

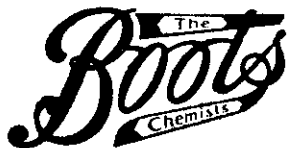
PASSED WITH HONOURS

would be a more accurate phrase, for Boots Aspirin is subject to rigorous laboratory control at every stage in its manufacture.

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THE NEBUCHADNEZZAR WAY

(Written for
"The Listener"
by Dr. Muriel
Bell, Nutrition-
ist to the De-
partment of
Health).



DANIEL relates how the King of the Babylonian Empire, renowned though he was for all his constructive enterprises, became abased by being temporarily driven out to eat grass like the beasts of the field—a circumstance which justified a jocular change of designation from Epiphanes (the illustrious), to Epimanes (the mad). After this lapse, the King appears to have recovered.

There have been more recent tales of men eating grass. A story recorded in 1734 tells how "a sailor in the Greenland ships was so over-run and disabled with scurvy that his companions put him into a boat and set him on shore, leaving him there to perish without the least expectation of recovery. The poor wretch had quite lost the use of his limbs; he could only crawl upon the ground. This he found covered with a plant which he, continually grazing like a beast of the field, plucked up with his teeth. In a short time, he was by this means perfectly recovered, and upon his returning home, it was found to be the herb scurvy grass." This apparently is an annual or biennial plant belonging to the *Cruciferae*, a botanical family which, through its members in our vegetable gardens (cabbages, cauliflowers, sprouts, swedes, Kohl rabi, cress), is responsible for providing a larger proportion of our yearly quota of vitamin C than any other family of plants.

I seem to remember hypocritically quoting from a Bible commentary in a Sunday School project I had to do as a child that the herb on which Nebuchadnezzar grazed was a *saxifrage*—I hadn't in the least idea then that this particular botanical family is the one to which belongs black currants, gooseberries, red currants—fruits rich in vitamin C. There is insufficient evidence in that Biblical story for toying with the idea that the nourishment provided by the grass eaten by Nebuchadnezzar effected a cure from scurvy!

Lucerne is Useful

And now, in the year 1942-43, one reads under a title in a serious South Island newspaper—"Lucerne as Human Diet"—that the Nutrition Committee of the Federal Health Department in Australia is considering the use of a material evolved from lucerne for the civil population when fresh vegetables and fruits are in short supply.

The New Zealand Nutrition Committee has checked this up, and finds that when ¼lb. of the young tips of this grass is put into a ½-pint of boiling water and boiled for 15 minutes, then strained (pressing out as much as possible of the water), the resulting liquor contains as much vitamin C as orange juice.