

panegyric which philosophic publicism can bestow without yielding some intelligible equivalent in return. When, week after week, one is informed that the man to save the Empire is a statesman in whom the nation has notoriously no confidence; when it becomes impossible to read in such a journal any article on a particular class of subject without finding the same name mentioned in tones of grovelling praise; when the possessor of this name can do nothing or say nothing without the inevitable paragraph—it is clear to those who are at all behind the scenes that some kind of secret compact has been formed. The able editor possesses certain subjects of common interest, outside the purely political pale, with his hero and patron. The two entertain the same views in matters of literature and art, or their natures are traversed by identical veins of theological belief. There is thus generated after a little while an atmosphere of intellectual sympathy. But long-continued intercourse upon the footing of equality which true sympathy implies is impossible; and perhaps almost before he is aware what has been done the man of letters finds himself metaphorically bound to the chariot-wheels of the astute statesman. The successful conduct of these transactions implies much cleverness in that party to them whom they chiefly concern, and in whose interest they manifestly are. He has to deal with men who are neither toadies nor fools by nature; and he has yet to make them perform, in a refined manner, the functions of the one always and of the other sometimes. He must not be despotic, or dictatorial, or unreasonable. He must present himself as a sort of personification of a patrician conscience. He must be largely hospitable in London, and entertain a great deal in the country. He must always avoid contretemps, and never permit the wielders of rival influence in the literary world to meet. If he does this successfully, he may command a place in the regular letterpress of the journal with as much certainty as the ordinary advertiser in the outside sheet. He may become, in fact, the recognised pet of a particular newspaper; and when he has achieved that rank, what, so far as the public is concerned, will it avail him? Much, it may be, for the time, and with a limited circle; but in the long-run, and with the bulk of his countrymen, little or nothing. Newspaper pets may command a *succès d'estime* for a season; but it is not in the nature of things that they should earn a more solid or enduring triumph.—*London World*.

SIR HENRY THOMPSON ON FOOD.

Sir Henry Thompson, in his recent article on Food, published in the *Nineteenth Century*, comes down heavily on the barbarous and unwholesome custom of "big dinners," with their preposterous superabundance of viands and their tediously protracted series of courses. It is all very well for Indians and the semi-civilized nations of the South Sea Islands to prepare *gorges* out of compliment to their guests, but the refined and cultured "heirs of all the ages" ought by this time to have got beyond this kind of barbaric hospitality; and it is pleasant to see a man of authority like Sir Henry come forward to enforce with physiological considerations the greater simplicity that common sense has so often advocated in vain. Sir Henry's recommendations should have the more effect that he is no ascetic, but recommends a *menu* that is at once appetising, nourishing and harmonious, while he shows that these three requisites can be much better secured by a moderate repast, carefully considered and arranged, and occupying an hour or at most an hour and a half, than by those wastefully profuse feasts too common even in Canada, which frequently consume three hours in getting through the multiplicity of courses, and are the fruitful parents of dyspepsia, gout, apoplexy and other maladies, which man's flesh is *not* naturally heir to, but which by his own reckless folly he brings upon himself. Strange how many shrewd men, after having made a fortune, deprive themselves of the power to enjoy it by the very attempt to grasp too much! It is to be feared that a growing desire for luxury and display, as opposed to the self-control and simplicity which mark a true civilization and refinement, are beginning to sap our higher life as a nation, and mar the true development to which we might aspire. How much of our insolvency and embarrassment is the natural fruit, not of hard times, though these may aggravate it, but of the inordinate greed of riches and luxury—the impatience of the steady plodding, the honest work, the simplicity of life and surroundings with which our fathers were content! They did not think—honest men!—that the hospitality of a gentleman required the mediation of a French cook, and a heaping together of all delicacies in season and out of season, in order to swell the bill of costs as well as the bill of fare to the highest possible figure. And has our appreciation of art—of the æsthetic—grown in any corresponding degree? What proportion does the encouragement of art among our richer classes—the purchase of pictures, or even high class literature, not to speak of philanthropic work—bear to the expenditure for gorgeous upholstery, the patronage of French cooks, the money spent on a profusion of unwholesome luxuries which gratify the vanity and the palate while they make havoc with digestion and health? Strange indeed that with all the boasted enlightenment of the age, all the progress of culture and activity of thought, it should be called hospitality to set people down to a mortal three hours of almost continual eating and drinking, while the most insipid conversation and the dreariest platitudes garnish the intervals between the courses. This is what we have for the "feast of reason

and the flow of soul"—for the lack of which trifling ingredient the flow of *champagne* must atone! It must have been after some such dreary entertainment that the witty Frenchman declared that life would be passable but for its amusements.

Against such waste of food, waste of money, waste of time and waste of digestion, Sir Henry Thompson, in the interests of hygiene, enters a strenuous protest, and it is to be hoped that his protest will not fall on deaf ears. He shows too, "a better way," by giving an outline of a well-ordered dinner, of comparative simplicity, so arranged as to provide the variety and balance of good material which the human frame requires, and to promote at once digestion and sociality, the main considerations, surely, in a social feast. His exposition of what are the various needs of the body with regard to food, and of the way in which these needs may best be supplied by harmoniously combining the materials at command, should enable both dinner-givers and ordinary housekeepers to cater more wisely for their tables. Not a few, indeed, of his recommendations have been reached, with little science by the short road of common sense, especially among nations which have a sort of natural genius for economy and thrift. Witness the French peasants' nourishing and thrifty *pot-au-feu*, which gives him a wholesome dinner on what our own lower classes too often waste or throw away. But somehow, common sense in cookery does not seem to thrive among ourselves, and there can be no question that not only the elaborate dinner parties, but also the usual fare of many a Canadian *ménage* is most injurious to individual health and to the building up of a vigorous national *physique*. In both respects a good example is already set by the first household among us. Let us hope that it will have its due effect. But, it might well be reinforced by the republication, in pamphlet form, of Sir Henry Thompson's articles, which contain, in brief space, a great deal of most practical instruction on the important subject of food.

It would be well, too, if the same information could be in some way be disseminated among our lower classes; among whom, owing partly to wastefulness, partly to ignorance, there is a lamentable want of good feeding, notwithstanding the large amount of their wages spent on expensive food material. It is not too much to say that, for two-thirds of what they now spend for food, they might procure far more palatable, more nourishing and more wholesome food, and save the other third for clothing and fuel, which would make a very appreciable difference in their comfort. As it is, the dreary monotony of greasy or leathery fried meat, bread and tea, tends to drive many a man to the tavern for the gratification of the palate which his food does not afford him, while a persistence in this un-economic dietary will assuredly deteriorate the *physique* of our working classes. This might be said, too, of much of the diet of a large portion of our middle-classes, the perpetual pies, hot "biscuit," rich cake and sweets which are regularly devoured by all, even by children under the complacent eye of the capable mother, who is proud of her *cuisine* and likes to see it enjoyed, regardless or ignorant of consequences. It can scarcely be said in this case that "ignorance is bliss," for many a puny, ailing child who should have been healthy and vigorous, and many a life prematurely shortened, are the natural results of this foolish and reckless indulgence. The present depression of business would be truly a God-send, if it should have the effect of compelling a greater simplicity of diet and of national habits. No branch of education is more needed in our common schools, especially female ones, than the inculcation of the simplest principles of hygiene as regards food, ventilation, and the general management of the household. But to accomplish this end, our teachers must first be thoroughly indoctrinated themselves with principles to which too many of them have given, as yet, but little thought.

As to the poorer classes, many of whom get but little common school education at all, the only way of reforming their habits in regard to food must be by means of the same volunteer missionary workers who seek to benefit them in other ways. Charitable organizations, conducted by intelligent ladies, might do something to persuade mothers of families to try a more wholesome style of living; and simple cottage lectures on food in the winter evenings might at once supply innocent entertainment and salutary advice to working men and their wives. Many of these only need to have their eyes opened to see how great a variety of wholesome and palatable food is within the reach of all who can buy food at all. How many a family could have a nourishing dinner of soup with a few cheap vegetables, or of Sir Henry Thompson's economic pea-soup, or his bacon and beans, for about half of what they pay for their monotonous fried chop or leathery steak. How many consider anything in the shape of a "second course," or pudding, an unattainable luxury, when they might find, in rice, and hominy, and other preparations of Indian meal, the materials for a nourishing dish which, for children especially, would be a most wholesome and palatable addition to the dinner and a material saving to the consumption of bread and meat; and for breakfast, if we could secure the general use of the "halesome parritch," eaten with cheap molasses in default of milk, what a boon it would be to the half-starved children of the poor. But the example of wholesome simplicity must be set by our higher classes, who must show their own appreciation of what they recommend to others; and let us hope that such articles as Sir H. Thompson's may persuade many that "good living," in the truest sense, is not necessarily rich or costly,