

Health Department.

Cheap and Good Food.

T. R. Allinson, writing to the *London Times* says:—Allow me to bring under the notice of your readers some experiments I have just concluded to solve the difficulty of feeding our poor in London and elsewhere. The cry is that food is so dear that the poor can scarcely live. This cry is true if they want to live on luxuries, but if they will live on wholesome, but plain and healthy fare, they can do so for very little. A little over a month ago I determined to give up all expensive articles of food and live almost as cheaply as possible. Having left off flesh foods for nearly two years, and lecturing frequently on the question of food, I knew what to select. Looking over my food accounts I found milk, butter, eggs, and cheese, with tea and coffee, were fairly expensive articles, and none of them necessary, so I gave them up for a time to see results. On October 19 I began my experiment; my weight was then 9 stone 8 ounces. I continued this purely vegetarian diet for a month when my weight was 9 stone 3 pounds 12 ounces, or a gain of 3 1/4 pounds. My friends said I looked well; I felt well, and did my usual work the same as ever. I walked from 10 to 15 miles daily, seeing patients or taking exercise. Here is an account of my dietary, which cost me little more than sixpence a day, and I could easily live for less without luxuries: Breakfast consisted of a basin of porridge, made from a mixture of oatmeal and wheatmeal which I found more palatable than either singly. This I usually ate with bread to insure thorough insalivation. Then came bread fried in refined cotton seed oil, or fried vegetable haggis. For drink I had a cup of cocoa or fruit syrup, with warm water and sugar. The cocoa used was an ordinary one with plenty of starch in it, which makes a thick drink, and no milk is then required. Dinner consisted of a thick vegetable soup and bread, potato pie, savory pie, vegetarian pie, vegetable stew, stewed rice and tomatoes, etc. For a second course I had bread plum pudding, stewed rice and fruit, baked sago, tapioca and apples, stewed prunes, figs, raisins and bread. Tea meal consisted of bread and jam, stewed fruit, or some green stuff, as watercress, celery, tomatoes, etc. I had only three meals a day, and frequently, when very busy, I had only two, and a cup of cocoa and a biscuit for supper. I always use the whole meal bread, as it is laxative and contains a good deal of nitrogen, which is thrown away with the bran. The cotton seed oil is a cheap and good cooking oil, and is impossible to detect. This diet I continued for a month, and now I only take the animal products when out, not having them at my table.

Now compare this diet with one of flesh or a mixed one. The latest analysis shows flesh to contain from 70 to 74 per cent of water, the residue being very rich in nitrogen, and it contains a little carbonaceous or fatty matter. Hence, to live on meat alone, as much as 8 pounds a day is necessary. Then there are to be considered the diseases of animals, which are communicable to man if that flesh be not thoroughly cooked all through; and as very few of our animals live a perfectly natural life, most of them are more or less diseased, especially the fat ones. The excess of nitrogen taken into the system in eating flesh meat has to be got rid of by the liver, kidneys and lungs; hence, these organs are overtaxed, and much disease is the consequence. In fact, were it not for flesh food we doctors would have very little to do. Men living in towns cannot afford to eat much flesh, because he does not get sufficient exercise and oxygen to burn up the excess of nitrogen. If he does eat this flesh, and if he eat much, then he must suffer from many complaints, such as indigestion, bilious attacks, congested liver, hemorrhoids, gastric catarrh, and other

gastric troubles. If the habit is continued in, gall stones or urinary calculi may follow, or rheumatism and gout. Then the kidneys become diseased, and more work is thrown on the heart, which becomes also diseased; the end is death by one of the lingering diseases which show a diseased organ some where. Even epilepsy and many nervous diseases are aggravated by flesh. Cancer is on the increase, and from some observations I have made, it may be indirectly traced to flesh. Consumption has only a remote connection with flesh, is being due chiefly to want of fresh air. Vegetable food is cheap, contains an abundant supply of nutriment at first cost, and our systems are so formed as to use it with least expenditure of the vital force. We use no cruelty in obtaining our food, and can easily see if it be wholesome or in a rotten state.

By means of our diet much disease is prevented, and even most chronic cases of present disease can be alleviated by it. If we want a cheap dietary we have the following foods to choose from: Wheat, oats, barley, maize, rice, sago, tapioca, semolina, hominy, peas, beans, lentils, etc., which are all concentrated foods and very rich in nutriment. Potatoes, parsnips, beets, carrots, turnips, onions, cabbage, sprouts, etc., give variety, bulk and flavor; to these may be added the sweet herbs for making savory dishes. Apples, pears, currants, gooseberries, plums, strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, and other fruits, with melons, peaches, grapes, etc., are high priced but wholesome fruits. The dried fruits, such as dates, figs, apple rings, currants, raisins, etc., are cheap and good. To these may be added tinned goods. This one can see the immense variety of tasty things we have, and these to suit all purses. We can add to these milk, butter, cheese, eggs and honey, which are got without killing animals. If we take animal food, then fish is least injurious, then beef and mutton, while veal, pork, game, etc., are very indigestible, and ought to be avoided.—*Knowledge*.

Something About the Teeth and Mastication.

The following interesting extract from a French periodical we copy from *Health*:—

"It would be impossible to deny the vast influence which the condition of the teeth exercises upon the general health and many stomach affections. Dyspepsia for instance, which is so often supposed to spring from remote cause, is in reality, most frequently one result of swallowing imperfectly masticated food. Reaumur's experiments have long since proved that food cannot be digested unless it is properly broken up. He caused some sheep to swallow tubes full of grass, saturated with saliva but not chewed. Two days afterward, examination showed that this food had not undergone any digestive change. Spallanzani still more conclusively proved this by causing a sheep to swallow two tubes, the one full of masticated, and the other of whole grass. The chewed grass was digested; the other remained unchanged.

The state of the teeth not only affects one's bodily health, but also influences character. In one of his tales, Voltaire makes Dr. Sidrac say that people with sluggish livers are capable of the greatest crimes. This is, perhaps going a little too far, but it must be conceded that such a habit of body strongly predisposes to hypochondria. In like manner a bad condition of the teeth, by the prolonged sufferings it occasions, which are aggravated by the most trivial cause, ends by rendering the disposition morose, irritable, and thence forward inclined to see only the dark side of everything.

But if it be true that character can be influenced by the state of the teeth, is it also true—and this is the point I wish to bring forward—that the teeth rapidly decay under the influence of overwork? Two English doctors, Messrs. Leither-

wood and Harlan, believe they have noticed that the teeth of those who devote themselves entirely to study undergo rapid changes, and that a period of rest retards this evil. They then put the further question: Are these occurrences attributable to an over-excited brain, whose excessive stimulation makes it assimilate to itself those phosphate elements which would otherwise go to nourish the teeth? Or is this decay of the teeth due rather to a low state of health, produced by overwork? It is well known that certain diseases of the nervous system, such as locomotor ataxia and infantile convulsions, have a very pronounced effect upon the teeth.

Comparing together numerous facts which have been culled from different isolated observations, Messrs. Leitherwood and Harlan find themselves compelled to admit that if the brain be overstimulated by work, the excess of phosphorus which it then consumes can only be gained at the expense of those organs which require this substance for their development, as the bones and the teeth. This question is not new. It has already been studied in France by Dr. Lucas-Championniere. That learned practitioner has at different times verified similar facts. He advises that the studies of children shall be carefully watched, and so regulated as to be increased or lessened in accordance with the condition of their teeth. He also counsels those young persons who go in for competitive examinations or a university career to exercise the greatest watchfulness over their teeth if they wish to preserve them.

Wakefulness.

The first effect of an excessive use of the brain is generally wakefulness. It is easy to understand why this should be the case when we bear in mind that exact observations have shown that sleep is caused by the blood in a measure flowing out of the vessels of the brain into those of other parts of the body.

Of course anything that prevents the diminution of the quantity of blood in the brain, prevents sleep. Every time an individual thinks, if it be only for the hundredth part of a second, every time his emotions are excited, the vessels of the brain enlarge, and the quantity of blood they contain is increased.

Normally, as soon as the thought has passed, and the emotion has faded away, the vessels contract, and when sleep is coming on, they diminish still more in calibre. But if a person thinks too much, and especially if he is anxious about some important matter, there is no opportunity for the vessels to become reduced in size. They must remain full of blood in order that the brain may do the work required. The tension is thus kept up too long, and eventually like all over-distended bodies lose their elasticity, and then a return to their normal dimensions is no longer possible.

Most of my readers have doubtless seen the India-rubber bands which are used for the purpose of keeping packages together. If the package is somewhat large, and the band is kept around it for a long time, the band, when removed, does not return to its original size. It is exactly the same with the blood-vessels of the brain. A condition of congestion is thus produced which is fraught with danger to those who do not heed the first warnings.

Chief and earliest of these promonitions is wakefulness. The vessels of the brain refuse to contract; they remain gorged with blood, the mind is in consequence active, and sleep, such as is required, is not to be obtained. Toward morning, perhaps, an hour or two of disturbed slumber may ensue, but it does little good, and the sufferer gets up to go to work utterly unfit for either mental or physical exertion.

Instead of the calmness natural to a person who has passed the night in sound and refreshing sleep, he is excited and

weary, the most trifling event annoys him, he is disagreeable to his family and friends, and he feels that he is not capable of sustained thought or dispassionate judgment.—*W. A. Hammond, M. D. in Youth's Companion*.

Strength and Health.

It is quite a common idea that health keeps pace with strength. I know intelligent persons who really think that you may determine the comparative health of a company of men by measuring their arms—that he whose arm measures twelve inches is twice as healthy as he whose arm measures but six. This strange and thoughtless misapprehension has given rise to nearly all the mistakes thus far made in the physical culture movement. I have a friend who can lift nine hundred pounds, and yet he is an habitual sufferer from torpid liver, rheumatism, and rather low spirits.

There are many similar cases. The cartmen of our cities, who are our strongest men, are far from the healthiest class, as physicians will testify. On the contrary I have many friends who would stagger under three hundred pounds that are in capital trim. But I need not elaborate a matter so familiar with physicians and other observing people. No test of health would be more faulty than a tape-line or a lift of the scale beam.

Suppose two brothers—bank clerks—in bad health. They are measured round the arm. Each marks exactly ten inches. There are the scale-beams. The bars rises to exactly three hundred pounds with each. Both seek health. John goes to the gymnasium, lifts heavy dumb-bells and kegs of nails until he can put up one hundred and twenty-five pounds, and lift nine hundred and his arm reaches fifteen inches.

Thomas goes to the mountains, fishes, hunts, spends delightful hours with the young ladies and plays cricket.

Upon measuring his arm we find it scarcely larger than when he left town, while he can't put up sixty pounds nor lift five hundred. But who doubts Thomas will return to the counter the better man of the two? John should be the better man, if strength is the principle or most essential condition of health.

The Finger Nails.

Most persons are familiar with these troublesome bits of skin which loosen at the root of the finger nails; it is caused by their adhering to the nail, which growing outward, drags the skin along with it, stretching it until one end gives way. To prevent this, the skin should be loosened from the nail's once a week, not with a knife or scissors, but with something blunt, such as the end of an ivory paper cutter. This is best done after soaking the fingers in warm water, then pushing the skin back gently and slowly. The white specks on the nail are made by scraping the nail with a knife at a point where it emerges from the skin.

A story is told of two Scotsmen, who travelled together three days in a stage-coach without a word ever passing between them. On the fourth day one of them at last ventured to remark that it was a fine morning—"And who said it wasn't?" was the reply.

The most absent-minded man in a certain section attended the Methodist Church on Sunday night, accompanied by his pet terrier. When he arrived in the church he raised his dog from the floor and seated him in a pew, and then went and tied himself to the fence.

"Oh, will he bite?" exclaimed one of Liverpool's sweetest girls, with a look of alarm, when she saw one of the dancing bears in the street the other day. "No," said her escort, "he cannot bite; he is muzzled. But he can hug." "Oh," she said, with a distracting smile, "I don't mind that!"