

The second factor, the coal strike, would make a recurrence of a big epidemic go hard with us. Many have attributed the increase of influenza to the scarcity and inferiority of the fuel supply though this hardly accounts for its presence in the countries that have not been in the throes of a coal strike. Insufficient heat, while it may not be a cause, has undoubtedly been an aid and abetment in the current prevalence of both influenza and pneumonia.

It is discouraging to learn that years of research will probably be necessary to give the world information as to the best means of combating this potential plague. Another epidemic would find the medical profession quite as impotent to deal with it as in 1918, according to Dr. Vaughan. Its causative agent is unknown. A vast amount of bacteriological work has been done on the subject but medical science cannot come to any definite conclusions concerning the agent that really produces plain unadulterated influenza. The complications such as bronchitis and pneumonia that frequently follow have rendered isolation of the organism causing primary influenza particularly difficult. Various vaccines in use as a safeguard have met with nearly as much failure as success.

The best preventive measure, impractical as it sounds, when influenza assumes any very serious proportions, is to keep in the best physical condition possible, and to stay away from crowds. In other words the best way not to get it is to avoid it.

EVOLUTION EVIDENCE HIDDEN IN HUMAN VEINS

Hidden away in the interior of man's veins are indications that his ancestors once walked in a stooping position, according to Dr. C. W. Stiles of the U. S. Public Health Service.

In the veins of human beings, as well as of the lower animals, Dr. Stiles stated, there are numerous little check-valves, that relieve the back-pressure of the blood and prevent it from flowing the wrong way. In all cases in animals, these valves are found in veins where the blood commonly flows "uphill" toward the heart, as in the veins of the legs and arms. In animals the blood must flow "uphill" also in the veins that lie beneath the ribs, since the animals carry the trunk of the body horizontally and the ribs therefore hang vertically. But in the veins that run horizontally, notably the great trunk vein that runs along beneath the backbone, no valves are needed to prevent back pressure, and none are found in this position.

In man, however, the trunk is carried vertically, so that the relative positions of the veins are exactly opposite to those in the animals, the rib-veins being horizontal instead of vertical and the great vein of the back being vertical instead of horizontal. Yet the valves in human veins follow the same pattern as do the valves in animal veins. They are found in the rib veins where they are not needed and are absent from the great dorsal vein where they would be really useful. This is understandable on a theory of ancestral survivals in man, Dr. Stiles pointed out, but is completely contrary to a special-creation theory which assumes that the body of man is perfectly adapted for his present mode of life and made without any use less parts or any mistakes.
