What do we mean when we say that "The Health of your State is the state of your health"?

The term health implies more than absence of disease in the individual and indicates a state of harmonious functioning of the body and mind in relation to the physical and social environment so as to enable him to enjoy life to the fullest possible extent in order to be of service to others.

Having this principle as our basis, let us now see the health of our country.

India is a vast country over a million and half square miles and her population nearly 400 million, speaking about 20 major languages, of various castes, creeds and prejudices. Facts and figures are dull things, except to experts, yet if we are to visualize India today we must have a few of these big facts and figures in our minds. The villages are innumerable in comparison with the few towns and cities. There are about 650,000 villages in which 89 per cent of the population live, and the historic cities and bazaars are packed to their capacities.

If we look into the social and economical level, poverty still is a major problem, owing to the remarkable increase in population. The production of food and the development of industry have not been able to keep pace with rapidly expanding numbers. The caste system, the practice of child marriage, the persistence of unhygienic habits, the extravagant expenditure on social and religious ceremonies still exists and are obstacles to her development and advancement. The education status is very low when compared with other countries and mainly in the villages there are very few people who can read and write. When health is lacking, then education is also lacking. In other words health and education must go together.

Our villages though flourishing in an abundance of fresh air, are lacking in healthful living. Many of our villagers produce fruits, vegetables, poultry etc. but alas very seldom they make use of them. The production is sold for money and the villager is even willing to sacrifice one or two meals.

There are well-to-do families undergoing starvation in most places due to lack of education. The master of the house enjoys life by engaging in gambling, drinking, smoking etc. leaving behind him discontentment, misery and unhappiness.

But thanks be to the Prohibition Act which not only restores the family affection, but wins souls from dreadful sins. It is gratifying to see that people are awakening to see the ill and deleterious effects of alcohol in the human system and we hear slogans from everywhere especially in the Christian Women's Temperance Union helping people to combat this dreadful habit.

In India we see diseases of all kinds everywhere. There are nutritional diseases predominant, waterborne diseases, airborne diseases, intestinal parasites, which to a great extent are preventable.

In towns and cities people mostly suffer from airborne diseases like tuberculosis, influenza, pneumonia, cold etc. due to congestion of population, improper humidity and lack of fresh air. Those who are engaged in working in factories and industries of cotton, iron, steel, stones, asbestos, mines, etc. suffer from industrial poison and show a peculiar tendency for respiratory diseases. The fabrics of cotton, small particles of steel, or iron or granite cause injury to the mucous membranes of the respiratory tract giving rise to diseases like silicosis, siderosis, anthracosis, and tuberculosis in accordance with the materials with which they come in contact.

There are very many people working in factories and industries who are quite ignorant of these diseases; but through their carelessness and lack of knowledge become victims of diseases and premature death.

I wonder whether they are protected from breathing such things by giving them masks to wear, and overalls to protect or whether they are given instructions concerning the dangers of industrial poisons. However as citizens, we should make it a real responsibility to bring up these our fellow-citizens from such dangers to health by instructing them in simple healthful living conditions.

A few days ago I happened to visit the tannery near our town and it was agonizing to see the deplorable conditions of the workers there. There are about 800 people dwelling in very small huts. These huts are not only very small in size but have no entrance for air except through a very small door-way which is shut most of the time. There is no facility for the education of children or for the care of mothers and infants; or for sufficient water supply. This must be the case with many of our factories and industries.

Nutritional diseases are predominant and they predispose the people to all kinds of infections by lowering the vitality of the individual. Deficiency diseases like rickets, scurvy, stomatitis are met with in many of the children. The existing conditions of rationing, black marketing, high cost of living, and lack of production leave bodies of young children and adults merely with skin and bones especially among the poor.

Waterborne diseases like typhoid, cholera and dysentery are prevalent all through the year. The hospital statistics have shown that many of the typhoid cases have come from the neighbouring villages. In towns and cities where people can use filtered chlorinated water; they are less liable to contract the diseases. Isolation hospitals and antityphoid inoculations of school children and others who are exposed to this infection in the families prevent the further spread of the disease.

In villages where the people are very ignorant, illiterate, and superstitious, they keep the diseased for a long time in the house till the disease is much advanced offering pujas to please the goddess of health; infecting others in the family and locality through polluted water and thus they become victims of death.

The sanitary system is very poor. In towns and cities where there is sufficient water supply there is efficient way of disposal of excreta through water-carriage system. Most of the drains can be seen clogged with all sorts of rubbish, excreta of human beings, animals, etc. due to lack of efficient sanitary arrangements and lack of running water through the drains. We can also see drains of dirty stagnant

water becoming reservoirs helping the breeding of mosquitoes and giving malaria freely to humanity. In all these cases many are the ill effects of breeding flies and mosquitoes. When will we get rid of all these? The prevalence of insanitary conditions in rural and urban areas are many. Hookworm infestations, filariasis and guinea worm diseases are met mainly with the rural population. The rural areas suffer from want of efficient disposal of night soil. People are in the habit of defaecating in the open field and hence the spread of hookworm is very easy when people walk about barefooted. Filariasis is seen mainly in the coastal regions and dirty stagnant water and thick vegetation favour the growth of this disease's by forming an abode for mosquitoes. Similary guinea worm diseases are also harboured through unprotected water supplies from step wells, mud around wells, tanks and pools.

The maternal and infantile death rates rank high in comparison with other countries. The number of women suffering from varying disabilities and discomforts, as a result of child bearing is also high. To tackle all these problems we should have hospitals, dispensaries, welfare centres, and clinics, especially in the villages as the majority of our people live in villages.

From what has been stated one can more or less visualize the health of our state, or province. It reveals that the health of the state is low and consequently it reflects on the individual or citizen of the State. But though our State is very low in health, it can be improved through education, improvement of social and economic conditions, adequate public health organization and legislation.

It is gratifying to see that the Government of India and private agencies are doing much to improve all these conditions. But as citizens of a free and democratic state, it is our sole responsibility and duty to help our motherland in all her achievements through our mutual help and co-operation. This may mean a little sacrifice of our comforts.

The cry in the villages is for help, but who will hear this cry and respond to it? Those of us who have the light; let us hold it high so that others will not have need to walk in the darkness of ignorance and superstition. We are lighted to lighten (others, let us all keep the torch burning,) so that others will see the light and come to the fold.

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### *Student Nurses' Page*

#### Farewell Party to Mrs. Carman

On the 28th September, 1948 a farewell Party was given by the Nursing Staff of Thomason Hospital, Agra to Mrs. P. Carman, former Matron, on her retirement from U.P. Nursing Services.

The Social began at 5 p.m., commencing with games, followed by a tea, after which small items of dancing and singing were performed by the Nursing Staff.

The address was then read and a small gift was presented in appreciation of her valuable services: