

I believe, hardly to be over estimated. The various accidents and disorders incident to the puerperal state, are as I shall endeavor to show you, very intimately dependent on conditions over which a judiciously contrived dietary exercises a marked control. The principles which guide us in the selection of remedies for those disorders are identical with those on which we rely in laying down regulations for the diet and regimen of the patient, and in the determination of this question are involved many points of vital interest in the pathology and treatment of puerperal diseases. The "diet" which is best adapted for a woman after parturition is that which will best secure her from becoming affected with the diseases incidental to that period; and no one who has witnessed the terrible rapidity with which these affections not unfrequently overwhelm the unfortunate subjects of them, will be disposed to consider anything unimportant which has a bearing on their prevention.

The subject of the diet of child-bed is one which has been of late forcing itself on professional attention; and I have been long impressed with the necessity for a revision of the rules laid down in the various text-books on midwifery, relating to the diet and management of women during the puerperal state, based upon a reconsideration as to the correctness of the principles on which those rules have been constructed. On July 9th, 1863, I read a paper on this subject at the annual meeting of the South Midland Branch of the British Medical Association, held at Peterborough. In this paper, which was not at the time published, I expressed very strongly my dissent from the teaching which has been prevalent on the matter in question, and recommended the adoption of rules, as I conceived, more rational, and better adapted to the end we all have in view—namely, the preservation of the puerperal patient from sickness and disease. I have the satisfaction of being able to state that the present respected president of the Obstetrical Society, Dr. Oldham, in his address at the annual meeting of the Society in January, 1864, expressed himself on this very subject in terms almost identical with those used a few months previously by myself at Peterborough.

The text-books most generally in use are those of Dr. Churchill, Dr. Ramsbotham, and Dr. Tyler Smith. The principles laid down in these works in reference to the diet of the patient during Child-bed are to be gathered from the following quotations.

Dr. Churchill says, in reference to the diet: "Excess, by inducing feverishness, may retard the convalescence. The patient should be confined to slops—gruel, panada, arrowroot, milk, whey, weak tea, &c,—with bread or toast and butter or biscuit, for five or six days, when the excitement produced by the secretion of milk has subsided; and if there