

Apple The Guardian of Health

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There is a well-known saying "An apple a day keeps the doctor away". This is not merely a saying but a good prescription to safeguard health.

Till some years back, except in parts of Kashmir, the plantations of apples were rarely known in other hilly tracts (which are suitable for its growth) of India. With the spread of knowledge about its usefulness and vitamin value, its growth has rapidly spread in Simla and Kulu hills of the Punjab and Kumaon Division of the United Provinces. It is a crop of great commercial value also, and still there are ample tracts of hilly lands in North-West India where this fruit can be grown to better the health of the nation.

The tempting aroma, and luscious flavour of the apple make it a universal favourite. It promotes secretion of appetite juice and thus stimulates digestion.

The sugar content of the apple is not very high, but it has very useful mineral salts. It contains potassium and sodium, lime, magnesium and a trace of iron. Though the protein contents is small but it is very fine. It also contains free organic salts, malic and gallic. Its therapeutic and medicinal value in cases of diarrhoea specially of infants and children has recently been established. Both in Unani and Ayurvedic systems of medicines stewed apple in sugar coupled with gold and silver leaves is prescribed for heart trouble and general debility.

Student Nurses' Section

Radium

BY J. D. DORAI RAJ, R. N.

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I am sure most of you have heard of Radium but very few of you will have seen it. I have written in this article only the elementary things about Radium. My training school (Scudder's Hospital, Ranipet) is one of the fortunate hospitals to deal with radium. I have worked for nearly a year as a radium custodian which gave me the opportunity to know something about it.

Radium.—During the present century, the power of science is increasing. Hardly a week passes without some important discovery being announced. The discovery by Madame Curie, of radium, is perhaps one of the most important events in the history of man. Radium is a metal of the alkaline earth group similar to calcium, barium, strontium and magnesium. It is extracted from pitch blende. Its symbol is Ra. Its melting point is 700 degrees centigrade. What is generally referred to as radium is *Chloride* of Radium. It resembles small crystals of common salt which may be crushed into a fine powder.

Discoverers.—The discovery of radium can be traced to the French Scientist Henri Becquerel in 1897, who undertook the systematic study of fluorescent and phosphorescent substances after the discovery of Rontgen's Rays. Fortunately, he began these experiments on some Uranian compounds and having put these minerals in small trays, of aluminium and copper, placed the trays on photographic plates and obtained direct photographs by exposure to sunlight. One day, the sky became overcast and so he placed the trays in a drawer where they remained for several days. Inquisitively he developed the plates without exposing them to sunlight and found definite dark dots on them. He soon found out that the darkening of the photographic plates was due to some effect emanating from the substance itself, possessing the power to penetrate the bottom of the metal trays. Becquerel had watched Marie Curie in the laboratory, had recognised in her a trained and a gifted experimenter. He