

Milk.

By Clive Beech.

MILK IS THE ONLY FOOD in the world which comes naturally from the living body. Eggs are not intended for food, but milk is. Small wonder that it has always been recognised as valuable for health. The present cult of milk-drinking is nothing new. The Ancient Hebrews drank as much milk as they did wine, while athletes of Ancient Greece built up their stamina on it. Their womenfolk also drank it, but favoured it more for bathing in.

A glass of milk passes through the human stomach in one hour, whereas bread takes almost $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours to be digested, and pork almost $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Milk fat, incidentally, is the most easily digested of all the edible fats. But cows' milk does not have the highest fat content, although it is quite sufficient for our needs. Goats' milk has one and half the fat content, and asses' milk also contains more fat. But the most fat is found in the milk of whales. This contains five times the fat of cows' milk, and will not mix with water, or young whales being fed would have their nourishment diluted. Strangely enough the fat content of milk is higher in hot, dry countries than it is in cooler lands. As they can eat almost anything and still produce double the quantity of milk to that of a cow, in proportion to their weight, goats are the most efficient milk-producers, especially in hot lands. Buttercups, by the way, do not improve the quality of milk or the butter made from it. The bright yellow colour of the fat comes from the bottled sunshine in the grass, and is always more noticeable in early summer, when the growth of fodder is at its height.

Summer milk also contains four times more Vitamin D than does winter milk, but a bottle left in the sun for half an hour without being covered loses nearly all its Vitamin C content. A gallon of average cows' milk contains 144 oz. water, 6 oz. fat, 6 oz. protein, $7\frac{1}{2}$ oz. sugar and $1\frac{1}{2}$ oz. minerals. Each single globule of fat measures one twelve-thousandth of an inch in diameter. It is these globules which make milk white in colour. For some unexplained reason, measures of milk in various countries do not always correspond. A gallon of milk in England weighs nearly $10\frac{1}{2}$ lbs., but in America a gallon weighs only just over $8\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. Although all the physical, chemical ingredients of milk have been recognised and measured in the laboratory, all attempts to make milk artificially have proved a failure.

Medical experts say that in spite of the contrary belief, it is better to drink milk quickly than to sip it slowly. The former method encourages speedy digestion, whereas sipping milk forms a large curd in the stomach which will take longer to deal with. According to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, U.S.A., milk is by no means a universally accepted food. One person in five just cannot digest it, and one person in 15 is positively poisoned by it.

Dried milk is also not a wholly new development. According to Marco Polo, the great Venetian explorer, the Mongol races of the fourteenth century used to travel on long journeys taking with them a 10 lb. brick of dried milk powder. Each morning a small lump was broken off the block, put into a leather bottle with water and well mixed up by the novel method of hanging the

bottles on the saddles of their mules. After a few miles' march, by about midday, the milk was ready to drink. Unfortunately Marco Polo left no record as to just how the milk was powdered. Milk bars are new ideas, but as long ago as 1907 a London dairy patented a penny-in-the-slot milk supplier. It held 20 quarts of milk and had a clockwork stirrer to keep the cream evenly distributed as well as refrigeration plant to prevent the milk from going sour.

Although milk often turns during a thunderstorm, this is not due to the effect of the thunder nor to the electricity caused by the lightning, but is due to the intense oppressive heat in the atmosphere beforehand.

An American professor avers that many millions of gallons of milk are lost annually throughout the world because of the nervous disposition of cows. Certainly it is a fact that if a cow is frightened unduly, or put in strange surroundings, or even neglected after regular encouragement or fondling, her milk yield will go down or stop altogether for some days. Most dairymen realise that keeping the cows contented and happy is as important as supplying them with plenty of food and water.

Milk baths have been well-known for centuries, but milk in a swimming bath is something new. Yet it has been tried, a few years ago, when a municipal swimming pool was half filled with milk—needless to say in America—and a swimming marathon organised and kept up until the milk began to turn to butter.

But however it is treated, milk remains the nectar of the gods, the first drink of early youth, the builder of bodies and the comfort of old age. It was no chance that the Promised Land overflowed with Milk and Honey.

National Association for the Prevention of Tuberculosis.

Services of Dedication for Nurses.

THIS YEAR THE National Association for the Prevention of Tuberculosis is arranging its annual special Services of Dedication for nurses on Sunday 25th April.

One service will take place at 3.30 p.m. at the Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square, London, W.C.2, at which the United Hospitals Festival Choir will lead the singing, and the collection will be in aid of the N.A.P.T. Harefield Fund for Nurses.

A service for Catholic nurses will be held at the same time at the Church of Corpus Christi, Maiden Lane, Strand, London, W.C.2, and the collection devoted to the same cause.

Another service will be held at the Canongate Kirk (the Kirk of Holyrood House, Edinburgh) at 3.0 p.m., and the collection will also be held for the N.A.P.T. Harefield Fund for Nurses.

A Benediction for nurses will be held at St. Francis Church, 53 Lothian Street, Edinburgh at 3.0 p.m., and the collection will be in aid of the N.A.P.T. Fund for Nurses who have contracted Tuberculosis.

In this way the N.A.P.T. provides the opportunity for nurses to unite in rededicating themselves to the wonderful work.

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