

The Household.

Vital Force.

There seems to be an active and enduring energy in man that is not pure physical strength, and yet aids in the indefinite prolongation of life. It is not the mysterious vital principle, though closely related to it. It is not firmness of muscle nor suppleness of limb, though these are useful attributes of the body. Neither is it the will, though this may sometimes help to keep the vital spark for a time within the mortal frame. It is sometimes called nervous force because it is more observable in persons of nervous constitution. Whatever it may be, it is quite as valuable as mere strength, and by judicious management it may be made to keep the possessor in health and to extend his life far beyond the allotted term of man's usefulness. Young men reared in the country are large, muscular and healthy. Beside them, young men reared in the city seem pale and sickly. But this difference of appearance need lead no one to suppose that the city youth has not equal or greater powers of endurance than those who have grown up among green fields and breathed the purest mountain air. When the war of the Rebellion broke out in the U. S. it called the young men of the country alike from farms, counters and counting-rooms. The city regiments and country regiments encamped side by side, enjoying at first the same degree of health. It often happened that the last died like sheep, because they were unable to endure the hardships and simple complaints incidental to camp life, while their neighbors from the city grew strong and lived to do duty afterward on a score of battle fields.

It follows, then, that the length of human life depends, first, on the amount of this vital force, and second, on the care with which it is husbanded. It is probable that it is oftener found in persons of medium stature and of no great physical strength, though it may co-exist with the amplest physical development. Let any one run over in his mind a list of all the old men he has ever known. How many of them were six feet in height? How many of them were men of superior muscle when they were young? A small proportion, we presume to say. Why is it that young men six feet tall, or who are athletes, seldom pass much beyond middle age? First, because their physical and nervous forces are not usually in proportion; and second, because, presuming on the superabundance of their strength, they exhaust themselves in over-exertion and intemperate indulgence.

It may be stated as an incontrovertible principle that any amount of exercise more than is necessary to keep the digestion perfect, has a tendency to shorten life. The digestion is the fuel under the engine, the oil which lubricates the points of friction in the machinery of the body. We cannot imagine a person mortally ill while the digestion is good. While it is perfect, the health is perfect. When it happens that any part of the body is diseased, the stomach is invariably in a morbid condition. Therefore, systematic and unnecessary exercise in gymnasiums is likely to prove injurious. Professional athletes are rarely long-lived. Abnormal development of particular muscles is attended or soon followed by weakness or de-

terioration. The fatigue that follows excessive exertion is a sheer waste of vitality, which may not be at once felt, but whose loss is perceptible later in life. Exercise must be regulated by sound direction. The bad results of confinement and sedentary habits must be counteracted, but beyond the point of cultivation of a healthy appetite, no one should ever go. The digestion may be kept good in less troublesome ways than by writhing and wriggling on the trapeze and crossbars. Food should be according to personal habits and the strength of the digestive organs. If a person's diet is coarse and heavy, it may sometimes be necessary to work in a gymnasium, like a blacksmith, or like a horse on a treadmill, to enable the system to dispose of it. The better way would have been to be temperate at table. Even the digestive pill of the gourmet is a more sensible remedy for overfeeding than the barbarous methods of modern athletes and acrobats.

The Chemistry of Food.

A contemporary has the following sensible remarks: There is no reason why every housekeeper and cook should have a knowledge of the chemistry of cooking, and of the healthfulness of different articles of food. At this particular season of the year nature bountifully supplies us with much that is cooling, in the way of fruit and summer vegetables, which are not only delicious articles of food, but are really health preserving, for often a slight indisposition of children, or older persons, can be readily cured by the free use of these culinary remedies. Spinach has a direct effect upon complaints of the kidneys; the common dandelion, used as greens, is excellent for the same trouble; asparagus purifies the blood, celery acts admirably upon the nervous system and is a cure for rheumatism and neuralgia, tomatoes act upon the liver, beets and turnips are excellent appetizers, lettuce and cucumbers are cooling in their effect upon the system, beans are a very nutritious and strengthening vegetable, while onions, garlic, leeks, chives, and shallots, all of which are similar, possess medical virtues of a marked character, stimulating the circulatory system and the consequent increase of the saliva and gastric juices promoting digestion.

Red onions are an excellent diuretic, and the white ones are recommended eaten raw as a remedy for insomnia. They are tonic and nutritious. A soup made from onions is regarded by the French as an excellent restorative in debility of the digestive organs. We might go through the entire list, and find each vegetable possessing its especial mission of cure, and it will be plain to every housekeeper that a vegetable diet should be partly adopted at this period of the year, and will prove of great advantage to the health of the family. With vegetables, as with everything else, much depends upon the cooking and the care and preparation beforehand. Washing in several waters is necessary to prepare all kinds of green vegetables for the table, and great care must be given in examining spinach, lettuce, greens and cauliflower, as often very minute insects are lurking in or under the leaves of these. It will be found a good plan to wash them in weak salt and water, after which they should be put in ice water for a few minutes, to prevent their becoming tough and wilted.

Fruits as Food and Medicine.

Of all the fruits with which we are blessed, the peach is the most delicious and digestible. There is nothing more palatable, wholesome and medicinal than good, ripe peaches. They should be ripe, but not over ripe and half rotten; and of this kind they may make a part of either meal, or be eaten between meals; but it is better to make them part of the regular meals. It is a mistaken idea that no fruit should be eaten at breakfast. It would be far better if our people would eat less bacon and grease at breakfast and more fruit. In the morning there is an acid state of the secretions, and nothing is so well calculated to correct this as cooling sub-acid fruits, such as peaches, apples, etc. Still, most of us have been taught that eating fruit before breakfast is highly dangerous. How the idea originated I do not know, but it is certainly a great error, contrary to both reason and facts.

The apple is one of the best of fruits. Baked or stewed apples will generally agree with the most delicate stomach, and are an excellent medicine in many cases of sickness. Green or half-ripe apples stewed and sweetened are pleasant to the taste, cooling, nourishing and laxative, far superior, in many cases, to the abominable doses of salts and oil usually given in fever and other diseases. Raw apples and dried apples stewed are better for constipation than liver pills.

Oranges are very acceptable to most stomachs, having all the advantages of the acid alluded to; but the orange juice alone should be taken, rejecting the pulp.

The same may be said of lemons, pomegranates, and all that class. Lemonade is the best drink in fevers, and when thickened with sugar is better than syrup of squills and other nauseous things in many cases of cough.

Tomatoes act on the liver and bowels, and are much more pleasant and safe than blue mass and "liver regulators." The juice should be used alone, rejecting the skins.

The small seeded fruits, such as blackberries, figs, raspberries, currants and strawberries, may be classed among the best foods and medicines. The sugar in them is nutritious, the acid is cooling and purifying, and the seeds are laxative.

We would be much the gainers if we would look more to our orchards and gardens for our medicines, and less to our drug stores. To cure fever or act on the kidneys, no febrifuge or diuretic is superior to watermelon, which may, with very few exceptions, be taken in sickness and health in almost unlimited quantities, not only without injury, but with positive benefit. But in using them, the water or juice should be taken, excluding the pulp; the melon should be fresh and ripe, but not over ripe and stale.—[Hall's Journal of Health.

Have the courage to wear your old clothes until you pay for your new ones.

Have the courage to obey your Maker at the risk of being ridiculed by men.

Have the courage to prefer comfort and prosperity to fashion in all things.

Have the courage to show that you respect honesty in whatever guise it appears, and your contempt for dishonest duplicity, by whomsoever exhibited.