

Health Department.

White or Brown Bread.

A writer in the *Nineteenth Century* condenses the evidence in favor of wheat-meal bread in the following paragraph:

"The earliest (?) agitator in the matter observed, two years ago, when travelling in Sicily, that the laboring classes there live healthily and work well upon a vegetable diet, the staple article of which is bread made of well-ground wheat-meal. Nor are the Sicilians by any means the only people so supported."

"The Hindus of the north-western province can walk fifty or sixty miles a day with no other food than 'chapatties,' made of the whole meal with little 'ghee' or Galam butter." Turkish Arab porters, capable of carrying burdens of from four hundred to six hundred pounds, live on bread only, with the occasional addition of fruit and vegetables. The Spartans and Romans of old time lived their vigorous lives on bread made of wheaten meal. In northern as well as southern climates we find the same thing. In Russia, Sweden, Scotland, and elsewhere, the poor live chiefly on bread, always made from some whole meal—wheat, oats, or rye—and the peasantry, of whatever climate, so fed, always compare favorably with our South English poor, who, in conditions of indigence precluding them from obtaining sufficient meat food, starve, if not to death at least into sickness, on the white bread it is our modern English habit to prefer. White bread alone will not support animal life. Bread made of the whole grain will. The experiment has been tried in France by Magendie. Dogs were the subject of the trial, and every care was taken to equalize all the other conditions—to proportion the quantity of food given in each case to the weight of the animal experimented upon and so forth. The result was sufficiently marked. At the end of forty days the dogs fed solely on white bread died. The dogs fed on bread made of the whole grain remained vigorous, healthy, and well nourished. Whether an originally healthy human being, fed solely on white bread for forty days, would likewise die at the end of that time, remains of course, a question. The tenacity of life exhibited by Magendie's dogs will not evidently bear comparison with that of the scarcely yet forgotten forty days' wonder, Dr. Tanner. Nor is it by any means asserted that any given man or any given child would certainly remain in vigorous health for an indefinite length of time if fed solely on wheat-meal bread. Not a single piece of strong evidence has been produced, however, to show that he would not, and in the only case in which whole-meal bread has been tried with any persistency, or on any considerable scale among us—to wit, in jails—facts go to show such bread to be an excellent and wholesome substitute for more costly forms of nutritious food."

The Philosophy of Dirt.

Lord Palmerston defined dirt as "matter out of place," and in some respects the definition was a shrewd one. Nothing is cleaner than sawdust; yet the good housekeeper who sees it on her carpet, loathes it as unclean. The crumbs of bread or cake, which certainly ought to be clean enough to put into one's mouth, violate all notions of neatness and cleanliness when dropped upon the floor. The turtle, in the mud, can have no notion of his vileness; on the contrary he delights in it, as does the ant in his earthen house, and the angle-worm in his cavern of dirt.

This is undoubtedly true of some people, as of some animals. There is a great outcry in London, as in other large cities, over the filth and poverty of the poor. But the Rev. Mr. Parker, of that city, does not altogether share in that opinion. He says that many of the families which are pitied for having to live in one filthy, unventilated room, neither ask nor deserve pity. In fact, they prefer to live in that way, and would do so

if they had all Heaven at their disposal. "Dirt," he adds, "has its warm friends, even amongst people who are not numbered amongst the outcast poor. I say this to guard benevolent persons against the notion that dirt and poverty are synonymous terms. I am given to understand that even some Christians have a wonderful liking for anything slovenly and slipshod; at least I have heard women screaming to other people to hold the fort and ring the bells of Heaven whose stockings would have been better for a day's darning."

Even if their dirt is an offence only in the eyes of others, yet on account of the sickness and death-breeding character of filth, something is due to other people's rights in having the sources of disease removed.—*Free Press*.

Wheat Should Be Eaten as It Grows.

Every physician in this country who is posted on cereal foods knows that wheat, as it grows (except the skin), contains more nutrition than any other food, either cereal, animal, or vegetable. It was intended that we should eat wheat as it grows, as we do an apple or a potato, all but the skin, but there has never, until recently, been known any possible means or way to make all of the wheat fine; hence the miller has given us nothing but "the beautiful white flour," from which the best or more nutritious part of the wheat is eliminated, or the so-called "graham" flour a name, title, or brand which causeth a multitude of sins. Most of the "graham" flour sold in this country is nothing but a mixture of the lowest grades of white flour with bran. No physician who is posted on cereal foods and knows the merits of the entire wheat flour will advise anyone to eat graham flour, while every physician in this country and England, who has seen and knows what it is, uses and recommends the entire wheat flour, which fact is explained by a short statement of the way it is made, viz: The wheat is first cleaned in the usual way, then it goes to a machine which takes off the skin or husk; then it is reduced, not ground, by the regular roller process (except purifiers); then, after the separation by bolting of the bran from the white flour, the bran is reduced by special machinery; then by a system of spouting the bran and white flour are brought together and mixed in exactly the same proportion that existed in the berry. The flour is not only much more nutritious than any other, but will assimilate with the weakest stomach, because it is fine and contains all the gluten and phosphates there are in wheat, which can be said of no other flour in the world. It is cheaper than any other because it makes so much more bread, which is explained by the theory of porosity.—[Dr. Tooker in *Chicago Inter-Ocean*.]

"The Hot Water Mania."

In dealing with physical ills which mankind is heir to, as in everything else, particular remedies, outside of those prescribed by regular physicians, have their season. Just now it is said to be hot water; and it is so much in vogue that the *Medical News* calls it the "hot water mania." People are taking hot water for every sort of ailment and disease. There are doubtless thousands of dyspeptics who devote themselves several times a day to the irritation of their stomachs by the use of hot water as a beverage. If people must be dosing, it is fair to assume that hot water, if its purity is assured, is a more innocent remedy than many which are indulged in. It is certainly a remedy at hand for which those must be thankful who are either poor in purse or reside a distance from physician and drug store. But there may be such a thing as too much hot water, as there is of many things which have more character. And this is what the *Medical News* asserts. It says that the physical effect of hot water taken into the stomach is to wash out that organ

and prepare it for better work, but he warns those who are after health in hot water that too much hot water injures instead of helps. Moreover it should be taken either before the process of digestion is begun or after it is completed. That is, the person who is seeking health by that remedy cannot devote his days to the drinking of hot water. It is fair to assume that, like other remedies, the water cure will have its day and the ailing public will turn to the remedy then held to be the popular one. May it be as simple, harmless, and above all as cheap as hot water.

Natural Appetites.

The satisfying of hunger and thirst, including, of course, the pleasant taste of articles of nourishment, is an enjoyment, and doubtless it was meant to be the sufficient enjoyment connected with eating and drinking. Men are more unreasonable and exacting than the brutes, and have insisted on heightening the pleasure—for a little while—by adding the excitement of poison. Gluttons and drunkards sacrifice sense, self-respect, and even taste, for the sake of a temporary transport. Every youth who thinks will welcome the following helps to the study of himself and his natural appetites.

In order to distinguish a poison-stimulant from a harmless and nutritive substance, Nature has thus furnished us three infallible tests: 1. The first taste of every poison is either insipid or repulsive.

2. The persistent obtuseness of the noxious substance changes that aversion into a specific craving.

3. The more or less pleasurable excitement produced by a gratification of that craving is always followed by a depressing reaction.

The first drop of a wholesome beverage (milk, cold water, cider fresh from the press, etc.) is quite as pleasant as the last: the indulgence in such pleasures is not followed by repentance, and never begets a specific craving.

Pancakes and honey we may eat with great relish whenever we can get them, but if we can't, we shall not miss them as long as we can satisfy our hunger with bread and butter.

In mid-winter when apples advance to six dollars a barrel, it needs no lectures and midnight prayers to substitute rice pudding for apple pie. A Turk may breakfast for thirty years on figs and roasted chestnuts, and yet be quite as comfortable in Switzerland, where they treat him to milk and bread.

Not so the dram-drinker; his "thirsts" cannot be assuaged with water or milk, his enslaved appetite craves the wonted tippie—or else a stronger stimulant. Natural food has no effect upon the poison-hunger; Nature has nothing to do with such appetites.

And it is well worth knowing—before experience teaches the bitter lesson—that strength is the effect of gratifying the natural appetites only, and weakness the effect of gratifying the unnatural ones. No competitor in an athletic contest who drinks alcoholic liquors can hold his own for half an hour; and even tobacco is disallowed there. One of the first things demanded of a young man who is going into training for a boat-race is, "Don't smoke."

MEDICAL ITEMS.

In case of chill, or of symptoms of what is called a cold, or of bronchitis or pneumonia, the best preventive is an immediate bowl of hot oatmeal tea, made with a tablespoonful of oatmeal to a quart of boiling water and a little salt and milk; also a tub or basin of hot water for the feet.

THE HOT-WATER CURE.—Whenever Burke found himself indisposed he ordered a kettle of water to be kept boiling, of which he drank large quantities, sometimes as much as four or even five

quarts in a morning, without any mixture or infusion, and as hot as he could bear. His manner was to pour out a pint at a time into a basin, and to drink it with a spoon, as if it had been soup. Warm water, he said, would nauseate, but hot water was the finest stimulant and most powerful restorative in the world. He certainly thought it a sovereign cure for every complaint; and not only took it himself, but prescribed it with the confidence of a Sangrado to every patient that came in his way.—*Dublin University Magazine*.

HOT DINNERS.—One of the most fruitful sources of grumbling, and it must be admitted, of not unreasonable grumbling, among private soldiers is that, after being detained on duty, unavoidably until, long after the dinner hour, they are obliged to sit down to a half-cold and decidedly greasy repast, or else to one in which the heat has been retained at the cost of drying it to a cinder in the regulation oven. To remedy this grievance Sergeant J. Brown, master cook, Commissariat and Transport Corps, quartered at Aldershot, invented, ten or twelve months ago, a contrivance termed a "hot-water oven," consisting of an oblong metallic box, the top, sides, one end, and bottom of which are hollow, as also the partition dividing the oven into two, an upper and lower compartment. At the top is an orifice, closed by a screw-cap, through which is poured boiling water, entirely filling the space between the outer and inner case. The heat thus obtained for the interior will keep warm the dinners of twenty-four men, if in basins or canteens, or a larger number in dishes, and in no way deteriorated in quality from when first cut. This ingenious contrivance enables the cooks to keep the meals warm for four hours. This oven takes about six gallons of water, which, when it has performed its duty, is released by a tap. So successful has it proved, that four are in constant use in Aldershot, whilst two more have been sent to Woolwich and Chelsea. Unquestionably, the oven will be a boon to the service.—*British Medical Journal*.

DEBILITY AND ITS CURE.—Sea sickness is very easy with those who possess stamina and nerve. You come on board with this; then perhaps *mal de mer* attacks you. Well, if you keep below you have merely your own strength to defend you; if you go on deck, and keep on deck, you find allies, most valuable, in the pure bracing air of the sea, and in the sunshine, and in the walking exercise you take, to say nothing of the good mental effects that accrue from seeing everything that is taking place around you, and from exchanging ideas with your fellow passengers. In this way debility flies; you get stronger instead of weaker every day, and as you gain more and more strength farther and farther flies away the danger of becoming a victim to sea sickness. Debility must be fought by passengers going first to sea: and my advice to all is to prepare for the voyage for three weeks or a fortnight beforehand by regular living, temperance in everything, good diet, exercise and fresh air. Do not take stimulants at sea, or the liver is bound to go wrong, and your last state will be worse than your first.

Stock for English melodrama One healthy villain who puts up a job on the hero, packs the jury, and sends him to the penitentiary for indefinite period. One heroine who scorns villain's matrimonial offers and sticks to hero who has put his foot in it. One comic cockney in a red vest. One comic policeman. A pasteboard bridge, some snow. "Where am I? Me brain reels!" "Leave me, sir! I loathe you!" "Naught remains now but to beg!" "Merciful heavens!" "Ha! Ha!" "Yum-yum?" Mix these well. Keep vice ahead until the last act and then give virtue a chance. The design of the play is to show how the villains would not have been foiled except for their own foolishness.