

rich a diet will suffer from skin disease. This is known to every veterinary surgeon. The late lamented Dr. Austin Flint, in his usual weighty way, has said, "diet should be regulated by the appetite, the palate and by common sense." Dr. T. Lauder Brunton says, "it is much simpler to say what the patient may not eat than what he may." Each climate necessitates its own diet. As far as possible, it is better to keep as near the diet a patient has been accustomed to. These three axioms, potent in general dietetics, apply with equal force to the skin.

Food should be taken simple plain,  
From excess in eating refrain,  
A regular meal hour obtain.

They convey more reason than rhyme. A change of diet is frequently of benefit.

Many cutaneous eruptions are entirely produced by a diet too large in quantity or too stimulating. A skin can be overtaxed just as a stomach or brain. It is related that a lady, who was troubled with an irritable eruption, always suffered a relapse when she took more than three ounces of solid food. The skin acts as a drain to superfluous nutritive particles taken in excess by man, as meat and drink. Were it not for this compensating power, drunkards and gastronomics would quickly perish. Vigorous exercise in the open air requires larger quantities of food of a solid character. The horse when wild can subsist easily on grass, but when hard worked requires corn in proportion. Those of sanguine temperament do not need as rich and stimulating diet as do the feeble. Excessive eating produces plethora. The vascular system becomes engorged. That portion of the skin we call the corium is exceedingly vascular; running throughout it are innumerable trunk-like and capillary blood-vessels. Towards the papillary layer is a delicate and highly organized plexus of capillaries affording abundant blood supply. The skin acts as an equalizer of the circulation at the surface. It becomes hyperæmic *pari passu* with the general system. While excessive dieting is injurious in all skin affections, it is more especially so in those connected with the vascular system.

A skin disease may be produced by too little food as well as by an excessive quantity. It is among the denizens of the poorest parts of a city, where squalor abounds, that the worst cases of skin disease are most rife. Of course, uncleanness and bad hygienic conditions are dominant in their causation; but insufficient food is the ruling source in the

majority of cases. Where the food supply is reduced to its minimum, we have as a consequence a poor condition of the blood (lack of red corpuscles, etc.) and malnutrition. These are the most favorable for the development of a skin disease. I doubt not but what many of the parasitical affections are greatly aided if not induced by a starvation diet. It offers a likely nidus for them. We know that Bacilli are partial to certain tissues outside of which they do not flourish. Healthy, well nourished tissues they cannot live in, it is only in the badly nourished where they reside. And so it is, I take it, with skin diseases. By producing a healthy tissue we can ameliorate the disease. Parasites love dirt and decomposing tissues. Where healthy tissue is these conditions do not obtain. Ergo no parasite. Good, nourishing food is the best means by which we can procure a healthy tissue or nutrition. The late Sir Erasmus Wilson, in his more advanced years, did not believe that there were any parasites at all; and taught that the small cells—spores, bacteria, etc., were but altered forms of cell growth such as we find in epithelioma, etc., and not extraneous products from without. His treatment was chiefly constitutional, good food being his mainstay.

Malnutrition is at the bottom of a great many skin diseases. If we could but devise some means by which the poorer classes could be supplied with wholesome food, undoubtedly there would be a great falling off in the statistics of the skin departments of the various hospitals and dispensaries, and we would get far better results than from any lotion or potion. We give tonics to procure an appetite; but among the poor, it is not so much the appetite that is wanting, as something to gratify it.

Although it may not be considered germane to introduce the subject of exercise, it has a beneficial influence on the skin, especially riding, boating, bicycling, etc., but I doubt whether taking long walks is not more hurtful than otherwise. Riding, boating, bicycling, notably riding, keeps the liver and digestive organs in good condition.

While all skin affections are benefitted or modified by diet, it should be especially directed in the following: In the *Hæmorrhagiæ*, *Purpura*, etc., it should receive careful attention, nourishing with as much variety as possible. In *Miliaria*, plain. *Pemphigus*—of best quality. Full animal diet, eggs, milk and cream, wine in proper quantity allowed. *Lichen Ruber*—Best of food given. *Prurigo*—Most nutritive articles. *Acanthosis*—Special stress laid on diet, heavy and indigestible food,