may relieve an infant which appears to be almost moribund. In very acute cases less concentrated preparations, such as yeast or extract of rice polishings, may not have time to act, but they may be effective when the condition is less grave—witness the success achieved in the Philippines in the treatment of infantile beri-beri with "tiki-tiki", an alcoholic extract of rice polishings.'

Finally the following passage from a letter written by a hospital physician in a town in the Northern Circars in December 1941 is interesting and instructive:—

'Although many patients present symptoms suggestive of vitamin-B_1 deficiency, we have seen very few cases of severe beri-beri this year. If this applied only to patients who come regularly to the hospital for treatment or ante-natal care, we might ascribe it to success in our efforts to educate the people; but it applies also to outlying villages, for very few beri-beri patients have been brought from them. It would seem that the high price of milled rice has made many people eat other grain at least for one meal. Neither have we had any cases of acute, *i.e.*, fulminant, beri-beri in infants this year, though mothers still report cases where an apparently healthy baby has begun to scream and died before the child could be taken to hospital. We have, however, had many cases of ill-nourished babies whose condition appeared hopeless, and yet rapid recovery followed after vitamin B_1 was given by injection. We are now giving bigger dosage, 25 mg. to adults with marked dyspnœa, and 5 to 10 mg. doses to infants.'

A.

PLAGIARISM

WE regret that we must admit to having been unconscious accomplices in an act of flagrant plagiarism.

In a recent number we published a paper on a certain modern surgical procedure. We accepted and published this article in good faith believing that it was an original description of this particular technique. We did not imagine that all the ideas were original; in fact we naturally expected that the authors would have taken full advantage of all the recent literature on the subject and have added practical points from their own experience under local conditions, but we certainly did not suspect that more than three-quarters of the article was a word for word, sentence for sentence, and paragraph for paragraph a copy of a paper that had appeared in an English contemporary only a little over a year earlier.

We remonstrated with the perpetrators of this blatant plagiarism. The excuse given by the junior writer was that the substance of the paper had been given to him as a guide to procedure, by his late chief in a medical college hospital where he had been a house surgeon, and that he did not know that it was copied from a published paper. If this statement is true, it only seems to us to deepen the hue of the crime, for the writers gave no indication in the paper that they were reproducing word for word another surgeon's instructions and there was no acknowledgment of any kind. The senior 'writer' appears to have had nothing to do with writing the paper, beyond 'correcting' the typescript and disclaims all knowledge of the source. This habit of claiming joint authorship without any justification is unfortunately not an uncommon one in this country. One great danger of such a procedure is here exemplified.

We are not proud of our share in this unfortunate incident, particularly as the medical journal in which the paper appeared is on our exchange list, but it is humanly impossible for us to be familiar with all the tens of thousands of medical articles that are published annually. We owe our sincere apologies to the journal and author in question, and these apologies have been issued, though we have not yet received any complaint from these sources.

Special Articles

THE ANTI-PELLAGRA FACTOR*

By K. V. GIRI, D.SC., A.I.I.SC., F.A.SC.
(*From the Biochemical Laboratory, Andhra University, Waltair*)

THE pellagra-preventive factor belongs to the important group of B-vitamins. The discovery of this vitamin and its therapeutic value in pellagra are of very recent date. Dr. Joseph Goldberger, a surgeon in the United States Public Health Service was the pioneer in the discovery of the cause and cure of pellagra. In 1926, it was first shown by Goldberger and co-workers (1926) that the water-soluble B was a complex composed of at least two dietary essentials—one, which is necessary for growth and prevention of polyneuritis and unstable to heat, and the other also necessary for growth and for the prevention of a pellagra-like dermatitis in rats, which is relatively stable to heat. These two factors came to be known as anti-neuritic vitamin and the anti-pellagra factor and also as vitamins B_1 and B_2, respectively. Goldberger considered that the anti-pellagra factor was identical with a vitamin which prevented pellagra in human beings. This factor was later on called vitamin G. The same factor was thought to be identical with a factor which prevented black tongue in dogs and rabbits (Goldberger *et al.*, 1928).

Thus 'vitamin B_2' was found to possess the following properties:—

* Andhra University Extension Lecture, delivered at the Andhra Medical College, Vizagapatam, on 17th January, 1941.