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## THERAPEUTIC VALUE OF HONEY

According to Dr. Pol Demade, who writes on this subject in *La Reforme Alimentaire* for January, honey occupies, or should, at least, occupy, an honorable place in therapeutics. Since up to the present date this right has not been generally accorded to it, the Doctor draws the attention of his confreres to certain experiences of his own, and also gives his reasons for the conclusions to which he has been led. He relates that the Lady Superior of a certain convent asked his advice about a tiny, emaciated baby. The child, which lay in its mother's arms, was nine months old, and gave one the feeling that it had but to close its little eyes for death to assert itself. The infant was suffering from diarrhoea, which had refused to yield to all remedies tried; the poor little creature was emaciated to an extreme degree, with black rings under the eyes, and the lower stomach fearfully large. The poor sufferer had no appetite whatever, but was in its place plagued with almost incessant vomiting and diarrhoea. The sickness, it appears, the French and Flemings call "old man." "What," says Dr. Demade, "could a medical man hope to do with such a wretched specimen, which any breath might send into Paradise? And yet there stood the mother pressing this remnant of life to her heart, her ninth child, which she told me she loved better than all the rest. I ordered her to feed the infant on honey and water, nothing else absolutely, for eight days, and, turning to the Lady Superior, I added that if the child were still living at the end of that time, to give goat's milk and water in the proportion of 1 to 2 parts respectively. I dismissed the case from my mind, since I did not hope for

anything better than death as a release. What my astonishment was when at the end of three months I was shown a healthy-looking, well-nourished baby, with an excellent appetite and regular habits, and its stomach reduced to normal proportions, may be easily guessed. Here was my little wretched creature nothing less than metamorphosed by means of the honey. And I learnt that the mother had used my remedy to other children who suffered from stomach disorder with equally good results. I profited by her experiments, and I have since found the use of honey in any disease of the digestive organs a most valuable agent." The Doctor adds that he has tried honey as a remedy for that most obstinate of all diarrhoeas which follows an advanced stage of pulmonary consumption, and even with young animals, and has in every case been rewarded by seeing the diarrhoea stop, and a desire for nutriment take its place. The list of chemical compounds used to clear the intestinal canal, with more or less good results, some of which work other mischief, is a long one; honey, which is at once cleansing and nutritious, ought to take their place. And it may be that this is only one of the therapeutic uses out of many to which it might with advantage be put. Dr. Pol Demade argues that it should be easy for any practitioner with common-sense to recognize the reasons for this high value possessed by honey. It is, in the first place, a most extraordinary natural product. It is a sugar, but not of the ordinary kind. It is antiseptic, almost free from fermentation, and withal capable of almost instant assimilation in the organism with next to no exertion on the part of the digestive agents. Ordinary su-