

of diet, there is considerable divergence of opinion as to the most suitable. Which shall we elect, a meat diet, a vegetable diet, or a mixed diet? This dissonance of sentiment is not confined solely as to the kind of diet; some rank diet above medicines, while others do not consider it worthy of a thought. A moderate meat diet is good, but there is a tendency to take it in excess, far more meat being consumed than is of benefit. This applies more especially to the well-to-do class, meat being a luxury with the poor. In excess, meat is apt to develop the uric acid or gouty diathesis; and as is well known, gout is a factor in producing psoriasis, etc. Meat once a day will suffice in most cases. Those taking little exercise require but a small amount of meat, while the active need more. It is asserted that a meat diet causes congestion of the skin, while a vegetable diminishes the congestion. A priori we should exclude a meat diet in all inflammatory affections and substitute a vegetable diet. The fact that when vegetables are withheld, a change is produced in the condition of the blood and scurvy induced, shows that they supply a want to the system. Perhaps no one more appreciates this than does the sailor after a long voyage. Although plentifully supplied with lime juice, he longs for the sight of a fresh vegetable, and on landing highly relishes them. A due proportion of vegetable is necessary to health. Physiologists have long taught that of all diets a mixed one is the best. To adopt, therefore, an exclusive line of diet as a meat or vegetable would be against all physiological rule. It would be impossible to enjoin a diet that would suit all cases. Nor can we as in diabetes lay down a hard and fast diet, and say, "thus far shalt thou go and no farther." Man is a composite being, made up of innumerable ingredients; his tastes are as numerous and variable. What would be agreeable to one, both as to health and taste, would be disagreeable to another. The dietary of the world proves this. Every nation and frequently every individual in a nation having a peculiar diet. Thus we have the rice-eating Hindoo and Chinese, the fish-eating Esquimaux, the beef-eating Britons, the porridge-eating Scotchmen, etc., while each nation has some characteristic food on which it mainly subsists; it would be interesting to inquire what influence it has upon skin diseases. Take for instance the character of the skin diseases as seen in London and Vienna, there is a marked difference in the two types. It seems to me that diet has much to do with it. The Blackfriars Skin Hospital,

London, have long had in use a diet table which has proved of most service in the majority of cases in attendance. As the Blackfriars is the oldest and largest skin hospital in London, it deserves a careful study. It consists of—*for Breakfast*, bread and milk or porridge with or without an egg; bread and butter. *Tea and coffee prohibited. Dinner*—plain roast or boiled fish or poultry, plainly cooked rice, eggs, or flour pudding, potatoes, and a few other vegetables. *Tea or Supper*—milk and water, or gruel, or other farinaceous food with bread and butter. *Drinks*—Barley water, toast water, thin gruel, soda water. *To be avoided*—Salt meats, soups, sweets, acids, fruits, pastry. No malt liquors, wine or spirits, unless under medical sanction. The above menu would not be very congenial or recherché to an alderman. It is certainly puritanical in its plainness.

Tea contains nearly 18 per cent. of tannin, its astringent properties produce constipation; it likewise has an evil influence over the nervous system, and tends to give rise to neuroses of the skin. Coffee is less open to the objections of Tea. Condiments and spices as a rule should be avoided. Milk is not always the harmless thing imagined. It should be boiled. It often disagrees with people advanced in years, causing oppression at the stomach, and often lingers in the bowels as hard cheesy lumps. Sometimes it does not suit those in the prime of life, or even children. It should be of the very best quality. Water should be taken sparingly during meals, freely in the intervals. Drinking cold water when fatigued or over-heated by great exertion has caused a permanent skin eruption. Alcohol has a tendency to keep up skin affections. Besides its deleterious effect upon the skin, it acts indirectly on it by crippling the stomach, liver or kidney; and yet alcohol preserves the skin. The lighter wines, claret, &c., can be used with impunity; while spirits should not be used, whiskey and gin are the least harmful of all. Malt liquors make the skin muddy, thick and pimply. Excessive beer drinking often brings on an eczema. Food which has a tendency to constipate should be avoided as far as possible.

To maintain a healthy skin, the frame should be well nourished; if it is thus in health, how much more so should it be in disease. It is a mistake, as a rule, to put a patient on a low diet in a skin disease. The skin should be well fed. Diet should be of good quality and nourishing; it is quality not quantity that tells. But then again it should not be too rich or stimulating. A dog fed on (co