

The menace of a State Medical Service is a diffuse shadow that slowly takes definite shape, moving methodically to the final assault. Resistance will come mainly from within the profession, but unless the members look well to their own affairs and set their house in order the attack will ultimately succeed.

There are defects in the fabric of the profession that need remedies and these deficiencies should be recognised, frankly admitted and agreed on and demands for help by the Government or by Municipalities formulated.

There are certainly hundreds, possibly thousands, of hospitals in this country serving populations of fifty to a hundred thousand inhabitants which lack a complement of specialised services, trained surgeons, physicians, radiologists, pathologists, etc., because the rewards are insufficient or too uncertain. It would be a comparatively inexpensive matter for the State (or Municipality) to appoint and pay a subsistence salary to such a body of professional men, leaving them the right to supplement their incomes by private practice.

One of the most sinister undermining attacking forces is the establishment of so-called Re-habilitation Centres which have special reference to the present defects of our Orthopaedic Centres. These would be State-controlled and administered, they would breed disharmony, and continuity of treatment would only be achieved on paper—real continuity would vanish. There is no doubt that the very name has captured the imagination of the lay public, including statesmen. It is for the General Hospitals, *a fortiori* the teaching Hospitals, to so enlarge the scope of their after-treatment that the injured soldier, sailor, airman or civilian receives continuous treatment under the direct supervision of the surgeon responsible for treatment *ab initio*, right down to the time when the injured man is ready for re-adjustment into industry.

This can be done if the great hospitals will bestir themselves in time and enlarge their Out-Patient Departments either by their own efforts and resources or by a formulated demand for State supplementary grants.

Industry will join hands in implementing such a plan. Already there is in embryo a factory established entirely by private enterprise—the Smit-Asquith Diamond Works at St. Mary Cray, Orpington, where the injured man is straightway enabled to earn a more than living-wage, and retain his self-respect. Now is the moment for the hospital authorities to encourage such enterprise and establish sympathetic relations. These industrial centres can be and will be multiplied throughout the kingdom. And these are the true re-habilitation centres that will fulfil all the needs of the orthopaedic surgeon, when he on his part has carried treatment far beyond the comparatively simple stage of achieving firm union of bone, tendon transplantations, plastic operations, etc.

Nor is there need for Re-habilitation Centres for medical cases beyond an expansion of Convalescent Homes. Surely the mansions and great estates that are rapidly falling into the hands of the National Trust are ideal for this purpose and would better serve the community as homes for healing rather than as museums or show-places for the holiday makers.

Yours faithfully,

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SPECIAL NUMBERS OF THE JOURNAL

Special numbers have been published from time to time, each dealing comprehensively with a particular branch of medicine or surgery. These special numbers are as follows, and copies, price 2s. each, post free, may be obtained from the Fellowship of Medicine, 1 Wimpole Street, London, W.1. A list of contents of any individual number will be sent on application.

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* "War Wounds and Injuries," published by Edward Arnold & Co., London, is a reproduction of these five special numbers in book form. * A second edition, revised and enlarged, will be published shortly.

Natural Vitamin C in Gestation & Lactation

The desirability of supplementing the intake of vitamin C by expectant and nursing mothers is now generally accepted.

As a vehicle for supplying the additional vitamin C, Ribena Blackcurrant Syrup has a number of points of recommendation, viz. :—

- (1) Blackcurrants are one of the richest available natural sources of vitamin C and in Ribena the ascorbic acid is associated with the other factors inherent in the *natural* vitamin.
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- (4) The gentle laxative action of the fruit juice is a natural corrective of the constipation associated with pregnancy.

The Ministries of Health and Food have allotted to us supplies of blackcurrants and sugar for the production of Ribena, but stocks are reserved for Children, Invalids and Doctors' prescriptions.

All chemists can now obtain Ribena.



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Vitamin Therapy in Cardiovascular Disorders

The fact that cardiac disorder is one of the most serious features of beri-beri early suggested that hypovitaminosis B₁ might be concerned in cases of heart disease not so obviously related to nutritional deficiency.

Since the cardiac picture in beri-beri consists of dilatation and hypertrophy, chiefly right-sided, with venous congestion, failure, and œdema, vitamin B therapy has been employed particularly for these manifestations.

CLINICAL REPORTS

Among a group of 120 patients showing signs of cardiovascular dysfunction, particularly increased heart rate and congestive failure, a significant proportion had symptoms of hypovitaminosis B₁ and showed a good response to vitamin B₁ therapy.¹

of protein, a considerable proportion improved under treatment with a good diet, supplemented by a rich source of vitamin B₁, such as wheat-germ or rice polishings.³ In a study of cardiac dysfunction resulting from hypovitaminosis B₁, it was stated that early cardiovascular manifestations included palpitation, a sensation of oppression in the chest and precordial distress, dyspnoea on exertion, and arrhythmia. As a rule these symptoms were benign and regressed on the administration of vitamin B₁. To clarify the diagnosis in cases of heart disease in which hypovitaminosis B₁ is suspected, the authors recommend the administration of vitamin B₁.⁴

In 30 patients, with signs of myocardial damage, who received a diet rich in vitamin B₁, a degree of symptomatic improvement occurred considerably greater than was to be expected from previous experience.²

Of 13 children—from 18 months to 4 years—with cardiac disorders associated with nutritional deficiency of a general nature, of vitamin B₁, or

SUPPLEMENTARY VITAMIN B

As a useful supporting treatment in cases of cardiac disorder, particularly those showing signs of congestive failure, tachycardia and œdema, Bemax is suggested. Bemax is one of the richest natural sources of vitamin B₁ with associated

factors of the vitamin B complex. It also contains vitamin E with assimilable iron and copper.

¹ *Trans. Assoc. Amer. Phys.*, 1936, 51, 341; *Ann. int. med.* 1937, 11, 104.

² *J. Lab. Clin. Med.*, 1937, 22, 991.

³ *Amer. J. dis. Child.*, 1938, 55, 750.

⁴ *Hospital, Rio. de Jan.* 1940, 2, 281.

Further particulars concerning BEMAX from Vitamins Ltd. (Dept. GU), 23, Upper Mall, W.6.