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THE MOUTH, THE MIND, OR MEDICINES?

IN 1952, Mr. or Mrs., Master or Miss New Zealander, you ate or drank or had injected into you, the result of almost ten million prescriptions. Your expectations of medicines following a doctor's visit were gratified, and it cost you over three million pounds, or 28 4/5, for every man, woman and child in the country. Many a time your doctor has little faith in the medicine he gives you, but you ask for something to take, and he gives it to your pressure.

Medicines and drugs are legion, and down through the ages man has pinned his faith in them. There was little science behind their use until modern times. Experimental work and research has shown a great many drugs to be worthless. On the other hand, it has modified some remedies and made them



Spencer Digby

THIS is the text of a talk on health broadcast recently from the YA and YZ stations of the NZBS by DR. H. B. TURBOTT, Deputy Director-General of Health.

worthwhile, and produced new wonder drugs and antibiotics that have amazing success. Your doctor does know how to discriminate, but he doesn't say no to you because of your false belief that there's a medicine for every ill.

I personally wish he would say no to you many a time and break you of the bottle of medicine habit. Do gargles get rid of big tonsils or help much with sore throats? Cough medicines cure a cough? Not really; they soothe only, while your body resistance puts up the fight! Liniments that you rub in through the skin mostly do but little good, but there's still a touching faith in them. In tonics you have an ardent belief. Vitamin pills must be wonderful, for your acceptance of these tots up about one-tenth of the national pharmaceutical bill. You waste much medicine and money through prescriptions for these pick-me-ups. They have no hope of curing troubles that have their roots in your diet or your manner of living. Well-being doesn't come from tonics, but from a pattern of living. This pattern is moulded in good feeding, good housing, good social adjustments, and good mental health. Doing a good day's work for our pay is part of this good mental health process. It is better that both doctor and patient admit frankly that many ailments have no drug cures; that, for example, while the doctor can nowadays cure a pneumonia, his prescriptions will not cure the common cold.

Back in 1943 we spent approximately ten shillings per head on medicines. In ten years we

have almost trebled that. And don't forget this is prescription medicines, leaving out all that vast amount of proprietary and patent medicines that you keep on buying. Are you any healthier for this huge total of medicaments? No, not really! Your faith in them seems false, for you are taking more and more of them, and the health you are seeking is elusive. Health is not to be found in the medicine cupboard. Indigestion occasionally arises from disease, but much more commonly has its roots in faulty eating, in emotional upsets and unhappiness, and in anxiety and worry. Recognise these things, take counter measures, and the indigestion disappears without any medicines. But something like five per cent of our national drug bill goes in indigestion remedies. Some of this is legitimate, most of it is useless expenditure.

When you chase health through medicines, you are on the wrong trail, and the health you seek will keep slipping away round the corner. You have provided for you every kind of service for curing ills, for diagnosing, for treating, for putting you back on your feet, and in your minds hospitals and medicines loom so largely that you think of these as synonymous with health. We must have these, but they're not the track to health.

Food is one way to health. Balanced meals—the right protective foodstuffs every day, this is a definite key to resistance to bodily ills. Rest and relaxation are important items to offset the tenseness and drive in modern life. Steady hard work in working months, followed by the annual holiday—this is a part of being healthy. Fresh air, sunshine, bodily cleanliness, play their part. Mental adjustments to life's difficulties are as important as right food. The mind, unhappy and unsettled, transfers its worries into body aches and pains, for which medicines are just waste time. The Mouth, the Mind, or Medicines! Which? The first two keep you healthy—not the medicine cupboard.



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COCOS GOLD

IN the early twenties of last century a British ship named Mary Dear sailed from the South American port of Calao. On board were high dignitaries of the Church and city of Lima, capital of Peru. In the holds was some £20,000,000 in treasure, removed from the city to prevent it falling into the hands of the liberator, Simon Bolivar.

When the Mary Dear was well at sea events took an unexpected, but for those days not uncommon, turn. The representatives of Spain's Most Catholic Majesty were dumped overboard, and the ship headed for Cocos, a tiny island lying off the north-west coast of South America (not to be confused with the Indian Ocean Cocos). There the treasure was cached until the time was more opportune for its removal and sale, and there, so far as is known, it still remains.

Many attempts have been made to find the hidden treasure. Men have dug and searched and blasted, but never with any success. Britain's famed speedster, Sir Malcolm Campbell, once dug for weeks in the island's steaming heat, but he, too, met with failure.

A dramatised story of the Cocos gold and of the men who dug, and sometimes died, in quest of it, is to be broadcast soon from National Stations. Written by C. Gordon Glover, the feature is entitled *Pacific Gold*. It begins with some full-blooded buccaneering ballads, for which, in the NZBS production, music was composed by Alex Lindsay. The singers are Henry Rudolph's Capital Quartet. The show was produced by William Austin at the Wellington studios of the NZBS. Norman Griffiths is narrator. *Pacific Gold* will be broadcast first by 1XN at 9.30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 21. It will be heard in later weeks from other National stations.

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