

STUDENT NURSES' ASSOCIATION SECTION

Reports and Articles for this Section will be welcomed by the
Hony. Organising Secretary, Miss Sharwood-Smith, Lady Hardinge
Hospital, New Delhi

DEAR STUDENT NURSES,

We have had a very welcome gift from the Students of the Lady Reading Health School, Delhi of Rupees 150 towards the Student Nurses' Fund. It was collected by means of a Fun fare and is a very great contribution for which we thank them very much.

I am still waiting for some contributions from you for this page, perhaps you will have more inspiration during the hot weather—anyway please send me in your essays.

Yours sincerely,
K. SHARWOOD SMITH.

Diet in Health and in Disease

Mrs. Bedford, Sister Tutor, Dufferin Hospital, Calcutta

Of recent years the subject of diet in health and in disease has assumed greater and greater importance from every point of view. From a Medical point of view diet has become so important that a special department has been opened in most big English Hospitals under a highly trained permanent official known as the Sister-Dietician—and this in turn necessitates a separate kitchen for the preparation of accurately weighed meals of a known composition.

It is interesting to note the changes that have taken place in connection with diets. In the old days—and not so very old either—there were 3 diets. 1—Fluid, composed mainly of milk with occasional eggs, 2—Light diet, composed almost entirely of fish, with occasional chicken, 3—Full diet, this usually was beef or mutton with vegetables, bread and potatoes. There were no special diets for the nephritic or for the diabetic. No attempt was made to balance the diet, as the study of the calorific value or quantities had not taken place. Today there is perhaps, a tendency to go to the other extreme and we get 'food faddists'. In some American Hospitals, I believe, the actual diet is prescribed in so many grams of proteins, fats or carbohydrates. The Dietician then consults the patient as to his likes and dislikes and draws up a diet containing only what the patient likes, so long as these articles of diet contain the requisite number of calories. The food is prepared and weighed by the skilled assistants. And the work of these skilled people may be completely ruined if someone puts an extra article of diet or a condiment on to the tray prepared by these skilled people. For instance if the patient is on a salt free diet, someone may put a salt cellar on to his tray or in the case of a diabetic someone may thoughtlessly put sugar on to his tray! That the importance of diet is now recognised is proved by the fact that the Universities include Dietetics as a course suitable for a Diploma. In India we have to take into account the poverty of the average Indian, which makes it very difficult to give an adequate balanced diet. Also there are the questions of cast or creed, here eggs may not be eaten, there no fish or meat or eggs are eaten, others are very strict vegetarians. We have to teach these people the food value of the articles they *can* eat, or the food value of the articles they can afford to buy. Often they are not able to buy milk even, so some substitute must be found. They need proteins, fats,

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carbohydrates (starches and sugars), salts of various kinds, vitamins and extractives (to increase the flow of the natural juices of digestion). The prevalence of Beri Beri, Rickets, Osteomalacia (softening of the bones in an adult) must prove the need for educating the people about the food they eat. Not only the poor people need this education. Sometimes even the poor person is the better off, as he may eat the unmilled rice with its most nutritious part still in the rice—the germ and husk—which provides the Vitamin B. & E. In the wealthier classes the polished table rice is more often used, but it is a pity, as the husk and the germ have been removed, therefore the food value is considerably lessened. The poorer classes also know that to germinate their gram makes it still more nutritious, they do not know that this gives them the Vitamins B. & E., but they do know that it is better for them. To do this the gram (chola or peas) is placed in water for at least 12 hours, then the water is thrown away (or used as the basis for soup) and the wet gram is put between wet clean cloths for another 12 hours, by this time there is a little shoot appearing, this gives the Vitamin B. & E. In some Hospitals the anæmic or Beri Beri patients are given germinating gram daily for the sake of the Vitamins. They are also given plenty of spinach pulp or water, valuable for the iron and many Vitamins which it contains. The humble spinach—disdained by most people and of such good food value particularly in the tropics where people suffer so much from anæmia. In some parts of the country it is called 'pulum sagh' and can be had very cheaply. This can be given or the water from it may be given even to a little child, if over 6 months old, and the spinach is boiled very soft.

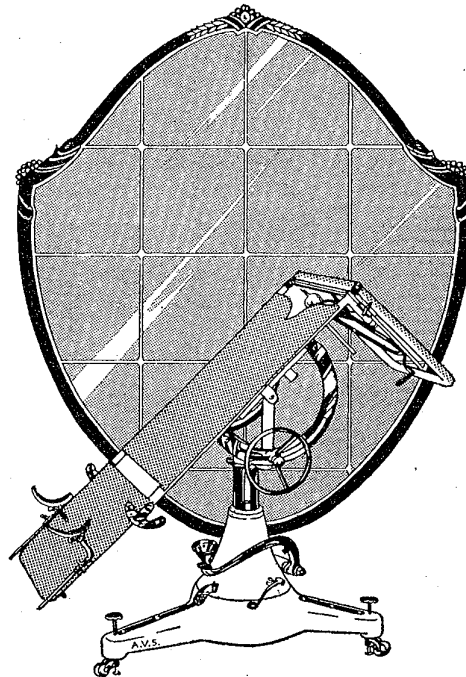
The amount of energy we have to supply to the body is obviously proportional to the amount of work expected of the body, but there must be a basal requirement apart from any extra work performed by the body. If we take food in excess of the amount we really need for the functioning of the body, including all its recreations and exercises in addition to the work required of it, then obviously we are taking too much, so it is converted into fat and stored 'around us'; so we have our stout people; unless there are other contributory causes. Or again, if some of the glands are not functioning properly we may require more or less diet. Thus if the subject is at absolute rest there must be a constant consumption of oxygen per unit of time and this represents the amount of combustion of food necessary to produce sufficient energy for the essential physiological systems, such as the cardio-vascular (heart and blood systems) and respiratory systems. This is known as the basal requirement of the body. From this basal metabolism the actual number of calories can be calculated, corresponding to the oxygen consumption necessary to maintain the subject's existence. Therefore all dietetic considerations must begin with this number of calories as a basis. The average basal calorific requirements for average height and weight vary from 1500 to 1800 calories per day, and this must form the basis of any dietetic regime. Of these, protein forms 500 calories per day. With regard to the rest of the calories it must be made up of fats and carbohydrates in what is known as the anti-ketogenic ratio, that is—the amount of fats compared with the amount of sugar that will keep the patient free from ketosis or acidosis. (Too much fat or too much sugar, both leading to unhealthy symptoms.) Usually a ratio of carbohydrates 2 to fats 1 is considered ideal. It is a well-known fact that the metabolism (the using up) of fats cannot take place unless there is a sufficiency of carbohydrates.

We have special diets for diseases now—diabetes, nephritis, heart disease, constipation, sprue, beri-beri, rickets, osteomalacia, antenatal diet, for dysentery, enteric etc., even down to the modern one for 'slimming'.

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I think I have said enough to make one realise that we must educate our people, particularly the future mothers, who have the health of the nation in their hands when the babies are growing up. An adequate, well balanced diet begun in childhood lays the foundation for a healthy adult life.

Perhaps the following table will be of interest.

VITAMIN	FOUND IN	NECESSARY FOR	DEFICIENCY CAUSES
<i>A. Fat soluble.</i> Stored in the tissues of all green vegetable eating animals.	All Animal fats. Cabbage, lettuce, water cress, tomatoes, spinach, yolk of eggs, cheese, milk, cream, Made in the body by the carotene in all yellow vegetables and fruits. Very little in ghee. None in olive oil or margarine.	Growth. Healthy epithelium. Prevents infection (particularly in pregnancy).	Xerophthalmia—hardening of the conjunctiva. Corneal ulcers. Impairs growth. Colds. Pyorrhoea. Bronchitis. Urinary tract infections. Thought to cause calculi (stones in rats.)
<i>B. Water soluble.</i> Called :— <i>B. 1.</i> Anti Beri Beri. <i>B. 1.</i> Anti Neuritic. <i>B. 2.</i> Anti pellagra. There are other B vitamins, but these are the best known.	Fresh vegetables. Found in seeds :— Peas, beans, dhal, (lentils.) Germinating gram, or seeds. Yeast. Marmite. Tomatoes. Carrots. Peaches. Bemax. Spinach. Fresh milk. Whole meal. Whole rice. Whole millet seed. Wheat bran. Liver. Eggs and kidneys.	Healthy mucous membrane. Resistance to disease. Healthy skin (pellagra is a dermatitis with pigmentation and erythema) Growth.	<i>B. 1.</i> Beri Beri. <i>B. 1.</i> Multiple neuritis (the wet type of beri beri has permeable instead of impermeable mucous membrane.) <i>B. 2.</i> Pellagra Stunted growth in rats.
<i>C. Water soluble.</i> Anti-scorbutic.	Oranges } Citrus fruits. Limes } Lemons } Cabbage. Spinach. Turnips. Fresh raw milk. Fresh meat. Grapes. Tomatoes. Prunes. Rhubarb. Green Vegetable. Pineapples. Boiling, Plus contact with the air, kills - Vitamin C. Any Soda kills Vit. C.	Prevention of scurvy. Destroyed by boiling. Replace with fresh Fruit juices. Dried milks do not contain Vit. C.	Scurvy. Hæmorrhages into the intestines, skin, bone, mucous membranes and joints. A very painful condition. Sailors used to suffer very badly from scurvy at one time.

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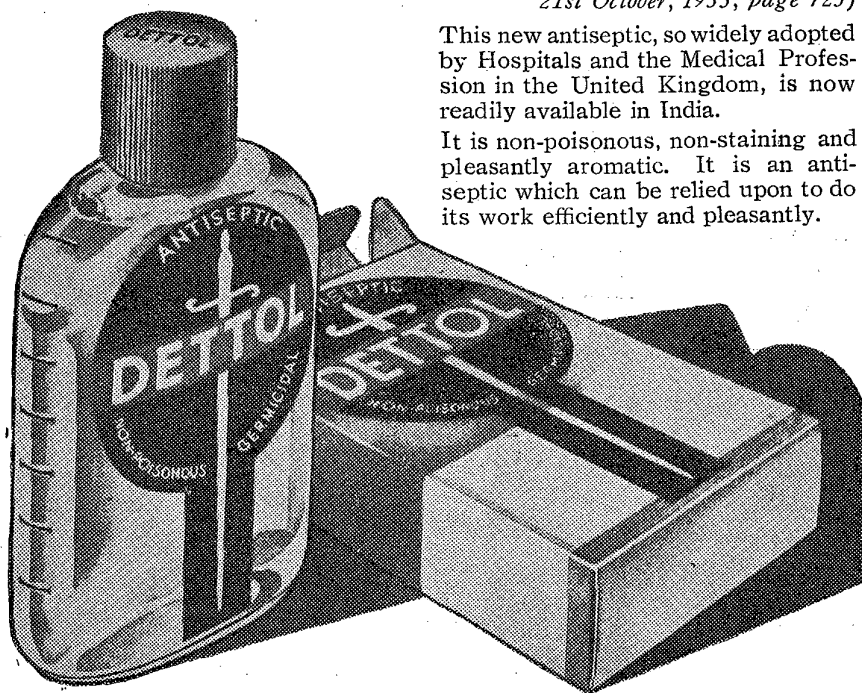
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(vide '*British Medical Journal*'
21st October, 1933, page 723)

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VITAMIN	FOUND IN	NECESSARY FOR	DEFICIENCY CAUSES
<i>D.</i> Fat soluble, associated with Vit. A. Anti-rachitic.	All animal fats. Cotton seeds. Codliver oil. All fish liver oils. Oats. Full rice. Young barley. Egg yolk. Meat. All livers. Halibol. Adexalin. Haliborange. The action of the sunshine on the skin, plus the ergosterol formed by the food makes this Vitamin.	Healthy bone, blood, teeth. For Calcium and Phosphate metabolism.	Rickets } In Dental } children. caries } Osteomalacia in adult Lack to A and D predisposes to tuberculosis.
<i>E.</i> Fat soluble.	In vegetable oils. Green leaves. Germinating seeds. All young green veg. Rice.	Pregnancy in animals Rats abort without it.	Sterility in animals.

THE QUIET HOUR

Life

By G. E. Swain

'In Him was life.'

What a wonderful thing life is! Who can tell its worth or describe its power. We of the nursing profession know much of its worth. How we watch its signs in our patients. That mere flicker is guarded with all the skill and fortitude we can command. And, oh, the joy when the flicker once more becomes a flame! We have conquered death and our patient lives again! Our hearts sing and the burden is lifted.

In John i. 4 we read, 'In Him was life.' The Lord Jesus Christ is the centre and source of all life; life in a fuller sense than that merely of the body. He said 'I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly.' John x. 10. And on the very eve of His suffering death on the cross He could say, 'Because I live, ye shall live also.' John xiv. 19.

God desires that we should have life—abundant life for the body and spirit. It was not, nor is, His desire that His creatures should be suffering and weak. You remember He said of the woman who had suffered of an infirmity and whom He healed on the Sabbath day, 'Ought not this woman whom Satan hath bound, lo, these 18 years be loosed from this bond.' There are also other instances where He attributed bodily ailments to the work of Satan. Also notice that when He was healing the palsied man His words were 'Thy sins be forgiven thee' Matt. ix. 2. Therefore we see that there are two enemies to the body, Satan and sin. How often are these precious bodies which God has given to us sinned against, and thereby God is not honoured.

The deliverance from these two enemies is found in the Lord Jesus Christ. He was manifested to destroy the works of Satan. 1 John iii. 8;