

be poorly nourished and are easily attacked by the bacteria of decay.

Owing to our present methods of living the vermiform appendix is the least used part of the human mechanism. From our knowledge of comparative anatomy we can safely conclude that at one period of man's history the appendix of the cecum was such an important organ that a human being who had one the least bit shorter than his neighbor's had a slightly lesser chance of surviving in the struggle for existence. At a time when one had to consume enormous quantities of coarse roots and leaves, which was the only food to be had during the winter, the man who was a few quarts short of appendical juice was soon left behind in the struggle; he had fewer children to inherit his appendical shortcoming; while the one who had an extra long one flourished accordingly, and handed his appendical advantage down to a numerous progeny. Just as we say now that an army crawls on its stomach there may have been a time in man's evolution when his success in life depended on the length of his appendix. Now all this has been changed; our ancestors began by picking out the roots that were most easily digested and then they stored up nuts and other fruits to last them through the winter, with the result that they could get along very well with a few inches less of appendix. When they took to eating meat and other foods which were digested in the stomach the appendix became a few inches shorter, and when they began to cook their food so that it was digested before it reached the cecum the *raison d'être* of the appendix ceased altogether. So that at the present time, Sir Wm. McEwan's high opinion to the contrary, notwithstanding, it is not only of no advantage to have a long appendix, but, on the contrary, it is a handicap and source of danger to have one at all. Indeed it is quite conceivable that it may only be a question of a few thousand years for the cecum itself to follow its five-foot appendix into the historic realms of things which have been. We may safely say that there is no organ in the human body, not even excepting the coccyx, which is less used than the vermiform appendix is to-day, and being the least used it is by long odds the weakest.

An organ which is weak even in the healthiest, must be still weaker in the unhealthy. Who are the unhealthy? Those who are deprived of fresh air, sunshine, proper food and exercise. Here we have the explanation of the truth contained in the well-worn joke, that it is fashionable to have appendicitis because most of the wealthy people have had it; and it also explains the unjust accusation which we so often hear, that appendicitis was invented by the doctors in order to reap a harvest of operation fees. The reason why the rich woman in the city is a fit subject for appendicitis is because she is the most unhealthy specimen of her race, for she habitually gets the smallest possible amount of fresh air, sunshine,