

to guide us in the choice of food; and as an obvious corollary to this tacit conviction, while he from the first insists upon the necessity of instituting a series of rigid experiments to discover the effects of a drug upon the animal economy, he nowhere suggests that similar experiments should be made in regard to food. He seems to have recognized the important difference between that kind of knowledge which we reach by experiment, as in chemistry, and that other kind by which we gain by observation, as in geology, where nature has made the experiments for us, extending over incalculable surfaces of space and periods of time. The feeding of the human race has been going on in every conceivable circumstance for many thousand years. In the language of Schleiden, "The Gaucho who in the wild pampas of Buenos Ayres, managing his half-wild horse with incredible dexterity, throws the lasso or bolus to catch the ostrich, the guancho, or the wild bull, consumes daily from ten to twelve pounds of meat, and regards it as a high feast day when in any hacienda he gains a variety in the shape of a morsel of pumpkin. The word bread does not exist in his vocabulary. The Irishman; on the other hand, regales himself in careless mirth on his potatoes and point, after a day of painful labor—he who cannot help making a joke of the name he gives to his scanty meal. Meat is a strange idea to him, and he is happy, indeed, if four times a year he can add a herring to season the mealy tubers. The hunter of the prairies lays low the buffalo with sure bullet, and its juicy, fat-streaked hump, roasted between two hot stones, is to him the greatest of luxuries; meanwhile, the industrious Chinese carries to market his carefully fattened rats, delicately arranged upon white sticks, certain to find a good customer among the epicures of Pekin; and in his hot smoky hut, fast buried beneath the snow and ice, the Greenlander consumes his fat, which he has just carved, rejoicing over the costly prize, from a stranded whale. Here the black slave sucks the sugar cane and eats his banana—there the Af-

rican merchant fills his wallet with sweet dates, his whole sustenance in the long desert journey—and there the Siamese crams himself with a quantity of rice, from which a European would shrink appalled. And wheresoever over the whole inhabited earth we approach and demand hospitality, in almost every little spot a different kind of food is set before us, and the daily bread offered in another form."\*

After perusing such a passage as this we naturally ask, what conceivable advantage could the world derive from the experiments of Dr. Stark, who contrived to kill himself in about six months, by a succession of simple dishes?

Before his promulgation of homeopathy, Hahnemann, with the exception of his disapproval of coffee, did not differ in his views on diet from other writers of his age and country. "There is not," he says, "and cannot be anything, which, as a general rule, is absolutely wholesome or unwholesome. . . .

None of the general maxims of the dietist can be accounted good: such as veal is the most wholesome butcher's meat, &c.

. . . There is a time for everything, says Solomon, and to my mind he speaks much more sensibly than most of the dietists." (Lesser Writings, page 227.) There is much more to the same effect in his early writings.

It is a very striking fact, that whereas, before he had discovered and taught the great law of healing, his position in regard to medicine was very similar to that of young physic of the present day, and he relied much upon sanitary and dietetic rules; after he had made good his grand discovery, that the obstacles to certainty in medicine were not insuperable, the power of diet as a method of cure, and its general importance seems to have assumed a very insignificant value in his eyes. What before had occupied whole treatises, now shrinks into this solitary observation in the *Organon*, (p. 308):—"Considering the minuteness of the doses necessary and proper in ho-

\* The Plant—a biography, in a series of popular lectures, by M. J. Schleiden, Professor of Botany in the University of Jena, &c.