

coal tar, etc., so that they cannot evaporate, and the sulphur dioxide and other impurities are irritating not merely to the eyes but to the air passages; as a result respiratory disorders tend to increase after a fog, and during a fog, it is advisable to keep the windows closed as carbon dioxide is less serious than the contaminations of a London fog. The last three months of winter are those in which illness is most prevalent; in summer not only do we ourselves store up health, but also it is probably that the earth itself "stores up health," and at least it stores up heat to some extent.

There are two means whereby illness can be prevented especially in winter (1) by raising the individual's powers of resistance, and (2) by the control of external conditions. Anything which keeps our health at a high level raises our power of resistance to disease, but there is considerable distinction between resistance to many common diseases such as pneumonia and resistance to the specific fevers such as scarlet fever and measles. In the latter case good health does not necessarily offer resistance, and therefore there should never be neglect of precautions against infectious diseases simply because a person happens to be particularly healthy.

In winter, and indeed at all times, the question of food is of paramount importance in the prevention of disease. In that season we should eat those foods which give heat without too much bulk; fats and carbohydrates should be increased. From a weight to weight point of view, fats have more than double the heat giving power of any other food constituent and animal fats contain the anti-rachitic vitamin D and the anti-infectious vitamin A. We cannot all digest the fish oils, but we can nearly all digest good butter and therefore we should eat plenty of that in winter as well as milk, eggs, mutton fat and the like. Carbohydrates should also be increased in winter, but never at the expense of fats; plenty of green vegetables, fruit and especially oranges should also enter into the dietary.

Clothing should not be heavier than is necessary to keep the body warm and should be sufficiently porous to permit of the circulation of air. The skin should be trained to meet changes of temperature as otherwise a person becomes more liable to diseases such as pneumonia, rheumatism, and the like.

Ventilation in winter, as in summer, should be good and windows are the best means of securing this. Dampness in houses should be avoided; it may penetrate to the upper storeys through defective slates or tiles, walls or choked gutters and such defects ought to be remedied. But dampness coming from below is much more serious because difficult and expensive to remedy. Frequently it is due to the lack of a proper damp proof course if the house is an old one. A damp proof course is essential if a house is to be healthy, and also the house should have concrete over the whole area it covers and between this and the flooring there should be provision for ventilation. The fact that the house is defective in the matter of its construction, in relation to preventing the rise of ground moisture, is most readily detected by the appearance of damp in cupboard walls and the lower portions of wall paper.

Exercise in winter is important, and if you cannot manage it in any other way shorten your bus rides to and from work.

Natural sunlight should always be utilised, but if unobtainable in winter a weekly dose from a mercury vapour or carbon arc lamp is a good substitute. In 1927-28, Dr. Maughan and Dr. Smiley took ninety-four Freshmen of Cornell University, U.S.A., who were specially liable to take colds and divided them into groups of forty-five and fifty. The first group were irradiated regularly by a mercury vapour lamp once a week during the winter and the second group were untreated. The incidence of colds

in the irradiated group was reduced by 40 per cent. compared with the other group. Another grouping in 1929-30 confirmed the experiment with a considerably higher reduction in colds. But sunlight treatment is a powerful tonic and stimulant and must not be used in excess; a weekly dose, as used by Drs. Maughan and Smiley is quite sufficient for those who are healthy and wish to remain so; in illness the frequency and sizes of the doses of light must be carefully regulated by a medical expert. Vaccines are often useful, but are not a guarantee against colds.

Summing up, health in winter may be maintained by good food, especially good fats, warm light clothing, daily exercise in the open air, sunlight and avoidance of damp.

With regard to the diseases common in summertime to avoid ill results from too much sun, efforts at sun bathing should be gradual; people may become quite ill by two hours' hot sun bathing by the sea. Caution should be observed in connection with the preservation of food if diseases like summer diarrhoea are to be avoided. Hay fever is due to the pollen of plants, and is often prevented by a process of inoculation with certain types of proteins.

LECTURE.

TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS OF THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS.

Major Norman Macleod's lecture on the traditions and customs of the Highlands proved both interesting and amusing, and he traced the origins of many of these to their sometimes curious sources; we had glimpses into earlier ages which showed how facilities for travel and more frequent communication with other parts of the country had altered the life of the Highlands, sometimes for better sometimes for worse. Particularly interesting were some of the superstitions existing from an olden time and tales of the witches, of those possessed of second sight, and of the moon worship which had sent its reflection down into modern customs and habits; then various beliefs in spirits, in woodland and water nymphs and kelpies was a very interesting part of the lecture, and the Highlanders knew which hillsides and streams were popular among the fairies and which were avoided. We had a glimpse into the old laws of the Highlands and into the long pedigrees in which the crofters and cottars could trace their generations. The making of the tartans and the origins of the various emblems and badges of the clan came in for their share of attention; indeed Major Macleod claimed that even the Druids wore the tartan. The lecturer referred to the great value set on education by the Highlanders and the sacrifices through which this was often attained, sacrifices which had served to swell the ranks of doctors of divinity, medicine and literature to a great degree. Altogether the lecture was a most interesting glimpse into the psychology of a people isolated more or less for centuries in the beautiful glens and wild hills of the West.

MESSRS. COW AND GATE'S MEDICAL BULLETIN.

The attention of the Nursing Profession is drawn to this interesting monthly publication issued by the Cow and Gate Medical and Research Laboratories. It contains useful summaries of and selections from recent reports and pronouncements on infant feeding questions and dietetic research; bacteriological investigations of milk supplies and milk production in general are subjects also reported on and discussed at some length.

The Bulletin is a very convenient and well arranged summary for the nurse who is interested in these questions, but has not sufficient time to collect or extract her own material. Copies of the Bulletin will willingly be provided on application to Cow and Gate, Ltd., Medical and Research Department, Guildford.

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