

GOLDEN JUBILEE WORLD TRIBUTE
TO DR. SIDNEY V. HAAS



Dr. Sidney V. Haas

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GOLDEN JUBILEE WORLD TRIBUTE TO DR. SIDNEY V. HAAS

In Honor of
His Pioneering Contribution
to Celiac Therapy
and
the Treatment of the Hypertonic Infant,
and of the Completion of
His Fiftieth Year
of Medical Practice



NEW YORK: 1949

The Committee for the Golden Jubilee Tribute to Dr. Sidney V. Haas

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*The Committee for
the Golden Jubilee Tribute
to Dr. Sidney V. Haas*

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

ON APRIL 5, 1949 more than a hundred leading physicians and laymen paid tribute to Dr. Sidney V. Haas, internationally known pediatrician, at a luncheon held at the New York Academy of Medicine.

Dr. Haas was the recipient of this worldwide tribute for his pioneering contributions to the field of pediatrics, particularly in celiac therapy and the treatment of the hypertonic infant.

A high point of the luncheon was the presentation to Dr. Haas of a Golden Book of Tributes. This contained letters from physicians throughout the world, and medical organizations in twenty-one countries, including Brazil, Portugal, England, China, Australia, India and Java.

The occasion also marked his completion of fifty years of medical practice.

This tribute to Dr. Haas helped to focus nationwide attention on the vital importance of pediatrics for the welfare of American children.

By two epochal contributions Dr. Sidney V. Haas has won a permanent niche in the history of pediatrics.

Bananas in the Treatment of Celiac Disease

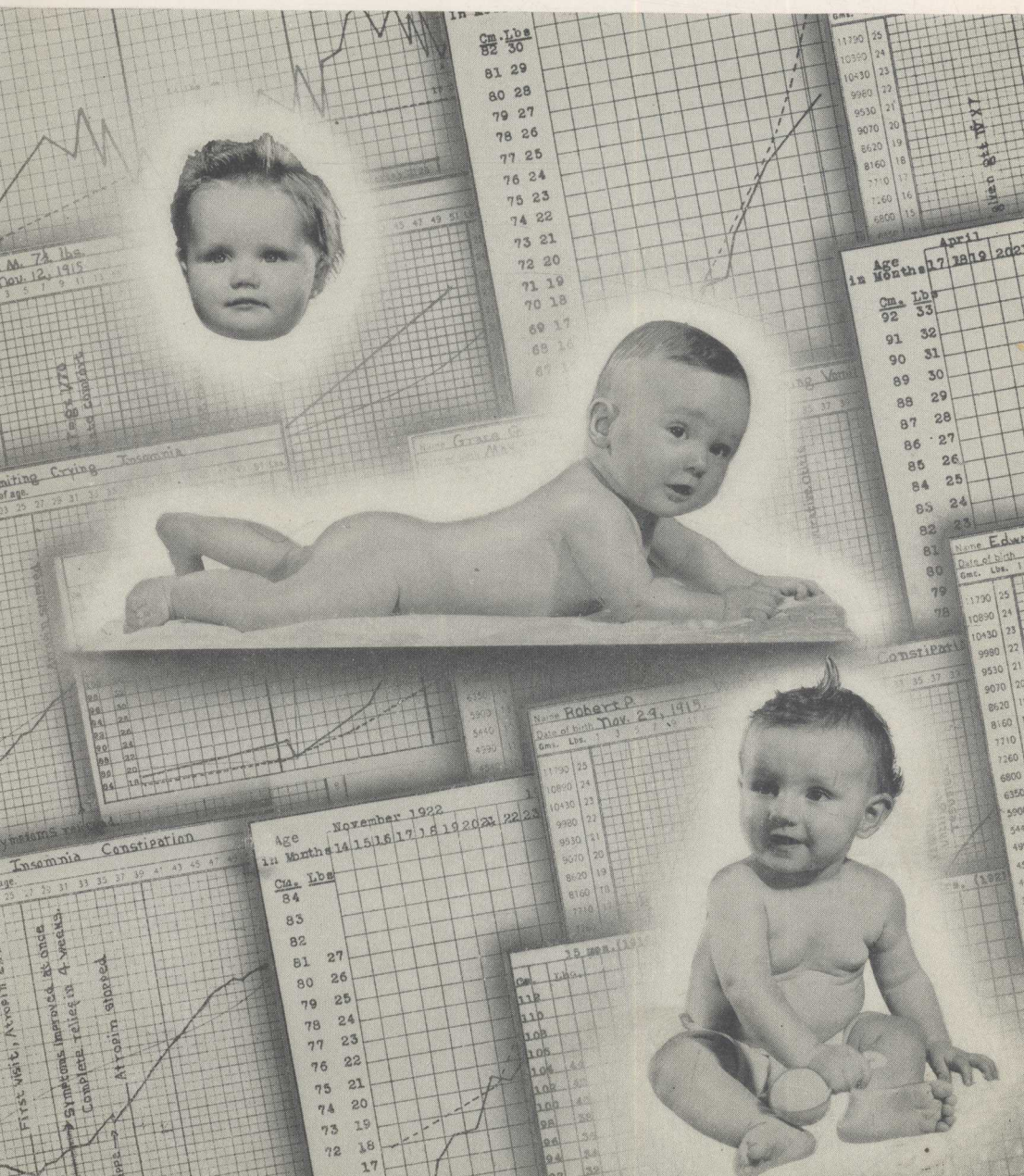
He is responsible for saving the lives of many thousands of children throughout the world by his discovery of the therapeutic value of the banana diet in the treatment of celiac, until then a serious children's illness with a high mortality rate.

Dr. Haas' paper on "The Value of the Banana in the Treatment of Celiac Disease" appeared in the "American Journal of Diseases of Children" in October, 1924.

In this paper Dr. Haas said: "Celiac disease is a nutritional disturbance of late infancy and early childhood due to inability to utilize fats and carbohydrates in a normal manner... Carbohydrates in the form of ripe bananas appears to be tolerated perfectly, making it possible to bring about a clinical cure in practically all cases."

This discovery was so pivotal that it altered the prognosis of celiac and has greatly aided physicians everywhere in treating the disease.

Subsequent experience convinced Dr. Haas that celiac is primarily an intolerance to carbohydrates, and only secondarily an intolerance to fats.



Atropin in the Treatment of the Hypertonic Infant

Dr. Haas' other epochal contribution to pediatrics was his advocacy of the therapeutic effects of atropin on the hypertonic (colic) infant, pylorospasm and pyloric stenosis.

It was in May 1918 that the "American Journal of Diseases of Children" published Dr. Haas' paper on "The Hypertonic Infant, the Curative Action of Atropin on Certain of Its Manifestations."

In this paper Dr. Haas said: "The hypertonic infant shows a tendency to rigidity, overaction of involuntary muscles and soon after birth develops signs of physical and psychic irritation, presenting the syndrome (physical) of vomiting, often visible peristalsis, constipation and imperfect nutrition; (psychic) of general irritability, insomnia and crying. . . . Although apparently a feeding problem, changes in method and character of feeding does not correct the condition. Atropin . . . usually relieves the condition at once and apparently increases the infant's tolerance for milk."

Continuing his studies in this field, Dr. Haas found that atropin corrects pyloric stenosis and pylorospasm.

His discovery of the banana therapy for celiac and the atropin therapy for the hypertonic infant marked great turning points in pediatrics. Either discovery would have entitled Dr. Haas to a high place among the world's pediatricians. Together they have made him in our time one of the outstanding contributors to medical progress.

This book is intended to commemorate the worldwide tribute to Dr. Haas. It contains a brief biographical sketch of him, a list of his published papers on pediatrics, excerpts from the speeches made at the luncheon in his honor, a list of the guests present, excerpts from some of the letters contributed to the Golden Book of Tributes and a complete list of those who sent them.

It is hoped that this little book will foster a wider understanding of the importance of pediatrics and of Dr. Haas' great contributions to the field.

Evan Evans

EVAN EVANS, M.D.

May 19, 1949

*The Story of
Dr. Sidney V. Haas*

DR. SIDNEY VALENTINE HAAS, the great pediatrician, pioneered in the treatment of celiac disease and in the use of atropin for children suffering from pyloric spasm. He studied under many famous physicians. One man in particular influenced him to enter pediatrics. This was Dr. Abraham Jacobi, the first physician in America to specialize in this field.

Following graduation, Dr. Haas entered Mount Sinai Hospital in New York, then at the Vanderbilt Clinic he became assistant, first to Dr. Jacobi, then to his successor, Dr. L. Emmett Holt.

It was Dr. Holt who interested Dr. Haas in celiac disease and its treatment. In those days celiac disease was frequently fatal. Under Dr. Holt's inspiration, Dr. Haas and Dr. Howland concentrated on studies of celiac disease. When Dr. Howland pointed out that celiac was an intolerance to carbohydrates, it occurred to Dr. Haas that some carbohydrates might be tolerated by celiac cases.

At this time, a child of two at the Home for Hebrew Infants in New York was dying of starvation because of anorexia nervosa—complete loss of appetite and refusal to eat. Dr. Haas suggested that it be fed bananas. On a diet of bananas the child improved, gained weight and took other foods which it had hitherto rejected. When banana was withheld, anorexia returned. Though not an instance of celiac disease, this case gave Dr. Haas the idea of trying bananas for celiac cases. In that way, he discovered that the carbohydrates in bananas can be tolerated by celiac patients. Dr. Haas then developed a routine of therapy for the use of bananas in celiac conditions. The pioneering work of Dr. Howland and Dr. Haas laid the basis for today's research in the field.

Dr. Haas' research in the field of atropin therapy preceded his work on celiac disease. When he was an interne at Mount Sinai, he noted that house painters admitted to the hospital were frequently in terrific pain with what was known as "painter's colic," which was the result of lead poisoning. Their extreme pains were relieved by administering belladonna or atropin. This suggested to him that atropin would relieve cases of bad colic in babies, vomiting and other symptoms of pyloric spasm.

The use of atropin for infants suffering from pyloric spasm was first suggested in a paper Dr. Haas presented in May, 1918. There was a storm of objection on the part of some physicians and he was told that the use of atropin was too dangerous. However, some doctors concurred with his opinion, and under proper clinical care, atropin and other forms

of the same drug are now being used widely.

Dr. Haas was born in Chicago, February 14, 1870. He attended New York public schools and was admitted to the College of the City of New York in 1884. He entered the Medical Department of New York University in 1892, and the following year transferred to the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University, from which he received his M.D. in 1895. He interned at Mount Sinai Hospital 1896-1898. He entered upon private practice in 1898.

Since then, he has been Lecturer, Society for Instruction of First Aid to the Injured, 1896; Clinical Assistant, Department of Diseases of Chest and General Medicine, 1900; Instructor, Department of Clinical Medicine, 1902; Lecturer, Department of Clinical Medicine, New York Polyclinic Medical School and Hospital, 1903; Clinical Assistant in Department of Children, Vanderbilt Clinic under Abraham Jacobi, 1903-1908; Physician to the Visiting Guild for Crippled Children, 1904; Assistant in Diseases of Children, Columbia University, 1908-1913, under L. Emmett Holt; Visiting Physician to Department of Children, Lebanon Hospital, 1908; Attending Physician to Home for Hebrew Infants, 1911; Attending Physician in Contagion, Riverside Hospital of the New York Health Department, 1924; Consulting Physician in Contagion, Riverside Hospital, 1933; Professor of Pediatrics, New York Polyclinic Medical School and Hospital, 1934; Active Consulting Pediatrician to Harlem Hospital and Lebanon Hospital, 1937.

He married Helen M. Patterson in 1901; has three sons, one of whom is a physician. Residence, New York City.

Dr. Haas is a Fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine since 1901; a member of the American Medical Association, the New York State, County and Metropolitan Medical and the New York Pathological Societies. He was formerly a member of the Greater New York, Yorkville, Harlem and Bronx Medical Societies and the Hospital Pediatric Club.

Golden Jubilee Luncheon In Honor of Dr. Sidney V. Haas

The worldwide tribute to Dr. Sidney V. Haas was paid at a luncheon held at the New York Academy of Medicine on April 5, 1949.

The toastmaster was Robert Moses, Park Commissioner of New York City.

An introductory address was made by Dr. Murray H. Bass, former chief of pediatrics at Mount Sinai Hospital.

Then the Golden Book of World Tributes was presented to Dr. Haas by Dr. L. Emmett Holt, Jr., son of a former chief of Dr. Haas' at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University.

Following Dr. Haas' speech of acceptance, Dr. W. Morgan Hartshorn, one of his co-professors on the staff of the Polyclinic Medical School and Hospital, presented him with a gold clasp on behalf of the Polyclinic staff.

Following are the speeches delivered at the Academy of Medicine luncheon in honor of Dr. Haas.

*Left to Right: DR. L. EMMETT HOLT, JR., MR. ROBERT MOSES,
DR. MURRAY BASS AND DR. SIDNEY V. HAAS.*



*Speeches delivered at
Golden Jubilee Tribute
to Dr. Sidney V. Haas*



Robert Moses

MR. ROBERT MOSES: Ladies and gentlemen: A profession is only as great as the men who practice it. Behind medicine are the people who have made and kept it one of the truly great callings of all times.

I do not need to tell you why we are here — what this occasion signifies.

We are here not only to honor one who, like Luke of old, was a great physician, but also to pay tribute to a friend — Dr. Sidney V. Haas.

First, I shall present Dr. Bass. You all know Dr. Bass, who is currently consultant at Mount Sinai. Formerly Chief of that hospital's Pediatric Service, he has also been connected with Willard Parker, the Hospital for Joint Diseases, the Hospital for Hebrew Infants, and St. Joseph's. He has known Dr. Haas for more than forty years. He has known him as both colleague and friend.

I take pleasure in introducing Dr. Bass.

DR. MURRAY BASS: Mr. Moses, Dr. Haas, ladies and gentlemen: On this auspicious occasion, it is fitting to review Dr. Haas' life and career as one of the great practitioners in his field.

Because Dr. Haas is so modest, I am not sure he is going to enjoy this. He makes me feel like a six-year-old boy I know who went to camp for the first time. While there, he received a letter from his mother. The little boy couldn't read, so he took the letter to his counsellor and asked her to read it for him. "But please," he cautioned her, "put your fingers in your ears so you don't hear it." (*Laughter*)

Dr. Sidney Valentine Haas was born in Chicago in 1870, but has lived in New York City since he was six years old. He attended the public schools here, and subsequently City College.

After he was graduated from college he took Horace Greeley's advice and went West, as far as a little town in Kansas called Home Station. Things were far from peaceful in Kansas at that time. They were



Dr. Murray Bass

burning corn for fuel and there was talk of Indian uprisings. Apparently young Haas didn't like it, for after a year he returned to New York.

Back in this city, he played with the idea of a theatrical career, but finally decided to enter business. His first job was selling dress goods at Stern Brothers. He did so well at it that not long afterward he and his brother opened their own business. The latter became the famous dress goods house known as Haas Brothers.

At this high point in his business career, Dr. Haas decided to study medicine. He attended New York University Medical School, and after earning his M.D. took graduate studies at Columbia's College of Physicians and Surgeons.

At Columbia, Dr. Haas came in contact with some of the finest teachers of that generation, including Dr. Emmett Holt. Dr. Holt was an amazing teacher, an able clinician and a remarkable man.

A student once asked Dr. Holt why he had decided to become a pediatrician.

"It must be hard to make diagnoses on children," the student observed. "They can't tell you anything."

"Yes," agreed Dr. Holt, "children are different from adults. They can't tell you lies."

Perhaps it was this attitude which accounted for part of Dr. Holt's influence on so many men in pediatrics, including myself. I am told that it was he who first advised Dr. Haas to enter the field.

After interning at Mount Sinai, Dr. Haas entered practice, and in 1901 married Miss Helen Patterson, a nurse whom he had met as an interne. Thus, not so far off there is another Golden Celebration awaiting him.

Since those early days Dr. Haas has become the well-known New York pediatrician you all know, the attending physician and consultant at some of our city's largest hospitals, such as Polyclinic, Lebanon, the Home for Hebrew Infants, Riverside, and Harlem.

Since that time he has also become famous as one of the most original thinkers in modern pediatrics. He is the author of many important papers on a variety of subjects. But he is most famous for two major findings: one, the use of atropin for hypertonic infants, which he evolved in 1918; the other, the banana diet as treatment for celiac disease, which he delivered in his now-famous paper of 1923.

Hypertonic infants are nervous and tense, and suffer from muscle spasms. These spasms often occur in the intestinal tract, causing vomiting, constipation, even severe colic. One variety of this is pyloric stenosis. In this disease the opening of the stomach shrinks to such a point that it is finally impossible for any food to pass through.

Dr. Haas treated it with atropin. He not only used atropin, but used a specific kind. He told how and in what amounts it should be used. The results were remarkable.

I am one of the many who have used Dr. Haas' atropin treatment. I have been using it for the past fifteen or twenty years. As a result I can report a complete recovery record for this period. I can also report that I have never had a single case which required operation.

It was at the Home for Hebrew Infants that Dr. Haas first experimented with banana feeding. One of his patients was an infant who had difficulty in eating. The baby refused all food. Dr. Haas offered him banana.

At that time banana was considered completely indigestible. Everybody was horrified at the idea of feeding it to an infant — everybody, that is, except the infant, who not only took it but asked for more. He was given more, and thus Dr. Haas discovered that the banana could be well tolerated.

He then decided to experiment with the banana as treatment for celiac. Celiac is a disease of chronic indigestion in young children, accompanied by severe diarrhea and lack of appetite. It leads to extreme malnutrition. At that time medical opinion diagnosed it as lack of toleration of fats and carbohydrates.

Dr. Haas fed banana to celiac sufferers and discovered that they could tolerate the carbohydrates in it; more than that, they could be fed it in large quantities with beneficial effect.

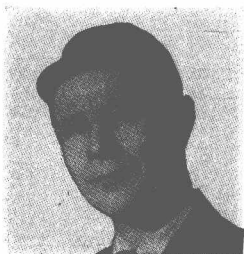
Dr. Haas, the medical profession owes you a real debt for these two major contributions. They have advanced medicine appreciably not only in the United States but throughout the world.

I can think of no more gratifying tribute than this celebration attended by your colleagues, patients and friends. Everyone here joins me in congratulating you, not only for your scientific attainments but also for the enviable position you have created for yourself in the hearts of all of us. We hope that your good health may continue for a long

time to come, and that as old age overtakes you, you will have the joy of seeing your son Merrill carry on your ideals and aspirations.

MR. MOSES: The next speaker will present a book of tributes to Dr. Haas. He is an old friend—the son of Dr. Emmett Holt, whose influence on Dr. Haas and many other pediatricians of his generation has been described.

Dr. L. Emmett Holt, Jr., is well known to you as the Director of Children's Medicine at Bellevue. I take pleasure in presenting him to you now . . . Dr. Holt. (*Applause*)



Dr. L. Emmett Holt, Jr.

DR. HOLT: It is only since I have been in New York, during this past year, that I have had the pleasure of knowing Dr. Haas personally. But I feel as if I had known him for thirty years. As a child I often heard my father speak of him, and during my twenty-odd years at Johns Hopkins my colleagues and I heard even more of him, his influence on the clinical studies conducted there was so great.

It takes a very original and courageous mind to do what Dr. Haas did: to defy all instincts and feed children fat in conditions of apparent fat intolerance. This is one of his major contributions to the advancement of medicine and I, along with all of you, admire him for it. His thinking has greatly influenced this generation of pediatricians. I am sure it will influence many generations to come.

[Dr. Holt reads excerpts from letters of tribute sent to Dr. Haas from all parts of the world.]

It is now my pleasure to present this Golden Book. It is actually blue, but it is intended to be a golden book to you, Dr. Haas, from your many friends.

DR. HAAS: Thank you, very much, Dr. Holt.

When I think of all the many men and women in medicine and of the great things that they have done, both in the past and in the

present, I am abashed to be the recipient of this attention. But it is good to know at the end of the day, when sunset colors tint the western sky, that one's efforts have not gone completely unnoticed.

A physician's function is to quiet pain—heal the sick—and try to improve the methods by which this is accomplished. No one originates anything. We build upon foundations laid long before, and climb by stepping in the footprints of those who have preceded us. No one remembers who first showed the way, and in a short time no one will remember who reached the goal. This is the manner of medicine wherever its language is spoken.

There is just one point that I should like to make to show the influence of one man upon the shape of things to come. Dr. L. Emmett Holt, Senior, who became interested in the subject of celiac disease in the early part of the century, induced Dr. Christian A. Herter to investigate the subject, and in 1908 Herter issued his monograph on infantilism due to chronic intestinal infection. Among the assistants at the Vanderbilt Clinic were Dr. John Howland and myself. John Howland later became Professor of Pediatrics at the Johns Hopkins Medical School.

In 1920 he read a paper on prolonged carbohydrate intolerance treated by means of a high protein diet. The high protein he used included protein milk—milk from which much of the sugar had been removed. This was the work of yeomen pediatricians. It was when he tried to introduce carbohydrates into the diet that he met with great difficulties.

In 1923 I read a paper on the value of banana in the treatment of celiac disease; for I had found that the carbohydrates of banana and other fruits—and, to a lesser degree, of vegetables—were well tolerated and could be used in any quantity in this disease. With this, the treatment became comparatively simple. We do not yet know the cause of the disease, but when we do, it will probably be very simple. We have a method of treatment which cures practically all cases.

Dr. L. Emmett Holt, Jr., and his colleagues are well on the way to showing that fats can be tolerated in this disease. When we first started out there was a universal opinion that fats were intolerant. And that opinion is still too widely held, as you may have learned from Dr. Bass' remarks.

When we started, it was really a tragic disease. One out of four