

practical life. . . . Proust defines hygiene as the art of preserving health ; but adds: What is health? That is to say, that the difficulty of defining it in a satisfactory manner would prevent one from precisely indicating the art of preserving it. Evidently health is not a thing of which we can describe the form and qualities ; it does not exist as a reality, we know no organism aptly representing it to us. It is only an abstract notion ; but, as such, it is easy to state for ourselves that *la santé est l'expression et le synonyme d'une évolution organique normale* (health is the expression and the synonym of a normal organic evolution). Now, all evolution is a process wholly of movement, a dynamic process *par excellence*, in which disturbances of equilibrium necessarily exist, in order to a return to equilibrium, in such a way that it is absolutely impossible to assign to any one of these continual oscillations the character of *health*. It has, however, formerly been conceived by science, and is still to-day by those who do not discern too closely, as a stable entity, a sort of mysterious individuality of the kind of *force vitale*, while in reality it is only the *syndrome* of the simultaneous presence of all the conditions which assure the normal evolution of an organism equally normal. We think, then, that the apparent difficulty of defining *health* resides wholly in this false conception of the subject ; it is almost as if one conceived light as a material object and endeavoured to discover in it the distinctive characters of objects, while it is only the perception of vibrations well-known, and even measured, of something unknown. Thus we understand health as a resultant state of normal evolution ; and this state reveals itself to our senses by a sign which ought to be inherent to it: *le sentiment du bien être* (the feeling of well-being). It is erroneous to say that health is characterized by the absence alone of all trouble ; it is erroneous, because, on the one hand, this absence accompanies cessation of life as well, and, on the other, health continues in spite of certain disturbances sometimes well marked, but due to the performance even of natural functions.

The death, for example, of an ovule, fecundated or otherwise, the direct or indirect cause of menstruation in women, is assuredly a disturbance of physiological life ; but none would dare to pretend that the menstruating woman has lost the right of believing herself perfectly healthy. On the other

hand, a close and perfectly appreciable sensation of satisfaction accompanies the performance of every normal function ; and such sensation will be much more accentuated, if it is the result of the *ensemble* of all the functions composing the life of the human organism normally accomplishing themselves ; it exists in effect under the form of well-being, the satisfaction of living, which is no more an abstract notion, but a positive sensation of the healthy man in all the force of the term: this internal satisfaction, which is the energetic denial given by physiology to a certain philosophical school having as its tenet the *denial of the pleasure of existence*. The genius of language has very well seized the character and bearing of this positive symptom of health in calling a man healthy *who feels himself well* ; and we will have overcome all the difficulties of definition in substituting the matter for the idea, *health*, its distinctive symptom and as designating as the aim of hygiene, *l'art de se bien porter* (the art of being well).

Examination of Milk.

The universally acknowledged value of pure milk as a food, as well as of the dangers attaching to it as a medium for the transmission of disease, as illustrated by the diphtheria outbreak in York Town and Camberley District, referred to in the last number of MEDICAL SCIENCE, makes it desirable that Medical Health Officers and medical practitioners everywhere be kept in possession of such knowledge regarding its constitution and examination as is of practical value.

Of the constituents usually determined by analysis (1) water, (2) sugar, (3) nitrogenous constituents, (4) ash, and (5) fat, are the principal. The two which are usually taken as indicating the nature of milk are the *solids and fat*.

Martin, who is analyst of the New York State Board of Health, and H. W. Wiley, chemist of the Department of Agriculture, Washington, give the following average constitution of milk:

	PER CENT.
Water.....	87.5
Fat.....	3.2
Sugar.....	4.4
Caseine.....	4.1
Salts.....	.7
Total Solids.....	12.5
Solids not Fat.....	9.3

The methods adopted for estimating solids are mostly of a delicate chemical character, demanding fine balances and delicate apparatus, there being