

great exactness the sort of life that was led at this school, which appeared to me one, like many others, where the bodily welfare is lost sight of in the zeal for moral development; that is to say, that while the children were put to sleep in cold dormitories, and sat most of the day learning lessons and sewing and such like things, and were only exercised by walking two and two about the streets of London, their food was of the most insufficient description. Breakfast consisted of bread and dripping, treacle, in the mother's words; when the children tired of the dripping, with skim milk and water to drink. The same for tea. Dinner on Sundays consisted of stewed skin of beef, on Wednesdays of stewed mutton, both with vegetables; on other days nothing but suet pudding, the allowance of suet only half an ounce per head. Throughout the previous winter she had suffered in the same way, and had been only "kept going," as her mother phrased it, by cod-liver oil.

Not being able to interfere with the diet in the institution, I did not anticipate great success in treatment; and although medicine afforded some relief, I felt bound to advise that the best thing for the child was for both mother and daughter to leave the institution when convenient.

I do not know if I have succeeded in depicting the pathological condition present in these cases. I cite them because they happen to be the clearest instances at hand of a state of things very prevalent in children, which can be distinguished in various degrees of severity by any careful observer, and which finds a place in most clinical descriptions of disease in children, though under various names. It appears to me that these children were on the brink of developing that condition known as *scrofula*, meaning by the term a peculiar *facies* which precedes a predisposition to tubercle, and is the outward sign of a defectively developed constitution. I consider it of service to group such extreme cases with those of minor severity when seeking to discover the causes which produce them, but I hope that it will not therefore be thought that I am basing my arguments on too narrow a foundation.

The fault in these cases was that the patients did not agree with their diet. The defect lay in their digestion. As the defect in their digestion issued in constipation, I discuss them under that heading. But one might have regarded them from other points of view. Most persons would have treated the condition with aperient medicines. Certainly the laity would have done so. For this reason I prefer to discuss them in such a manner as to bring together various pathological conditions which in practice would medically be treated as one.

The mistake in feeding these children appears to me two-fold; first, that being dwellers in towns they were fed as if they were in the

country; secondly, that being children they were fed like adults. These are the two great errors in feeding children. When either of them is committed the child falls ill; when neither of them is committed the child remains well. Let us notice them separately.

Many millions of our fellow creatures subsist in perfect health all over the world at agricultural occupations upon a diet consisting of milk and its products, grain in its forms of flour and meal, a few vegetables, mostly potatoes, and a very little meat. Uninstructed persons seeing this exclaim, What better food could we find for our children! They forget that this diet is adopted from necessity, being composed of cheap and least salable articles of produce, and those best suited to the limited culinary apparatus of the peasant. They forget that those who feed upon it are a picked population, many of whose children die, and the weakly of whom drift off to the better food of the towns. They also forget that the work produced upon this diet is slow and often indolent, and by no means up to the standard of towns. And finally they forget that there are in the country certain stimulants to digestion in the shape of sunlight and fresh air and hard bodily labor, which develop what Horace terms the *dura messorum ilia*.

Nothing is more certain nor yet more generally overlooked than that country people eat such food from necessity and not from choice, so that potatoes, buttermilk, and porridge give place to bread and meat and better vegetables when they can be obtained, which is but seldom. How great an error is committed by those who adopt such a diet when they could get better, and how thoughtless the person who expects to thrive upon it without its natural accompaniments!

The second defect is this, to give adult's food to a child. Bread may be the staff of grown-up life, but milk is the food of infancy, and the food of these ages is different because the work to be done upon it is different. A man has to work and a child to grow. The former serves others, the latter himself. The child is therefore limited in his exertions by pleasure, but the man by his bodily exhaustion. The life of a child therefore requires much more nerve food than that of a man. In what that consists we can not exactly say, but it is represented by a diet of much higher quality than that which is sufficient for a man. A baby lives in its mother's arms without any exercise for a twelve-month. What man could do the same? Such existence signifies high vitality, and high vitality implies high diet. Therefore we find that milk is composed of costly elements.

We see the same thing throughout the animal kingdom. All young mammals are nourished on milk. Nearly all young birds are fed on animal food. They are hatched in the spring, when such food can be obtained. When the