

U.S.A. is before us. The question of food-yeast production from molasses is also receiving consideration.

DEHYDRATION AND REFRIGERATION

The new industry of dehydration has been greatly developed as a result of the war. A considerable body of knowledge has been gathered in course of this development. It is for you and us to consider what part of this industry can be switched on to peace-time production. It is my earnest hope that the fruit dehydration industry which has started on a large scale in the N.W.F.P. may be established on sound lines and become a permanent feature of the food industry in this country. Dehydration of vegetables and fish has been carried out indigenously in village homes in various parts of the country for a long time and it is for you to consider whether, with the help of the knowledge now available about more scientific methods of dehydration, the old indigenously methods may not be improved or transferred to new lines. The food-packing

industry is also an important one, to which I would like to invite your attention.

"Refrigeration is now considered to be the best method of preservation of perishable materials like fish, meat, vegetables, etc., and I would request you to consider this question also with reference to this country.

"The implications of a well-organized food industry are colossal. It is meant to (1) prevent or diminish spoilage, (2) remove foodstuffs from seasonal gluts thus preventing waste and making them available in other seasons, (3) increase or retain the nutritional value of foodstuffs, and (4) produce new foods like yeast, synthetic vitamins, vitamin concentrates, etc. Great things can and will be achieved by the application of science and technology to food. Food has even been produced from wood, and during the present war, fats have been made from coal. I do hope by your joint endeavours with our technical experts, you will be able to help us in the development of a full-fledged food-industry in this country on scientific lines."

TATA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL FOR THE TREATMENT OF CANCER AND ALLIED DISEASES*

PHILANTHROPISTS are the back-bone of any enlightened community, and in India, the House of Tatas has perhaps no equal. The first triennial report of the Tata Memorial Hospital for Cancer shows what enlightened philanthropy could do for the alleviation of human suffering.

On the suggestion of Sir Frederick Sykes, the then Governor of Bombay, Sir Dorab Tata agreed early in 1932, to finance the establishment of a Radium Institute in Bombay. "As originally visualized, the scheme was on a modest scale, providing for the purchase of 400 milligrams of radium at an estimated cost of Rs. 2 lacs which included an endowment for its upkeep."

Owing to the unexpected demise of Sir Dorab Tata in 1932, the "duty of carrying through the project devolved on his Trustees". In order to provide a worthy memorial to the spirit of enlightened philanthropy embodied in the persons of Mr. J. N. Tata and his two sons Sir Dorab and Sir Ratan, the Trustees decided, after consultation with experts like Prof. Regaud of Paris, Dr. Patterson of Manchester and particularly Dr. Ewing of Memorial Hospital, New York, "to start a Cancer Hospital instead of a Radium Institute and equip it with the necessary adjuncts for surgery, X-rays and Radium—for, though a Radium Institute would undoubtedly supply an urgent want in Bombay, the type of service it would render would necessarily be restricted". "If its scope could be enlarged with a proportionate increase in the benefits conferred, the Trustees were of opinion that the much greater expenditure involved in building and maintaining a Cancer Hospital would be justified". Thus came into being the best institution for the treatment and study of Cancer in the East, built and equipped at a cost of Rs. 4,000,000. It was opened on the 28th February 1941 and up to date, some 7,000 patients have had the benefit of the knowledge of the experts in the staff of the institution.

Its modest achievements detailed in the report, makes one hope that after the termination of the hostilities, the extension of the teaching and research programme envisaged, would "really contribute its share to the solution of the many problems that are encountered in the study of Cancer". Realisation of this aim would be possible, only if the best brains in pure science are attracted to the laboratory and given not only facilities, but what is more important, unfettered freedom.

Cancer is a problem of the West while Leprosy is the problem of the East. Care of over five thousand Cancer patients in the course of three years is no mean record, but this pales into insignificance when it is realized that among us in India to-day, there are 1,500,000 lepers. One out of every three lepers in the world is in India. Even the erudite refuse to consider this serious leper problem, owing to the horror and loathing instilled into every one, by generations of dread of the disease. The problem has to be tackled some time, if we wish to rid India of this foul disease.

When theology is unable to fit the lepra bacilli in any Cosmic Plan, when scientists during the past five decades have failed not only to discover a remedy but even to make out whether the bacilli seen in a lesion are living or dead, when all attempts either to cultivate the bacilli or to transmit it to laboratory animals have failed, and when it is impracticable to dream of either isolating all the infectious cases or of separating from leprous parents their children at birth and rearing them up under ideal conditions by legislative measures, it is up to organized philanthropy to encourage investigations on the disease, extend to the victims, the benefits of medical science and rear up children of leprous parents free from chances of infection.

One fervently hopes that the next great philanthropic venture of the House of Tatas would be an attempt to tackle the problem of Leprosy in India.

* "First Triennial Report," Bombay, 1945.