

or retarded, the result in time being ill health of the body, or to use the common accepted term—disease.

It therefore follows, by logical analysis that if this happens continuously the cellular structure will decline in its normal activity, and eventually cease to function. If this condition of slow atrophy extends too widely death can be the result.

Thus a definite link is established between food and health or conversely food and disease.

Neutralisation, apart from nutrition, is also a vitally important factor in maintaining body functional balance, and for this is needed a sufficiency of alkaline mineral salts such as sodium, magnesium and certain others.

Waste products of the processes of metabolism are acid in character and alkaline elements are required to neutralise them, in order to make them harmless, until they are expelled from the body. If by lack of these alkaline elements it becomes impossible for the body to cope adequately with metabolic waste, the refuse is bound to remain predominantly acid, and the accumulation thereof will eventually lead to a disruption in the balanced functioning of the body, with consequently disturbed health.

It is only necessary to study the character of deficiency diseases such as rickets, anaemia and others, to realise that a breakdown in the metabolic processes can lead to a serious effect on health, if the lack of necessary nutritional elements are missing from the foods eaten.

Further, even with adequate nutritional elements available, if the acid waste products are allowed to accumulate because of lack of sufficient neutralisers, there is again a likelihood of the efficiency of the body being adversely affected.

There is, however, a third very important factor in food relationship to health or disease and that is excessive feeding. This results in excessive waste being produced, which cannot be handled effectively by the normal intake of alkaline elements and therefore becomes definitely harmful. The normal eliminatory processes are overworked, due to overloading the system in excess of the food elements required, with starch, sugar, protein and fats; this being the rule rather than the exception at the present time. The extra burden on the eliminatory processes results in a lowered vitality, and an all round impairment in body functioning.

The body as a whole is a very tolerant piece of wonderful mechanism, but its good temper can be overstrained to breaking point at times, although it does make valiant attempts to rectify any wrong thrust upon it. By the ingestion of relatively large quantities of refined and denatured foods, sufficient neutralising elements to deal with the excess waste products are minus and a crisis sooner or later develops, which takes the form of a supreme effort being made by the body to unburden itself of its overload of waste. This supreme effort to maintain normality in the body may possibly take the form of skin eruptions, fevers, catarrh and such like complaints, but it is reasonable to assume, if one accepts the relationship between food and metabolism, that the apparent symptoms of distress are likely to be the result of overfeeding in some shape or form.

If the practice of continuously overfeeding on starchy and protein foods is carried on without cessation, despite Nature's warning in the shape of preliminary

minor illnesses, the burden on the body will become too great to be handled by the usual eliminatory channels, and then the acid waste products find lodgement in the inner tissues, with eventual serious effects on health.

Bodies so treated become victims of rheumatism, gout, neuritis and similar complaints because of their inability to deal successfully with excessive waste. They may be classified as acid waste diseases.

The foregoing does not arbitrarily convey that all disease is attributable to incorrect feeding, but it is reasonable to suppose that the continual ingestion of food lacking in the required alkaline elements can cause disturbances in the metabolic processes, with disease in some form as the result.

To maintain the body at normality it requires a balance of chemical elements, and as a general guide it may be said that this can be obtained by eating foods in the proportion of one third of those developing acid waste to two thirds of neutralisers. The former consists of starch and protein foods, the latter being the vegetables and fresh fruits, particularly those in the citrus group such as oranges, lemons, limes and grapefruit.

From the foregoing it may be inferred that balanced feeding cannot help but result in cleaner healthier bodies, which resist disease and its development to a far greater extent than those undernourished or overfed.

Work Among Children.

BASIL HENRIQUES TO ADDRESS LONDON DISTRICT NURSES MEETING.

MR. BASIL L. Q. HENRIQUES, C.B.E., J.P., Chairman of the East London Juvenile Court, will address the Annual Meeting of the Central Council for District Nursing at the County Hall, Westminster, on Thursday, May 29th. Mr. Henriques will discuss the value of the work of the district nurse among children and of voluntary organisations in the welfare state.

The Central Council, which is responsible for administering the District Nursing Service in the County of London, still retains its voluntary status, despite a grant from local rates. President of the Council is The Lady Nathan of Churt, M.A., J.P.

District nurses are a familiar sight in London as they make their rounds visiting sick people in their own homes. Their duties include the care of those elderly patients who cannot always be admitted to hospital because of the greater demand upon hospital beds, as well as cases requiring injections, surgical dressings, midwifery and so on. They spend their days among people from all walks of life, in many different types of dwelling and must show qualities of skill, initiative, tact and sympathy when out on their own. To many, the district nurse is affectionately known as "The Friend of the Family" and her work is an expression of the service and tradition of the nursing profession at its very highest.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES of Great Britain and Northern Ireland give notice of an Open Conference "Hospital Planning—Present and Future," to be held at the Henry Jarvis Hall of the Royal Institute of British Architects, 66, Portland Place, London, W.1, on Tuesday, September 2nd, 1952. Morning session 10-12.30 p.m. Afternoon session 2-4 p.m.

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