

Breathing foul air, drinking impure water, eating bad or too much food, too little sleep, improper clothing, or want of exercise and perfect cleanliness, each and all interfere directly, more or less, with the natural or healthy actions of the organism, and cause disease.

Moreover, a very large proportion of the causes of disease arise from the imperfect manner in which the waste matters from our own bodies are disposed of; from these waste matters being conveyed back into our bodies again, and chiefly along with the air and water consumed. Many persons, in their bedrooms, breathe, over and over again, air laden with excrement given off by the lungs and skin, a highly injurious practice, and a very common cause of disease. Other excrete matters from the body are often thrown in proximity to wells of water, and hence find their way into the water, and with it get back into the system. These waste matters, if not absolutely poisonous when thrown off, soon undergo changes and become in many cases highly deleterious. All in the long list of contagious diseases—small-pox, cholera, scarlet-fever, typhoid, and the like—are often spread, and therefore may be said to arise, in this way. The contagion is in the excrete matters, and if these are not properly disposed of, as by free ventilation, disinfection, etc., such diseases will readily spread to other persons. The contagion is conveyed to others usually with the air or water, sometimes with foods.

Besides the above causes of disease, there are what may be called climatic causes—sudden changes in the state of the atmosphere or weather, mental or emotional causes, and hereditary causes—those inherited from parents, over all of which we have less control. Nevertheless, by proper regard to the state of the skin and to the clothing, and other agencies, climatic causes would be almost inoperative; and by careful attention to the laws of health generally, hereditary diseases would disappear in a few generations, and those arising from mental or emotional cause would be rare.

By means of knowledge regarding the nature of these agencies *in all their varying conditions*, and of their relations to, and effects upon, the organs and functions of the body, one is enabled to control the causes which disturb and pervert these organs and functions, and thus prevent disease. Happily, it is much easier for every one—much less knowledge is required—to take care of and preserve the health than to regain it when lost; to keep the organs and functions in a perfect and healthy condition, than to get them into such condition again after they have become deranged or perverted. When the parts and their functions become altered from their natural state, the most extended knowledge and profound skill and experience may be required to set them right again, if indeed it be possible to set them right, as it may not be. Every one has, then, in his or her own hands, to a great extent, the power to prevent disease and to prolong life, which disease might greatly shorten.

A high remedial value attaches to hygienic measures, and in all diseases their practical application is of the first importance. On the near approach or actual occurrence of disease, the prompt