

## ABSTRACTS FROM HEALTH JOURNALS

### COFFEE AS A BEVERAGE

Dr. Oscar Dowling, President of the Board of Health of the Louisiana State Board, makes the following statement in regard to coffee, in the *Bulletin of the Louisiana State Board of Health*:

“Coffee is an excellent and safe beverage, and because some people are adversely affected by it does not mean that the overwhelming majority are not benefited. There is no occasion to banish coffee from the breakfast table because of the fact that under some conditions it may produce disease. It is simply to be used with discretion and in moderation and obviously no harm can result.”

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### PREVENTION AND CURE OF SCARLET FEVER

Specific means for preventing and for curing scarlet fever have been recently found. Takahashi and Zingher, two noted scientists, have made important experiments in immunizing people against scarlet fever by the injection of the toxin of this disease.

Takahashi injected his own children with blood from active cases of scarlet fever and was thus able to immunize them to such an extent that he was unable later on to produce scarlet fever in them by swabbing their throats with throat secretions and blood from a scarlet fever patient.

Zingher injected more than 1,400 susceptible persons with scarlet fever toxin and was able to obtain sixty-one per cent negative Dick reactions after these injections, showing that most of the patients injected had been actually immunized against scarlet fever.

Many investigators are now working in an effort to cure scarlet fever through injections of blood serum and fresh blood from convalescent patients, and their work, although still in an experimental stage, gives much promise for the future.

The cause of scarlet fever is now known to be a germ called *streptococcus hemolyticus*, which forms certain poisons in the body, absorption into the blood producing the symptoms of this disease.—*Illinois Health News*.

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### THE INFLUENCE OF CLIMATE IN THE TREATMENT OF TUBERCULOSIS

Dr. J. D. Blackwood, of the Medical Corps of the United States Navy, sent letters recently to the most prominent specialists on tuber-

culosis in the United States, asking them the following four questions:

1. What type of pulmonary tuberculosis is benefited by altitude?
2. What type of case is benefited most at sea level?
2. Do you consider a ward in a general hospital situated near sea level in a city a proper place for the treatment of pulmonary tuberculosis, with the most benefit to the patient? If so, what type of case?
4. In your opinion, would a patient derive more benefit in a hospital devoted exclusively to the treatment of tuberculosis situated away from the city?

The majority of the answers obtained by him were as follows:

1. Those cases of tuberculosis most benefited by altitude are the moderately advanced chronic cases in which there is no tendency to hemoptysis, no cavitation, no weakening of the circulation, no emphysema or nervous irritability.
2. The climate of sea level is best for advanced cases complicated with cavitation, hemoptysis, weak circulation or emphysema.
3. General hospitals are proper only for study and observation of cases of tuberculosis, emergency cases or for hopeless cases.
4. The sanatorium is the ideal place for the treatment of tuberculosis, on account of the moral effect on the patient and the benefit derived from the attendance of doctors and nurses who are specially trained in the treatment of this disease.—*United States Navy Medical Bulletin*.

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#### CARE OF A CHILD AFFECTED WITH MEASLES

Drs. Ludvig Hektoen and Ethel B. Parry, in an article published in *Public Health*, the official bulletin of the Michigan Department of Health, offer the following statements regarding the way to take care of a child who has measles:

“Keep the patient in bed, protected from drafts or any chilling influence; give him light, nourishing food with plenty of water, and continue the careful attention during convalescence.”

“Knowing how contagious measles is, how dangerous it is for the weak child or for anybody who cannot be given proper care, parents should consider very carefully the temporary protection of the young or weak child during an epidemic or following any exposure, by the use of convalescent serum.”

“Accept the possibility of measles when a child has watering eyes and a cold in the head with any signs of fever. Keep him from school and away from other children for a few days. It is a harmless act and may mean safety for many.”

It has been proved that if blood is taken from a person who has had measles two or three weeks previously, the serum of this blood has the property of immunizing other persons against measles when injected into their system. This is what Drs. Hektoen and Parry refer to as “Convalescent Serum”.

### TREATMENT OF DIPHTHERIA CARRIERS

The *Bulletin of the Louisiana State Board of Health*, mentions in a recent issue the work of Saurman in the treatment of diphtheria carriers, that is, persons who have diphtheria germs in their throats without showing any active symptom of the disease. With a two per cent aqueous solution of gentian violet sprayed in the throats of the carriers, Saurman has been able to clear their throats of diphtheria germs with as little as two gentian violet sprays with two-day intervals.

Saurman suggests that a two per cent solution of gentian violet be used to spray the fauces and nares of all persons that may be likely to harbor diphtheria germs in their throats.

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### CHLORIN IN THE TREATMENT OF RESPIRATORY DISEASES

Vedder and Sawyer, of the United States Public Health Service, have found a method which they claim is very efficient for the treatment of respiratory diseases.

This method consists in placing the patient in a chamber, the air of which contains a constant proportion of chlorin. This concentration is supposed to be about 0.015 mg. per liter. Patients are placed in this room, or before an apparatus generating chlorin in the same proportion, during an hour at a time for one or more days.

Vedder and Sawyer claimed that by this means patients having colds, acute laryngitis, acute bronchitis, chronic rhinitis, chronic bronchitis, chronic laryngitis, whooping cough or influenza can be materially benefited and in some cases cured.

The New York State Board of Health is experimenting further on Vedder's and Sawyer's discovery. The last report of their experiment shows that only 6.5 per cent of 506 persons with various respiratory diseases treated with chlorin, reported themselves as cured, in contrast to 71.4 per cent of 931 patients reported cured in the original paper of Drs. Vedder and Sawyer. Thus the chlorin treatment of respiratory diseases, must still be considered in the experimental stage and not yet as an established discovery.—*Journal of American Medical Association*.

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### PNEUMONIC PLAGUE IN LOS ANGELES

The outbreak of pneumonic plague recently reported from Los Angeles, California, is the second outbreak of this disease in the

United States. The first occurred in Oakland, California, in September, 1919. Conditions, although very serious at the beginning, are improving rapidly under the strict quarantine and sanitary measures carried out by the health authorities, and the epidemic is now under control.

An extensive campaign for the extermination of rats is being carried out in that section of the United States. The United States Public Health Service has been coöperating with the local authorities in an effort to control the epidemic.

The first pneumonic case in Los Angeles, occurred about October 19, 1924. The plague appeared first in the Mexican quarters in Los Angeles. Many foreign countries have quarantined against vessels coming from the port of Los Angeles.

The health authorities in Los Angeles are proposing to continue an intensive campaign for the extermination of rats so as to prevent further outbreaks, now that the present one seems to be under control.—*Journal of the American Medical Association.*