

THE NUTRITIVE VALUE OF FLOURS.

SIR,—With reference to the letter of Drs. Hill and Flack in the *JOURNAL* of November 11th, if these gentlemen will refer to pages 20, 21, and 67 of *The Etiology of Beri-Beri*,¹ they will find the information asked for.

Dr. Stanton and I introduced the term "polished rice"; it comprises those rices which in the process of polishing or milling have been deprived of the pericarp, subpericarpal layers, and embryo or germ. The removal of the yellowish subpericarpal layers leaves a grain composed of cells packed with starch grains, so that a polished rice is also a white rice. (See the illustrations in above report.) The rices in use in England are polished or white rices; a considerable number of these are faced or glazed with substances such as talc, and the term "white" or "polished" as applied by us to rice may not have been readily intelligible to workers in England, the term "overmilled" would perhaps have been preferable.

At one end of every grain of polished rice there is a depression which in the unpolished grain contained the embryo, a minute, shrivelled, yellowish structure. After the padi or rice-fruit has been hulled and most of the husks removed by winnowing, the grain is passed into the polishing apparatus; it is there deprived of its pericarp, subpericarpal layers, and embryo. The structures detached are driven by centrifugal force through the meshes of the steel wire cloth, and to the mixed product thus obtained Dr. Stanton and I applied the term "polishings"; it consists of a fine, yellowish-brown powder mixed with husks and broken rice grains. On receipt of polishings at the Institute for Medical Research they were sifted to remove the husks and broken rice grains; from the sifted polishings our extracts were prepared.—I am, etc.,

H. FRASER,

Director Institute for Medical Research.

Kuala Lumpur, F.M.S., Nov. 13th.

CHINESE REMEDIES FOR PLAGUE.

SIR,—The following remedies for preventing or curing plague, recently placarded in public places by the Chinese officials at Taichoufu, in the Shantung Province, may interest some of your readers. They were kindly sent me by Mr. R. F. Walter, Secretary to the Government at Wei-Hai-Wei.

1. After the "Opening of Spring," on a certain day (King-tz-7th in a recurring series of tens) boil turnip juice and any sort of creeping bean vines, no matter how much. It is recommended that all the family, both large and small, drink it when it is warm. Thus the plague will be avoided.

2. On the sixth day of the sixth moon² gather "Horse Tooth Vegetables,"³ dry them in the sun, and lay away until New Year's morning, boil until done, and pickle in brine and vinegar for one year. Partaking of this will also prevent the current malady.

3. Take one piece of horse bone, wrap in red cloth, and place in a small bag and wear on the side of the body, men on the left, women on the right side.

4. In the fifth⁴ watch of the night throw black beans—a large handful—into the well, unseen of men. The members of the household drinking this water will be powerless to spread the infection. In places where river water is used let each household each day at daybreak throw a pinch of black beans into the water jar. This will enable the whole family to avoid the sickness.

5. During the reign of K'ien Lung⁵ the plague devil was driven out by "Thunder Pill" into hiding in Kiangsu, Ch'angchowfu, Chupu Magistracy. All who adopted this prescription were able to avoid this plague. Those who lived by it were beyond numbering. To make the "Thunder Pill"

Ingredients:—Take rhubarb 4 oz., gold leaf flakes 30 pieces, cinnamon $\frac{1}{2}$ oz., alum 1 oz., all ground fine. Make into pills and take with water. Dose $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.

6. Take "Hwantsung"⁶ and one lump of white alum and place in the water jar. This is effective.

¹ Studies from the Institute for Medical Research, No. 12, 1911.

² July 1st.

³ That is, just before daybreak.

⁴ A popular disinfectant.

⁵ Spinach.

⁶ 1876.

7. Red sulphur ground fine and mixed with water, and profusely spread in the nostrils of the patient and in the bed will also prevent the spread of the infection. This is a wonderful remedy.—I am, etc.,

Portsmouth, Nov. 2nd. C. MARSH BEADNELL,
Fleet Surgeon, R.N.

THE DERMATITIS PRODUCED BY EAST INDIAN SATINWOOD.

SIR,—The observations made by Professor Cash of Aberdeen (*BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL*, October 7th, 1911) exactly harmonize with those set forth in my original paper, to which reference has been made by him. In the last paragraph of his paper Professor Cash says:

No case has presented itself in the course of these observations which would illustrate the statement made by Jones and Wechselmann, to the effect that some satinwood workers, after a first attack of dermatitis, may acquire resistance towards the irritant, and so remain immune, although still exposed to the contact of the dust.

Although Professor Cash seems to think otherwise, my experience was exactly the same as his. In my original article I say:

In each case improvement followed cessation from work, and in each case the illness reappeared when work was resumed.

Further on in the same article I state

That one or two went to work elsewhere and got along without further trouble.

What I meant, and what actually took place, was that one or two went to work elsewhere, where satinwood was not used, and got along without further trouble.—I am, etc.,

Ibroy, Nov. 13th. H. E. JONES.

ACUTE POLIOENCEPHALOMYELITIS IN CORNWALL.

SIR,—In your issue of November 4th I have just seen a communication on an epidemic of acute poliomyelitis in Cornwall, in which grave strictures upon the sanitary condition of Penryn are made, the inference being that the alleged neglected and dirty state of the town, and the cases of poliomyelitis which are stated to have occurred there, stand to one another in the relation of cause and effect. No attempt is made to establish the same relation for the remainder of the cases reported, and which occurred elsewhere. It is only with regard to the Penryn cases that such an inference is suggested.

In my own practice, out of seven or eight cases of this disease, two occurred in Penryn, the remainder occurring almost entirely in houses of the greatest cleanliness, and isolated from filth and dust as completely as is possible.

Seeing that this is so, and that the record of Penryn for diseases which are well known and well proved to be dependent in their origin on insanitary conditions has for a large number of years been exceptionally good and one which will bear comparison with most towns, I think it is unfair that, in the hunt for a cause, this town should be accused of a condition of things the existence of which I deny.

As to the statement that crude sewage flows into the tidal estuary at the head of which Penryn is, that is quite true; but Penryn is no more guilty in this respect, of discharging crude sewage upon foreshores, than other places I could mention, or than most places similarly situated. The joint authors of the paper referred to speak of what is left by the ebbing tide upon the exposed mud, but nothing is said of what is brought by the flowing tide from elsewhere; nor of the intolerable nuisance caused to us by this during the past summer.

I must apologize for having gone to this length, but I feel it to be my duty to clear my native town from what, in my opinion, are false charges, and my council also from the same.—I am, etc.,

JAMES BLANEY,
Medical Officer of Health, Penryn Urban Council.
Nov. 19th.

THE SYMPHYSEAL LIGAMENTS OF THE PARTURIENT GUINEA-PIG.

SIR,—With reference to the communication of Mr. Bland-Sutton and Sir Francis H. Champneys on this subject, I should like to add that this stretching of the