

Food Spreads Health Or Disease

Livingstone Tells Story Behind Food Restrictions

Officials Must Keep Constant Check on Eating Places to Protect Public

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Sanitarian

In man's quest for the good

sea and air he has created for himself responsibilities in the magnitude of his achievements. One of his responsibilities is pathogenic bacteria (bacteria that is harmful to men).

Many of us can recall when the Mexican bean beetle, Japanese chestnut blight, and the Mediterranean fly were unknown. Man's desire for better and faster transportation is responsible for their presence in our country today. Fields of dried bean bushes, mountains of dead chestnuts and barren orchards are now common testaments as to their destructive powers.

Not many decades ago cafes and restaurants were few and far apart

The food served was substantial but plain, minus present day adornments. In man's effort to find a better way of life he has caused the location of cafes and restaurants at points for his convenience. Fast travel brings pathogenic bacteria from the east, north, west and south to our eating places. In the eating places the germs are picked up by man, who by following his daily pursuits of life does his part to scatter the germs nationwide.

Mr. Howard Whitman's article "Disease a la Carte" is doing much for the betterment of foodhandling methods. According to Mr. Whitman's article more than 25% of the food produced in the United States is eaten in restaurants. Sixty-five million Americans eat at least one meal a day in public places. They have a right to expect freedom from disease.

Latest figures show there were 23,765 cases of food-borne diseases reported throughout the nation in twelve months—389 outbreaks and epidemics affecting from a few to several thousand people. Everyday at least one community in the land is stricken, the Public Health Service reports, by "disease dished up at \$10 a plate or hidden in a 10¢ sandwich". We don't want this to be said of Haywood County, North Carolina.

Try to go back and find the spoon which fed you the poisonous bacteria when you are laid low with violent retching and diarrhea. Try to trace the soda glass from whose saliva-filmed rim your child, now burning with fever innocently imbibed the vicious germs.

According to Mr. Whitman's article a cleanup campaign was inaugurated in one of our largest cities by the Health Commissioner. There was found food exposed to rats and mice, garbage was uncovered, its filth carried to the cooking table by flies and cockroaches. The Commissioner found improper refrigeration, glasses ringed with germ-laden lipstick, spoons and forks ridged with food and saliva, filthy sterilization methods, food stocks fested with bugs and weevils. In another city the Health Officer was shocked into action when two of his personal friends contracted syphilis from the rims of contaminated glasses. We once scoffed at this root of contagion for venereal disease—until Surgeon General Thomas Parren told us, "The spirochete (causing syphilis) has been found on a glass half an hour after inadequate rinsing".

Within the past month a Mexican crossed the Texas border, bound for New York where he died within a few hours after reaching his destination, with smallpox. Visualize the unwelcome visitor eating in our restaurants, the trail of germs from Texas to New York, the epidemic his stop-over at the restaurants would have caused if it had not been for health laws regulating exposure to disease. What would have been the results if there had not been efficient public health personnel to do the necessary clean-up work of the trail of germs? Restaurants are visited daily by germ-laden people. It is imperative that effective methods be put in force to protect those who eat in restaurants.

What the naked eye misses, the microscope often shockingly reveals, according to Dr. W. L. Mellman of Michigan University. The examination of drinking glasses used in taverns, one out of seven he found trench-mouth spirochetes. The Public Health Service, using mobile laboratories, examined 50,000 utensils from 5,400 eating places in 156 cities. Only 28% were free from dangerous amounts of bacteria. A survey in one large city showed counts of 2,300 bacteria on spoons, 390,000 on soda fountain tumblers, and 7,000,000 on beer glasses. Consider these figures with the recognized safety limit of 100 bacteria per utensil.

The medical profession tells us that dirty cups, spoons and glasses are sources of influenza, tuberculosis, diphtheria, pneumonia, scarlet fever, whooping cough, colds, trench mouth, typhoid fever, dysentery, mumps and measles.

In one of our Southern cities there was a food poisoning outbreak which sent 278 people to bed with chills and fever. All of them had eaten ham salad at a neighborhood cafeteria. The proprietor in-

PRINCE AT PARLEY ON PALESTINE



PRINCE FAISSAL AL SAUD, of Saudi Arabia (left), is shown with Sir Alexander Cadogan, British delegate to the United Nations, just before the opening in New York, of the United Nations General Assembly's extraordinary session on the Palestine problem. (International)

sisted it couldn't be his fault; all the ham was chopped by a machine. No human had touched it. The ham slicing machine was inspected. It was found the machine was covered with scrapings and literally filled with pathogenic microbes.

It appears that for its special target, filth singles out our children. Children aren't as cautious as grownups. For that reason they don't complain and inquire as grownups. That is why soda fountains, ice cream parlors, drug store lunchrooms, hot dog and soft drink stands—where millions of teenage girls and boys have their tete-a-tetes—or among the foulest purveyors of dirt and disease.

Check the places where you and your family eat. Find out if dishes and silverware are sterilized, not merely zozzled in a bacteria broth. To kill bacteria, dishes must be immersed for two minutes in water at a minimum of 170° F. 170° F. is much hotter than a dishwasher can put his hands into. He must use a rack or dish basket to submerge the dishes into water of that temperature. If you see a dishwasher working by hand, you know—unless he is using a chemical disinfectant—that he is merely giving the microbes an invigorating bath, perking them up so to speak for a trip down your throat.

Microbes get away with murder because they live in an unseen world. Take those which cause diphtheria, tuberculosis, scarlet fever, pneumonia. You can find more than a million of them on a pinhead. But even their minuteness is less startling than their power to multiply. Within twenty-four hours, a single germ under favorable conditions can produce 281 trillion offsprings.

If you eat in a restaurant with improper refrigeration, think what you are up against. A few germs will multiply like fury unless the temperature where food is stored is below 50° F. It is surprising the number of refrigerators found—some locally—that do not maintain a temperature of 50° F.

Some communities are fighting the plague of restaurant filth, tooth and nail. To protect yourself and your family, see that your communities pitch in. Look out for the human element. There is no sanitary device to prevent a waitress from scratching a sore on her neck before picking up your toast. Few foodhandlers are vicious but many are untrained. Every community ought to have foodhandling school with required attendance of restaurant foodhandlers and operators often.

Every community needs a staff of trained inspectors. It takes an expert to know where to look for hidden filth, to spot the rat infestations, to take swab tests for microscopic study. Don't let your city fathers balk at the cost of inspectors. A staff capable of combing every restaurant in town from three to ten times a year is fantastically economical compared to

Rheumatism Pains Eased By Vitamin

BUFFALO, N. Y.—(AP)—Vitamin E sometimes relieves the severe pains and muscle contractions of one form of rheumatism. Dr. Charles L. Steinberg of Rochester, N. Y., told the New York State Medical society's annual meeting.

This rheumatism is primary fibrositis, an inflammation of muscle or connective tissue which accounts for 5 to 13 per cent of all types of rheumatism, he said. The pains and contractions may come and go. They may be generalized or localized, with the muscles tender, hard, and often feeling stiff. Large doses of Vitamin E are particularly effective when given early in cases of contraction of the fingers and palm of the hand. Vitamin E relieves the trouble in early stages and can be used advantageously with surgery in advanced cases, Dr. Steinberg said.

The extra doses of vitamin are effective, even though the person has a normal amount of the vitamin already in his bloodstream, he reported.

HAYWOOD MAN LICENSED BY MEDICAL BOARD

Dr. George W. Gibbins of Canton was one of the 67 physicians licensed last week by the North Carolina Board of Medical Examiners in session at Raleigh.

the costs of epidemics.

In some cities you can telephone the Health Department and get the latest bacteria count on any restaurant in town. This should be true everywhere. Some cities publish the bacteria counts in the morning paper—should any clean restaurant object to this? Should not the public be warned against insanitary eating places?

The rest is up to you—the public. Go to the drug store where your children have lunch and sodas. Look it over. Ask to see the kitchen. The back of the counter. See how the glasses are washed.

Whenever you go out to eat, demand the same cleanliness that you take pride in maintaining at home. When a member of your family is sick, you give him a separate glass—sometimes wash his dishes separately. Why go to a restaurant and pay for the privilege of drinking from the quick-rinsed glass of a cold sufferer, a syphilitic or a typhoid carrier?

Don't laugh it off when a waiter brings you a cup ringed with lipstick. Its sickly red tinge is a danger signal. Danger for you, your family, your community. It is nothing more or less than good citizenship to warn the restaurant manager, to call in your local Health Department, if the warning goes unheeded. You have every right to be militant when your good money brings you disease on a silver platter.

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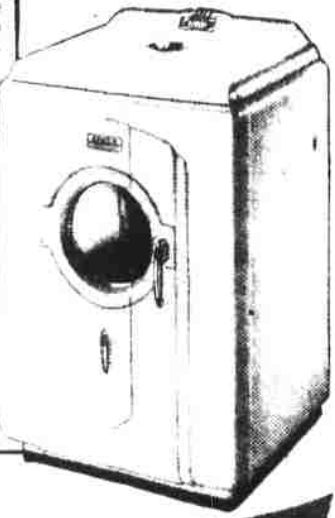
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