

great service. Prunes, figs, seeded fruits, such as currants, raspberries, and strawberries, tend to irritate the intestinal tract, and any form of stewed fruit is good. Milk tends to constipate, but soups and broths containing the extractives of meat have an opposite effect. A glass of cold water drunk slowly the first thing in the morning has a mildly aperient effect, and the addition of oils and fats to the ordinary diet does much to assist the forward motion in the intestine.

With the opposite condition of the bowels the nourishment should be of a bland character, and should be taken at the body temperature. With adults, milk is serviceable, and particularly if it is diluted with lime-water. The astringent property of alum-why has been already mentioned, and recourse should be had to it. When diarrhoea occurs in an infant, whose natural food is milk, the milk must be stopped until the symptoms have abated. Dr. Eustace Smith recommends that whey, weak veal or chicken broth, and barley-water should be given alternately as substitutes, and, if the infant is above the age of six months, the yolk of an egg can be given, beaten well with a few drops of brandy and a tablespoonful of cinnamon-water.

Flatulence can generally be overcome by taking food which does not easily ferment, by avoiding aerated drinks, and reducing to a minimum all foods of vegetable or animal origin which contain casein.

Obesity is caused by an unequal balance between the intake of food and the output of energy. With some constitutions the cells are particularly active, and even a small amount of nourishment results in the formation of adipose tissue. The foundation of all treatment is the curtailment of food, and particularly those of a fat-forming nature. The treatment must not be too rapid, and particularly in cases of abdominal plethora, and the heart must be examined from time to time to see whether there is danger of collapse. Mr. Banting showed a reduction of thirty-five pounds in thirty-eight weeks by paying strict attention to his diet. His modified diet was as follows:—

Breakfast.—Four or five ounces of beef, mutton, kidneys, boiled fish, bacon (but not pork), or two eggs, a large cup of tea without sugar or milk, and a little biscuit or dried toast.

Dinner.—Five or six ounces of meat or fish containing very little fat, any vegetables excepting roots and tubers, a little stewed fruit, and two glasses of wine.

Tea.—Two or three ounces of fruit, a rusk or two, and a large cup of plain tea.

Supper.—Three or four ounces of fish or meat, and a glass or two of claret.

It will be seen that there is a preponderance of proteids, and an absence of milk, sugar, beer and butter.

Other systems have been devised which are slight

modifications of the above. Their differences are pointed out by Dr. Hutchison in "Food and Dietetics." Thus, Oertel restricts fats more than carbo-hydrates, and limits the amount of fluid. Ebstein modifies Banting's diet by increasing the proportion of fat and giving less proteid. Herschfeld's diet resembles Ebstein's. Van Noorden gives a large number of small meals, and restricts fats more than carbo-hydrates.

Sugar is a very fattening food. Saccharin has equal sweetening power and is not a food, so that it can be used as a substitute for sugar. Fat fish and rich meat and all rich made-dishes should be avoided. Bread is even more fattening than the same weight of potatoes, and should be eaten only in small quantities, and should be of the coarse variety. Fresh fruits and green vegetables may be taken freely, but roots and potatoes are best avoided. When the diet consists largely of proteids, the amount of water should be abundant, to avoid the danger of uric acid troubles.

Gout, which is caused by an excess of uric acid, can be treated by avoiding those things which produce uric acid. All cellular organs, such as sweet-breads, liver, and spleen, yield nuclein during digestion, and nuclein is a fruitful source of uric acid. Vegetables, eggs, milk, and cheese do not yield uric acid, and are of great use in the treatment of gout. Tea, coffee, cocoa, meat extracts, and alcohol should be avoided, and their places as beverages supplied by plenty of water, which will help to carry off the uric acid. If alcohol would be greatly missed by the patient, a little whisky is recommended as the least harmful form, but it must be largely diluted with an alkaline mineral water.

For stout gouty people the Salisbury treatment is in general use. By the use of minced beef and hot water, flatulence is lessened and obesity reduced. The hot water is of great service in carrying off uric acid. The beef which is used in this treatment is prepared by mincing it finely, removing all gristle and connective tissue, and moulding it into little round flat cakes. These are put into a hot greased pan, and when they are nicely browned they are turned to the other side. When both sides are brown the pan is set on a cooler part of the stove, and the meat allowed to cook slowly until the red colour has disappeared. A little butter is put on each cake, and salt is added.

In Dr. Haig's treatment, which is more suited for thin gouty people, butcher's meat is excluded, and the proteids are reduced to a minimum.

In renal diseases a milk diet is best. White meats should be given in preference to red meats, and there must be a careful avoidance of all condiments and stimulating flavours, such as spices, mustard, radishes, water-cress, asparagus, and onions.

Diabetes is a disease connected with metabolism, in which the power of the tissues to absorb carbo-

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)