

judges of the quality of milk by the amount of cream it yields; this is quite a sound practice, for, if the milk is rich in fat, it is also likely to present a satisfactory analysis as regards other constituents.

There is a very adequate supply of mineral salts in milk, *i.e.*, about 10 per cent. Phosphate of lime and phosphate of potash are present, and this is one reason for realising the value of milk as a food for children; these elements are necessary for the building up of bone and muscle. In iron milk is somewhat deficient, but this is not such a drawback as might at first appear, because the iron in milk is of a type that is very fully absorbed; moreover, as the baby usually commences life with a good supply of iron stored up from its mother's body, the deficiency does not affect the value of milk in infant feeding. Milk also contains all the vitamins, particularly A and D.

There are many different methods of bringing milk into the diet and, indeed, there is hardly a meal into the composition of which it does not enter in greater or less degree. Many proprietary preparations are on the market that have milk as their basis, and most of those are good, but it is in general terms that we are discussing milk and we need not consider these products. It is often held that milk loses some of its nourishment in boiling, but this is not so to any appreciable extent, although undoubtedly the vitamin contents must be affected. Boiling drives off some CO<sub>2</sub>, and also water, it is said that the skin which forms on the top contains a good deal of the nourishment contained in milk. This is not so however; the amount lost through this formation on the top of milk when boiled is small, although it does consist chiefly of caseinogen and lactalbumin, detached from the mineral salts.

Much more might be written on the digestion and absorption of milk, but these processes do not very closely affect the subject under discussion, which refers, from rather a more general point of view, to the adequacy or otherwise of milk as a substitute for meat. It has already been indicated that milk answers well to what may be termed the digestive test. One of the most important points in regard to it and one that there is no need to emphasise for registered nurses, is the fact that milk is very readily contaminated; it is a perfect food for babies, but it is a perfect food for micro-organisms too, hence the necessity for care in connection with its transmission and storage.

Finally, there are, of course, many people who cannot take milk without suffering ill effects and even attacks of real illness; but as a general rule such drawbacks to its use do not exist and its value in the diet of children can scarcely be exaggerated.

#### THE PULSES

These comprise such foods as beans, peas, lentils, and other foods of similar type. They are rich in nitrogen, and for this reason were spoken of as "the poor man's beef." Their chief protein is legumin, which is somewhat similar in character to the protein of milk; it is a globulin with about 80 per cent. of nitrogen and some 50 per cent. of sulphur. The pulses are poor in fat but rich in protein and carbohydrate; their proteins are not so analogous to those of the body as are the proteins in cheese, milk and eggs. Fat is usually added in some form when they are cooked or, as in the case of beans, they are eaten along with some fatty food; beans and bacon were considered a very nourishing dish for the labouring man, although probably less popular now. The purines in the pulses give rise to the excretion of uric acid and they are forbidden in most cases of gout. These foods are poor in phosphorus, but they are rich in lime and potash. They do not always prove very digestible, and remain for a considerable time in the stomach; they are, however, well absorbed in the intestine.

A plateful of good lentil soup is equal to about 1 oz. of meat, and when the soup is made with milk its nutritive value is, of course, greatly increased; the point of view of cost, however, puts such a method of cooking foods like peas or lentils more or less out of consideration for poor people. Lentils are richer in protein than peas or beans and beans have rather more than peas. The soya bean is the richest of all the pulses in protein and fat; but it has never become popular as an article of diet in this country. Naturally, in the course of drying, the pulses lose much of their vitamin content, although there are processes whereby this can be made good when they are prepared for a meal; it is easier in the long run, however, to add the vitamins to the meal by the addition of fruit or some other suitable food.

#### NUTS

From the weight to weight point of view, nuts are among the nutritious of foods. They are rich in fat and, therefore, are of a high caloric value as well as being rich in protein and carbohydrate. Vegetarians rely on them for a concentrated supply of protein, but like the pulses they may prove indigestible to some. Chestnuts and almonds are the most rich in nourishment and, as is well known, chestnuts form one of the principal foods of the French peasantry.

I. M.

### THE HOSPITAL WORLD.

#### "PETER PAN" RECORDED STORY FOR GREAT ORMOND STREET HOSPITAL.

*Sir James Barrie's Great Wish Fulfilled.*

*By Special Correspondent.*

Standing in the H.M.V. recording room, I have witnessed the fulfilment of one of the late Sir James Barrie's wishes—Gordon Harker playing the rôle of Captain Hook in "Peter Pan."

For years the creator of the immortal story wanted Gordon Harker to be Captain Hook, but the plays in which Gordon Harker has acted have always been so tremendously successful that he has never had the opportunity.

After many years, His Master's Voice Company decided to record scenes, songs and music from "Peter Pan," the rights of which were bequeathed by Sir James Barrie to the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, London.

Here was not only Gordon Harker speaking the famous words of Captain Hook, but Miss Jean Forbes-Robertson playing "Peter Pan" and Dina Sheridan taking the part of "Wendy."

The Hospital for Sick Children is to benefit from the sale of these records, which will be released this Christmas. It will be a permanent record of the play and will be distributed all over the world.

Gordon Harker, Jean Forbes-Robertson and Dina Sheridan all gave their services absolutely free for the children of the Hospital. They were supported by the Italia Conti children who have played in the West End production for so long.

Dina Sheridan travelled from Llandudno to play the part of "Wendy."

The destruction of part of this beneficent charity by ruthless bombing makes it necessary that every effort should be made to raise funds on its behalf, if London's sick children are not to be deprived of its highly efficient care.

*previous page*

*next page*