

SUMMER MEATS AND DRINKS.

In these Summer months we are forced to the confession that the vassal stomach has much to do with our wills and deeds, our thoughts and words, as the superior head. To say "a man has no stomach" for anything is really as significant as to say he has no brains for it. For the intellectual forces can no more get on without the gastric, than an army without a commissariat department.

It is related of Sir Walter Scott that he sometimes kept the printer waiting for copy. It was wonderful if he did not—clever and wonderful scribe that he was. Thoughts cannot be pumped out mechanically by anybody except a newspaper editor and reporter, and Sir Walter, though he could write the Warley Novels, could not, we dare affirm, have edited a newspaper. One of the Ballantynes, on a certain occasion when the press was standing, appealed to the great novelist in person. "Toot mon!" was the answer, "how can I mak the McGregor's wife talk, wi' siccan a twisting in the bowels as I have!"

Substitute for bowels the shorter and more expressive word which the novelist actually used in his extremity, and you may imagine the strait the man was in when the printer's devil drove, and the locomotive train whistled and snorted, but the tender, the fuel carriage, the stomach was off the track.

As for writing, so for every operation which requires thought or memory, the whole man, and especially the chemical and alimentary part of him, must be in order. Hence, in the Summer months particularly, it is a question of no small moment whether there is "death in the pot" before we dip our spoon in.

Dr. Combe, in treating of digestion and dietetics, gives one rule to be observed, without which all others are of no avail—"the rule of not too much." The best of all directions, it is, perhaps, the hardest to follow, since in our languor we are prone to the delusion that we can take something in at the mouth which will restore whatever is wanting, cool us if heated, or strengthen us if weak.

We eat and drink, moreover, for amusement—a joke the stomach will not always stand, however it may please the palate; and when the poor overworked machinery rebels, we blame the weather or the climate, or accuse our innocent bodies of dyspepsia. Then run for drugs and nostrums, still further to complicate matters. Dr. Combe's moss-trooping countrymen in the old time had a style of cooking admirable for its simplicity, to say the least of it. They would flay an ox or a calf, hang the skin, bag fashion, upon four stakes, fill with water, and put the carcass in to boil. One would think that the manner of preparing a dinner, not alluded to by Prof. Blot, would remove the temptation to over-stuffing. Yet the moss troopers were huge feeders.

Like all rude people they learned from nature what Dr. Hall lays down as an axiom: "After dinner, play the ananassa." At any rate their diet was simple—oat-cakes, beef done as above, would not create the heterogeneous mixture which we civilized folks deposit in our stomachs, to fester and effervesce, while we stupidly wonder that our food disagrees with us, and take a potion or a pill, to make it disagree worse.

The comic almanacs have a standing joke about the Irish maiden, for whom a dose of selditz was prepared. She swallowed the alkali, and then the acid, and, we need hardly add, was "astonished." Yet we all do the same thing. We put incongruous matter into our stomachs, and are surprised that they do not agree.

The Summer markets tempt the palate with their various offerings, and rich and poor manage to find variety enough to give the apothecary business, and to swell the bills of mortality. Things which might be eaten with impunity, if taken alone, are jumbled together, and then we blame innocent things as unhealthy, whereas it is our own omnivorous appetites which do the mischief.

But the various drinks which are imbibed are an infinite deal worse than what is eaten. The consumption of "hot and rebellious liquors" in this Republic is absolutely appalling. Cold climates allow stronger potations than are safe or prudent during our ardent Summers. The fever which the sun engenders is aggravated by drinks which would suit the Esquimaux or Siberians. The vital energies are fearfully taxed, and the excitement is followed by prostration. The system is predisposed to malarious influences; and the heat which one might endure in a sound body is fatal when the fire without is matched by furious heat within. Whoever could persuade the people from extreme moderation from excitements, if not total abstinence from Whisky & Co. during the summer months, would not only save life and prevent disease, but reduce the criminal calendar. The tendency to improper indulgence has been of late years increasing fearfully among us. It was once thought that high prices would abate the consumption of alcoholic mixtures. Such does not appear to have been the case; and while more is drunk than ever, much of the liquor which is consumed is of the worst and most deleterious quality. It is surreptitiously manufactured and thrown into the market by men without conscience; retailed by men without a scruple; and drunk by men without sense.

More danger to the future of the republic is to be apprehended from the vicious appetite for inordinate potations than from any other cause. Our national politics are visited by this fatal indulgence; for men claim to perform the highest duties of citizens while they are under influences which incapacitate them for the lowest demands upon mind and body. Whisky is the potent means of cajolery and bribery; and it is all the worse as an agent of mischief that it does not come within the statute. Like the great imp, it can be declared against, but not reached. Journalists owe it to their country to strive to bring popular opinion up to the proper standard against the great enemy alike to public health and public morals.—N. Y. Tribune.

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