



INFANTILE PARALYSIS

This is the season of the year in which infantile paralysis is prevalent and newspapers everywhere contain reports of cases of children, and even adults, suffering from paralysis and dying of this crippling malady.

The most modern method of treatment is the use of serum taken from someone who has recently recovered from the disease. The exact method of spread of infantile paralysis is not known, although it is realized that it spreads from person to person and that when once in the body the poison travels through the nervous system, affecting chiefly the nerve cells in the front of the spinal cord and thereby bringing about paralysis.

There seems to be no doubt that people do not develop the disease because they have in their bodies an immunity to it, perhaps having suffered at some time a very mild infection.

Apparently there are people in communities who are carriers of infantile paralysis and who spread the disease from one person to another without themselves being actually sick. The detection and control of carriers is the most important step in preventing epidemics of many infectious diseases.

The causative agent of infantile paralysis is not known and attempts are being made in many research institutions to find out the nature of the organism. In a recent small epidemic there were 12 cases of the disease, 10 who were treated with convalescent serum and who recovered, two who were treated without the application of modern medical means, but by the use of faith and adjustments died.

The interest which the public has shown in lending its efforts to the control of this disease is best revealed by the fact that in Montreal during the last epidemic, according to Professor H. E. Cushing, cripples for many miles around wrote to the health department offering to come at their own expense to supply serum, if it were required for new cases of the disease.

Health authorities should have a sufficient amount of convalescent serum on hand to treat cases in time of epidemic. In the epidemic which took place in Manitoba, 8,000 cubic centimeters of serum were available, an amount representing eight quarts. The serum is injected with a needle into the muscles, and, if given early, aids in the prevention of paralysis and in producing prompt recovery. The next most important step may well be absolute rest in the acute stage. When the patient in the early acute stage of infantile paralysis is given absolute rest, the amount of congestion in the spinal cord is less, and the amount of paralysis is naturally less also.

After the acute stage has disappeared it becomes necessary to treat the paralysis by modern orthopedic methods. Massage and electric treatments are not to be given unless they can be administered by trained investigators who will not irritate inflamed tissues.

If it were not for the fact that many people have a natural immunity to infantile paralysis, the amount of crippling and permanent injury from this disease would be far greater than it now is.

Unquestionably the virus or agent that causes infantile paralysis is widely distributed so that the opportunity is open for infection. There seems to be considerable likelihood that people who have some immunity to the disease develop increasing immunity as they grow older.

Furthermore, as one reaches adult age he is less frequently exposed to the disease than when he was a child. Some investigators have argued that immunity decreases with age, and that it is only the lessened exposure that keeps most adults from having the disease.

It is known of course, that immunity to other infectious diseases brought about by inoculation against them tends to wear off after a period of time. It is known that the incidence of both infantile paralysis and diphtheria is low in infants under one year of age; probably because such infants are not frequently exposed to these diseases, but probably also because the infant at birth has in its blood immune bodies against infectious diseases derived from the mother.

Professor's Wife: "Goodness, John! Where did you get that lighted red lantern?"

Professor: "I picked it up. Some careless person left it out there by that hole in the road."

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PICTURES ARE NOT ALWAYS TRUTHFUL

Some Mail Order Houses Find Them Very Useful in Their Business.

CAN "DOCTOR" PHOTOGRAPH

Concerns Can Give Wrong Impressions With Illustrations While Sticking to Truth in Descriptions.

"Copyright, 1917, Western Newspaper Union." "Figures never lie," it has been claimed, but this is far from the truth. The defaulter who has "doctored" his books in such a way that he has escaped detection for years, knows that figures can be made to lie. The shrewd politician, who knows how to juggle statistics, knows that they can be made to tell a story that is far from the truth.

But there is another medium of expression which is also supposed to be a stickler for truth, but which is a greater prevaricator than figures. That is a picture. A picture of any person or thing, supposedly, is an exact reproduction of the original, but this is frequently only a wild supposition. The photographer who did not make his picture tell a little fib now and then would soon go out of business from lack of patronage.

Pictures Better Than Words.

Pictures have come to occupy a very important place in the life of the world in recent years. It has been said that for newspaper purposes a picture which tells its story strikingly is worth more than columns of written words on the same subject. Newspapers and magazines have realized the truth of this fact and as a result pictures are used profusely in illustrating the news and fiction of the day.

No one has been quicker to realize the possibilities of the picture when properly—or it might be said improperly—used, than the mail order man. He has realized that a picture will do more to sell his kind of merchandise than a column of words and figures. One reason for this is that it is harder to catch a picture in a lie than it is printed words and figures. For instance, if you sell a man a table on the strength of a printed statement that it is 48 inches wide and if when the table reaches the customer it is only 36 inches wide, the customer not only has a moral right to kick, but he has a legal right to accuse the seller of obtaining money under false pretenses.

However, if the customer buys a table which looks in a picture to be 48 inches wide, but which proves upon its arrival to be only 36 inches wide, he has no legal grounds upon which to base a complaint if the seller has not told him in so many words that the table was 48 inches wide.

Stick to Truth in Figures.

Some unscrupulous mail order houses have taken advantage of this selling power of pictures in a very ingenious way. They adhere strictly to the truth in the actual measurements given in their catalogues of the articles which they have to sell. They may employ descriptions which exaggerate the qualities and appearances of the articles offered, but when it comes down to actual measurements the descriptions given are technically correct. Then these concerns rely upon their pictures to sell the merchandise, realizing that a picture will make a far deeper impression upon the mind of the prospective buyer than the actual figures given. A picture of a wide, roomy bed will attract the eye and the reader probably will not stop to measure off the width of the bed as it is described in the catalogue to see whether it is as wide as desired. Figures, in the abstract, mean little to the average reader and do not convey the impression that is given in the picture.

A former manager of a mail order house tells how his concern manipulated pictures in this way to suit its purposes. It had pictures of its chairs retouched so that the legs seemed to be an inch and a half in diameter, when they were really less than an inch. It made narrow beds appear in the picture to be wide and comfortable. Posts of iron beds that were really an inch in diameter were made to appear as if they were three inches in thickness. These things are easy for any competent artist to do.

Patrons Had No Recourse.

This concern, however, adhered rigidly to the truth in the measurements included in the descriptions. Customers who found, when they received their goods, that they were not what they expected, could kick, but it would do them no good. The mail order house could show that it had set forth the measurements truthfully in catalogues, and there was no recourse for the customer.

There is no question but that pictures will lie, sometimes without any manipulation, and the person who buys an article of merchandise from a picture is taking big chances, even though the picture is not intentionally altered to give a wrong impression. Any amateur photographer knows from experience how the camera often will give a wrong idea of proportions.

The only safe method is to buy from the local merchant where one sees the article itself and not a picture of it. The article itself cannot lie about its dimensions, at least.

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