able to conclude that the 'slightly toxic' mussels are not important from the standpoint of public health," Dr. Meyer said.

The mussels became most poisonous between the first week of July and the last week of August. The sale of mussels has consequently been forbidden during the past two summers in California, and the state department of health regularly issues a warning against their use during the period when this food is particularly liable to be dangerous.

Since the serious outbreak of mussel poisoning in July, 1927, in San Francisco and vicinity, the problem has been investigated by Dr. H. Sommer and his assistants. Clams, it was found, contain a poison very similar to that of mussels.

Poisonous mussels emanate a typical odor of cyanide, which is very faint in most cases, however. The digestive gland of the harmful shell fish is usually larger and softer and often of a greenish color and lighter or darker than the normal.

Health Contest Winners

Milwaukee, Wis., Syracuse, N. Y., East Orange, N. J., White Plains, N. Y., and Sidney, Ohio, were the winners in the first Inter-Chamber Health Conservation Contest sponsored by the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, it was announced at the meeting of the Health Association. The object of the contest is to assist in reducing economic losses in the United States due to unnecessary illness and death.

The contest for 1929 was so successful that a similar one has been started for 1930, and 183 cities have already enrolled.

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PUBLIC HEALTH

Air Pollution Commission Suggested to Health Officials

Oxygen of Air is More Important Than Food and Drink, Yet Edibles Get Most Attention, Dr. Sappington Says

A COMMISSION on air pollution, similar to milk commissions, ventilation commissions and the like, was suggested by Dr. C. O. Sappington of the National Safety Council at the symposium on atmospheric pollution held in Fort Worth, Texas, before the American Public Health Association.

"You can go for days without food; you may even do without water for a considerable number of hours; but it is a matter of minutes when it comes to the necessity of breathing uncontaminated air with the requisite amount of oxygen," Dr. Sappington declared.

Old Methods for New Problem

"It is a fact that men have always paid more attention to food and drink than to the air which they breathe in spite of the greater importance of oxygen to the body," he continued. "This may be the reason for our accomplishments in the field of regulation of water, milk and food supplies. The mechanism through which these changes have been brought about is by education of the public and regulatory legislation. These same means are at our disposal in the solution of the problem of atmospheric pollution. It is my belief, however, that much more can be done by the dissemination of adequate information than through the passage of laws."

Specific methods of reducing air pollution were described by Howard W. Green of the Cleveland Health Council.

"Supervision by competent technical men of design and installation and of the operation of all plant equipment burning fuel will in time reduce the preventable air pollution to a minimum," Mr. Green prophesied. "The most optimistic feature in this whole problem lies in the fact that in most cases the necessary improvements result in sufficient savings in the fuel bill and labor expense to pay the cost of the improvements within a short period of time, in some cases within a period of a year or a year and one-half.

Mechanical stokers, proper construction of chimneys, electrification of locomotives, attention to types of fuel, and installation of auxiliary oil or gas burners in incinerator plants, were among the suggestions he made.

How air pollution affects the health of the people was described by Dr. T. C. Terrell of Forth Worth.

"Carbon monoxide gas is one of the most universally feared forms of atmospheric pollution," he said. Less than half the amount of this gas necessary to cause death, is enough to cause headache, dizziness, weakness and other symptoms.

Two diseases which occur frequently in industrial centers are pneumoconiosis and silicosis. These are produced by inhaling particles of silica and carbon with the air. Many of the particles are returned with the expired air, but a certain proportion remains in the lungs and air passages. These particles affect the cells and eventually a diseased condition results.

The air may also be polluted by the presence of bacteria and of plant pollens. From germ pollution may result diphtheria, influenza, whooping cough, pneumonia, scarlet fever, and tuberculosis, while hay fever and asthma are caused by pollen pollution. Investigations showed that the disease germs in New York dust varied from 300,000 to 3,000,000 per gram, one gram being about one twenty-eighth of an ounce.

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