

ANNOTATIONS

HOW TO LIVE¹

THE subtitle of the book, *How to Live*, is *Rules for Healthful Living Based on Modern Science*, and aptly describes its central theme. This latest edition, the twenty-first to be published since the initial appearance of the book in 1915, has been very extensively rewritten by Irving Fisher, the original senior author, and Haven Emerson, who replaced the late E. L. Fisk, as junior author. Several sections in the book have been written by other authorities in special fields, and many scientists in such fields as physiology, psychology, nutrition, and medicine have given advice on the present text. Thus, up-to-date, scientific data are interpreted for the layman in non-technical language and made the basis of specific instructions for attaining optimal health.

The subject matter of this book is what man should do for himself in order to realize his potentialities for a high level of health and vigor. No matter how many diseases can be cured by adequate medical care, nor how many can be prevented by control of the environment, and by immunizing procedures, "man's health and happiness will still lag far behind their possibilities unless man learns to do for himself what is good for his health, happiness, and longevity." The problems of individual hygiene are grouped under four major headings: (1) Man's contacts with the outer world, (2) food, (3) common poisons, and (4) activities. Under the first topic, the functions of the skin are described and the hygiene of clothing, housing, and bathing are discussed. The subject of food and man's nu-

¹ Fisher, Irving and Emerson, Haven: *How to Live*. New York and London, Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1946, 21st Edition, 354 pp. \$2.50.

tritional requirements is treated extensively in eight chapters and two supplementary chapters giving tables of food values and sample menus. Under the heading "Our Common Poisons," there is a discussion of the present evidence on the effects of alcohol, tobacco, coffee, tea, and chocolate and three short chapters on mouth health, defecation, and infection. The chapters on "Our Activities" give brief but comprehensive advice on many aspects of work and play, rest and sleep with attention to such problems as monotony, worry, and fatigue, and to the value of exercise, hobbies, recreation, and acquiring mental poise. On all subjects specific advice is given to guide the reader in formulating rules of hygiene best suited to his own conditions of life.

The facts presented in this book should be known by everyone. Health workers recognize today that one of our greatest public health problems is to develop the interest of individuals in practicing healthful habits in their every-day life. How to Live not only elaborates rules for hygienic living but also gives the bases for such rules and tells the benefits to be expected. This book can be read to personal advantage by laymen in all walks of life and is suitable for the high school ages.

It is possible to question some statements as, for example, the following: "many Americans, perhaps most, do suffer from a mild degree of anemia due to a lack of iron in the hemoglobin of their blood" (p. 83). Of more importance to the objectives of this book, *i.e.*, to persuade people to follow its rules for healthful living, is a tendency to emphasize some points that are of minor or even dubious significance. The essentials for an optimal diet are clearly described, and the attainment of such diet by most persons would be an achievement. It seems of dubious value to urge the avoidance of all refined sugar, and of salt and condiments, to the extent that these prohibitions form the basis of two of the twenty-two rules of personal hygiene. Even though caffeine is a stimulant, the moderate use of coffee or tea has not been shown to reduce the health and vigor of healthy people, and its use is recommended for some old people; therefore, it seems unfortunate to advocate complete exclusion of coffee and tea and group them along with alcohol and tobacco. Since attention to weight is recommended, one

wonders why the normal weight tables included in previous editions have been omitted.

DOROTHY G. WIEHL

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THE MONEY VALUE OF A MAN¹

SINCE 1930, when Dublin and Lotka published the first edition of *THE MONEY VALUE OF A MAN*, this book has proved its value to health administrators, as well as to other professional groups concerned with the problem of setting a value on human life and disabilities. The new and completely revised edition now available will be welcomed by former users and should gain many new users of the important data which is so ably presented.

The specific objective of the book is to furnish estimates for the *average* man of "the present value of his net future earnings, *i.e.*, of his gross future earnings less that part which is expended on himself" (p. 70). Obviously, the amount of future earnings varies according to earning capacity (wages) of the man, his present age and expectation of life. Therefore, tables are presented which give present value of gross and net future earnings for a man of each year of age from 21 to 64 years at sixteen different earning levels and at three levels of mortality, average mortality for 1939-1941, above and below average.

But estimates of the money value of the average man do not constitute the only data of interest in this book. Much basic data had to be collected for computation of the gross and net values and the authors' discussion of these data and related information furnishes a comprehensive description of a number of social and economic conditions as well as of mortality trends in the United States. For example, a chapter on *The American Family* (new to this edition) gives material on age at marriage, marriage rates, size of family, chances of widowhood, and on number of orphans; and a second new chapter on *Income in Relation to Age and Economic Status* presents data on sources of family income, on variation of annual earnings according to

¹ Dublin, Louis I. and Lotka, Alfred J.: *THE MONEY VALUE OF A MAN*. New York, The Ronald Press Company, 1946, Revised Edition, 214 pp. \$6.00.