

cases it is found practically impossible to successfully carry out this part of the treatment.

Permission to eliminate meat from the diet of the patient is only given by the medical attendant after a severe struggle; but when it comes to beef tea and broths, to suggest a separation of these from the sick room is rank heresy, and is to be put down with a strong hand. The reasons of this are: first, a lack of knowledge of dietetics by those in authority in other matters relating to the health of the human family.

The graduates in medicine of the present day receive no instructions in dietetics. Beyond a few lectures each session upon the proximate principles of food, our medical colleges teach absolutely nothing regarding the influence of diet upon the human organism in health and in disease, and as a consequence what information our medical students receive upon this is confined to his hospital, experience where the diet is selected, upon economical principles, by a committee of management composed of a majority of *laymen*.

Chemistry has long since shown beef tea to be composed of salts and putrefactive materials in solution, to be in fact *urine*. Physiology has shown it to be a direct poison to the protoplasmic cells composing the muscle and nerve tissue. Pathology has shown it to be one of the best known medicines for the cultivation and development of micro-organisms. Clinical observation shows it to be an important factor in the causation of those diseases to which the physician is putting forth his best endeavors to combat; yet in our hospitals and public institutions, where the physicians of the present day get their knowledge of dietetics, a *broth* diet is considered the proper food for those who are too ill to keep body and soul together upon a *full* diet.

Half a century ago Sylvester Graham

wrote: (10) "Practising physicians have "not all been very careful to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with those "physiological laws which should govern "them in prescribing the diet of the sick, "and this probably is one of the principal "reasons why they have not been more "successful in the treatment of disease."

To show the progress made in dietetics during the past fifty years, I will quote from a recent writer (11) who gives the present standing of the profession upon this subject: (The italics are my own.) "Up "to the present time *we have no knowledge "upon the subject of dietetics*; we have "known only that a man loses in twenty- "four hours certain quantities of nitrogen "and carbon, in consequence of which he is "obliged, in order that he should not lose "weight, to take each day a mixture of "these elements."

To show the progress made in the successful treatment of disease since Graham's time, I will quote from statistics of the death rate in one disease only—pulmonary consumption. "That terrible disease "causes one-seventh of the whole mortality in our latitudes; and if we exclude "children and old persons, it causes the "death of one-third of the population," (12) and this, a curable disease, as is shown by the fact of its having undergone spontaneous cure in about one-third of all cases upon which *post mortem* examinations are made, and a disease which probably more than any other is due to dietetic causes.

A second difficulty in the way of carrying out this part of the treatment comes from the patients themselves. Fothergill (13) recognizes this in the following:—"To a "large number of persons the pleasures of the "table are the best part of their existence. "Even while conscious, in many cases, "of the benefits derived from a restricted "dietary, these persons will take an early "opportunity of consulting someone else,