

To the Editor, The Public Health Journal, State Medicine and Sanitary Review:

Rural Sanitation.

Sir,—Cities have been studying the problem of sanitation and putting into practice the knowledge obtained with amazing success. Hitherto an opinion has prevailed that sanitation was not a problem for the rural communities to consider. A change of view has now come. Village and farm, it has been found, lose a great part of their natural endowments of fresh air and abundant sunshine by neglecting to properly utilize these things.

It has been found, too, that countless men and women suffer from ailments inherited or acquired in childhood which may be healed in youth, that are remediless in maturity. At this point a systematic public sanitation accomplishes the greatest good. Little sufferers whose complaints are regarded as childish whims because the child will often play in pain, are passed by without attention. Year by year the blemish takes deeper and deeper hold, impairing the usefulness and shortening his life.

Weeding out the aches and pains by carefully finding the causes, thereby building stronger bodies, which give clearer minds and on and on the good manifolds, until the results are hard to foretell.

As a close observer of the conditions of rural life, no greater good could be done the whole people than the adoption of countrywide laws of sanitation.

Our present legislatures have already enacted a large number of measures for the general welfare, thereby endearing themselves to the hearts of the people.

To purify one tainted stream in a village or town, removing the cause of sickness, lessening doctor's bills and saving the lives of children—preventing homes from being orphaned, and wives from widowhood; to go into the school-room and find some child who has been embarrassed because of backwardness in his studies, the unknown cause some times being defective

eyesight, impaired hearing or adenoids—locating the trouble and remedying it, and restoring the child to the normal, where he takes his place along with the rest of his fellows, all this and more should be accomplished everywhere.

A Rural Woman.

Hygiene, Health and Habits.

Sir,—Because a few persons are able to eat unwashed and live filthy, the average person is inclined to feel that the precautions we take to preserve the public health are unnecessary. As a matter of fact, the existence of healthy appearing persons who seem to have no need of hygiene proves nothing against the general hygienic system. Some persons seem to be immune to typhoid fever and small-pox. Physicians and hygienists are seeking to protect the susceptible masses. It is possible to prolong the lives of the weakest and most susceptible by hygienic measures.

And this brings me to some habits. The average person puts his hands in his mouth or carries things to his mouth too often, without examining the condition of his hands.

We know definitely how certain diseases find lodgment in the human system. But will it be possible for society to have ideal health as long as so many respectable persons insist on nibbling dirty hands or putting things into their mouths with dirty hands?

More attention also should be paid to the habits of children. Children of all ages will drop anything edible in the streets, and pick it up and eat it without a qualm. Why give a baby pure milk and let it eat a piece of bread that has been used as a floor mop? Good air and good food are better than bad air and bad food, but if hygiene is to be effective it must apply to all human habits.

It would be better if all fruits and vegetables in cities were cooked. Heat is about the only thing that can be relied upon to offset the carelessness and unscrupulousness of those who handle food-stuffs.

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