

Although as old as medical history, and so common that in cities over 90 per cent. of the population have had the disease by the age of eighteen, measles is still one of the mystery diseases which it has been extremely difficult to combat. It is believed to be caused by an extremely small organism which cannot be seen with the ordinary microscope, and which passes through a filter which stops ordinary germs.

With the possible exception of smallpox it is the most contagious disease known to man, and according to the U. S. Public Health Service, it is difficult to control because the symptoms of the disease are not obvious until about four days after infection.

"The importance of measles is frequently underestimated," said Dr. Victor C. Vaughan, chairman of the division of medical sciences of the National Research Council, and one of America's leading epidemiologists, "and it has been commonly believed that the disease acts as a weeding-out process to eliminate the unfit at a very early age and does no harm to the strong. On the contrary, a study of measles in the U. S. army camps during the world war revealed that a person who has recently had measles is ten times more likely to die from pneumonia than one who has not.

"It is not over-sanguine to claim," Dr. Vaughan continued, "that if this disease, together with whooping cough, diphtheria, and scarlet fever, could be entirely suppressed, the average length of life would be increased by at least ten years.

"There is great probability that the work of Drs. Bernard, Debre and Joannon will lead to an eventual control of the disease," Dr. Vaughan said.

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#### NEW POISONS MENACE WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

A plea that the federal government should provide for study of industrial poisons, which are menacing the lives of more women workers than ever before, was made by Dr. Alice Hamilton, professor of industrial medicine at the Harvard Medical School, in a recent address before the Women's Industrial Conference.

"A great many new and more or less unfamiliar industrial poisons have come into use since the war, and each month we hear of at least one new one," said Dr. Hamilton. "This brings about a serious situation, for unless the new poisons are carefully tested on animals, the human beings who use them in trade processes will be taking the place of experimental animals.

"Unfortunately, it seems to be nobody's duty to undertake the investigation of these new dangers. In Great Britain and in Germany the Central Department of the Factory Inspection Service assumes this as one of its obvious functions, but in the United States no state department is equipped to do this. The federal government has the necessary experts in its service, but none of the bureaus has a budget which would make such investigations possible. It is hard to understand why so rich and important an industrial country as ours should show penuriousness in this particular field."

There are fewer women than men engaged in industries involving hazards from lead, carbon monoxide, benzol and other poisons, Dr. Hamilton pointed out. But women are more susceptible than men to the industrial poisons and the number of women in hazardous industries is steadily increasing.

A further cause for alarm is that the effects of breathing poisonous fumes or absorbing particles of poison through the skin extend to the next generation.

"We have evidence, based on French statistics and on animal experiments that lead poisoning in the father affects the offspring, but the evidence is much stronger with regard to the effect of lead poisoning in the mother," she stated. "Striking statistics from French and English reports leave no doubt that a woman who has chronic lead poisoning is more likely to be sterile than a normal woman, and if her child is born living it is more likely to die within the first year of life. It is plain that if a poison is circulating in the blood of the mother it is practically certain to affect the child."

Industrial wood alcohol poisoning, which may end in blindness or death, results from breathing the fumes, and is exactly like the poisoning from swallowing wood alcohol, Dr. Hamilton told the conference. At least three times the usual air space is required for safety in a workroom where wood alcohol is used.

"In some occupations carried on by women small amounts of wood alcohol are used in connection with shellac and dyes and the amount of fumes is too small to cause acute poisoning, but it is an established fact that slow chronic poisoning from repeated small doses may also cause loss of sight," said the speaker.

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#### EAGLE ON ANCIENT CUP IS CLUE TO ITS AGE

An eagle, symbol of the proud and ruthless Roman Empire, when portrayed on a cup belonging to the early Christians must be taken as a significant clue to the cup's age. This is the latest report just made to the Archaeological Institute of America by Dr. William R. Newbold, of the University of Pennsylvania, on the mysterious "Great Chalice of Antioch," which has puzzled archeologists for the past ten years.

The chalice, made to be a holder for a cup used for religious purposes, is decorated with figures of Christ and the Apostles, and also with a wealth of symbolic design. If it was wrought in the first century A. D. there is considerable likelihood that the figures of Christ and his followers may be portraits by a craftsman who had seen them or who was furnished with exact descriptions of portraits of them. If the cup dates only to the fourth century or much later, as some archeologists believe, then its importance as a historic document is somewhat less. Dr. G. A. Eisen, who has spent nine years investigating clues to the cup's history, has decided that it probably held the cup used at the last supper of Christ and his disciples.

Dr. Newbold points out that the eagle, the bird that flies nearest to the sun, was widely used as a symbol of immortality by the Romans and by earlier