

may be roughly described as replacing tissues wasted in the ordinary progress of life, and allowing a sufficient amount of moisture to pass through the body, evaporating in the breath and through the skin. It is not quite correct to regard rectal excreta and urine as wasted or unassimilated food, though they are the residual products of the action of the digestive organs on food. Nevertheless, in serious illness, the Physician has often to consider not only the nutritive values of various diets, but also their effect on the digestive and other organs. Food that is quickly digested, and leaves unassimilated only a slight residuum easily ejected, is the most suitable nourishment for invalids; and the primary object of sick cooking is to so treat the food ordered to be prepared, as to enable it to be easily digested. At the same time it is of the utmost importance that all its "goodness" be retained in the food when cooked. As a general rule it may be said that all bakings (such as custards and other milk puddings) should be slow, that stewing (*i.e.*, cooking below boiling point, say at a temperature 180 degrees Fahr.) is preferable to boiling, and that all roasting and toasting should be done before a brisk, clear, but not fierce fire. In certain cases it is desirable to peptonise food to assist digestion. Diet, especially in sickness, should be as simple as possible: the simpler the diet the more easy the digestion. A great many things, nutritious in health, are not digestible in illness. While the patient must take a sufficient amount of food, care must be taken that the digestive organs are not irritated by over feeding. As soon as possible after convalescence very frequent feeding must be discontinued, and regular meals resumed, in order that the digestive organs may get the necessary rest.

All the patient's food should be served as daintily as possible. A regular meal should be brought to him, on a neatly arranged tray, covered with a clean serviette: the glass and silver should be bright, and the knife sharp. Soup, gruel, beef-tea, &c., should be served in a proper covered cup; while, for meat and vegetables, a hot-water plate should be used. When a feeder has to take the place of glass or cup, one of the ordinary shape, but without a strainer at the base of the spout, should be used. It is almost impossible to keep a spout with a strainer clean, and consequently it too often becomes a channel of absolute contamination to the hapless patient.

Milk is the most valuable of all diets for invalids. It should be boiled if the source of supply is uncertain, but *scalding* is of no use whatever. It may be taken warm, iced, mixed with soda-water (one-third of soda-water to two-thirds of milk), or lime-water may be added, from one to two table-spoonsful to the pint.

The following recipes for preparing milk food may be useful in varying a milk diet:—

#### TO PEPTONIZE MILK.

Procure Fairchild's peptonizing powders (each tube contains five grains of zymine and fifteen grains of bicarbonate of soda). Into a perfectly clear glass bottle, holding nearly a quart, put one powder, quarter pint of water, and a pint of milk. Shake the bottle, and place it up to the neck in a vessel of hot water (temp. 120 Fahr.); let it stand for from twenty to thirty minutes, shaking occasionally. The milk must then be boiled or iced. Extreme heat or extreme cold will stop the peptonizing process, which, if too much prolonged, renders the milk bitter and unpleasant to the taste.

#### DEVONSHIRE JUNKET.

Warm a pint of new milk to a temperature of 100 degrees Fahr., sweeten to taste, and add half a teaspoonful of essence of rennet. When set, a few spoonfuls of cream should be poured over, and a little nutmeg and powdered sugar sprinkled on the top. A junket should be made in the dish in which it is to be served.

#### RUSSIAN CUSTARD.

Mix two eggs with half-a-pint of milk, sweeten to taste and strain into a basin; set in a shallow saucepan of boiling water, cook for about half-an-hour or till quite set.

#### A FAVOURITE PUDDING (COLD).

One egg, one-third of a pint of milk, one quarter of an ounce of gelatine, one ounce of loaf sugar. Beat the yolk and white of the egg separately; soak the gelatine in a small quantity of the milk; add the yolk of the egg and sugar. Bring the rest of the milk to the boil and pour it over them; as soon as the gelatine and sugar are dissolved, stir well and let the mixture come to the boil; at the moment of boiling pour the mixture on to the white of the egg, which should be previously well whipped; mix the whole thoroughly, and pour into a mould. The pudding must not be stirred or shaken till cold, when it should turn out in appearance like a thick solid cream, surmounted by a clear jelly.

#### WHITE WINE WHEY.

Sweeten slightly and heat to nearly boiling point a pint of new milk, add a wine glass full of sherry. When cool, strain carefully, avoid breaking up the curd or allowing any to pass through the strainer. Whey can often be retained on a sick stomach when all other forms of nourishment are rejected.

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STRIVE for that serenity of spirit that will enable you to make the best of things. That means contentment in its best source.

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