

home) of plenty of fresh milk, wholemeal bread, fruit or vegetables, or both, and roots.

Conditions which were not common to all five homes were the drinking of cod liver oil and the brushing of teeth. In some homes no use was made of cod liver oil, and in others, toothbrushes were conspicuous by their absence. In some cases the supply of sugar was certainly liberal. It may be noted in passing that 24 of the 159 children with perfect teeth, examined at the University Hygiene Institute, had enjoyed a daily and plentiful ration of sugar. Indeed, one of these children had taken large doses of sugar on medical advice because of a certain form of vomiting to which he was liable. Yet, both he and his sister, also a great consumer of sugar, possessed perfect teeth.

These observations suggest that dental caries is not the penalty for the consumption of sugar, but is due to a defective supply of vitamins and minerals in the daily food. In other words, caries is a deficiency disease which is aggravated by lack of sleep and fresh air. If these two factors are provided in sufficient quantities, the appetite and digestion are bound to benefit, and the result of a combination of these beneficial influences will not only be a decline in the frequency of dental caries, but also a decline in the incidence of rickets. In my opinion the ability of the toothbrush to prevent dental caries has been overrated, and I believe that no reliable evidence exists incriminating sugar as a direct cause of dental caries.

(Communicated by the Secretariat of the League of Red Cross Societies).

LEAGUE OF RED CROSS SOCIETIES.

M. Bonabes de Rougé has been appointed Secretary-General of the League of Red Cross Societies in succession to Mr. Ernest J. Swift, who resigned upon his election as Vice-Chairman of the American Red Cross, who, it will be remembered, took an active part in helping to found the Florence Nightingale International Foundation. M. de Rougé joined the staff of the Secretariat of the League in 1924—since which date he has taken an active part in its numerous activities and has received wide recognition from many governments.

M. de Rougé is Chevalier of the Legion of Honour, Officer of the Order of St. Sava, Officer of the Crown of Italy, and Knight of Honour of the Sovereign Order of Malta. Many national Red Cross Societies have manifested their appreciation of the services rendered by M. de Rougé by conferring upon him their official decorations.

During the meeting of the Nursing Advisory Committee of the League of Red Cross Societies, it will discuss measures for establishing a relief service and to define the rôle of the nurses in war and disaster. Now that war is fought barbarously from the air, the service of Red Cross Nurses in the field becomes more and more precarious, and yet means must be found for the nursing of the sick and wounded by women in war.

AIR RAID PRECAUTIONS RESERVE.

The British Red Cross Society, at the request of the Home Office, is preparing to enrol an Air Raid Precautions Reserve, to consist of men and women drawn from the public, qualified by the possession of the Society's Certificate in First Aid in Chemical Warfare, such persons to serve in connection with Air Raid Precautions duties with a Detachment of the Society. Their instruction will be designed to meet the requirements of the work the individuals will be called on to carry out, which may differ from that of fully-trained Detachment members.

THE HORRORS OF CIVIL WAR IN SPAIN.

From Madrid comes the information that an epidemic of typhus has broken out.

The epidemic affects both the Government and the Nationalist forces, and it is stated that General Franco's staff is just as much perturbed as his adversaries, since the disease is causing ravages in the Nationalist as well as in the Government ranks.

The Valencia Government has asked the League of Nations to send a medical mission to Spain to deal with the epidemic, and the Pasteur Institute of Paris has already answered its appeal.

NEUTRAL RELIEF FUND FOR SPAIN.

The "General Relief Fund for Distressed Women and Children in Spain" is making an appeal to mitigate the sufferings of women and children, the victims of uncivilised methods of war. A Committee supported by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Archbishop of Westminster plead for victims in whatever part of Spain they are found. Many women and children have had to leave their homes and are destitute. Many of the children are orphans or have been separated from their parents. They lack food, clothing, and shelter; they are without medicines and medical supplies. Hunger and disease threaten them.

The Committee have already sent out a first consignment of supplies to Burgos *via* Lisbon and another to Barcelona, and any funds that are entrusted to them will be used with equal impartiality for the sole purpose of relieving distress. They will endeavour to co-operate with other organisations which are equally impartial, and every care will be taken to ensure that the relief is administered efficiently.

A LEAGUE INQUIRY.

The League correspondent of *The Times* reports that an inquiry into the epidemic of influenza in Northern Europe is being conducted by the Health Section of the League of Nations. So far returns have been received only down to December 27th; these show that influenza was specially prevalent in Berlin and Copenhagen and in the Northern European countries generally, as well as in the South of England. A *questionnaire* has since been sent out by the League's experts, and the replies so far received are understood to indicate that the epidemic is more severe than was at first thought. The results will be published when complete in a special report.

The inquiry has proved the more difficult because influenza is not generally a notifiable disease.

FIRE PRECAUTIONS.

King Edward's Hospital Fund announces the publication of a new edition of their "Fire Precautions at Voluntary Hospitals." These notes, which are intended to be a guide to Hospital Committees and Secretaries, have been thoroughly revised by the Fund with the valuable assistance of Major C. C. B. Morris, M.C., Chief of the London Fire Brigade.

Whilst, of course, it is well known that fires at Hospitals are exceedingly rare, Hospital authorities have nevertheless to be very watchful that all the necessary precautions are taken and are constantly under review.

The re-issue by the King's Fund of these notes provides an admirable opportunity for the Hospital Committees, who have not recently made a close review of their anti-fire arrangements to take it in hand.

"Fire Precautions at Voluntary Hospitals" can be obtained from Messrs. Geo. Barber and Sons, Ltd., 23 Furnival Street, E.C.4, price 6d., net, post free.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)