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GAS ATTACKS FROM AIR

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Menace Exaggerated, Says British Doctor

"FEWER CASUALTIES IN NEXT WAR"

Specialists Review Medical Progress

AUCKLAND, September 2.

The common belief that civilians in British cities undergo the grave danger of annihilation by an aerial gas attack in any future war is discounted by Colonel C. I. Ellis, surgeon-in-chief to the St. John Ambulance Brigade, who is a member of the British party for the British Medical Association congress in Melbourne. Colonel Ellis did notable medical work in the Great War and was twice mentioned in dispatches.

"In the next war," he said, "casualties among combatants will be relatively fewer than in the last because defensive preparations will be more thorough, armies more thoroughly mechanised, and air transport available for the wounded. As usual, Britain was slow to awaken to the danger of new gas and germ attacks by air, but now she is thoroughly aroused and is taking immense strides toward protecting the civilian population in Britain. Plans are well under way to have at least one room in every house tenable against gas or germs in time of war. During the past few months an intensive campaign of education and instruction has been carried out throughout the country, and is gaining scope and effectiveness every day. The prospect of civilian populations being annihilated from the air is just a dream. How many stop to reflect that by far the greatest number of casualties from gas in the last war was due to the fact that its use came as a surprise and the Allies were not equipped to meet it? I saw the first gas mask made as a model, and the masks were not available until after the gas had actually been used at the front. In the next war, we will not rely on agreements or conventions. We will be ready for gas or germs before they can be brought into use."

Universal Inoculation

Universal inoculation against disease germs and education as to the danger of the different types which might be dropped from planes would go a long way toward combating this form of attack, Colonel Ellis said. By means of radio and co-operation, men and women outside wearing gas masks and other protective clothing could warn people in their homes of the extent and duration of the danger.

Ambulance Air Fleets

Colonel Ellis said that fleets of ambulance planes would be available in Britain should another conflict occur. In the Great War vast numbers of wounded men died from shock because it was impossible to give them adequate treatment soon enough. By the use of planes it would be possible to rush the wounded direct from the battle zones to fully equipped base hospitals in little more time than was now taken to deal with victims of motor accidents. Nursing attention would probably be available on the journey in the larger machines. The total result would be to save an enormous number of lives and avoid the immense suffering such as wounded men patiently endured in the Great War before reaching the base. Much study was being given to the design of planes in order to make them readily adaptable for ambulance purposes should the need arise. The devising of stretcher-carrying gear for insertion in existing machines had made very good progress, and there was no doubt that planes would be more and more used for transporting sick and injured in time of peace. The St. John Association was taking its full share in this movement.

Cancer Research

"Although no results have been published, present indications of the work are very hopeful," said Dr. H. S. Soutar, a noted London authority on the use of radium, in discussing research work in the new technique for treating cancer of the throat and larynx. Dr. Soutar is also one of the B.M.A. delegation.

"Research has extended over 18 months at the Radium Institute of the London Hospital," he said, "and so far about 100 patients have been treated. Two units of radium, each of five grammes—enough to fill a large thimble—are used, and the treatment is external."

The energy of the rays given off by radium, he continued, said Dr. Soutar, and it was applied like a ray from a searchlight. Patients were exposed to it for about an hour a day for three to five weeks. Radium units were valued at £30,000, were lent by the Belgium Government, which had an enormous surplus owing to the halt in the use of radium. "The work was being done by himself and Sir John McLennan with the assistance of a clinical group."

Prolongation Of Life

"You can sum that up in two words, 'All nonsense,'" said members of the medical party when questioned concerning a recent report from London that doctors had discovered a method whereby life could be prolonged and old people of 70 or 80 rejuvenated and given all the life and activity of a person of 40 years.

"The only way to bring about long life is to prevent disease," one doctor said. "The cleverest brains of the medical world are constantly engaged in research, not only to evolve the best treatment for existing diseases, but to prevent the contraction of those diseases; and it is by getting at the cause and eradication that we can accomplish the greatest boon to humanity."

Dr F. F. Muecke, formerly of Adelaide, who is a member of the party, is a specialist in diseases of the nose and throat at the London Hospital. Referring to the advance he had made in his department, Dr. Muecke said that the fear of hemorrhage following operations had almost been broken, medically overcome, and the removal of the mastoids of the ear, which had often led to the dreaded meningitis, was now an ordinary operation.

Health Insurance Schemes

The opinion that a health insurance scheme on lines similar to that operating in Britain would be a boon and benefit to Australia was expressed by Dr. L. E. Fleming, chairman of the council of the British Medical Association. He said that the health insurance scheme in Britain was a huge movement, and also a huge success. It now covers 10,000,000 people, and more than 16,000 medical men were active participants. The fund was controlled by the Ministry of Health, and the actuary's estimate of revenue had been exceeded by millions of pounds. There was happy co-operation between the Health Ministry and the British Medical Association. However, before such a scheme could be introduced into Australia a full investigation would have to be made into local conditions.

Three Distinguished Doctors At Fremantle

PERTH, September 2.

To take part in the British Medical Association Congress to be held in Melbourne, three distinguished doctors reached Fremantle today in the Anchises from Great Britain and South Africa. Professor Edwin Bramwell, Professor of Clinical Medicine at the University of Edinburgh, and one of the leading authorities in the world on the physiology of the human brain, is president of the Royal College of Physicians, and will preside over the neurology section of the congress. He will continue the journey to Melbourne by train, leaving Perth tomorrow night. He is accompanied by Mrs. Bramwell.

Another representative is Dr. R. Hutchinson, president of the Royal Society of Medicine in London, an association of all medical societies in Britain. He will preside over the children's diseases section of the congress. The third doctor is Dr. C. M. Murray, who will represent the Medical Association of South Africa, of which he is a member of the Federal Council. Incidentally he is an authority on turf culture on golf greens.

Adelaid Doctors To Attend Conference

The president of the S.A. branch of the British Medical Association (Dr. D. R. W. Cowan) will leave for Melbourne this week to attend the annual meeting of the B.M.A.

Dr. Gilbert Brown, who for six months has been doing post-graduate work in Europe, is a passenger on the Baradine, which is due here on Saturday. He will go straight to Melbourne to attend the meeting of the British Medical Association and that of the Australian Society of Anaesthetists, of which he is president. He will return to Adelaide on September 18.

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Pacific Health Conference

SYDNEY, September 2.

Many matters of importance will be discussed at the second International Pacific Health Conference, which will be opened in Sydney tomorrow by the Federal Minister for Health (Mr. Hughes). It will be attended by delegates representing the League of Nations, Great Britain, and practically all the countries of the Pacific zone. The morning session will be devoted to the reading of the presidential address by the Federal Director-General of Health (Dr. J. H. L. Cumpston), and a review by Dr. J. A. McCallum, of the Commonwealth Department, of the progress made since the inaugural conference.

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STARK REALISM IN EXHIBITS

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Educational Show Of Food Values

VARSITY DISPLAY

STRIKINGLY interesting and educational exhibits of anatomical work and the nutritive qualities of various foods are shown in two of the sections of the medical exhibition at the Adelaide University, which opened yesterday.

Stark realism is a feature of the anatomical display, which includes human dissection work. Sensitive people may find it wiser to avoid this section.

One room in the Darwin Building effectively illustrates the nutritional values of various common foodstuffs, showing diagramatically their content of calories, protein, phosphorus, calcium, iron, and vitamines A, B, and C—the main requirements in food.

Proportionate quantities of foodstuffs of all kinds, from cabbages to rice, are shown on plates, above which are charts giving the content of the respective nutritive elements.

Asparagus, it is found, has vitamines, but not a high content of the other properties. String beans are rich in vitamines, but weak in calories and protein, while cabbages and carrots both get high marks for vitamines.

VITAMINE CHAMPION

Oranges and lemons are champions in the vitamine C class, and do well in A and B, in strong contrast to rice, which has no vitamines at all, although it positively bulges with calories and protein and is not stinted for iron and phosphorus.

Calories, incidentally, are probably the least important of these qualities in individual foodstuffs, since they can be made up in many different ways.

Sugar and lard have calories and nothing else. Nuts are rich in calories and phosphorus, amply equipped with iron and calcium, and fairly well off for vitamines.

Eggs are near the top of the class, their main defect being a shortage of calcium. Milk is another approach to the ideal nutriment, its one deficiency being iron. With the exception of liver, meat has little to offer in vitamines, but liver is a good source of A and B vitamines and iron and protein.

Another section of this display shows the amount of water in various foods—half a pound of each kind of food, with the water content in a tumbler, is used.

WATER IN MEAT

Two lettuces, at this rate, contain a tumblerful of water; and ½ lb. lots of tomatoes, cabbages, carrots, and oranges yield approximately the same amount. The very high water content of these foods explains their lack of calories.

Half a pound of beef, surprisingly enough, contains two-thirds of a tumblerful of water, and ½ lb. of potatoes nearly a full tumbler. Nuts, by contrast, have hardly any water at all.

At the anatomical museum you can see exactly what acute rheumatism does to calcify muscles into bone, and if you feel bold enough, you can see what the inside of a foot or hand looks like.

From many other interesting exhibits here, you may learn that the brain of a racehorse differs from the brains of other horses, because the speed of its travelling develops certain characteristics that show in the brain.

NEW SOCIETY FORMED HERE

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Blood Transfusion

FEW organisations have accomplished so much good in an unostentatious way as the South Australian Blood Transfusion Service, which has been officially formed with Sir Henry Simpson Newland as president, after having functioned unofficially for the past seven years.

At a meeting at Covent Garden, King William street, the following council was appointed—Sir Henry Simpson Newland (president), Col. S. R. Burston, Drs. B. H. Morris, F. R. Hone, J. G. Sleeman, and D. G. McKay, Lieut.-Cols. C. F. Woodcock, and H. G. Viney, Chief Officer G. J. Plenty, Messrs. Andrew D. Young, L. M. T. Hargrave, J. T. Massey, W. W. Devling, Jr., and J. Murphy, and D. S. Foy, representing the undermentioned institutions: The Inspector - General of Hospitals Department, the Adelaide Hospital, the Children's Hospital, Toc H, the Red Cross Society, the St. John Ambulance Brigade, the S.A. Ambulance Transport, the Y.M.C.A., and the Motor Cycle Club of S.A., and affiliated bodies.

Mr. D. S. Foy

The following were appointed an executive committee to draw up the constitution—Col. S. R. Burston, Drs. F. R. Hone and D. G. McKay, Chief Officer G. J. Plenty, and Mr. J. T. Massey. Mr. D. S. Foy was appointed organiser and Mr. Wal. J. Murphy secretary.