



TRACING HER ANCESTRY

The stuffed figure of Su-Lin, giant panda, looks on as Paul McGrew shows Henry W. Nichols, chief curator of geology at Field Museum of National History, a fragment of a fossil animal's jaw bone and teeth which he discovered in Nebraska. The fossil is believed to be a 20,000,000-year-old ancestor of Su-Lin.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Preventing Tooth Decay Is the Job of the Patient

Public Health Association Hears Reports of Fight Against Venereal Diseases; State Has Birth Control

EACH person who wants to keep his teeth from decaying must do the job himself. He cannot depend on his dentist for this, Dr. Nina Simmonds, nutrition authority of the University of California's School of Dentistry, declared at the meeting of the American Public Health Association in Kansas City.

Eat just as few sweets as you can and get as many vitamins, especially the sunshine-vitamin D, as possible. This sums up the rest of Dr. Simmonds' practical advice to those who want to avoid tooth decay or caries, and explains why the job of caries prevention is so largely an individual one. If it is to be done by eating the right foods, or not eating the wrong ones, obviously each person must do it for himself, and parents must do it for their children.

The role of cleanliness in caries prevention Dr. Simmonds dismissed by saying that "the use of the tooth brush in personal hygiene is an accepted practice." She also pointed out that many

members of primitive races and also numerous persons living under civilized conditions often escape tooth decay even though their mouths and teeth are not kept clean. Observations have shown, however, that these persons also do not eat sweets, and when they change their diet they are likely to get decayed teeth.

Cutting down on sweets, Dr. Simmonds explained, cuts down the number of acid-forming germs in the mouth. It is the acid formed by these germs that destroys the enamel of the teeth and gives caries its start. She cited many experiments by different scientists which all showed a relation between sweet foods and caries. Other factors enter into the situation, but the dietary one seems to be most important.

The cause of tooth decay is "an exceedingly complex problem," Dr. Simmonds pointed out, but she believes that further research will solve this problem as it has such others as rickets, scurvy, beri-beri and pellagra.

Sources of Syphilis

ERADICATION of syphilis in the nation can be hastened by locating and examining contacts of known syphilis patients, it appears from the report of Drs. T. B. Turner of the Rockefeller Foundation, A. Gelperin of the Cincinnati Health Department, and J. R. Enright of Hawaii's bureau of venereal disease.

Working in the syphilis department of the Johns Hopkins Medical School and Hospital, these investigators found that for every 100 patients coming for treatment, 30 more infectious syphilis patients could be located by contact investigation. If these patients had not been discovered and treated, not only would their health have suffered but they would probably have spread the infection still further.

It cost \$10 to bring in for medical care each previously unrecognized case of syphilis, and about \$18 for each infectious case. The results achieved were, in the opinion of Dr. Turner and associates, well worth the cost.

Second Venereal Disease

AN attack on gonorrhea similar to the nation-wide fight to wipe out syphilis should be started at once, said Dr. Walter Clarke, executive director of the American Social Hygiene Association.

Gonorrhea, like syphilis, is an ailment that formerly was not mentioned in polite society. Like syphilis, it causes a vast amount of suffering, disability and childlessness. It is even more common than syphilis. Dr. Clarke said that gonorrhea is more prevalent than any ailment except the common cold.

Three potent weapons for fighting gonorrhea have recently been developed and because these weapons exist, Dr. Clarke believes the time has come to start serious plans for a public health attack on this disease.

One of the weapons is a female sex hormone which, he declared, cures gonorrhea in little girls in 63 per cent. of the cases in 150 days. The efficacy of this treatment was discovered by Dr. Robert Lewis of Yale.

Second weapon against the disease is the modern counterpart of the sweat house treatment used by the Indians when they first contracted gonorrhea from white people.

Modern physicians use malaria, radiant heat, and high-frequency radio waves to produce high fever to cure gonorrhea. Many investigators have devised