

in the light of knowledge. Neither have sentiment and ignorance a place in the conservation of health. The criminality of using drinking cups in common is established. Not a few, however, some farmers included, believe these things to be faddish, thus in a small way retarding progress in health development. It is now very generally agreed that all public drinking places should be so installed as not to permit the slobbers of one person to enter the body of another. The use of drinking fountains and individual cups is therefore a sane, sanitary measure, and should be encouraged. This is not so necessary in the home because all members of the family may have good health. It is the part of good judgment, however, to discourage the old practice wherever there is apt to be any danger, as in schools and churches. Individual cups and towels should be used by each sick member of the family. Unsanitary water should not be used until sterilized by boiling or by the use of calcium chloride.

Drinking from streams in thickly settled communities is to be discouraged, because such water may be polluted from the carcasses of dead animals, excreta of farm animals, and the bowel discharge of people. Many examples of sickness and death are known to result from the careless use of such unprotected water. Furthermore, persons accustomed to a given water supply should be on their guard when traveling through the country and drinking from unsanitary wells. It is the part of wisdom to refrain from drinking such water. In some localities, practically every well is safe, in others most are unsafe. Many examples of typhoid are traceable to unsanitary wells; the same is true of local epidemics. Many intestinal diseases as dysentery, diarrhea, typhoid, etc., are transmitted by water. It is good economy for the country to guard against the spread of water-borne disease because of their bad effects on society. Let it be known that pure water is absolutely indispensable to health, and that the supply should be guarded both as to source and method of use.

#### VENTILATION AND PURE AIR

Much has been said and written regarding the value and importance of good air and ventilation. This has resulted in considerable improvement. Today the theory is known, but much of practical value remains to be emphasized. Our investigations show that certain things should be done to improve the quality of air in sleeping rooms, especially. The air conditions in the farm homes are unsanitary, as a rule. Many places are found in which little attention is given to ventilation. The only system of ventilation, with few exceptions, is by windows and doors, which really is not a system at all. Several homes were visited in which three, four, or more persons sleep in a room with one window for ventilation, and that usually closed. Such a condition is harmful to health, for close confinement during the night, and breathing again the vitiated air tends to destroy rest, weaken the vitality, and increase the possibility of contagion. It is not difficult to understand why rural people house themselves so closely. During the day they are in the open air, and coming to the house, the close quarters and quiet air seem an agreeable contrast to the cold and wind. So the tendency is to overdo the matter. This should not be, for all people need an abundance of good air at all times. It is recommended that the windows be opened to let in fresh air, which is necessary for life. The night air is not harmful, as so many believe. There is more of superstition and fear in this belief than there is of common sense. Each sleeping room should have two or more windows. It is easy to provide against drafts by use of window boards. Drafts of pure air do little damage to health.

The average temperature in farm homes is too high in winter. Except in the presence of a very young child the ideal temperature during this season is about 69 degrees. Too high temperature, with low relative humidity, is directly responsible for some of the catarrhal and other troubles affecting the nasal and throat cavities.

In giving health air to the farm home, and for that matter to all buildings in which people are gathered, four things should be kept in mind:

1. Ventilation in which an adequate supply of fresh air is supplied for every occupant. This means four or five times as much as most people are now getting.
2. Temperature at about the right degree, not being too low, nor too high, especially. It is to be reduced in summer and not made too high in winter.
3. Humidity as near the normal for a given

temperature as possible. Keep a liberal quantity of water evaporating on the stove in winter.

4. The introduction of an abundance of sunshine, the great natural disinfectant. It dries out the room. It may fade a rug, but it will assist in giving the right color to the cheek. Lift the shades, open the shutters, pull back the curtains and let the sunshine in. It is the symbol of life, as darkness is of death.

It is observed that not only do too many persons occupy a bedroom according to its size and ventilation, but that in some cases there is extreme carelessness as to the cleanness of bed clothing. Its odor should indicate the need for washing. Agitation in the state for hotel sheets of a given size and free from dirt, as brought about by the traveling public, is a sane safeguard against the transmission of venereal and other diseases, and should meet with the commendation of rural people. Yet a more important movement for country and city alike would be a campaign of education for the specific purpose of improving the cleanness of the other bed clothing as well, some of which does not go to the laundry for weeks, or to the clothesline for air and sunshine, for months.

There is no good excuse for bad air in rural homes of our broad country. In the crowded city, however, where one or more families may be forced to occupy a single room, it is less possible to devise the necessary safeguards. The country, through neglect, is decreasing its vitality and leading the city only by a slight margin in its freedom from tuberculosis, which is traceable in considerable part to the quality of air breathed in the home, factory, and public buildings. The death rate from this cause in the country is about 136.6 per 100,000 persons annually; in the city it is about 198.3 per 100,000 annually.

An organized campaign for good air in the rural homes, schools, and churches of Nebraska and for sanitary water supplies would soon result in lengthening human life and increasing its efficiency.

#### SANITARY FOOD

Much sickness in Nebraska is traceable to a poor quality of food. The state has a food and drug department which guards the quality, weight, and correct naming of foods. This department spends most of its time with inspection at places of manufacture and sale, requiring all unsanitary bakeries, dairies, stores, etc., to clean up or quit business. There is federal inspection of animals and meats at the large stock-yards and packing houses. It would seem that all would be in full sympathy with state and federal inspection of foods and drugs, but such is not the case; for frequent complaints and criticisms are heard, usually from persons representing selfish interests. It would further seem that no one would seek private gain at the expense of public health. Perhaps the worst situation of this kind at present is in the sale of habit-producing drugs. It is worth while for rural people to be diligently on their guard against the use of unsanitary foods, whether bought from the town or produced at home. Fruits and vegetables of the farm are usually fresh and clean. The meats may come from local slaughter houses or farm production without inspection, giving more danger than is usually supposed. On this account, beef and pork should be well cooked to kill tubercular germs in the first named and parasites in the second named.

How to keep fresh meat in the country is a problem because ice is not available at many places. As a result, cured and preserved meats are largely used. Eggs, usually fresh, and chickens make up for most of the drawback. In some respects the food supply of the country is more healthful than that of the city. Substantial articles of diet are used and not so many nick-nacks. Cooking is quite well done, but too little thought is given to food values, such as might properly be included in each meal. In this respect the men, by their knowledge of balanced feed, show more practical knowledge in stock feeding than the women do for the family.

Not enough care is given to the milk supply in the country. The milk is fresh, but too often not clean. Sanitation in this line will develop as:

1. Milk is used from healthy cows only.
2. Cows are given good water, good food, and sanitary stables.
3. The milking is made clean in every respect. Through carelessness it may become polluted with manure and dirt from the cow's udder, the unclean hands of milkers, and dirty pails.
4. The milk is given sanitary care. This means clean, covered vessels, made so by washing and scalding; handling with clean hands;

and cooling in the water tank, cave, or refrigerator free from the odor of decaying foods.

Milk is an ideal culture medium for the germs of typhoid, scarlet fever, diphtheria, and diarrhea.

Dish washing is carelessly done in many homes. Not enough suitable soap and soda are used to dissolve grease and other matter. Too often the dishes and silverware are not scalded to sterilize them, and the wiping is not always done with clean towels, also sterilized. In some homes the dishes and silverware used by one sick with a contagious disease are allowed to be used by some other person at the next meal without thorough cleaning. Such carelessness is nearly criminal. Food for an infant should never be chewed by the mother or other person before giving to the child.

#### DRUDGERY AND OVERWORK

The tendency among farmers is to decrease rather than increase hard work. This has advantages as well as disadvantages. There are few cases of overwork among men. Overwork is more common among boys and girls during the period of adolescence. A little more concern and thought by parents for this stage of development would give stronger and healthier men and women, for persons forced to work too hard during adolescence are apt to be weakened thereby and made more susceptible to disease.

Rural women sometimes fare badly. In fact, quite a few of them are overworked much of the time, even to the point of drudgery. This does not add to the strength of rural life, for overworked women are not capable of being the best possible mothers. In many cases the mother receives bad care at the time of a child-birth. It would be of great value to the health of our state if it were generally understood that the rural mother should be allowed to rest two, and preferably three weeks at such time before again taking up the regular routine of housework. Furthermore, neighbor women should not be allowed to bother her with useless gossip.

#### REST, WORK AND PLAY

These are necessary every day in the life of rural people. In fact, the normal person rightly divides his time between rest, work, and play. This is true of both young and old.

Farmers believe in work, and rightly so, for by it they obtain the necessities and luxuries of life. Let it be understood, also, that work is a necessary process in the education and health of every individual. It is largely by his own work that the education of an individual is made possible. The opposite of work is leisure, which impoverishes the individual and to that extent decreases the resources of the community. A leisure class is not productive, neither is it as healthful as a working class. The farmer has full opportunity to work, and therein lies a part of the secret of his success.

Play is necessary for rural people as well as work. It calls them away from the more arduous duties and makes them to be glad each with the other. It offers real fun and recreation, the lubricants of life. It makes people live longer, happier, and healthier. Too much play, on the contrary, at the expense of work and rest, makes people of little force and not capable of rendering much service to society. The one who plays when it is in order will live longer and do more work than others in the long run. There should be family play and recreation in the home.

Systematic rest, especially by the young, gives time for rejuvenation. The necessary sleep, an average of about eight hours a day, should be the lot of most people. Irregular periods of rest, as for example, that caused by too late hours, develops bad health and inefficiency, if carried to extremes.

The three great functions above named have about equal importance in the life of an individual, and are either directly or indirectly of value in the conservation of personal and public health. Too often the individual fails in his ability to rightly and sanely divide his time between rest, work, and play. His habits may lead too much towards development in one line. If so, one who goes to the extreme is regarded as being either lazy, a grind, or a sport.

#### CLOTHING AND EXPOSURE

This topic has less importance in rural sanitation in Nebraska than most others. An increasing tendency is being manifested for the use of sanitary clothing, such as will not impair health. Examples of this kind are too numerous for discussion in this place. The underclothing should be kept scrupulously clean because it is close to the body. A rule of considerable importance might be observed by school children and other

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