

MILK FOR THE WORKER

(Written for "The Listener" by DR. MURIEL BELL, Nutritionist to the Department of Health)

IT is often erroneously stated that milk, being a food for children, should be put away as one puts away childish things when one reaches adult life. Another point of view, which receives more scientific support is that quite an amount of milk should be put away, in a different sense, by the adult.

In an experiment with successive generations of rats, Professor Sherman found that rats grew and thrived in apparently good health for 50 generations on a diet of which one-sixth was formed of dried whole milk. He was under the impression that this was an adequate diet, until he increased the percentage of milk solids from one-sixth to one-third of the total, when growth became more rapid, death rates lower and vitality greater at all ages. There was a marked increase in the average length of adult life, and greater vitality extending for a longer time into old age. There is a combination of several food factors in milk which contribute to its

ability to confer increased longevity on rats. Professor Sherman is naturally guarded in suggesting the application of these results to human beings, but he discusses the philosophical aspects of the shortness of human life and particularly of that latter third of a man's life in which opportunities remain to render his fullest service to the world; and he emphasises the advantages to society of the earlier attainment and the longer retention of full adult capacity and efficiency of the people of the future who will have received the benefits of the new knowledge of nutrition. This is a new slant on the same thesis as is formulated in Bernard Shaw's *Back to Methuselah*—that with increased length of life there is more opportunity for contemplation.

A Compulsory Pint

But we must get back from philosophising to actual facts about man and milk. There are certain trades and occupations in which milk is so beneficial as to have been adopted as a compul-

sory measure. A pint of milk a day is demanded by law in England for lead workers and for sandblowers. A pint of milk a day is a necessary protective measure for those working with "dope" in aeroplane manufacture, for it diminishes their tendency to develop the toxic effects that come from inhaling too much amyl acetate.

Apart from these specific examples of the protective nature of milk for adults, there are other examples in factories where the management has provided a rest pause during the morning and afternoon and has found as usual that workers did better work and had fewer accidents. But those that also drank milk during the rest period remained healthier with less loss of time through illness. In one factory the management found that the cost of the milk was more than covered by the increased output.

There are nations who consume much larger quantities of milk than we New Zealanders are accustomed to take. Our New Zealand average intake is only five-eighths of a pint. Nutrition experts advise that adults should, if possible, take a pint of milk a day, expectant and nursing mothers, children, and adolescents 1½ pints a day.

(Next week: "Scabies," by Dr. Turbott.)

ANÆMIA is iron-starvation



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"Hard work, if not opportunity," she replied. "First there were all the local girls who wanted their photos taken to send to the boys overseas. Now there are all the soldiers themselves. And the trouble with soldiers is that they insist on having their photos the day after they're taken." She turned the three wet prints drying in front of the radiator, and three members of the forces favoured us with cheery smiles.

A bell rang downstairs. A few minutes later Sylvia's head appeared above the stair-well. "Two soldiers. They've only got ten minutes, and they want to know if they can have the prints tomorrow?"

Resignedly my hostess put down her half-finished tea. "A trade, definitely not an art", she muttered to me, and hurried downstairs.

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