

BY ELLIN K. ROBERTS



YOU and the WEATHER

*In The City You Can Dodge It—In The Deep Country It Comes Naturally—
But In The Suburbs You Meet It Head On—
And What Does It Do To You?*

Like the postman, the commuter is supposed to carry on with his appointed rounds despite rain, sleet or snow, and so is the wife he leaves behind him. The commuter must commute. The children must get to school, to the dentist, to a birthday party. An approaching hurricane is no excuse for missing a committee meeting, and the cook who runs out of baking powder can fight her way through the downpour to the nearest store, which may be two miles away. All things considered, if awards are to be handed around for hardiness, the suburbanite is surely a top candidate.

And how weatherproof are you? Is it your imagination if you feel jittery before a thunderstorm? Is there any excuse for cancelling your dentist appointment on a smothering July day, and taking to the hammock with a book you've wanted to read? Does arthritis really hurt more in cold weather?

The truth is, weather has a very definite effect upon your physical and mental state and the relationship between the individual and the weather has now become a recognized area for

scientific investigation.

In talking about the weather we really mean bad weather.

Like the villains in novels, it's more interesting—and more likely to provide dramatic consequences—than the good kind. On pleasant days, we feel fine, and that's as it should be. It's what happens to us when we're miserable, and bullied by the weather, that concerns us.

Ripe Tropical Old Age

Starting with the general climate—and climate is simply long-term weather—it is well known that people in a temperate climate are more energetic, more alert and ambitious than people in the tropics. But Dr. Clarence A. Mills, professor of experimental medicine at the University of Cincinnati, has been finding that the sudden changes in weather which occur in a temperate zone cause considerable stress and strain on our physical and mental systems. The respiratory disorders, diabetes, cancer, arthritis, and ailments related to stress, such as peptic ulcers, flourish where the winters are frigid, the summers torrid, and the variations in between

both abrupt and extreme. People become high-strung as a result of constantly trying to adjust physically to "record" days and 20-degree shifts in temperature overnight. People in the tropics may not be so productive, but they aren't prone to nervous breakdowns and if the mosquitoes don't get them, they live longer.

"Trick Knees" and Tempers

What actually does happen to us as weather shifts or reaches extremes? Dr. William F. Peterson of Chicago has conducted experiments which reveal that even minor fluctuations produce corresponding changes in all the metabolic and chemical processes of the body. Up to a point, cold is stimulating, as anyone who has enjoyed a brisk autumn day knows. But after that point, the body has to work extremely hard to maintain sufficient heat. The fuel provided by food is burned up faster and more oxygen is needed. The cold constricts the blood passages, including the coronary arteries, and people who already have poor circulation (whose capillaries don't expand or contract readily, usually due to

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