

NUTRITION AND HEALTH

Stress of Modern Life

(By D. W. Adamson, Wellington.)

WHENCE comes health? Is it luck? Is it some caprice of chance which ordains that one person in every ten is blessed with this priceless possession, while the other nine are doomed to varying degrees of suffering and pain?

"Heredit," you may say. But is heredity a full explanation? No! It is not, and in this series of articles I hope to show that ill-health is not a matter of poor heredity, but is due primarily to wrong pre-natal and post-natal care and feeding. That good health is by no means a matter of luck, but is the result of an intelligent interpretation of the laws governing the functions of the human body and their common-sense application—in other words, that good health is to a very large extent optional is what I would impress on readers' minds.

During recent years many scientists have been investigating this subject in order to discover what effect, if any, the various phases of malnutrition in the parents produced in the offspring. One surprising fact reveals that healthy parents may live and thrive in a normal and healthy manner on a dietary that is known to be lacking in certain essential elements, but, each succeeding generation of parents when confined to the same deficient dietary develops physical defects and weaknesses of function that were not present in the original parents.

These degenerative changes which include such faults as structural weaknesses of the bones, muscles, glands and special sense organs become more and more intensified with each succeeding generation until in four or five generations the physical deterioration is so pronounced that further reproduction becomes impossible. Working along somewhat similar lines of investigation, but with a different object in view, other scientists are producing specific diseases, and other abnormalities of the body ranging from colitis and ulceration of the intestinal tract to diseases of the nervous system and of the bones, simply by withholding from the diet certain of the food substances, mineral elements and vitamins which are necessary for the optimal development of the body.

Although all the rapidly accumulating evidence points to the fact that what we eat is the major factor in the promotion and maintenance of good health, we must not lose sight of the fact that the complexities of modern life force upon us a vast number of factors which have an adverse bearing upon our health, and which emphasise the necessity of introducing artificial means of restoring the environment most suitable for our development and well-being. The most important of these are an abundance of fresh air, sunlight, suitable physical and mental exercise and recreation. But, beware of the faddist or the crank. However necessary it may sometimes be to adopt apparently faddish methods to correct our physical ills, it is seldom necessary to depend upon other than rational common-sense methods to maintain good health.

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