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The A B C of Vitamins

Physiological Chemistry

C. H. A., in the *Bulletin of the Virginia Section of the American Chemical Society*:

A

Oh, fine and fat was Ralph the rat,
And his eye was a clear cold grey.
How mournful that he ate less fat
As day succeeded day,
Till he found each cornea daily
hornier,
Lacking its vitamin A.
"I missed my vitamin A, my dears,"
That rat was heard to say,
"And you'll find your eyes will
keratinize
If you miss your Vitamin A."

B

Now polished rice is extremely nice
At a high suburban tea,
But Arbuthnot Lane remarks with
pain
That it lacks all vitamin B,
And beri-beri is very very
Hard on the nerves, says he.
"Oh take your vitamin B, my dears,"
I heard that surgeon say;
"If I hadn't been fed on standard
bread
I shouldn't be here today."

C

The scurvy flew through the schooner's
crew
As they sailed on the Arctic Sea.
They were far from land and their
food was canned,
So they got no vitamin C.
For "Devil's the use of orange juice"

The Skipper had said, said he.
They were victualled with pickled
pork, my dears,
Those mariners bold and free.
Yet life's but brief on the best corned
beef
If you don't get vitamin C.

D

The epiphyses of Jemima's knees
Were a truly appalling sight;
For the rickets strikes whom it jolly
well likes
If vitamin D's not right,
Though its plots we foil with our
cod liver oil
Or our ultra-violet light.
So swallow your cod liver oil, my
dears,
And bonny big babes you'll be.
Though it makes you sick, it's a cure
for the rickets
And teeming with vitamin D.

E

Now vitamins D and A, B and C
Will ensure that you're happy and
strong;
But that's no use; you must reproduce
Or the race won't last for long.
So vitamin E is the stuff for me,
And its praises end my song.
We'll double the birthrate yet, my
dears,
If we all eat vitamin E.
We can blast the hopes of Maria
Stopes
By taking it with our tea.

Science News-Letter, April 21, 1928

The True Humanizer

Physics

ROBERT A. MILLIKAN, in the *Atlantic Monthly*:

Not long ago I heard a certain British literary man of magnificent craftsmanship and fine influence in his own field declare that he saw no values in our modern "mechanical age." Further, this same man recently visited a plant where the very foundations of our modern civilization are being laid. A ton of earth lies underneath a mountain. Scattered through that ton in infinitesimal grains is just two dollars' worth of copper. That ton of earth is being dug out of its resting place, transported to the mill miles away, the infinitesimal particles of copper miraculously picked out by invisible chemical forces, then deposited in great sheets by the equally invisible forces of the electric current, then shipped three thousand miles and again refined, then drawn into wires to transport the formerly wasted energy of a waterfall—and all these op-

erations from the buried ton of Arizona dirt to refined copper in New York done at a cost of less than two dollars, for there was no more value there.

This amazing achievement not only did not interest this humanist, but he complained about disfiguring the desert by electrical transmission lines. Unbelievable blindness—a soul without a spark of imagination, else it would have seen the hundred thousand powerful, prancing horses which are speeding along each of those wires, transforming the desert into a garden, making it possible for him and his kind to live and work without standing on the bowed backs of human slaves as his prototype has always done in ages past. Seen in this rôle, that humanist was neither humanist nor philosopher, for he was not really interested in humanity. In this picture it is the scientist who is the real humanist. *Science News-Letter, April 21, 1928*