

liquor the breast, &c., was boiled in (you can add the almonds to the liquor to start with, if desired; they impart a nice flavour); a mere grate of nutmeg or lemon-peel may be added, and, of course, a little salt. Boil gently for a few minutes to any consistency you like, using the liquor for that purpose; by this means you can give it either from the feeder, or if thick with a spoon.

I hope I have made clear to you the kind of fluid meat nourishment best suited to our patients during early convalescence, upon which we have now entered. The three cardinal points with respect to them are freshness, strength, and entire freedom from fat. My readers must pardon the digression, but in my judgment an Obstetric Nurse should understand the preparation of these simple concoctions, for the less we have to do with the "substitutes" of commerce the better. Useful *when* we have nothing else at hand, they should never be relied upon to take the place of freshly-prepared broths, &c.

After the midday meal sleep should be encouraged, for by that time the patient has been awake some hours. You may think this may prevent sleep at night. Not at this early stage of convalescence, for sleep begets sleep, and helps to *tranquillise* the brain—a point of *first* importance for parturient patients.

At four p.m. the afternoon tea comes in, and there are few of our patients who do not welcome it. Bread and butter, or a sponge cake, with this meal is better than the hot buttered toast—of which I have no opinion—that is often given at tea time. If the patient wishes it, or if she appears faint, you can beat up a new-laid egg in her tea, as directed in the *Record*, No. 91, but I do not advise it being boiled.

The evening duty follows after this. Wash the hands and face, change the draw-sheet, adjust the binder, shake up the pillows, arrange the bed-clothes, and in fact put things comfortable for the night. This should be done not *later* than nine p.m. After this a basin of milk gruel for supper. With respect to this last form of nourishment, a great deal goes to how it is made to get some of our patients to take to it, and as oatmeal forms a very important part of their dietary we will say a few words about it.

Gruel can be made and strained off from groats or coarse Scotch oatmeal; but in either case it should be thoroughly cooked. It is the half raw condition in which it is so often served renders it distasteful to women. The best thing to make the gruel or porridge in is a clean *tinned* iron saucepan (eschew enamelled ones), which should be kept exclusively for that purpose. If you use coarse Scotch oatmeal, put a pint and a-half of water into the saucepan. Let it come to a sharp

boil. Put a pinch of salt in. Take half a tea-cupful of meal; gently drop it into the boiling water, stirring the while. Draw the saucepan off the fire on to the hob, and keep it gently boiling for an hour, stirring frequently. If it thickens more than necessary for straining, add more water. When done, pour through a *gruel* strainer into a basin. Then put as much as you require back into the saucepan with some milk and warm them together. Some women like thin dry toast in their gruel, others not.

After supper comes preparation for the night. Have up in your room all you may be likely to require—fuel, water, and whatever kind of light you may have for your use, such as candles, lamps, &c., or if gas, that you have matches at hand to re-light it if necessary; milk, tea and sugar, some biscuits, a reserve of gruel to re-heat, &c. With respect to a light for the lady's room, we all know that gas is the worst, but it may be the only means of lighting that you have. Supposing there is gas in both your rooms, see that you have a portable light as well (a candle and candlestick), so that if you have to fetch up anything in the night or leave your room it will be ready for you. I have heard of Nurses, from negligence in this matter, stumbling about the house in the dark or very early dawn, and thus conveying an impression of "burglars" about, to the terror of some one or more of the household—generally the cook.

I think the best light for the lady's room is one of Price's patent night lights, burned in a glass cup. They are very reliable, and give quite sufficient light, and there is no smell with them. When you place the light, put it into such a position as not to be in the lady's eyes. We do not want to keep her awake over a night light! When you make up the bedroom fire for the night, screen that also from her eyes; it may burn up brightly, and flickering on her face awaken her. Believe me, a good or a bad night depends more often upon trifles than you may think for; and what Nursing point is of more value than how to encourage sleep? At this stage of convalescence there is not often pain, and the milk troubles have not yet begun (as a rule).

(To be continued.)

DOCTOR: "Well, my dear sir, what seems to be the seat of your disease?" Patient: "It doesn't seem to have any seat, doctor. It's just jumping up and down all the while."

A FOREGONE CONCLUSION.—Young Doctor: "Well, I've got a case at last." Young Lawyer: "Glad to hear it. When you get him to the point where he wants a will drawn, telephone over."

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)