

# Hygiene Consciousness Needed

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A number of years ago Simon Gould went to Florida (from New York) and underwent a fast of about twenty days. I believe he fasted at Dr. Esser's Hygienic Health Ranch in Lake Worth, Florida. Several days after the fast was broken and, while the experience was still fresh in his mind, he wrote me urging me to proclaim in the Review that fasting is Hygiene and that all else is merely an adjunct. I had run into this idea many times before; I have encountered it many times since. The idea that some one factor of Hygiene is Hygiene does not always cluster around the fast. Sometimes the thought is expressed that diet is Hygiene, at other times the opinion is voiced that happiness is Hygiene, or that physical exercise is Hygiene.

A recent example of the idea that fasting is Hygiene was carried in the Hygienews, March, 1973 under the heading "Some of the Instructors Teaching at the Convention," where we were told the names of the following speakers and informed that they conducted fasts: "Dr. Keki R. Sidhwa of England, Director of his own fasting institution; Dr. William L. Esser, practitioner of Lake Worth, Florida, who has been conducting fasting for over 35 years; Dr. D. J. Scott, practitioner of Cleveland, Ohio, with over twenty-five years of experience in the science of fasting people for the recovery of innumerable ailments; . . . Dr. J. M. Brosious, St. Petersburg, Florida, who has supervised fasting for the recovery of health since 1942 . . . . The informed Hygienist will know that people do not fast for the "recovery of illness." Who wants to recover illness, anyhow?

I doubt very much that the writer of the foregoing item about the convention speakers intended to convey to the readers of Hygienews the idea that fasting and Hygiene are synonymous terms, but this is precisely the idea that is conveyed by the language used. Each of the men named wants to be known as a Hygienist and wants his institution known as a Hygienic institution, not as a mere fasting place. By putting all the emphasis on fasting and excluding all mention of Hygiene and the other Hygienic factors, readers cannot but get the idea that fasting is Hygiene—diet, exercise, and other Hygienic factors are mere adjuncts.

The fast is an essential factor element in a total plan of life that, in its wholeness constitutes the only valid means of restoring, as it is the only valid means of preserving health. The whole plan of life constitutes Hygiene. What we have just said of the fast may be said, and indeed we do say it, of every other Hygienic factor. For example, we may say that exercise is an essential factor element in a total plan of life, that in its wholeness constitutes the only valid means of restoring, as it is the only valid means of preserving health.

It may be understandable that food is the element of Natural Hy-

giene that has the strongest appeal to the neophyte in Hygiene and that he is inclined to think primarily of this subject when he thinks of Hygiene. Unless he or she is young and athletically inclined the importance of exercise is likely to be overlooked, as is also sunshine, if there is a strong inclination towards prudishness. Rest and sleep are factors that may not receive due consideration, especially by the young. A realization of individual responsibility is also difficult in people who have been taught, from infancy up, to depend on the physician and his bag of tricks. They are likely to want somebody to do for them what they can do for themselves and no one else can.

An urgent heed among Hygienists is that of developing Hygiene consciousness. We need to learn to think of Hygiene as an integrated whole, each factor of which is correlated with every other factor and cease to think of Hygiene in terms of particular fragments. When a Hygienic practitioner or Hygienic establishment is mentioned we need to be able to think of Hygiene in its wholeness and not think of the institution as a fasting place or the practitioner as one who conducts fasts. Not everyone who goes to a Hygienic institution is given a fast, but everyone eats, rests, exercises and seeks to acquire emotional poise. Fasting is conducted in many places that are not Hygienic. A place is not Hygienic merely because fasts are conducted therein. To label Hygienic institutions as fasting places will inevitably lead to the confused idea that fasting places- are Hygienic institutions. Hygienists, of all people, should avoid this mistake. We should begin today to develop a deeper and broader understanding of the Hygienic System; we (should learn to think of Hygiene as bionomy and not as a mere program of fasting. Each factor element in nature's grand system of Hygiene should be given its proper place in the integrated whole and thought of as of equal importance with every other factor, not merely as something that is an adjunct to the fast but as an essential integer within a vital synthesis. It is also important that we learn to think of Hygiene as a means of keeping well and not merely as a means of getting well. It is in its role as a preserver of health that it assumes highest importance. It performs no function in the work of restoration that is different from the work it performs in the work of preserving health.