

It is present only in extremely small quantities, there being not more than 10 grains of it to a ton of rice. But minute as this quantity is, its absence from the rice diet means disease and death.

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Similar substances have since been discovered in other foods, always in very small quantities—the vitamines of limes is in the proportion of 1 to 100,000 parts—and their presence in many food-products appears very probable.

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The discovery of these unsuspected food constituents throws a great light on scurvy. At one time scurvy was thought to be caused simply by an excess of salt in the diet. Smollett attributed the prevalence of scorbutic affections in the south of France in the 18th century to the salt-laden breezes from the Mediterranean. Generally, however, the dread disease was blamed on imperfectly preserved food, and lack of vegetable diet. But scurvy broke out in modern polar expeditions (such as Scott's in the "Discovery" and Charcot's in the "Pourquoi pas?") which were supplied with the very best of tinned meats and vegetables, all rigidly inspected by the surgeons before being issued to the men, and undoubtedly in sound condition. The explanation is that the preserving process, tinning or salting or drying, destroys the vitamines, and while the foods are otherwise perfectly wholesome, and may be consumed for limited periods without ill results, as a long continued diet, they are fatal.

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Up to 20 or 25 years ago, a form of scurvy known as "black-leg" was common among the shantymen of the Ottawa Valley and more particularly among the river-drivers. At that time the shanty bill-of-fare consisted of little but salt pork, beans, bread and tea. But with the variety of food now supplied, the disorder has entirely disappeared.

Scurvy was prevalent in the early mining days in the Yukon, and a gold-seeking adventurer of the writer's acquaintance tells that when he developed symptoms of the malady, his friends made light of it, and advised him to eat raw potatoes and he would be well in a few days. But he felt anxious about his condition, and determined to enter the hospital at Dawson for treatment. In the hospital they charged him \$10.00 a day and simply fed him on raw potatoes!

CHARLES MACNAMARA, ARNPRIOR, ONT.