

Water may be drawn from an impure source, such as a polluted well or surface stream, from organic or sewage matter, a leaking drain, cesspool or manure heap in close proximity. This would be highly dangerous if any of the water were used for drinking and cooking purposes. The germs of typhoid, especially if the patient's stools were imperfectly disinfected before being discharged, would certainly convey infection if water were drawn from a source such as above. Rain water is likely to be contaminated by the air it comes through, by decaying matter on the roofs of houses, and in the cisterns in which it is stored, especially if such be unclean or leaden ones, owing to the action of the soft water dissolving the lead coating. House filters, if not frequently cleaned, are a source of pollution rather than otherwise. Standing water in a sick room may convey disease on its ingestion by another person.

Town water may be contaminated by the land through which it flows, by the storage tank or cistern, or by the conveying pipes being coated with a too soft coating of lead, or by a break in a pipe, allowing the entrance of organic or disease-laden material to enter its flow.

Mineral impurities may produce the condition subsequently developing into goitre. Lead-poisoning may occur from the action of soft water on storage cisterns lined with lead, or from lead being dissolved from service pipes by a non-mineral water. The symptoms of lead-poisoning are chiefly indigestion, colic, and a paralysis of the forearm, sometimes kidney disease.

Diseases caused by water-borne infection are chiefly cholera, diarrhoea, enteric fever, diphtheria, skin diseases.

Diseases frequently conveyed by infected milk are scarlet fever, diphtheria, epidemic enteritis, and tuberculosis; this latter is particularly liable to infect infants and young children, causing "consumption of bowels." Tinned and unwholesome foods give rise to ptomaine poisoning, symptoms of vomiting, diarrhoea, intestinal pain, and collapse or shock may take place rapidly.

Sickness and diarrhoea accompany the ingestion of all unsound food, acting as it does by irritating the intestinal tract.

Animal parasites in meat undestroyed by cooking may remain in the human body and give rise to troublesome complication, some producing anæmia, such as the blood-sucking round worms. Threadworms produce in children an irritation much affecting the nervous system.

HONOURABLE MENTION.

The following competitors are accorded honourable mention:—Miss G. FitzGerald, Miss F. Sheppard, Mrs. M. Talbot, Miss T. Robinson, Miss Chapman, Miss Macdougall, Miss T. O'Brien, Miss Gladys Tatham.

QUESTION FOR NEXT WEEK.

Describe your management of the patient's breasts in an obstetrical case from the moment her child is born.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS.

Una, the organ of the Royal Victorian Trained Nurses' Association, states editorially:

"It will be of great interest to our readers to learn that though the R.V.T.N.A. cannot from its present constitution be affiliated with the International Council of Nurses, the difficulty in the way may be overcome. National groups of associations only can be so received. Already Great Britain and Ireland, the United States, Germany, Holland, Finland, Denmark, Canada, India, and New Zealand are members of the wider council, and it would be a grand thing if Australia could be one also before long.

"For this purpose the R.V.T.N.A. and the A.T.N.A. will have to come to some formal union with a central committee, which may bear some such title as 'Australian Federation of Nurses' Associations.' This united committee will have to be composed entirely of nurses. . . .

"The next congress is to be held at San Francisco in 1915, and it is earnestly hoped that Australia will make an effort to have four delegates at that representative gathering."

The National Council of Trained Nurses of Australasia would, in our opinion, be a very fitting title for the federated Associations.

SISTER HILDEGARD.

Those born in the purple often find its envelopment restrictive, and are now wisely shedding a few of its trammels. This appears especially to be the case with Austrian Archduchesses. Recently the Archduchess Isabella, a niece of the Dowager Queen of Spain, has passed through the six months' Red Cross course at Vienna as "Sister Hildegard," and will now proceed to Spain to make herself of use in a Spanish hospital. The Press, of course, presents the lady as a martyr, repudiating her rank and title. This is contradicted. The Archduchess does not propose to spend the remainder of her life in seclusion, but to devote herself to a useful career, and enjoy the peace of mind which usually results.

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