

honest and hospitable upon a diet of beer, beef and cheese. The German is slow, persevering and meditative upon beer, sausages and tobacco. The Irishman is volatile, careless and combative on potatoes and whiskey. The *habitant* of Lower Canada is stupid, unambitious and credulous on pea-soup and pork. The American is sanguine, "cute," nervous and assertive upon a diet of preserves, doughnuts and Johnnie-cake. We might extend the list, but without claiming that the above characteristics are *entirely* due to the diet, we believe we are warranted in claiming for it a very important influence. If we do not allow that the waste of brain-power is replaced by elements extracted from the diet, we are obliged to conclude that the brain increases in size and power supernaturally, and that it is not influenced by natural laws. As to the increase in size and power supernaturally, this has not been proved to be the case. On the contrary, we find material elements existing both in the food and in the brain, the natural conclusion is, that there must be a very close connection between the two, and further, if the brain did not depend upon material substances for its sustenance and growth, it would, of course, be independent of them, and no material substances, such as alcohol, would have any effect upon it. That it is uninfluenced by natural laws is untrue, otherwise we would have no hydrocephalus, brain-fever, or softening of the brain; these are sometimes aggravated by other causes.

It is unfortunate that the influence of diet as a remedy in physical and mental diseases should be so often overlooked by medical men. Amongst allopathists this is very common, their system consisting chiefly in the prescription of violent remedies. There are, of course, some cases in which the effects of diet are so palpable that the common-sense of the patient obliges him to pay attention to it; but in other cases, the medicine is prescribed to be taken at stated intervals, the further directions being, "take good care of yourself." This last direction being relative, often leads to serious mischief. To show the *rationale* of the mode of treatment by diet, we may state that in lung diseases the prescription of fatty foods, such as cod-liver oil, is sensible, as the lungs are composed chiefly of fat. The supply of fatty foods will sustain the lungs; then in some cases it is necessary to prescribe further some remedy to remove the destructive cause, if such there be. The prescription of this last remedy without the oil would, in many cases, have such a weakening effect as to cause the patient to succumb.

We proceed, however, to attempt to account for the appearance of the great intellects of the world, and in order to do this will be necessary for us to take one genius and examine the causes of his appearance. To consider some general facts will not be out of place. The majority of illustrious men have been born in the temperate zone, where the variety of food is greatest, and have generally appeared after periods of intellectual darkness or else have been made, so to speak, by the exigencies of the times. If we take Byron as an example, we find that he "strikingly combined in his own nature some of the best and perhaps some of the worst qualities that lie scattered through the various characters of his predecessors—the generosity, the love of enterprise, the high-mindedness of some of the better spirits of his race, with the irregular passions, the eccentricity and daring recklessness of the world's opinion that so much characterised others." Inheriting these qualities and following a mode of life of an exciting nature—whether dissipated or not in its character—and inheriting a sensitive mind, need we be at any loss to account for the morbidity of his intellect. In his ancestors diet and dissipation had done their fell work, and we find their dire effects produced in Byron; he fed his morbidity and increased its strength by over-indulgence followed by extreme fasts. Such a diet could not fail to exercise a terrible influence upon his brain-power, and allowing that such qualities are hereditary, his children would naturally be affected in a certain ratio proportionate to the maternal influence. This being the case with descendants, we are justified in stating that a great intellect is produced in a descendant when the lives of the ancestors have been proper and when all the requirements of the ancestors' mental powers have been amply supplied. It is further necessary that there should be a union of such qualities in the parents, or that a certain eccentricity in the one should be met with a counterbalancing quality in the other. We find in the case of great intellects that such is the case; in some cases the bad qualities being more or less apparent, as the paternal or maternal influence is greater or less for good or for evil. We must also take into consideration with this the fact that early training will make or mar an intellect.

Any observing person can form a just and correct estimate of the intellectual power of a nation, when he is informed as to the diet of the nation, and the same is true of individuals, we can at once form a tolerably correct opinion of a person's mental calibre when we know their mode and manner of dieting: when we see people devoting themselves entirely to the pleasures of the table and looking forward with greedy anticipation to some extravagant feast, we at once know that intellectuality is not causing them any uneasiness as to its development. It is to be hoped that more attention will be paid to this question of diet and that a system will be promulgated in such a manner that each and every one will know why they partake of certain foods; it is rather satirical that we should develop the Short-horn qualities and leave man's qualities to take care of themselves.

It is a beautiful dream, though it may appear Utopian to some, that a future period of the world's history, we will have so understood this question of diet and heredity that all mortals will be possessed of about the same intelligence and genius. It would be an interesting experiment for some medical man to take two children and give one food containing all the necessary elements for brain-sustenance and remove from the food of the other any element which is found as a constituent of the brain—and then to record the result. It would be better however to experiment upon the same child: it might be done for a stated time and the result would certainly be important.

H. B. S.

AUCTIONS, AUCTIONEERS AND AUCTION-GOERS.

(Concluded.)

The moral of this article is threefold. First, to those about to sell out: Do not be penny wise in the basement lest you find that you have been pound foolish when your fine furniture is being sold upstairs. Indeed in large establishments where there are a great many articles pertaining to kitchen departments which are too good to be given away, it would be better to send them to an auction-room, thus securing the best part of the day for the sale of the furniture; since no matter how anxious people may be to get bargains many will tire and drop away before a long day is over. Besides, the most indefatigable auctioneer must become exhausted sometime, and will naturally hurry through towards evening; thus all that has been gained in the basement may be more than lost upstairs.

Secondly, to auctioneers. Do not forget that politeness pays in every walk of life, and although you may feel greatly tempted to snub vacillating bidders and impudent talkers, try to keep your temper and if possible use nothing stronger than sarcastic politeness. A good auctioneer requires pleasant manners, good temper, native wit and ready repartee—in fact, he ought to be what we Canadians call "a smart man"; and we have some very good specimens in Montreal.

Thirdly, to auction-goers I may say a few words. Be sure you know the value of the articles you intend to buy, and if they are as good as new do not expect to get them at less than half-price. Never crowd up a room where there is nothing that you really require; and when you have finished bidding on an article do not make audible remarks as to its having "gone quite high enough"—remember that if it were your furniture that was being sold you would not think that people had any right to make disparaging remarks upon it, thus injuring your sale. To do unto others as we would they should do unto us is a very necessary maxim at an auction.

Montrealers seem to have a mania for making their own purchases, but in the old countries people generally choose the articles which they wish to buy, and then entrust the bidding to a furniture broker. Some fancy that they cannot buy as cheaply in this way, and that the brokers must necessarily wish to get all the bargains for themselves; but what may be a good bargain to one who requires the article, might be no bargain at all to a broker. I have had many purchases made for me through brokers, and have always found them honest and honourable, and quite willing to take a small but sure percentage rather than risk paying out large sums for furniture which may be left on their hands, and is not likely to be sought out at their shops by those requiring it. But doubtless there is a certain fascination about getting one's bargains for one's self, and when a lady's time is of little value she may as well spend it at a sale as anywhere else; but since there is such an easy way out of the difficulty, let her no longer declare that "it is so tiresome going to auctions."

In conclusion, let me describe an auction which I attended some time ago. The house was handsome, elegantly furnished, and situated in the most aristocratic part of the city. The audience was made up of wealthy and refined people. The auctioneer was *the* auctioneer of course, and from the time he took his stand in the dining-room he kept up a continual flow of witty sparkling remarks. No necessity to scold about loud talking here—well-bred people who respect themselves always respect the rights of others.

"Twenty-four dollars for this superb tea-set—crimson and gold—unique, chaste—going at twenty-four!" A voice in the distance: "Five!" "Five, of course—twenty-five! Six, for you Madame? Six, seven—twenty-seven—eight, nine, thirty! Thirty-one for you, Captain?" "No, thanks; let it go." "Ah, now, Captain, I never saw you beaten before. Say thirty-one?" "No more at present, thank you." "But remains yours truly; oh, Captain! Going! going! Gone! The name, please?" "English." "Mr. English! shure I thought you were Airish when you said *foive*."

"Now we will sell this large arm-chair with all its cont—, I beg pardon, Captain, I mean coverings." (A laugh from the occupants.) The chair in question containing the handsome Captain, his charming wife seated on one arm and another pretty lady on the other—rather valuable contents. The ladies disappear when attention is drawn to the chair, but the Captain, after allowing it to be shown, seats himself again, remarking: "Sell me well." "Ah, yes, I'll sell you well, if you'll bid," replies the auctioneer. "Thanks, much obliged." "Somebody touched my arm! Is that a bid?" The lady,