

frequent characteristic of the unprogressive.

We must realize that health is conserved by the application of precisely the same physical and biological sciences which have led to commercial and social development and added to man's pleasure and comfort.

Health, which should be our most cherished possession, must not be wrapped in mystery and buried in ignorance, nor lost by any *laissez faire* policy. On the other hand we must not allow the too enthusiastic faddist to risk it for us on any of his too optimistic theories.

The faddist says "if preventable, why not prevent." It looks simple to him.

He recommends a "cure-all" serum. He proposes universal vaccination. He advocates deep breathing, cold baths or long walks as a preventive or cure of all ills. Fresh air, overfeeding and prolonged, complete rest appeal to him as a panacea, in fact, too much to eat and nothing to do appeal to most of us.

He simply cannot see that there is no royal road to health and no blanket method of prevention or cure of disease.

His enthusiasm is much too easily aroused by the announced discovery of some hitherto unknown active cause of disease, some new theory as to the effect of physical environment on human resistance or some new method of cure or prevention.

Our eagerness to be deceived is evidenced by our public support of newspapers and magazines which furnish impossible and misleading news items concerning health and its preservation and publish advertisements of fraudulent remedies. We imprison the burglar when we are lucky enough to catch him. If in his operations for the relief of financial plethora he impairs his victim's health, his punishment is increased and in case death results his life is the forfeit. On the other hand, charlatans and quacks who foster our fears, steal our strength and lose our lives are willingly presented with millions of dollars annually. Our credulity permits us, in fact, leads us, to offer ourselves voluntarily to be drugged, robbed and murdered.

When Irving Fisher, the well-known Professor of Economics of Yale University, and his colleague, Norton, estimated that over six hundred thousand deaths occur each year in the United States which might be prevented, or, more correctly, postponed

by the systematic and conscientious application of scientific knowledge already available, we should have been appalled. We undoubtedly were amazed at his figures showing the equivalent financial loss of about two billion dollars per annum.

Recognition of the various complexities which confront those who desire to improve the public health is important in order to permit of the preparation of broad general plans which properly co-ordinate the various fields and workers.

These will be found to be of two general classes, namely, those which concern man in his relation to environment, and those which arise from a conflict of interests between man and mankind. Their consideration, however, will not be found to warrant either a fatalistic pessimism born of a helpless ignorance or a "cock-sure" optimism resultant from any phenomenal forward movement of our own generation.

Not land nor sea nor sky afford escape from the mad rush of to-day. Is "velocitania" a disease or is it a natural evolution of our times? Shall we become immune or shall we end in "tachyphobia"? Modern means of annihilating space enable, in fact, compel us to group and regroup ourselves many times a day and seem to stimulate towards, instead of away from, the herding together of cities. We are increasingly bearing each other's burdens and exposed to each others real and imaginary ills. The unremitting grinding of each one of us against the other prevents adequate renewal of the loss from vital waste.

There is, indeed, much need of the increasing armamentarium provided by present advances in our knowledge of the environmental foes of man's health and happiness, because of the increasing opportunity for disintegration to which the modern kaleidoscopic life exposes us.

We may find it profitable to consider shortly some of the exact knowledge which has come to us concerning disease processes and to see what we have in the way of real weapons for our own defence.

Many of us at this time can recall the announcement of the discovery of the bacilli which cause diphtheria, tuberculosis, typhoid fever, cholera, cerebro-spinal meningitis and other diseases. Within a quarter of a century the method of transmitting malaria has been discovered and it is not more than half that time since Reed an-