

A NEW YEAR RESOLUTION

THE editor in a very recent issue of a medical magazine asks "Do doctors tell their patients enough about themselves?" He answers in the negative, and ends his editorial thus, "the doctor is etymologically a Teacher . . . his duties as Healer are secondary to this."

A farmer's wife in our own land writes me an interesting letter. She says: "I wish more doctors would take an interest in the whole family and its environment as regards illness. Too many women's ills stem from too much rushing around or overwork and worry. The trouble is more mental than physical. Doctors should get hold of husbands and inform them their wives have to get away from everything occasionally and, of course, vice versa. They should refuse the bottle of tonic and make people cure their own ills. I have imagined all kinds of ills when really all I needed was a good rest and a bit of peace with a little fussing over."

Now let us consider these two statements. I think most doctors would like to do more teaching. But if they were to tell you your illness was emotional and not physical, would you take it? Or would you go off down the road to the next doctor who might not be so frank, and who might give you what you expected, medicines or pills? Nevertheless, I personally think the medical editor has raised a question needing consideration. The farmer's wife says she would welcome the assurance her ills were emotional, and that relief from tension was all she needed. However, she seems to be a very enlightened person. Are you? Do you admit to yourself the power of your mind and your emotions over your body—that aches and pains can come from feelings and emotions?

Your muscles are always working, one against another often, to keep you tuned up. You really live in a state of muscular tension. When you enjoy yourself, there is relaxation in all your muscles; when you are upset mentally, maybe criticised, or failed with expected promotion or worried in domestic life, there

is increased tension in all your muscular tissues. This changes immediately to relaxation if you are praised, get the expected promotion and achieve happiness in your home life. Nerves and muscles are a team very directly linked with your feelings and emotions. Nerves work on muscles and "over-tense" the body when you fall out with people, are in unsatisfactory work or unhappy in your job, or when you live unhealthily through feeding wrongly and failing to take enough rest and relaxation. If allowed to continue these "over-tensions" react on the mind. There may be just plain discontent, discouragement, fears about the future, or real depression. If the tense state and these unhappy feelings are allowed to continue too long, the body feels tired and it begins to feel real aches and pains—anywhere—maybe in joints, maybe in stomach or intestines. These real aches and pains have led to operations at which no physical defect is found.

In some there may be an inner conflict of such long standing that the origin is forgotten and a psychiatrist's help may lead to unravelling and recognition. For the majority it is a question of recognising the power of the mind over the physical body, and recognising the tenseness, the aches and pains, for what they are. You may not be able to escape the causes, but have to put up with unhappiness in work or in domestic life. Then the thing to do is to recognise this frankly, and seek to down this worry, with its resultant tenseness and apparent bodily troubles, by finding an outlet for the tenseness, in some new productive work or hobby, in some form of play, both individual and competitive, that takes you out of yourself, and in deliberate rest and relaxation.

Our farmer's wife was right. Too many ills stem from too much rushing around or overwork or worry. Pain or discomfort can come from tenseness, from stress centred in feelings and emotions, and can be carried by nerves to that part of the body or that organ in which you feel it. No treatment of the body or the organ cures this kind of pain.

This is the text of a talk on health broadcast recently from ZB, YA and YZ stations of the NZBS by DR. H. B. TURBOTT, Deputy-Director-General of Health

Recognise its origin—loneliness, domestic quarrelling, worry over money, just plain trying to do too much—and get relief from the stress in something you do with your hands, some productive work or hobby, some play and relaxation. You won't find relief in medicines or drugs.

Husbands, could you apply the farmer's wife's discovery, and make a New Year resolution to give your wife "a good rest and a bit of peace with a little fussing over"?

IN AUSTRALIA —

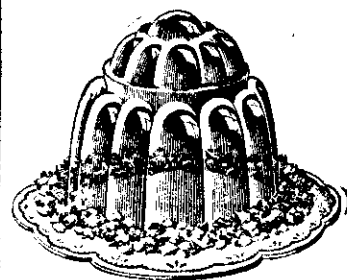


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Dante's Inferno

IN the early morning of the Friday before Easter in the year 1300, the poet Dante found himself, in a metaphorical sense, lost in a forest, his way out barred by a wolf, a lion and a leopard. Soon, however, a helper appeared, the poet Virgil, who explained that he had been instructed by three ladies on high to guide him through the perils of the Inferno and Purgatory back to the seat of the godhead. So begins Dante's great allegory, *The Divine Comedy*, whose aim, says the poet, is not to delight but to reprove and exhort, and help form men's characters by showing them the perils of life. Such a severe and practical aim has not prevented subsequent ages enjoying the poem and continually retranslating it to suit the language of the time. The BBC has now issued a new series of six readings from the first book of *The Inferno* with Marius Goring and Esme Percy reading the parts of Dante and Virgil respectively. These will be heard from 1YC on February 9 and 3YC on February 15.

Symphony in Brass

BANDSMEN will be interested in a programme called *Symphony in Brass* in which the Wellington Metropolitan Fire Brigade Band is under the baton of a guest conductor, Raymond Cray. In Australia, Raymond Cray is well-known as a pioneer of special arrangements for brass band which break away from the conventionalised harmonies often found in such music. He is also known as a composer of band music and several of his compositions have been played on the BBC. In New Zealand he has worked with brass bands in some of the main centres, introducing them to a style of music usually considered more suitable for orchestral combinations. In the first of two programmes from 2YA the Metropolitan Fire Brigade Band will play on Tuesday, February 5, "Come Back to Sorrento," "Silent Night," "Boogie for Brass," "Lover Come Back to Me" and "Reflection in a Wineglass." The second programme will be heard on February 12.