

MILK: AS MEDICINE AND AS FOOD.

By MEDICUS.



longer ago than last evening I was paying a visit to a neighbour of mine, a professional man by the way, who lives some distance from London. I arrived unexpectedly, and found that coffee was being served. I always do get good coffee at this friend's house, because he buys the beans, short blunt little Mocha ones, and roasts them and grinds them himself. So of course I did not require a second invitation to partake of a cup.

"Hullo!" I remarked, "have you taken to Swiss condensed milk?"

"Yes," he said; "when there is any difficulty about obtaining fresh milk in the neighbourhood I fall back on the Swiss. There is no adulteration in it, and only sugar sufficient to make it keep."

"Well," I replied, "I daresay you are right, seeing that milk in cities is so very much adulterated. For I do not think there is anything deleterious in the condensed article, only I prefer the other myself."

"Once upon a time," I continued—but I suddenly paused, for I had no wish to be compelled to commence story-telling. I was too late, however, for my friend's wife said:

"Once upon a time, doctor—go on, please; you were going to treat us to one of your experiences."

"The Swiss milk reminded me," I replied, "that once upon a time I was starting upon a long voyage to the uttermost regions of the earth, when it occurred to me that milk would be a great treat while at sea. So I bought four dozen hermetically sealed tins of this delectate from an Aberdeen firm of some notoriety. I was assured that it was the best new milk that could be procured in that county of shorthorns and black polls. And so it turned out. But the fact was and the fault was that the milk was too good, for when, after being a few months at sea, I went one day and opened my case, and took out a tin, I found nothing in it but buttermilk and butter. The motion of the ship had effected the change. However, the buttermilk was delicious, and the butter itself really a treat. But, if ever I go so long a voyage again, I shall take a supply of condensed milk for private use."

Now, before going any further in this paper, let me give you a receipt for an excellent substitute for milk in tea or coffee. It is simply a new-laid egg, well beaten up, and a little warm water and sugar added to it. Many prefer this to milk, and it is certainly most nourishing.

Milk is the simplest and most perfect of all foods for the young, and it is often used with great benefit by both old and young as a medicine.

I must speak of it first as a food.

First, then, catch your hare; in other words, procure your milk as pure as possible, free from adulteration, and in every way genuine. The littlest housekeeper who reads these lines can tell very easily whether or not the milk supplied to the family contains a sufficient proportion of cream. She has only to pour it into a thin glass tumbler, and stand aside for a few hours, when the cream will show itself on the top, and it should be quite as thick as three penny pieces placed one on top of the other.

The milk, moreover, should not be bluish in

colour, and it ought to be very pleasant to the taste, and not at all salt.

It is a difficult thing, however, for our little housekeeper to tell good milk by looking at or even by tasting it, for if it has been sold by unprincipled dairymen—and I fear there are a deal of them about—after having added water to it to increase its bulk, they will not have forgotten to add also some treacle, with perhaps a little salt, or some annatto and sugar, in order to restore its colour and give it flavour.

Again, the milk supplied may be good enough and rich enough, but may have come from a dairy where they are not over particular in cleanliness. In milk like this there will be a slight black sediment. Now, I would not have my readers use such milk on any account. The sediment, it is true, may only be dust, but that dust has no business to be there, and I feel convinced that people who are not particular about the cleanliness of their milk, their milk utensils, and milkmen, would not hesitate to allow the cow herself to drink putrid water, if she felt so inclined. And this is precisely how that terrible disease, typhoid fever, is often spread throughout whole villages and parishes. So girl housekeepers must beware, even in country places. Those who live in cities would do well to study the outs and ins of the dairy from which they get their milk, and on no account should they buy what I may call secondhand milk, that is, milk which has been sold from a dairy to a small milk or bread shop, and from which it is retailed.

Another hint I must give you about milk. Pray do not forget that it is an absorbent of whatsoever impurities may be floating in the air around it. Put it in a clean jug when you get it, place that jug in a pure atmosphere, and, in order to make assurance doubly sure, cover it up.

Never keep milk long before using it. Have it fresh and fresh.

Whether the milk you buy be intended for young or for old, for those who are well or those who are sick, get it if you can from the same cow as long as possible. Young cows give the best milk, and cows that are well-tended, well-fed, and well-bedded at night. But some kinds of food, such as turnips, may affect the flavour of the milk and, on the whole, you cannot expect milk to be quite so good in December or January as it is in June.

I should add to this, however, that just after the cows have been turned out to the young grass in the spring, the milk becomes more abundant but also more watery, so one has many things to study before jumping to the conclusion that the milkman has been calling in the assistance of "the cow with the iron tail."

Charity is a rare but beautiful virtue. It is Burns who says,

"O! gently scan your brother man."

I should advise you to act up to what the poet preaches. Gently scan your brother man, but at the same time if he be a dairyman, and did not supply me with what I considered right, I am not so sure I would not take my jug to the next shop, scanning or not scanning.

We ought to be more than particular about the kind and quality of milk infants have. If typhoid fever may be begotten in the human being—as it sometimes is—by drinking milk from cows that have imbibed or drank that which is unwholesome, can we be so very certain that bad milk may not sometimes be the beginning of many and many a little ailment in infancy?

It may occur to some mothers who read this paper that boiling the milk before giving it to the child would effectually prevent any danger from anything injurious which might be in it. True, it might and very likely would, but it should be remembered that if you boil the

milk you to some extent spoil the milk, for you rob it of many of its salts and other of what I may content myself with calling its virtues as a food.

The milk given to an infant should be, as I have said, if possible, from the same cow all along. I quite agree with most medical men that the outcry against the mixing of milks is nonsensical, but at the same time if the article can be procured from a young and healthy, well-conditioned cow, then my advice is to hold by that cow, and I believe most mothers will agree with me.

The milk given to a very young child of say two to four months old, that is being brought up by hand, should be half hot water with a teaspoonful ~~or~~ more of sugar in each bottleful (the sugar of milk is best—this can be had at any respectable druggist's shop). In addition to this, as the milk of the cow is apt to be, or soon to turn acid, and cause attacks of indigestion, to each feeding bottleful should be added from a teaspoonful to a dessert-spoonful of lime-water. This is also got at the chemist's, though it is easily made, and for the benefit of those who live in far-off country districts, I here give the receipt for its manufacture:—Take of slaked lime, one ounce; pure filtered water, half-a-gallon; put them in a large stoppered bottle and well shake for several minutes, then stand aside till this sediment sinks, when it must be drawn off with a syphon into a green-glass bottle for use as wanted, and this bottle must be kept well stoppered.

As the child gets older more sugar and less water should be used.

A word about the water itself that is put into baby's milk. If common well water, often so hard, disagrees even with the constitutions of grown-up persons, how much more likely is it to injure the tender infant? Use then pure, soft, filtered water and nothing else, even if you have to send a hundred miles to procure it.

But lime-water in milk is good for invalids of all ages as well as for children. It aids the digestion of it in a remarkable degree. Indeed, many people could not assimilate milk at all if it were not so treated. They may swallow it, and it may lie in an undigested semi-hardened state in the stomach for days, and thus be very injurious to the system, and militate against the chance of the patient getting well.

I cannot put it too strongly, and I beg invalids most earnestly to remember, that although milk if it can be digested is a most invaluable food, if not assimilated it is all but a poison. Your milk and soda-water I have little faith in, unless lime-water has been added to it, for there is no soda nor any alkali in soda-water; it is only aerated water pure and simple.

Milk is more easily borne by the invalid with breakfast than at any other meal, and it should not be taken with supper unless well cooked, and only then if it is found to agree and not to cause sleepless nights. Porridge and milk is much vaunted as a supper dish by our brethren beyond the Tweed. Well, it should be taken early if at all, and it ought to be borne in mind that in a naturally bracing country like the north of Scotland, where people live a deal out of doors, many an article of diet can be used with benefit which we in the south cannot touch with impunity any more than we could thistles.

Goat's milk is the most nutritious of all milks, but not the most easily assimilated by weak stomachs.

Ass's milk is easy of digestion, and is therefore often prescribed for the delicate invalid.

Milk is not the best drink invalids can take, but warm from the cow in the morning it does good. Buttermilk and whey possess many virtues, and certainly ought to be drunk by

human beings instead of being thrown to the pigs, as they invariably are in England.

If I had a patient of a delicate constitution or one suffering from debility, who was about to go to some bracing mountainous country, or to the seaside for a change, I should very likely recommend milk as a medicine. "Get the best," I should say, "goat's, if possible. Take it in small quantities at a time, and add a little lime-water to it. If at the same time you can digest cod-liver oil, take that; and if you cannot, take the extract of malt instead. This is an excellent tonic." Milk is invaluable to the consumptive. He or she ought to try to take it, just as much as she tries to take cod-liver oil.

Milk is an emollient and a demulcent, and of great use in coughs and colds, and in many states of debility or actual disease of the internal organs.

Milk, then, is most valuable to even grown-up people both as a medicine and as a food, but to the young, especially the very young, it is life itself.

THE SPINNING WHEEL IN USE AGAIN.



ABOUT twelve months ago Mr. Albert Fleming, a devout disciple of Mr. Ruskin's and a Companion of the

Guild of St. George, while pondering how to find some way of helping certain poor women living on the fell-sides above Eterwater and its neighbourhood, had the happy thought that it might be a good thing to try to revive what Wordsworth calls "The venerable art torn from the poor." The women Mr. Fleming wished to help were too old to go out to clean, and too blind to sew. Spinning is a work which can be carried on at home. It can, as needle-women say, "be taken up and put down," that is, it can be done during odd moments of leisure. What is more, it does not require much eyesight. The difficulty was to find a spinning-wheel, for all those once in use in this valley had, as the local expression goes, long since been "broken down." A wheel was, however, found in that storehouse of ancient things, the Isle of Man; and then an old woman of eighty-four was found whose fingers had not forgotten their cunning. She taught Mr. Fleming, and gradually a few infirm old wheels were got together from various parts of the country, and from these he pieced together a model from which a clever local carpenter made fifteen new ones. Mr. Fleming's next step was to take a cottage, which he dedicated to St. Martin, whose typical act was clothing the poor.

Here, with the help of a clever and kind lady friend, classes were held, and here Mr. Fleming himself taught many of the women; and as soon as one of these was able to spin a good thread, he lent her a wheel and gave her some flax, together with an assurance that he would buy it back when spun, at the rate of 2s. a pound. Under favourable circumstances, and without neglecting home duties, women can easily earn 5s. or 6s. a week; but as they daily become more fond of the work and more expert, they will probably earn more. The finding wheels was by no means the greatest difficulty Mr. Fleming had to encounter; the next thing was to find a loom. At length, however, one that was very old was disinterred from a cellar in Kendal, where it had been hidden away for years. It was in no less than twenty pieces, and no one had the least idea how to set it up. Art came to the rescue. A photograph was procured of Giotto's "Weaving," from the Campanile at Florence, and that proved of the greatest service, for the old loom from Kendal was practically the same as that which Giotto has left to us. A weaver was found, too; and now the work of teaching, giving out flax and weaving, all goes on under the roof of the pretty little cottage dedicated to the soldier saint, and the webs which gradually grow into being are bleached within a stoze's-throw of the house in the simple old Homeric fashion. No chemicals are used; all is effected by the honest and kindly agency of nature. The result of this single-hearted effort on the part of Mr. Fleming is that twenty spinning-wheels are now busy at work in the Dales—or, in other words, that twenty women who could not otherwise have earned a penny are now feeling honest pride in helping to provide for their families. Their cottages, too, are much brighter than they used to be, for it is part of a woman's religion to put everything in order before sitting down to work. The Langdale loom produces a strong and thoroughly honest sheeting that can be trusted to outwear many a machine-made rival. It is forty inches wide, and sells readily at 4s. a yard. Some specimens were recently presented to Mr. Ruskin. They were of a finer quality, and had been expressly woven for him. In the corner was embroidered, in soft silks, the lovely cluster of roses from the garment of spring in Botticelli's famous picture of Venus. This clustre stands on the title page of "Fors Clavigera," on the fly-leaf of all Mr. Ruskin's books, and has come to be regarded as the badge of St. George's Guild. Besides linen sheeting of various degrees of fineness, the workers in St. Martin's Home produce an unbleached linen so good in tone and texture, that when known it is certain to be in great demand for crewel-work and other kinds of embroidery. It is impossible not to feel a hearty interest in Mr. Fleming's undertaking. To clothe the naked and feed the hungry is an excellent work, but it is more excellent still to put them in the way of earning their food and clothing for themselves.

M. H., from the *Spectator*.

VARIETIES.

TWO SIDES TO EVERYTHING.—Everything has its fair as well as its seamy side.—*Sir Walter Scott*.

SLANDEROUS TONGUES.—The worthiest people are the most injured by slander.—*Swift*.

THE GREAT METROPOLIS.—I have often amused myself with thinking how different a place London is to different people. Those

whose narrow minds are contracted to the consideration of some particular pursuit, view it only through that medium. A politician thinks of it merely as the seat of Government in its different departments; a grazier as a vast market for cattle; a mercantile man as a place where a prodigious deal of business is to be done upon 'Change. . . . But the intellectual man is struck with it as comprehending the whole of human life in all its variety, the contemplation of which is inexhaustible.—*Boswell*.

OVER-PRECISE.—We are often over-precise: scrupling to say or do those things which lawfully we may.—*Fuller*.

OUR OWN HEARTS.

The stern behests of duty,
The doom-books open thrown,
The heaven ye seek, the hell ye fear,
Are with yourselves alone.—*Whittier*.

THE MUSIC OF LOVE.

Love took up the harp of life, and smote on all the chords with might;
Smote the chord of self, that, trembling,
Passed in music out of sight.
Tennyson.

AN ECONOMICAL PLAN.—There is certainly a great economy in a woman's adopting for occasions of ceremony one dress, from which she never diverges. It becomes her characteristic, and there is even a kind of style and beauty in the idea.

THE ART OF HAPPINESS.—If you would be happy, try to be cheerful, even when misfortune assails you. You will soon find that there is a pleasant aspect to nearly all circumstances—to even the ordinary trials of life. When the hour of misfortune comes, whether it appears in the form of disease or pecuniary loss, face it manfully and make the best of it. Do not nurse your troubles to keep them warm; and avoid that useless and senseless habit of constantly referring to them in your conversation.

THE NAMES OF WOMEN.—The names of women should be soft and clear, captivating the fancy, and ending in long vowels resembling words of benediction.

HOPE AND DESPAIR.—Hope thinks nothing difficult; despair tells us that every difficulty is insurmountable.—*Watts*.

HOW TO BE JUST.—It is not sufficient to constitute us just men and women that we strictly pay our debts, keep our promises, and fulfil our contracts, if at the same time we are stern when we should be kind, hard where we should be tender, cold where we should be sympathetic: for then we pay only half our debts and repudiate the other half.

32 BURIED RIVERS OF ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, IRELAND, AND WALES.

At Stow yesterday Kate espied Netty near her at a market-stall; and on greeting her, said, "Dear Netty, are you coming for a run with Amy and me?" She had not mistaken Netty, whose sad countenance underwent a change to joy. Pleased to abandon her task, she skipped over hillocks and stones, as gay as ever now, till she heard a rent and her cape was stayed by the brambles. "Oh! Kate, I think you see that rent, can it be mended ever? And my shoe is gone now, I trod in green mud! What will mother say to us, Kate, for this? Let us go home down this lane, you will tell her we are indeed so sorry."

**ANSWER TO CHARADE (page 35).
M-ACE.**