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by physicians, are really "second-hand medicines," and the best physicians generally do not use any but the simplest kinds, and for the simplest purposes.

If you have understood what is here written, you will see that it is not up to the layman to distinguish between good and bad patent medicines. If the layman wants to treat disease at all, he should study disease and remember "a little knowledge" is the most dangerous thing in dealing with health and life.

H. W. HILL.

COMMON DRINKING CUPS, ETC.

2. We are constantly being warned against using common drinking cups, towels, etc., in hotels and railway trains. It seems to me that this is a kind of fad among doctors, and that the dangers are but slight after all. If I am wrong in this I should like some substantial reason for being otherwise.

Ans.—You are partly right. The roller towel, the common traveller's drinking cup, etc., in railway trains, hotels, etc., probably do less harm on the whole than they do in school and at home.

To understand this, it must be remembered that every year we have a certain number of cases of measles, so many of tuberculosis, so many of this and that. The only way to find out whether one means of spreading disease is more or less harmful than another method, would be to trace how each case of measles, tuberculosis, etc., is contracted; and tabulate the results.

Of course, this has never been done with a sufficiently large number of cases to give conclusive rules; but I was able, in the case of typhoid fever in Minnesota, to conclude that 10,000 cases of typhoid fever occurring in that state annually, arose thus: about one-third of all, (i.e., about 3,300) came from drinking water into which had entered the discharges of the bladder or bowel of typhoid patients; about one-third came from eating food or drinking milk on which or into which flies had carried bowel discharges from non-fly-proof toilets, used by typhoid infected persons; about one-third came through food or milk or towels or cups, etc., handled by persons who had on their hands the discharges of the bowel or bladder of typhoid-infected persons.

The diseases conveyed by roller towels may be any of those which can be contracted from the discharges of the patient; hence practically any of the infectious diseases of this part of the world, from syphilis and tuberculosis to chickenpox and German measles. But they are transferred chiefly, not by washed hands wiped upon the towel, but by half-washed hands wiped upon the towel; and by the habit of wiping the lips, not by wiping the face on the towel.

In hotels, etc., transients use the towels for a day and pass on. Hence the chance of any one transient using exactly the same spot on a towel that another infective transient has used, is not so very great. In schools or households, however, if every member uses the common towel every day, it is almost inevitable that sooner or later, every member should receive infection from any one other infected member, and perhaps not once but many times; thus the chances are greatly multiplied.

H. W. HILL.

MOSQUITOES AND DISEASE.

I have heard that mosquitoes carry certain disease in tropical countries. Do mosquitoes in this climate also carry diseases? What precautions can be taken to get rid of mosquitoes?

ENQUIRER.

Ans.—Mosquitoes are known to carry certain diseases, not by mere transfer of the germ as a needle thrust into one person might carry germs in the blood to a second person into whom the needle was also thrust, but by the germ in a certain stage taken into the mosquito's body from one person, then developed in the mosquito's body to another stage, and then passed out to another person. In brief, the mosquito, in these diseases acts, not as a mere mechanical conveyor, as flies act in carrying typhoid fever, but as a peculiar specialized incubator. So delicate a process is the incubation and so specialized must the incubator be, that not only is a mosquito alone capable of it,

but there is required a different kind of mosquito for each kind of disease germ. The ordinary mosquito cannot carry malaria or yellow fever; the yellow fever mosquito cannot carry malaria; the malaria mosquito cannot carry yellow fever, and so on. Nor can any mosquito convey any of these diseases unless he (or rather she—only the females do it) first secures the germ from a person who has the disease.

In this part of the world (Ontario) malaria mosquitoes exist; I have myself seen and caught them here. But the malarial germ does not flourish here and rarely occurs, except in the bodies of persons who contracted the disease elsewhere. So the malaria mosquito here seldom has a chance to secure the germ, bite she ever so many people.

The ordinary mosquito, like any other biting animal, from a lion down to a mouse, or any other biting insect or even a needle or a pin, may carry other disease germs from one person to another, purely mechanically. Occasional cases of blood poisoning, from ordinary mosquito bites, as well as from rat bites, or the bites of the ordinary non-poisonous snake, are thus produced. Occasionally it may even be that the germs of blood poisoning are on the skin of the person already, and the bite merely makes a hole for it to enter by.

To get rid of mosquitoes:

1. Get rid of or spoil their breeding places, i.e., protected water, such as swampy spots, old tomato cans half full of rain, rain barrels, choked-up eaves troughs, shallow ornamental ponds; etc., etc. This is best done by draining what can be drained; screening anything like a rain barrel which you wish to keep; putting fish into ornamental water to eat the eggs and larvae; or oiling swamps which cannot be drained with light fuel oil, spraying once a week or once in two weeks, as may be needed, one ounce per sixteen square feet of swamp. The oil can be used on a rain barrel, and if the water be drawn off carefully below the oil, it may not be objectionable for ordinary purposes.

Dragon flies are said to kill adult mosquitoes; probably birds and bats also kill a great many.

Mosquitoes are much easier to get rid of than flies, for flies need dampness only, while mosquitoes must have actual collections of water in which to breed. Mosquitoes do not breed in long grass or amongst dense foliage unless there are actual collections of water somewhere therein, but they will breed in the water collected in the pitcher plants, or even in a cow-track.

ANNOUNCEMENT.

The staff of the Institute of Public Health are available for engagements to give public-health lectures, for clubs, schools, societies, etc., the only cost being travelling expenses.

H. W. HILL.

Hope's Quiet Hour.

A Peep at Palestine.

Those of you who have read last week's "Quiet Hour," describing the Palestine Exhibition in Toronto, may be interested in a few more facts about the Holy Land which I gleaned there yesterday. The Bible was written by men familiar with Oriental customs, and some of its allusions are puzzling to us until they have been explained by those who are also familiar with Oriental manners and habits.

In the first place we are amazed by the astounding fact that men and women in Palestine live, dress, and act very much as they did three or four thousand years ago. It seems as if a miracle had been wrought, on purpose to allow earnest Bible students the opportunity of studying for themselves the way people lived in the days of Abraham, and in the time when our Lord walked visibly on this earth. It is important for us all to realize that our hope for this world and for the great Hereafter is not depending on beautiful theories, but on literal fact. I once showed to a young girl the location of the Lake of Galilee

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