

articles of diet. For instance, in the Scotch settlements the use of porridge has conferred upon the eating of this product a sanctity almost equivalent to that of a sacred rite. In the English settlements, the ancient custom of eating a big hydro-carbonaceous breakfast of pork foods and eggs, washed down with tea or coffee, is as the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be broken. And again, the down-East influence, touched perhaps with a Yankee blend, is evidenced by the use of apples and maple syrup as being "healthy" at all times and places, or by the use of dry cereals and fruit at breakfast, and at other meals, of corn sauce, pumpkin pie and Johnny-cake, all to be taken with the rapidity of a threshing machine in action! Three meals a day is perhaps the most common practice, and doubtless is Scotch in origin, too.

Further, in dealing with this subject it is necessary to emphasize the important influence of the water supply of our Western prairies on the health of our people. In view of the fact that, in taking a farm or homestead, the water supply is often the last thing of which account is taken, it cannot be pointed out too strongly that many wells are so strongly impregnated with the alkaline earths as to coat heavily the interior of kettles, and to cause severe diarrhea to newcomers. It stands to reason, therefore, that this same water must be a source of chronic irritation to certain digestions, and will complicate the dietetic management of disease. It is necessary, too, to warn our people against the impropriety of using any well for human beings that is liable to the surface soakage from stables or privies, a matter quite too often disregarded.

Here it might be asked, "Are there no errors in preparing food and in habits of eating?" Without dwelling too long on these matters it is easy to point out that, while the average standard of cooking is excellent in the matter of bread-making and the cooking of vegetables, fruits, puddings and sweet things, the practice of frying meats, especially pork, until the meat fibre is hard and tough practically destroys the nutritive value of meat, and often causes indigestion or constipation. The making of tea is often defective, also—an important error, because enormous quantities of tea, both green and black, are consumed in the West. The error lies both in making the tea too strong, and in allowing it to stand a long time on a hot stove, thus spoiling the nature of this fluid, so excellent when properly made. But far more serious perhaps is the great error in habit of bolting food without any pretence at mastication, which is all too common amongst men and young people, if less frequent among womankind. Added to this is the equally prevalent bad habit of eating and drinking simul-