

We also hail with delight the reappearance, after a long time, of the 'Devayatana' (the Magazine of the Hindu Academy, Daulatpur). Its get up is excellent and it is full of interesting reading from cover to cover. We wish it a long and useful career.

## OUR STUDENTS' DIET.

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One notices with delight and remorse the students' crowd at the public restaurants for nutritious food like egg and meat preparations; with delight because, as Dr. Santoshkumar Bannerjea truly says in his book 'Infantile Cirrhosis' that in Bengal curries act as sauce to rice—the main object being to swallow as much rice as possible; with remorse because, as Dr. Rames Chandra Roy rightly mentions in the 'Bharat Barsha' that tea, cake and other bazar preparations sold as food are undesirable if not actually poisonous. Of course it is not the student's fault that he goes there. It has to do with the lack of the Government and Corporation supervision.

Such being the case, if one has to go to these places one should have only those preparations of egg which can be made in one's presence. I must mention here also that there is no difference between a duck's egg and a hen's egg. The former being larger and cheaper may be taken much more easily. We should always avoid cakes and meat preparations in the public restaurants. From the sweetmeat shop we may take Rosogolla and Gilapi if kept in glass cases and dipped in syrup. They are both nutritious diet. The former is made from curd—the proteid of milk—and the

latter from *Maskalai dal*. They cannot produce any disease; if taken fresh, as they cannot be made from bad stuff. But we should note that there is a kind of Rosogolla which is not made from curd at all, and against this variety one must be on one's guard. These Rosogollas taste differently also. In the present circumstances it is therefore desirable that one should have eggs and meat at home. The usual way of testing an egg is by shaking it when a rotten egg emits a sound due to the presence of a bad gas. These eggs also do not sink in water to the bottom. But the best method is to hold an egg before a light as it points out the overlaid eggs too. A good egg shows uniform ruddy appearance. Any streaks of black should raise suspicions. In a bad egg the white and yellow yolk are mixed together. One should note that weight for weight egg is much more nutritious and cheaper than milk.

As the inspection is not easy, one has to rest content with the municipal mark. With regard to fish glossy eyes and lustrous scales are good points for selection. Gills are sometimes coloured red. In a stiffened fish the decomposition has not yet set in.

I believe with people who say that 100 grms. of proteid, contained in about half a seer of meat or fish, must be consumed by a man of average height and weight during 24 hours, doing ordinary work. As it is not possible to take half a seer of meat or fish regularly one has to distribute it (proteid) between *dal*, fish and vegetables. I think

Bread or a loaf of Bread	...	8 Chhataks
Or		
Rice ...		8 Chhataks
		(gruel not taken off)
Dal ...	...	2 Chhataks
Ghee or Oil	...	1 Chhatak
Fish or meat	...	4 Chhataks
Vegetables	...	4 Chhataks
Lemon		1 Chhatak

should form one's principal meals in minimum. Fine polished rice as consumed by the gentry, it must be known, is less nutritious than the coarse unpolished variety, because much of the nutriment and an essential thing called *vitamin* are removed by polishing rice in the mills. Desh rice is therefore preferable. New *dal* softens soon by boiling. *Goed-mong* and *musuri* are the best. *Chholerdal* and *dal* in general must be boiled to softening, otherwise they act as laxative and are of no use as food.

Red meat or fish, when not artificially coloured, contains iron—a good blood tonic. A good loaf of bread should be elastic and crisp. A rightly baked one shows good brown colour in the crust. A lighter shade means defective baking.

Persons in a state of growth like students require more food. They do damage to their health and body by taking less. A more liberal diet acts at an advantage. Fat is not much needed in a warm country like India. One should have a little more carbohydrate and proteid. The latter is needed most by brain workers. We should know that Rosogolla contains proteid of milk; crust of bread that of bread. Maize and oats are sometimes better than fish or meat. Gelatinous and sticky potatoes are superior to the loose and sandy ones. Of the vegetables, raw papiya and raw plantain are the best. Most vegetables contain 80 per cent. water. Of the fruits, plantains, ripe papiya and cocoanut are the best. Ripe papiya and pineapples are good digestive. Mango, figs and plantains are good laxatives.

One must take something early in the morning before one begins one's work as an empty stomach hails diseases. *Halwa* is good because the meat in *suji* contains a fair amount of proteid. *Suji* must be thoroughly boiled to be digested. One has to be careful about ghee. The best is to purchase butter from a municipal market as the Lansdown Market, Bhowanipur, and College Street Market in Calcutta, and prepare ghee from it. One may note here that municipal markets are under direct control of the Government and the Corporation.

Porridge which is very nutritious may also be taken in the

morning. This is prepared from oats. Four heaved up tea spoonfuls of Quaker oats dissolved in 4 table spoonfuls of water boiled for 3 or 4 minutes over a spirit stove to form a gelatinous consistency make porridge. This can be taken with sugar or milk and sugar. A tin of Quaker oats costs As. 12 and lasts for 2<sup>0</sup> days. Money of course goes out of India with oats. Those who live with parents may take *murki* made with fried maize which is also very nutritious. I should mention again that things must be purchased from a Municipal Market. Milk should never be purchased elsewhere. If the mess cook refuses to prepare this morning meal the student may prepare it himself. It will take about 3 to 5 minutes if we have a spirit stove worth (As. 10 or As. 12) a bottle of methylated spirit (As. 6) and an iron pan with a handle (As. 5) or a pincher in addition (As. 2). Spirit gas stoves should not be purchased as they go bad very soon. Aluminium vessels should be avoided as they contain lead, a poison.

With regard to stimulants like tea and cocoa, the latter should be preferred as it is also a food. It may be taken with sugar alone. Habit does away with the smell as it has done with tea. Money in both cases goes out of India. If we must have tea it is better purchased loose from the tea stall in a municipal market. Tinned tea and bazar loose tea should be avoided as some of them are drugged to form a habit.

With regard to evening tiffin after the college hours, omlets may also be prepared at home, or one may take fresh fruits like plantains or dried fruits like ground nut with other articles of food. It is advisable to point out that fresh fruits (one or two at least) must be consumed daily as a necessity. They contain an important thing for body and health called *vitamin B* which is destroyed by heat. Plantains (the big ones) or bananas (the small ones) are very nutritious food. Khasia children subsist solely on them and thrive well. I have said that omlet may be prepared at home. It is best prepared in the following way. It may be prepared in two minutes. You cut one or two red pepper and a slice of onion into small bits, break

one or two eggs over it and sprinkle a little salt and turmeric powder; stir the whole thoroughly for a little time. Flour need not be added if the yolk is broken up thoroughly well. There is no harm in adding flour which containing a percentage of proteid adds to the nutritious value, but in the case the omlet becomes a little hard. Put on the spirit stove the pan containing  $\frac{1}{2}$  chhatak of butter. When the butter is heated well you pour into it the egg mixture. You turn when the thing becomes a little solid, wait for a while, and the omlet is prepared. In place of onion one may add cardamom and cinnamon powder. With regard to the warmth or heat which some people complain about the regular taking of eggs it should be noted that it is due to fault in digestion after having hard boiled eggs. Half boiled (where the yolk remains semi-solid) or as omlet, eggs cause no trouble if two are taken regularly and daily. Four or more if taken daily for some time may cause muscular pain.

When the mess cook is absent one need not and should not go to a hotel. For temporary measures I have found out, by experimenting on myself that two omlets with four duck's eggs and a chhatak of butter, a loaf of Bread (1lb,) and several medium sized plantains are a satisfactory food for 24 hours. I found myself strong active and light with a pure vegetable diet of 1 lb bread, 16 medium sized plantains, 6 pice worth fried rice, 4 Rosogollas and a chhatak of ground nut (without the crust) taken at different times during the day. The best I found to be the above diet with an omlet of two eggs in place of fried rice and Rosogolla. I may mention here that no fixed limit can be put to one's diet. The diet is answering well if one finds oneself fit with it i.e. if one can walk erect with firm and rapid strides 4 or 5 miles at a stretch without the least exertion or fatigue. The listless people with dragging legs are not having proper diet. The fallacious idea of appeasing the appetite by filling the stomach with anything should be given up.