

*The dangers
of overcaring
for the health.*

The contrast of nature and nurture
— the biological forces that shape
our ends, rough-hew them as we will

— appears nowhere more characteristically than in the making or marring of health. To keep well and sane, shall we let ourselves fall back upon a tempered inclination, or struggle thoughtfully to regulate our ways in obedience to a system? Are we more likely to succeed by reason or by instinct? Dr. Woods Hutchinson is a naturalist, not an artificialist. In his thesis entitled "Instinct and Heath" (Dodd, Mead & Co.) the two are one. He is a bold and incisive advocate, and his strokes tell. Like all his kind, he frequently overstates his own side of the case, thereby missing the benefit of the confidence that goes out to the moderate, and bringing upon himself the suspicion of less thorough command of his data than is essential to an authoritative wisdom.

Yet it is equally pertinent to remember that his aim is practical and his appeal a popular one. His knife is out for fads and superstitions, prejudices, and the over-zealous regimen. Diets are as apt to make dyspeptics as to help them. Pleasant things are not inherently noxious, as our Puritanic or proverbial misconceptions lay down, but are in the main pleasant because they are in accord with nature; pleasure is the stamp of approval that nature gives them as their reward. Early rising may be economically desirable, but physiologically it is better to sleep all you can. While one man's meat is another's poison, it is so mainly in exceptional instances. For the average man meat is just what he needs, and its place cannot be taken by any of the substitutes for food. Appetite, reaction, cheer, unconcern, these are the signs of health and vigor; they are normal, and to be trusted. All this is sound doctrine, most forcibly inculcated. It is a good thing to have so much of this side of the health question popularized, as against the endless systems that claim in a single experience to establish the falsity of generations of instinctive wisdom. Dr. Hutchinson's prescriptions may be freely taken, though the prudent will add their own dose of salt. _____