

this "cancer field" with that of Wetherby, where there are no floods and where the land is high and dry and principally limestone. From this it is evident that the explanation of the Pickering mortality cannot be the flooding of the land or the deposit of mud. The only thing common to the two districts is the diet, which at Wetherby is good, being meat and bacon two or three times a day amongst the farming class and good living amongst the wealthy residential class, and of course much meat means much salt. Dr. J. A. Hargreaves, the medical officer of health, believes that the poorer classes are comparatively exempt, and that cancer is a disease of class. He is working at this point, as illustrated by his own district.

Nothing can be clearer about cancer than the fact that its incidence is connected with diet; and if our various pieces of knowledge bearing upon diet are compared it will be found that the only constantly-present thing is salt. It does not matter what the rest of the food may be, salt must be present, and in excess, considering the patient's occupation and mode of life. If salt is absent, cancer is absent. Savages, as far as is known, are exempt from cancer,\* and they get no salt. All domestic animals except the pig are subject to cancer, and salt is given to sheep, to cows, and to horses, but never to pigs. Sarcoma has been known to occur in the pig, in the testis, but no true case of cancer. Professor McFadyean has never met with a case. Wild carnivora, with, of course, a pure meat diet, are exempt. No authenticated case has ever been met with amongst them.† Of course, they get no salt except in rare instances, as in the case of the buffaloes' "salt licks." On the other hand, when confined in zoological gardens, they are given salt and they become subject to cancer. An African hippopotamus has recently died from cancer at the Zoological Gardens in London, and salt had been given to it. I can find no instance of true cancer in any animal which has not had access to salt, but Mr. Roger Williams mentions two cases of sarcoma, one in a plover and the other in a marsupial. Sarcoma, however, is a different disease to true cancer. It might be supposed that the rice-eating natives of India would be exempt from the disease, but they are not. "All natives of India are keen on salt," writes Dr. Andrew Duncan of the School of Tropical Medicine. The rice-eaters are not quite strict vegetarians, as they take fish when they can get it. They eat much food of the pea tribe which contains much nitrogen. Sailors may live for weeks on salt junk and breathe a salt-laden atmosphere, but it does them no great harm because conditions

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\*W. Roger Williams, *The Lancet*, Nov. 4th, 1899, p. 1258.

† Ibid.