

Letters from Graefenberg, in the years 1843, 1844, 1845, & 1846 : with the report, and extracts from the correspondence, of the Enniscorthy Hydropathic Society / by John Gibbs.

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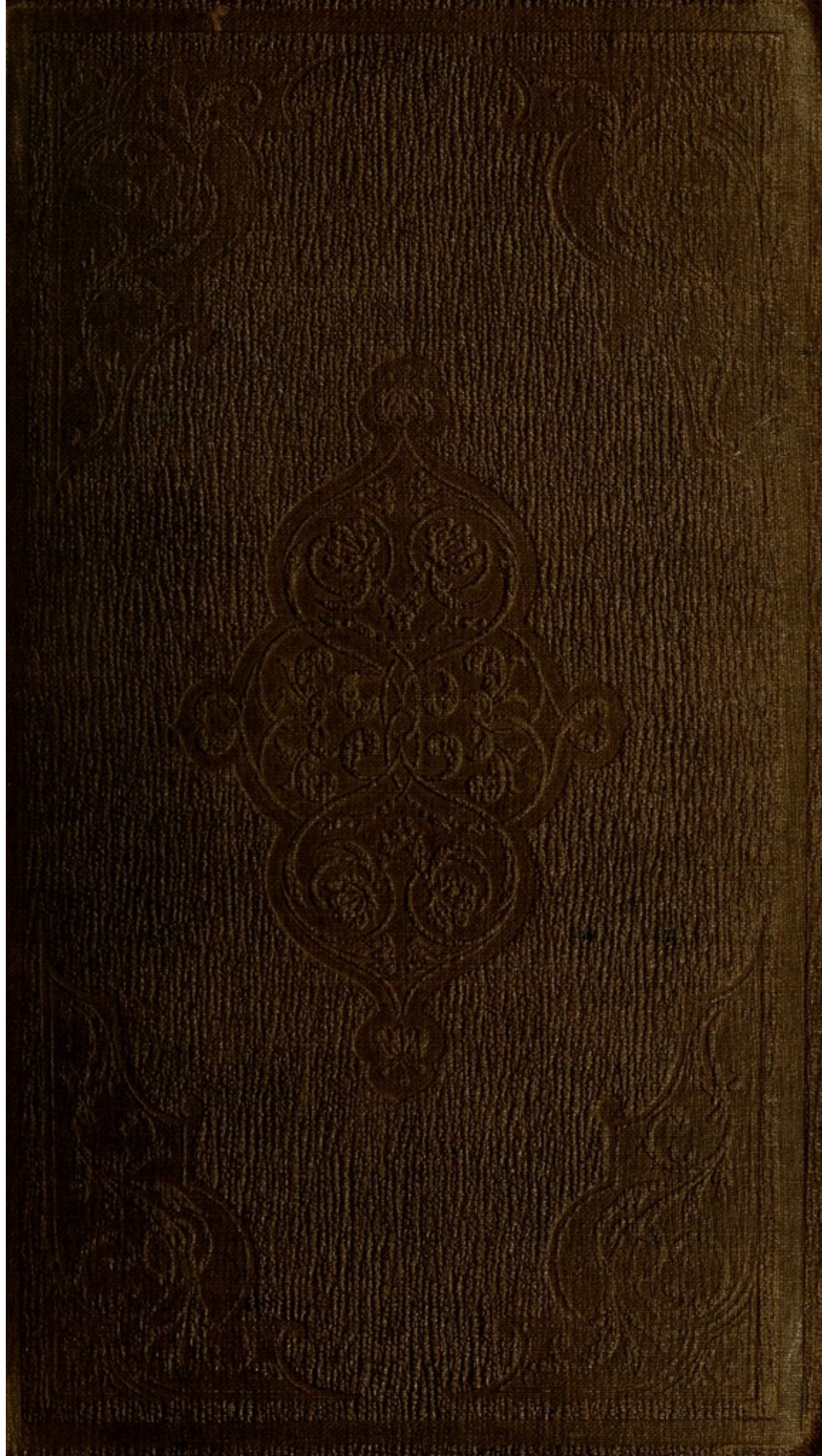
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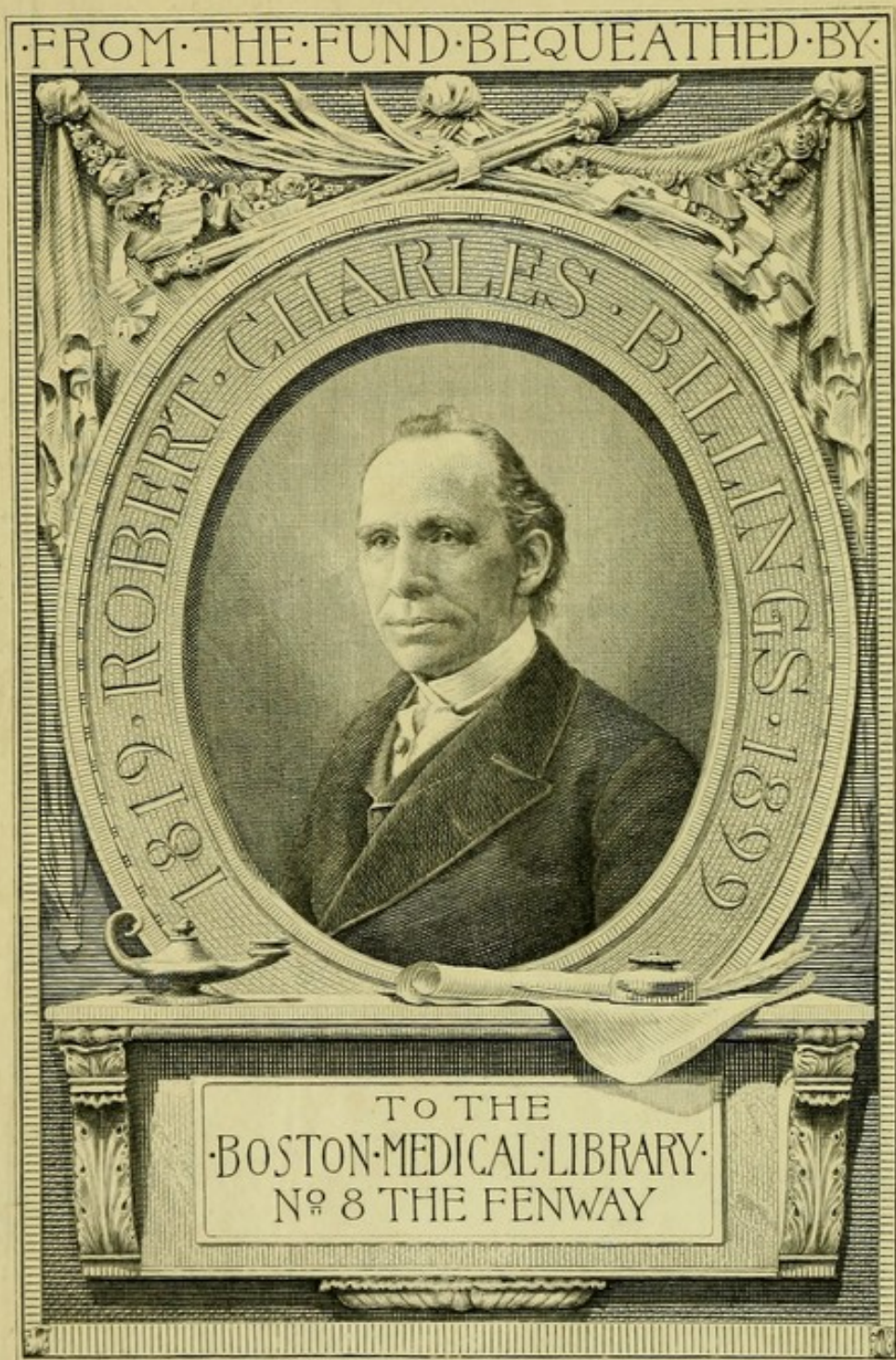
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To
J. H. Hodgson, Esq.,
with the author's regards.

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Wm

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LETTERS

FROM

GRÆFENBERG,

IN THE YEARS 1843, 1844, 1845, & 1846.

WITH THE REPORT, AND

EXTRACTS FROM THE CORRESPONDENCE,

OF THE

ENNISCORTHY HYDROPATHIC SOCIETY.

BY



JOHN GIBBS.

“Quorum pars fui.”

“We speak that we do know, we testify that we have seen.”

“Son mal sera incurable, s'il ne cede a la boisson, et aux bains de ces eaux.”

LONDON:

CHARLES GILPIN, 5, BISHOPSGATE STREET WITHOUT,

M.DCCC.XLVII.

TO THE
RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF LICHFIELD.

MY LORD,

I do not know to whom I can dedicate, with more propriety, these letters, than to your Lordship.

You have been, I believe, the earliest convert, in a high station, in this country, to the water cure.

You have had the courage to think for yourself; and, having tried this new system of the healing art, you have come forward, nobly and humanely, on more than one occasion, to recommend it to the consideration of the public.

In addition, your Lordship was at Græfenberg during the greater portion of the time of which these letters treat.

These reasons, together with a reliance on your Lordship's well known kindness and readiness to confer a favour, induced me to solicit, to the following pages, the sanction of your name; for according which, I have the honour to request your acceptance of my warmest thanks, and the assurance that, with every sentiment of respect and esteem,

I am, my Lord,

Your Lordship's much obliged,

And most obedient servant,

JOHN GIBBS.

8, *Mansion House Place, Camberwell,*
March 3, 1847.

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PREFACE.

“Men who have a knowledge of the human frame, and a correct notion of the principles on which the water cure proceeds, will neither be ashamed nor confounded by following in the wake of Priessnitz.”—PRESHAW’S *Wetsheet*.

“Having now been an eye-witness of the various effects capable of being produced in the system by this mode of treatment, and the restoration to health, after years of lingering pain and wretchedness, of many persons who had sought relief, in vain, from every other method, I must be bigoted indeed to doubt the evidence of my own senses.”—E. G. MARTIN, M.D.

My attention was first directed to the water cure by my near relative, Mr. George B. Gibbs, one of the earliest friends of the temperance reformation in Ireland; at whose suggestion, backed by the perusal of the works of Captain Claridge, Dr. James Wilson, Mr. Abdy, Dr. Edward Johnson, Dr. Courtney, and Mr. Beamish, I resolved on proceeding to Græfenberg, with the twofold purpose of testing the efficacy of the treatment in my own case, and of investigating its principles and practice as exemplified in the cases of others.

Previous to my departure from Ireland, I had the pleasure to assist Captain Claridge in the

formation of a Hydropathic Society at Enniscorthy, the principal objects of which were to obtain and to publish authentic information respecting the water cure ; and it was in the fulfilment of a promise to the members of that society, that the greater number of the following letters were written. The flattering reception which they have met with from the parties to whom they were addressed, induces me to present them now in a collected form, with some additional letters not hitherto published, and with various extracts from the correspondence of the society, which appear to me to be worthy of preservation ; and also with an appendix, containing the valuable report of the society, for which, and for the kind terms in which my name is mentioned therein, I feel deeply indebted.

I must here observe, that I do not hold myself responsible for every opinion expressed by the various writers whose communications are included in this correspondence ; and I must also apprise the reader that he is not to look in these pages for a laboured exposition of a theory, nor for a manual of practice, but only for the testimony of a witness, accompanied by such reflections as might easily suggest themselves to any close observer and inquirer after truth. Nevertheless, I believe that several practical details, not so explicitly noticed by other writers, will be found

in these pages ; and, besides incidental remarks on the subject, I have devoted one letter in particular to an outline of the received theory of the water cure. If it shall be objected, that this theory is imperfect and unsatisfactory, I can only reply by admitting the full force of the objection, and by pleading that the water cure, like all the collateral sciences, is still only in its infancy. If then—I will not say the *modus operandi*, but the *modi operandi* of water, for I believe that its modes of action are many—if the *modi operandi* of water be but imperfectly understood, it must only be classed, in this respect, in the same category with every drug in the pharmacopœia. “If you ask,” says Dr. Dickson, “a teacher of medicine, why opium puts you to sleep, his answer will be, ‘from its narcotic power.’ ‘Why does rhubarb purge?’ ‘From its cathartic power,’ you will be told. What does that mean? Simply that it purges ! Again, you demand, ‘How does antimony vomit?’ Again you get a similar reply, ‘From its emetic power’—in plain English, it vomits ! Such is the mode in which the schoolmen juggle ; instead of an answer, they give you an echo !”

Let me here introduce an anecdote from Dr. Baynard :—“I remember when I was at Leyden, in Holland, not short of forty years since, walking in the physic garden, a Scotch gentleman, a

student there, asked the Professor Franciscus de la Boe Sylvius, what *absynthium marinum* was good for? The professor smilingly asked him, what countryman he was. He answered, '*Scoto Britannicus*.' He asked him if, in their metropolis, Edinburgh, they had not such a punishment as the boot, to extort confession from the stubborn criminals? He answered, 'Yes.' 'Why, then,' quoth Sylvius, 'take this plant in his luxuriant season, root and branch, and clap it into the boot, and squeeze it hard; for without it confesses, I doubt neither thee nor I shall ever truly know what his virtues are!'" And this must of necessity be so, as long as aught is left to conjecture respecting the nature and the action of the conservative power in the living body. It cannot be denied that, notwithstanding all the discoveries of the moderns (and they are neither few nor unimportant), and notwithstanding all the dissections which have taken place since the days when Heraphilus and Erasistratus dissected live men, still much is left to doubt and conjecture; and we may often vainly inquire, with Celsus, "Why should one believe Hippocrates rather than Heraphilus, or why him more than Asclepiades?" I trust that, in making these observations, I shall not be understood as undervaluing the physical sciences; I only wish to protest against the bigotry of those who are ena-

moured of imperfection, and who blindly oppose every innovation.

The advent of the cholera amongst us afforded decisive proof, if any were needed, of the very great obscurity which hangs over medical science, and of the very great uncertainty of medical practice. Who can have forgotten the panic which seized upon the medical profession on that occasion? Who does not remember the various remedies which were successively had recourse to, not only without any beneficial results, but absolutely with an increase of mortality? Is it not notorious that, whilst there was a fearful mortality amongst the wealthier classes in Dublin, who were restricted in the use of water as a drink (and that in a disease which is accompanied by intense thirst, and in which the blood becomes so thick that it often refuses to flow to the lancet), there were but comparatively few deaths amongst a large number of the lower classes, who were subjected to no such cruel and murderous restraint? And what improvement has sprung from experience? At a late meeting of the Western Medical and Surgical Association, one medical gentleman referred to another, who, "after alleging that all the old methods of treatment for the Asiatic cholera had proved futile, proposed beginning the subject *de novo*." And thereupon a third learned doctor said, that he "positively felt a creeping of the

skin, at the relation of the enormities which had been perpetrated by practitioners upon their patients. When he listened to the recitals of practitioners who described the extravagant doses of mercury and of opium which they administered, he could not refrain from fancying that he was witnessing the orgies of so many Indian savages, whilst counting the scalps of their victims. He thought it a pity that the inventor of such a system of torture should not experience the fate of the inventor of the brazen bull, and illustrate upon his own person the efficacy of his infernal ingenuity. He believed that in the majority of persons who died of Asiatic cholera, death was the consequence of the treatment rather than of the disease. He had seen above a thousand cases of Asiatic cholera, and in no instance had he seen any benefit from any mode of treatment. On the contrary, he had seen persons die of narcotism, who would have survived if left to the *vis medicatrix naturæ*. He had seen others die of absorption of air through the veins, when the saline fluid was injected; and he knew many who had had the extraordinary luck to escape both the doctor and the disease, yet rendered miserable for the remainder of life by the effects of the immense doses of mercury which had been given to them during the cholera paroxysm. In fact, it was afflicting to contemplate the sufferings

which the rash and empirical practice of the profession, in the management of this epidemic, had created." If these things be so, is there not an evident necessity for other remedies than those hitherto in use? and are medical men justified in scornfully rejecting, without a fair trial, a remedy, merely because it is new to them, and proffered by unprofessional hands? The answer is supplied in Dr. John Forbes's late excellent article in the "British and Foreign Medical Review." "If it shall appear," says the doctor, "as we believe it will, that the external application of cold water is capable of being beneficially applied in the cure of diseases, in modes of greater efficacy, and to a much greater extent than has been hitherto practised by medical men, there remains only one course for the members of the profession to pursue, viz., *to adopt the improvements*—if such they be—regardless of their origin, or their past or present relations." "It is not the demerits of the donor, or the birth-place of the gift, that we are bound to look to; but simply, whether it is qualified to aid us in our glorious and divine mission of soothing the pains of our fellow-men."

In prosecuting my inquiries at Græfenberg, I have been favoured by many gentlemen, both British and foreign, with many proofs of kindness and with much valuable information, for which I beg to express my grateful acknowledgments. Of those

gentlemen, I should be inexcusable not to mention the following: the Earl of Lichfield, Sir G. Webster, Hon. Mr. Tracey, Sir G. de Courcey Laffan, M.D., Captain Moore, Rev. T. Smithett, Captain Blair, Captain Trench, Captain Claridge; Rev. Messrs. Byers, Elliott, Hayne, and Blissett; J. Archer, F. Wright, A. B. Mills, E. H. Schedel, M.D., author of "*Examen Clinique de l'Hydrotherapie*;" J. Hamilton, J. Helmsley, H. S. Singleton, and Gratton Bright, Esqs.; Herr Niemann, director of the water cure establishment at Malaga; Colonel Lane, Major Hailes, Captains Mackenzie, Whyte, M'Callum, and Bowden; T. Bernard, T. Allin, G. A. Thompson, H. C. Wright, author of "*Six Months at Græfenberg*;" T. B. Lloyd, M.D., H. Greenough, J. Marsden, M.D., L. Parker, W. Bruce, W. Murray, W. D'Arley, A. F. Webster, W. Berwick, R. Denison, W. Young, G. Downes, H. J. Colvin, H. S. Vandaleur, G. T. Thomas, C. H. Lovell, M.D., G. Pietsch, W. Ellis, R. L. Jones, T. G. Small, M.D., M. D'Ashwood, H. Haycroft, W. Cohen, F. La Moile, W. Atkins, E. Robinson, E. C. Meeker, J. v. Ganahl, R. Murray, H. S. Robinson, T. R. Allan, T. Sherlock, J. D'Erlam, W. Bridgman, C. Sewel, J. Meeker, J. P. Hitchcock, N. Spencer, R. Stockdale, C. Anderson, J. Franks, G. Lovibond, and J. W. Campbell, Esqs.; Count Goess, Count Aicholt, Baron Höpken, Baron Voitier;

Messrs. Calvas, Pichler, v. Reuss, Prenner, Ambrosy, Hirschfield, Timari, Hauser, Müller, David, Waitz, M.D., Goerney, Wolters, Josephi, Doormann, Fehland, Heymann, Löwenthal, Schrötteringkt, M.D., Lindo, Göbel, Goerlitz, and Meyers ; and also the secretary, Herr Böhm.

But, above all, I shall ever feel deeply indebted to Mr. Priessnitz, for the innumerable favours which I have received at his hands. Contrary to what he has been represented to be, I ever found him ready to answer any question respecting the details or the *rationale* of his mode of treatment ; and he was kind enough to invite my inquiries by saying that, if there were any points on which I particularly desired information, he would be happy to afford it to me. I shall ever cherish the liveliest remembrance of all his kindness to me.

Since the introduction of hydropathy into this country, it has been winning its way,—slowly, perhaps, but surely, in public estimation. Of this we are afforded proof in the support which is extended to so many hydropathic establishments in different parts of the kingdom : viz., Dr. Wilson's and Dr. Gully's establishments at Malvern ; Dr. Ellis's, at Sudbrook Park ; Dr. Barter's, at Blarney ; Sir A. Clarke's, at Dublin ; Dr. Rischanech's, at Ilkly ; the Harrow establishment ; and the establishments of Doctors Weeding, Feldmann, Lovell, Courtney, Heathcote, Balbirnie,

Johnson, Stummes, Paterson, King, Curtin, Hills, Preshaw, and many others. Hydropathy is likewise extending its influence in other quarters. It was only the other day that an advertisement from the governors of one of our principal hospitals, announced that various new baths were being fitted up in it, in order "to keep pace with the increasing science of the age!" And whence this increase of science? From a hamlet in the Sudates! Since Priessnitz arose, has not every medical man, who has any pretensions to common sense, made sundry improvements in his practice, and does he not now employ water in manifold ways, of which, a few years since, he had no idea? And why does he not employ it in still many more ways? Why, but from ignorance, similar in kind, though not in degree, to that which ten years since restrained him from his present practice? Notwithstanding the many excellent works which have been written in defence of hydropathy, and notwithstanding the innumerable proofs which have been given of its efficacy, its principles are still far from being generally understood, and its claims far from being duly estimated.

We may take as an illustration, an article replete with dull jests, which appeared in a recent number of "Blackwood's Magazine," the writer of which has found out that, "simple fare, regular

diet, agreeable society, lots of laughing and talking, bathing and shampooing, bracing exercise, and enchanting natural prospects, have something to do" with a cure. Blessings on his learning! he reminds me of the gentleman who made the sage discovery, that there is not a syllable in the English language without a vowel in it! But, notwithstanding the very novel views developed by this reviewer, I cannot help believing that water has peculiar *medicinal* virtues; for, as Dr. Heathcote says, "air, exercise, and diet, are common to all remedial measures." This reviewer has likewise found out that the water cure is so old, that certain monks, in bygone days, performed wonderful cures through the agency of bathing and wet compresses; and that therefore there is nothing new in the water cure. There is no reasoning with a person who can gravely assume it, as self-evident, that a part is equal to the whole; all that need be said of him is,

"That putting all his proofs together,

'Tis three blue beans in one blue blather."

But perhaps it is not strange to find such writers enunciating their solemn nothings, while mere bookmakers pay flying visits to Græfenberg, and, without staying there a sufficient time to learn how to spell either the name of the place or of

its proprietor, or of the neighbouring town, presume to write essays on the cure, in which they disseminate the most absurd and pernicious errors. A writer of this class represents it as a routine practice at Græfenberg, that a lady, in addition to other treatment in the morning and in the afternoon, after breakfasting at eight o'clock, is "enveloped in a wet sheet at nine, and the moisture of her bandage renewed, and then recommended to lie down and go to sleep." (!) This bandage is previously described as "a thick wet cloth, about three yards long, (!) round the waist," with a similar dry one over it. And, in continuation, this very accurate describer of things as they are *not*, states that, on awaking from the aforesaid sleep, it is "in the common order of the day's proceedings to take what is called the packed or sweating bath," immediately after which comes the "cold bath," and then, if I understand it, the "douche!" And all this, observes this artless writer, "pretty well occupies the time till one o'clock, at which hour every body dines." And these, we are told, are the "parts of the Græfenberg process which might be practised at home."!! I would not give many months' purchase for the life of any one who should be simple enough to adopt such a routine of treatment; and I cannot but consider that, on a subject of such vital importance, such misrepresentations, however well-

intentioned or unintentional they may be, are highly reprehensible.

Respecting one of the forms of what is termed the crisis, namely, the skin crisis, whether it appear in boils or a rash, I shall venture to say a few words, although in doing so I shall have the misfortune to differ with a medical friend who has written a very able work on the water cure, and who holds that the boils or rash do not in every instance result from impurities in the system, but that they are sometimes owing to irritation produced by the action of the treatment upon a thin and sensitive skin. These opinions he seems to ground on the fact, that boils and other eruptions often appear on very meager persons. Now, without going the length of advocating what is called the humoral pathology, I must express my dissent from such opinions for the following reasons. In the first place, I have known cases where the patient, in some instances with a thin, in others with a thick skin, has had frequent boils or a constant rash for months together, and who then, after being restored to health, has continued for as many more months the very same treatment which had caused those crises, without having the slightest return of them. In the second place, I have known many instances where the patient was of a very meager habit, and where, nevertheless, the effluvia from his person

from beneath the heating compress, or while in the wet sheet packing, or when heated by exercise, and also from the compress or sheet itself after it had been removed from the body, have been most overpowering, and this solely from the transudations of the skin, and without any eruption whatever. Now, as nothing can come from nothing, and as smoke is held to indicate fire, there must be some cause for such effluvia; and, notwithstanding the meager habit of the patient, it does not seem to me to be going out of the way to seek that cause in some impurity of the system. And again, I have known patients with the thinnest possible skins take active treatment, including daily douches, for months together, without having the slightest eruption of any description whatever. Now, if we can draw any deduction from such facts, I think it is not this, that boils and other eruptions are frequently traceable solely to the irritation caused by the action of water on a too sensitive skin, without any reference to the state of the system. We should, however, be very careful of dogmatising; and it would be better if all, whether allopathists, homeopaths, or hydropathists, should oftener remember, that we are but as children "picking up shells on the sea shore," while the depths of the great ocean before us are still unexplored.

It is, I think, to be regretted that this mode of

treatment is not distinguished by a more appropriate cognomen than either that of hydropathy or water cure. I cannot but regard both of these names as very inapplicable, and I have a still stronger objection to that of *cold* water cure. In page 129, of this book will be found the case of a patient, who, throughout a treatment which was continued for five months, and by means of which he was restored to health, never had a *cold* bath. It is, perhaps, this misnomer of cold water cure, which has misled so many into the belief that this system of treatment relies only upon *one* remedial agent for success in every case, and which has caused both friend and foe too often to overlook the great distinctions between topical and general, internal and external, cold and tepid applications, and also apparently to forget those other remedial agents, the sweating process, frictions, regulated exercise, or rest, as in the treatment of diarrhoea; diet, clothing, and also the withdrawal of unhealthy influences, and the substitution of only those which exert a soothing power on the mind, and are therefore conducive to health. All these certainly form *one system*, but it is a system composed of *many remedies*. The opponent who taunts the hydropathist with having only one remedy, only betrays his ignorance of the resources of the system which he assails. No hydropathist who understands his art will venture to affirm that he

has only one remedy—a footbath and a head-bath, an enema and a halfbath, a wet sheet packing and a douche, and various other appliances, which produce diametrically opposite effects, can no more be said to be one remedy, than a mustard blister and a mustard emetic; and that practitioner who should delude himself into the belief that he had only one remedy, might be expected to order the douche in brain fever, or to seek to combat apoplexy with the sweating blanket, or Asiatic cholera with a footbath. Let us hear no more, then, of the oneness of a remedy.

It may perhaps provoke a smile if I add to my other testimonies in favour of the hydropathic treatment, that of the tailors at Freiwaldau, which, nevertheless, seems to me to be not without its significance. They are unanimous in stating that they almost invariably find that, in a short time, the patients at Græfenberg increase in muscular development.

Having said so much to induce my readers to adopt the use of water internally as well as externally, it is but right that I should caution them against the use of *impure* water. Although pure water is always clear, soft, light, tasteless, and odourless, yet water may be all these, and still hold some deleterious substance in solution. There can be no doubt, I think, that this is often the case with water which has passed through

leaden pipes, or been received in leaden tanks. No one can peruse "Lambe's Cases" without rising from the perusal with the conviction that water, in passing through leaden pipes, or while lying in leaden tanks, exercises a solvent power on the mineral, and that when such water is taken internally, it often causes the painter's colic, and not unfrequently induces paralysis. Mr. Lambe gives even a case where a small bit of pewter, which had accidentally dropped into a well, imparted deleterious qualities to the water, and was the cause of much mischief until it was discovered and removed. And water thus tainted is fully as injurious to health in soup, or any other beverage or article of diet, as in the simple state.

Were I to say all that I could wish, this volume would swell to double its present size: therefore, in conclusion, I shall only briefly touch upon what appear to me to be suitable means of still further advancing the water cure in public estimation. In the first place, it strikes me that the republication of the older writers on the external and internal use of common water in the treatment of various diseases, would be a great boon not only to the public but to the profession. Of those writers, it would perhaps be desirable to publish the following in full, viz., Van der Heyden, Floyer, Baynard, Hancock, Smith, King, Simpson, Wainewright, Short, Brown, Athill, and

Blair ; and, in whole or in part, Currie, Jackson, Kinglake, Ryan, Rigby, Whyte, Stock, Rumford, Buchan, Wesley, and Cochrane, with extracts from many others. In the next place, I should be glad to see a Hydropathic Journal established, and also to see an extensive circulation of hydropathic tracts. I know that such an agitation would be sure to be condemned in professional quarters, but, I think, unjustly. It appears to me that popular works on this subject are especially needed ; for I am satisfied that there exists respecting it, in the public at large, fully as much apathy and hostility, if not more, than in the profession. Nay, so strong is the public prejudice, that I have no doubt that if all the medical men in the kingdom were to adopt by to-morrow the principles and practice of the water cure, the greater number of them would discover before night that they should either abandon their convictions, or sacrifice their interests. I was recently told by one medical gentleman, that he would prefer to treat all cases by the water cure appliances ; but that if he did so, his practice would leave him, and that, in self-defence, he is obliged to exhibit drugs. A similar prejudice operated on the public mind sixty years ago, when Mr. Rigby wrote his "Treatise on Animal Heat." In that work he frequently tells us that he was in the habit of using lotions of "weak saturnine

water," and of employing compresses wetted with the same ; "simple water," he says, "not being used, because I had reason to believe that an application so unusual, and in appearance so unlike a medicine, would not have been employed to the degree I was desirous of."

But, above all, I would advocate the opening of free hospitals for the poor, numbers of whom, I am convinced, would gladly avail themselves of an opportunity to make trial of a system, from participating in the benefits of which they are now almost wholly debarred ; and I am satisfied that the results of such institutions would preach more forcibly to the public mind, than all and everything which hitherto has been said and written in favour of the water cure.

J. G.

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ERRATA.

Page 7, line 30, *for typus read typhus.*

„ 51, „ 37, *for saur read sauer.*

„ 73, „ 2, *after fluity read*.*

„ 117, „ 22, *for ticks read licks.*

„ 120, „ 7, and again line 11, *for saer read sauer.*

„ 168, „ 41, *for Vinzanz read Vinzenz.*

„ 205, „ 12, *for left off tepid bath and took cold read left off the tepid
and took the cold bath.*

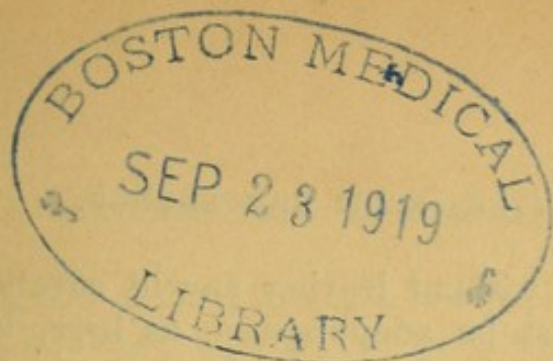
„ 245, „ 33, *for weekly read daily.*

The author regrets that, in the heat of controversy, he should have penned a few unguarded passages from which it has been inferred that he is opposed, in all cases, to the exhibition of any but water-cure remedies: on the present occasion he can only add that he hopes to have an opportunity hereafter to explain his views more fully on the subject.

APPENDIX

1. The first of the three main topics...
2. The second of the three main topics...
3. The third of the three main topics...
4. The fourth of the three main topics...
5. The fifth of the three main topics...
6. The sixth of the three main topics...
7. The seventh of the three main topics...
8. The eighth of the three main topics...
9. The ninth of the three main topics...
10. The tenth of the three main topics...

The author regrets that in the heat of controversy, he should have
given a less complete account of the facts which he has been able to
bring to light. It is his hope that the reader will find the account
of the facts of the case, and that he will be able to judge for himself
of the truth of the statements made in the text.



LETTERS FROM GRÆFENBERG.

LETTER I.

*To Robert Thomas Ridge, Esq., Hon. Sec., Enniscorthy
Hydropathic Society.*

[Republished from the *Wexford Independent* and the *Wexford
Conservative.*]

“Wash and be healed.”

Græfenberg, Austrian Silesia, Dec. 19, 1843.

MY DEAR RIDGE,—Did you know from personal experience how difficult it is to find time at Græfenberg for letter-writing, (especially when one is undergoing treatment), I am sure that you and the society would make every allowance for my not sooner complying with your wishes to receive authentic information, from the fountain-head, on the subject of the water cure. Yet, while thus pleading my excuse, I must, at the same time, admit that, even if I had abundance of leisure, I had a reason sufficiently strong to restrain me from writing much sooner, in my desire to form, from observation, opinions which I should be under no subsequent necessity to retract. I can do little more in this letter than write a sort of introduction to the information which I shall have to communicate hereafter; but I trust that, having once broken the ice, I shall often write to you during my stay here. I have been here now more than three months, and all that I have witnessed during that time, (and I have been a pretty close observer), has led me to the belief, and strengthened me therein, that, in all curable diseases, including many incurable by other means, the water cure is a remedy safe in its operation and beneficial in its

results, and this without leaving any ill effects behind; but then it must be administered, as here, by *skilful* hands, and it must be *fairly* tried by the patient, without his neglecting to perform *all* that may be ordered, and also without his presuming to *do more, from a foolish impatience to become quickly well.*

I did not bring with me to Freiwaldau, (the nearest town), as good an opinion of the water cure as I had when I left home. As I drew near to my journey's end, I began to think, "Can I have come all this way to find an assemblage of fanatics worshipping at the shrine of an impostor?" I recollected that one of my fellow-voyagers from England, a major-general in the Prussian service, had told me, that throughout Germany the confidence in the water cure was much diminished, and that Priessnitz's reputation was daily declining; and, in my mood, I almost forgot, that in reply to my question, "If he knew anything personally of the water cure?" the same gentleman had also told me that, "all he knew personally was, that two officers, friends of his, who had been long and vainly treated by the first medical men for knee diseases, had gone to Græfenberg, and had returned home perfectly cured." "Well," I thought, as I entered Freiwaldau, "I shall soon learn more about it," and I *did* soon learn more about it. I had not been many hours at the hotel, when a gentleman arrived, on his way home *from* Græfenberg; he was the first "Kurgast" I was fortunate enough to meet, and I eagerly entered into conversation with him. He frankly told me his case, and at the same time kindly gave me permission to make any use of it that I pleased—all that he told me I afterwards heard from several persons at Græfenberg. He had had dropsy, retention of urine, dyspepsia, palpitation of the heart, asthma, and rheumatism. Medical men, both in England and Germany, declared his heart to be ossifying, and they pronounced him to be incurable, but Priessnitz told him that he had no heart disease. He was painfully costive—his *fæces* being like bits of chalk. He had been twice at Græfenberg—in 1842 for five months, and in the present year for two months. His asthma was so bad that he could walk

with very great difficulty even a few paces up hill. His general treatment, during the first visit, was, daily, three leintuchs, followed by tepid baths—during the second visit, three leintuchs, abreibungen and douche. The first year he had a crisis on his leg—it commenced at the foot and spread to the hip. The limb became, at first, red, and then livid, like mortification—there was no breaking of the skin. The crisis lasted two months, during which time he was confined to bed, and was obliged to change the legumshlag constantly day and night. The umschlag consisted of a wet sheet put on double, with a dry one over it. This crisis carried off the rheumatism and dropsy—the indigestion and retention of urine soon followed. When ordered the douche, on his second visit, he feared that the shock would have struck him down to rise no more, for he still believed the doctors that his heart was affected; but, to his surprise, he stood the shock better than that of the tepid bath on his former visit. He had much improved in strength and freedom of breathing, but could not remain at Græfenberg sufficiently long to perfect his cure. When leaving, he was assured by Priessnitz that by mild treatment at home his health would be restored. His treatment is to be as follows:—he is to wear a waist-umschlag, to drink water, and to take an abreibung every morning—when stronger, he is to have a bucket of water thrown over him, instead of the abreibung; but he is not to use either the cold or tepid bath until his perfect restoration to health. Late in the autumn and early in spring, he is to take leintuchs for thirteen or fourteen successive days; at Græfenberg he remained in his leintuch from twenty minutes to three quarters of an hour, according as his feet warmed. He is sixty years of age. He concluded his statement by energetically assuring me that it was utterly impossible to give me any idea of his former sufferings, and he most fervently thanked God that he had been led to place himself under Priessnitz's care.

Ever yours,

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER II.

From R. T. Ridge, Esq. to the Editors of the Wexford Independent, and the Wexford Conservative.

[Republished from the Wexford Papers.]

MY DEAR SIRs,—I some days since received from Græfenberg the letter which I send you, but knowing that your space would be occupied with assize intelligence, I deferred, until now, requesting its publication in your paper. You will perceive that Mr. Gibbs intends this letter merely as a finish to the preface commenced in his first; and, I think, that before entering into any details of the cases of cure which have come under his observation, he has most judiciously laid before the public a statement of the mode of living at Græfenberg, with a description of the place and its talented proprietor; we may then anticipate that his next communication shall contain matter solely in reference to the application of water, as a remedial agent. It appears strange to me, and is much to be regretted, that there should exist in this country such prejudice against, and apathy concerning Hydropathy, and that the countenance and support which have been given to many a quack nostrum, whose properties and component parts are not known, should be denied to a remedy, the application of which has been *proved* to be in accordance with the enlightened theories of the most scientific *medical* men of the present day, and which has done so much to mitigate suffering, and re-establish health, without leaving after it any of those evil consequences which often follow the lancet, the mercury, the hyosciamus, the opium, the strychnine, and the prussic acid, of the drug practitioner. But more than all does it appear strange, that Hydropathy should have so many enemies amongst the medical profession; enemies, not because they have weighed it in the balance of science, and *found* it wanting; not because they have examined its merits in a practical way, and found it, by *experience*, either worthless or dangerous; but enemies from prejudice, without being *aware*, that the practice of

Hydropathy is assuredly founded on those very theories which they themselves have spent so much time endeavouring to master. If, then, this is the case—and who can deny it?—it must be confessed that it is both strange and wonderful, to hear men of education—men, many of whom, I am sure, have the welfare of the community at heart, condemn and ridicule a practice with which they are totally unacquainted. If medical men are really quite satisfied with the success of their own practice, if they are convinced that their art has arrived at the *ne plus ultra* of perfection, it might be deemed a natural consequence that they should oppose themselves to any innovation on their modes of treating disease; but, there is no medical man whose opinion is worth having, who does not acknowledge that, “although anatomy has been better illustrated, the *materia medica* enlarged, and chemistry better understood than formerly, yet there are many diseases which have baffled his art, and that there are mysteries about others which thousands of *post mortem* dissections have not been able to solve.” I believe that no candid drug practitioner will maintain, that the practice of medicine bears any improvement in proportion to its antiquity, but that he will admit, with the eccentric and talented Abernethy, that “diseases have increased of late years in proportion to the increase of medical men!” Now, my object in writing this letter is, not to endeavour to decry the medical profession, many of whose members I am proud to call my friends, and for whom I entertain the highest esteem. I do not wish to be understood to undervalue the efficacy of medicine, because I know well its value, and have witnessed how far it has been successful in the treatment of disease; but, when I behold the manifest antipathy which many medical gentlemen have shown to come forward and investigate, on fair grounds, whether Hydropathy has any merit, and, if it has, if it ought to supersede their practice; when I hear of many of them catching at every report of the unsuccessful issue of the water cure, and, while they intentionally overlook the thousands of cases of almost wonderful cure which have been effected, boldly asserting that such and such a one

"was killed by water;" I conceive it high time to tell these gentlemen that it is not by "tiny witticisms and mere assertions that they must expect either to put down any new practice, or extend their own." They should be reminded that facts are worth all their statements, and that truth will advance with a giant stride, even in the face of their revilings, or of the "hisses and hootings of an ignorant multitude." We have been most gravely informed that Sir Francis Burdett was killed by cold water! that the "gout was driven to his stomach by his mania for wearing wet rags round his body." Most sage discovery! and what is the intended inference? It can only be, that the water practice is bad and fraught with danger. Now, if such be the line of argument, if such the means that are used to *investigate* the merits of Hydropathy, of course the *same* means are legitimate to test the merits of medicine! I, for one, say, that it is quite fair! I war not with those who compare cold water and drugs, and judge of both by the number of victims that have fallen martyrs in their devotedness to either, *when* prescribed by qualified practitioners; (as, of course, neither science is accountable for the errors of quacks). Therefore, when a patient dies under drug-treatment, the assertion that he was killed by medicine is a fair argument, inasmuch as the doctors use a similar one; and we may, accordingly, fairly say, that the Rev. Mr. Bushe, who died a few days ago "of gout in the stomach," having had the best medical advice in Dublin, "was killed by the *materia medica*, he had such a mania for holding large doses of the gout specific." But it is really lamentable that prejudice should so stultify men's minds as to make them assert such gross absurdities. Men must die under every system of treatment of disease! The Hydropathist does not profess to have discovered the "*Elixir Vitæ*, neither does he pretend to the possession of any miraculous *Catholicon*," but he really does profess—and the doctors will not analyze his art—to have at his command a system, by which he can cure a much *larger number* of diseases than can be cured by the administration of drugs. This, it is true, is merely

assertion, but why not either endeavour to find out its falsehood, if it be false, or its truth, if it be true, and have the courage to acknowledge and act accordingly.

The oneness of the remedy has been advanced as a reason for its being "incapable to cure different diseases"—but who says it is a single remedy? Those who know nothing of it, or those who would wish it to be so? The candid impartial inquirer who has fairly investigated the system, the men of science who have devoted their time and talents to the subject, the thousands of persons who have had their health restored, their torments alleviated, and their minds made cheerful and happy by its influence, all, with one voice, say that water is not a simple remedy any more than medicine is a simple remedy. Water, according to the manner of its application, can effect all that ever have been the primary objects of the medical man. "It can allay excitement by arresting preternatural activity in the circulatory and respiratory processes!" What more can the lancet, the blister, the tartar-emetic, the fox-glove, effect? except it be the large amount of debility, and the seeds of future disease they leave as a legacy to those who have tried their efficacy! It can exalt the energy of the living actions (as the learned Liebig says) by accelerating the change of matter! What more can the whole list of tinctures, the wine, the brandy, effect? except it be to carbonize, by their well ascertained influence, more blood than can be circulated through the brain, and thereby cause the delirium, the subsultus tendinum, and congestion, that have carried many a typus victim to the grave! "It can institute new outlets or centres of fluxion" for the escape of morbid matter! What more can the ointment, the setons, the issues, the caustic, the reddening plasters effect, except it be the immense torture they inflict, and a feeling that the cure is worse to experience than the disease. If then, Hydropathy can effect all these means of curing disease, if it can "lower the vital action to any amount without leaving after it the debility attending blood letting, if it can elevate the vital actions even beyond the healthy standard, I ask those who take so much trouble to sneer at, and ridicule it, does not the water cure

possess in skilful hands an immense power" over disease of every kind? and I would add in the words of Doctor Edward Johnson, "Dare any medical man for his reputation's sake assert that it is a subject which merits his opposition, and about which he is justified in being so apathetic as many of the profession have showed themselves"! The late Dr. Macartney, professor at Trinity College, Dublin, one of the most talented physiologists in Europe, was not one of those unthinking many who condemn without a reason, and become opponents without any grounds but prejudice; he taught the practice of physic, and yet he used to say, "Water, when its properties and modes of application are well known, will be worth all other remedies put together!" That day has at length arrived; the properties of Water are now clearly understood; and the opinions respecting it which have been or are entertained by such eminent medical men as Liebig, Hancock, Smith, Floyer, Baynard, Currie, Behrend, Gregory and Hume Weatherhead, are fully borne out by the success attending the practice at Græfenberg and elsewhere, and, as the last named gentleman has well observed, "however unnatural the water cure may appear to those who have never investigated the subject, and to the millions who have destroyed nature by living in direct opposition to nature's laws, yet, it is based on the soundest and most rational physiological principles!" While thus I would speak of the extraordinary opposition which Hydropathy has met with in this country among professional men and prejudiced persons, I must take this opportunity of protesting in the strongest manner against the dangerous absurdity of unqualified persons practising a system which, if it can do good and is mighty to save, can also be made by ignorant and injudicious application to injure or perhaps destroy. It is not suited for every tyro to try his hand. To practice the water cure with safety and success, as to practice medicine, requires a knowledge of the subject, and an acquaintance with the laws of the animal economy, together with the power of being able to discriminate disease, and above all, to be able to meet the different forms and symptoms that will present themselves in the

same disease, as it is not by any stated formula of treatment, but by meeting the stages of a complaint with judgment and precision, that the Hydropathist can expect success. Let me then warn all who do not wish to further prejudice the public mind against the investigation of the merits of Hydropathy, all who do not wish to place the lives of their fellow-creatures in jeopardy, not to try to treat disease with more courage by the water cure than they would with mercury and the lancet, while they are incapacitated, by want of experience and of physiological knowledge from practising either with safety. We have formed a society at Enniscorthy for the purpose of examining and inquiring into the merits and practical utility of the water cure, but I regret to say that not a single medical man has joined it; satisfied no doubt with remaining in blissful ignorance whether human suffering can be more benefited by water or by drugs, and quite content with their professional attainments and success, do they, who are entrusted with the lives of many, rather uphold their present medical doctrines, than seek after any others which might be of greater advantage to the community; and as it was in the days of the immortal Harvey, so it is in these days, "they who sit enthroned in antiquated opinions, find it easier to laugh at methods which threaten to hurl them from their high estate, than to offer a valid objection to them by argument;" we have now the very same profession, who denounced the discoverer of the circulation of the blood as a visionary and a madman, applying no less lenient epithets to those who would dare assert that there can be found in nature's gift a simple remedy for the ills of humanity more efficacious and less harmful than all the contents of the Pharmacopœia; and I dare venture to opine, that the day is not far distant when the public will be as certainly blessed by as universal a belief in, and conviction of the truths of Hydropathy, as they most assuredly have been by the tardy acknowledgement on the part of the medical profession, that Harvey was no madman but the benefactor of his species. It must be confessed that, notwithstanding the doctors' opposition, the discoverer of Hydropathy has not had as many enemies to contend

with, as had Galileo, Harvey, Newton, or Jenner, who were "martyrs to persecution from the ignorant, the prejudiced, and the self-interested," and possibly he may live to see the day when his doctrines shall be as well vindicated as theirs have been. With many acknowledgements for past favours,

I am, dear Sirs, yours very much obliged,

ROBERT THOMAS RIDGE.

Dunsinane, March 16th, 1844.

LETTER III.

*To R. T. Ridge, Esq., Hon. Sec., Enniscorthy Hydro-
pathic Society.*

[Republished from the Wexford Papers.]

"Balneum in plerisque morbis confert."—HIPPOCRATES.

Græfenberg, Feb. 7, 1844.

MY DEAR RIDGE,—You will readily believe that the statement of the case, the details of which I have given you in my first letter, caused some change in the current of my thoughts. I consequently went up to Græfenberg more favourably disposed towards *the cure* than when I entered Freiwaldau, but still with my mind bent on the strictest investigation, and fully open to conviction, according to the facts which might be presented to it. On those facts I have based my opinions.

In the first place, the number of patients, 339, including those in private lodgings, was conclusive evidence that Priessnitz's high reputation, and the belief in the efficacy of the cure, had suffered no diminution in public estimation. Amongst the patients, besides Germans, were persons from almost every part of the world—French, English, Russians, Turks, Persians, Italians,

Greeks, Danes, Swedes, Spaniards—Europeans, Asiatics, Americans—nay, there was even an African under the cure, and of him I may mention, that he has long since left, perfectly restored to health. I may also state here, that one of the most powerful nobles of Austria, Prince Lichtenstein, (whose brother had been formerly under the treatment here,) has, within these few days, arrived with his family, to place under Priessnitz's care his only son, a boy of three years of age, who has been afflicted for some months with a chronic complaint of the bowels. I have also to add, that, beside many works in foreign languages, over one hundred books and pamphlets have been written in German by friends and advocates of the cure.

In the second place, the facts, the cases of entire or partial cure, which presented themselves from day to day, led me to form those opinions respecting the efficacy of the treatment, to which I have given expression in my former communication.

And here I cannot refrain from recording my gratification that many British physicians, with the attributes of their race, have had the energy, independence, and manliness, even despite the prejudices of their professional education, to inquire into, and, acting on their convictions, to adopt, because undeniably the best, a new system of the "healing art."

Græfenberg, that is Priessnitz's establishment, consists of one very large building, one large, two small, and two moderate sized dwellings, with the necessary out-offices. In the largest building, Priessnitz and his family reside. It also, beside many sleeping apartments for a portion of the guests, contains the kitchen, dairy, bakery, and the dining saale, which latter being 120 feet long by 35 broad, with a large recess on one side, affords an excellent promenade on a winter's evening. Græfenberg is most favourably situated for the cure; it stands 1,909 German feet above the level of the sea;* the springs of

* This measurement differs, I believe, from that given by other writers, but I have extracted it from a published map, conceiving that the safest authority to rely on.

the purest* water in its neighbourhood are very numerous, and the many walks through its extensive forest yield shelter and protection alike from the heat of summer and the winds of winter, but, against these, one acquires at Græfenberg, a still better protection, in a strength and hardihood of frame which resist and defy the severest changes of the weather. It was a beautiful day on which I first ascended the mountain, the sun was shining through an unclouded sky, numerous wildflowers were blooming by the way-side, the walks were crowded with the guests of the cure, and the whole scene was such as to impress one with all the charm of novelty. What a contrast now! not a flower, not even a blade of grass to be seen, the earth all robed in white for days together, not even "one glimpse of the blue"—and yet Nature has her beauties even now. It is a glorious sight, when the rising sun wraps the forest in a blaze, to see the snow-clad trees raising themselves to Heaven, and glowing like giant and fantastic columns of burnished gold. But enough of this. Græfenberg has been often described, and you wish to hear of other things. Yet first a word or two of Priessnitz—as well as I can, I must present him to the society. He is forty-three years of age; he is about five feet eight or nine inches in height, squarely and stoutly built. He has a spacious brow, a keen, searching eye, a close-set lip, on which there dwells fascination when it relaxes into a smile; and, to close the description in the words of one of our popular writers, it may be said, that, "notwithstanding several defects in point of beauty, and a sternness of outline in almost every feature, there is something uncommonly pleasing as well as striking in the whole expression of his countenance, and one reads there kindness of heart, as well as firmness and decision of character."

It is a mistake to suppose that Priessnitz has got no theory. Believe me that he has a theory and a very comprehensive one, though, for aught I know, it may

* Pure water is light, perfectly transparent, and has neither taste nor smell; readily dissolves soap, freezes at 32° Fahrenheit,

be still capable of improvement. Did I not know "what a world we live in," I should be surprised at what you tell me of a rumour in your neighbourhood, that "many have returned uncured from Græfenberg, and are now in Dublin, under the Surgeon-General's care." Knowing something of all the Irish, and English too, who have left this for many months back, I have no hesitation in pronouncing that rumour to be one of those calumnies which base-minded men, *who have an interest in upholding error*, maliciously fabricate, in the hope thereby to damage the truth. Ever yours very sincerely,

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER IV.

To the Editors of the Wexford Conservative, and the Wexford Independent.

[Republished from the Wexford Papers.]

MY DEAR SIRs,—I have great pleasure in sending you Mr. Gibbs's third letter from Græfenberg. As I had anticipated in my last, it contains a great deal of most interesting matter, and recounts some really wonderful cures. The success in the case of Prince Lichtenstein's child, which had baffled the doctor's art, ought, in my opinion, to lead the public mind to look earnestly and zealously to the subject of Hydropathy. To have within our reach the means of preserving health, and of arresting the progress of disease, and not to avail ourselves of such an inestimable blessing, appears both strange and wonderful; but, owing to prejudice, the public have ever been slow to learn the things which pertain to their

is vapourized at 212° Fahrenheit; yields, on evaporation, from one to six grains of sediment from a pint. (See the "Edinburgh Dispensatory" and Dr. Rutty's "Synopsis.") "The higher the mountains, the more limpid, wholesome, and pure are the springs." (Adolphus de Thermis Hirschbergensibus.) "I examined the water at Græfenberg with all necessary tests, and found it of remarkable purity." (Sir C. Scudamore, M.D.)

welfare. Astonishment, then, must give place to regret that, at least, the enlightened portion of the community do not come forward and investigate, if "a system, which can appeal to the testimonies of clergymen and medical men, of princes and peasants, for its great success in *those very diseases* which have hitherto set medicine at defiance," really deserves to be scoffed at and rejected. In my humble opinion, Hydropathy never can, to any extent, be extended in this country until it is taken up by our medical men. They are the persons who are capable of applying this mighty agent with *safety* and *success*. The benefiting our fellow-creatures is, at least should be, the aim of both Allopathists and Hydropathists. The country is well stocked with the medical profession, and yet, we are ever hearing of thousands smarting under the most agonizing diseases, notwithstanding that they have "run the gauntlet of every vegetable, mineral, and alkaline preparation of the pharmacopœia, without deriving the smallest benefit or mitigation of their suffering. Thousands languish, waste, and die under the *usual remedies*." Is it because they are *usual* remedies, that we are justified in withholding all others? Shall days and years pass on, and "the returning season" bring no health to the tortured, blistered, physicked creature, who writhes with the melancholy reflection that he is beyond the help of medicine? Shall the *blessings* of Hydropathy be denied to those whom drugs have left uncured, and shall patients be made to suppose that they are "past all hope" when they are left, feeble, emaciated, and incurable under the "usual remedies," while we hear of such cures effected by the water treatment, as my friend Mr. Gibbs, and others, having witnessed, relate? I cannot conceive it possible that the public will continue to deny to Hydropathy the candid investigation which we who advocate it, *solicit*.

I am, dear Sirs, yours very sincerely,

ROBERT T. RIDGE.

Dunsinane, March 27, 1844.

LETTER V.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq., etc.

[Republished from the Wexford Papers.]

Αριστον μεν ὕδωρ.

Græfenberg, Feb. 24, 1844.

MY DEAR RIDGE,—In my last letter I mentioned that Prince Lichtenstein had brought to the nearest town, Freiwaldau, (about an English mile and a half from this), his only son, a child three years old, to place him under Priessnitz's care. As, from the rank and youth of the patient, and the nature of the disease, this case has excited more than ordinary interest, I think I cannot better commence this letter than by detailing the particulars. For fifteen months all that medical science could do for him was done, and done in vain. His complaint was obstruction of the bowels; for three weeks he had no relief, and his medical attendants, apprehending the Iliac passion, gave him up, and advised, as a last resource, that Priessnitz should be called in. The child was accordingly placed under Priessnitz's care. On the twenty-fifth day after commencing treatment the patient had relief, has since been regular, and for the last fortnight has been playing about—thus adding one more to the many triumphs of water over medicine. The applications in this case were *abreibungen* and *sitzbaths*.

It is nearly incredible the horror of water, I had almost said the hydrophobia with which some persons seem to be afflicted. A middle aged man came here some weeks since; when ordered into the bath—he had never been in one—he cast himself at Priessnitz's feet, and besought him, “not for himself,” he said, but he “prayed him, for the love of heaven, to remember that he had a wife and little ones at home.” Let me give you another illustration: a “boy,” of about four or five and twenty, and “six feet two without a shoe,” was ordered the cold bath; for an entire fortnight he was

unable to muster courage to take it; at length, shamed by the example of others, he went to the bath, and as he stood hesitating and shivering on the brink, he exclaimed "Oh! if my poor mother could *see* me now, what would she do? the sight would certainly kill her?" Next day, afraid that his poor mother should even *hear* that he had risked his precious life in a tub of cold water, he wrote to her, that he was "following the water cure, but that she need not be alarmed, as he was not taking any baths!" In a few days he left, saying, that if his mother would give him leave, he would return in summer. Let us then not deem it strange that Prince Lichtenstein, although aware that *his brother* had been cured by Priessnitz and water, of an obstinate knee disease, which had baffled the doctors and *their* remedies, should yet suffer *his child* to languish under disease and physic for fifteen weary months. It only affords us one more example of how slowly, and yet how surely, truth at length overcomes prejudice.

It may not be out of place in this letter to say a few words of Priessnitz' earlier career. He, as you have already heard, is the son of a small proprietor, whose ancestors for some hundred years, have tilled the ground on which this establishment is built. While yet a boy, there was in the neighbourhood an old man who used to cure diseases in cattle by water applications. Priessnitz, it is said, used to assist him in his operations, and thus first acquired the rudiments, on which, with the energy and daring of genius, he has founded a science. One of his first patients, as related by Captain Claridge, was himself. Having broken two of his ribs, and a surgeon having told him that he never could be so cured as to be fit for work again, he resolved, with an unusual determination and firmness, to endeavour to cure himself. "To effect this, his first care was to replace his ribs, and this he did by leaning with his abdomen, with all his might, against a chair, and holding his breath so as to swell out his chest. This painful operation was attended with the success he expected; the ribs being thus replaced, he applied wet clothes to the part affected, drank plentifully of water, ate sparingly, and remained in perfect repose. In ten days he was able to go out, and at the end of the

year he was again at his occupation in the fields." The fame of this cure soon spread abroad; others came to consult him; other cures were effected by him; his success, as is ever the case, provoked enmity; the *village* doctors joined the number of his foes; a complaint against him was forwarded to the authorities at Vienna; a commission of three physicians was appointed by the Aulic Council to proceed to Græfenberg, and to investigate the truth of the charges brought against him; the three reported favourably of him, and thus, once more, persecution served the cause it was employed to suppress. Allow me to introduce here an anecdote connected with the inquiries of the medical commission. While the members of it were in Freiwaldau, one of them visited a lady of rank whose little child was ill; he prescribed for it, gave it up, and then thought that he would test Priessnitz and the water cure. He accordingly sent for Priessnitz, and, addressing him in the singular number, as he would a peasant, told him how the child was afflicted, and, pointing to it, added, "Well, and what canst thou do?" Priessnitz made no answer, but only smiled. The doctor left; and Priessnitz obtained from the mother permission to treat the child, the doctor having given it as his opinion that it could not survive until next day. Next day the doctor called, made his compliments to the mother, who, he was surprised to observe, appeared calmer than he thought suitable to the occasion, and, in a hesitating manner, as if afraid to touch a tender chord, he softly asked, "And the child?" "Behold it!" said the mother, pointing to it playing about at the other end of the room. From that moment, the doctor, with a superiority far above the petty jealousies of professional prejudice, became Priessnitz's firm friend.

An English physician, Dr. Lovell, of London, has just left this, a convert to the cure. What, permit me to ask, are the physicians of the county Wexford about? Do they wish to be considered less learned, less talented, less inquiring, or less candid, than their brethren elsewhere? When shall I have the pleasure of hearing that the reformation has commenced amongst them? I trust they will not suffer themselves to be numbered amongst

those who "oppose a valuable discovery, and sacrifice human life, because they are too proud to acknowledge an error of practice, or too indolent to investigate a question of fact."

Ever yours, very faithfully,

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER VI.

To Dr. F. R. Lees, Editor of the National Temperance Advocate.

[Republished from the *National Temperance Advocate*.]

"Water, when its properties and modes of application are well known, will be worth all other remedies put together."—DR. MACARTNEY, formerly Professor of Medicine, T.C.D.

Græfenberg, March 16, 1844.

MY DEAR SIR,—After more than six months' stay here, I feel privileged to give an opinion on the merits of the water cure; and by so doing, I shall at length fulfil my promise to you.

Græfenberg has been already so often described, that it is quite unnecessary for me to say more than that it is admirably situated for the cure, being 1,909 German feet above the level of the sea, having numerous springs of the purest water in its vicinity, and well-sheltered walks extending for miles in the contiguous woods.

The first day I dined at the establishment, such was the gaiety reigning around, that I could scarcely persuade myself that I was dining in a hospital; and, as a teetotaler, I was particularly alive to the gratifying novelty of about 250 persons of all ranks and nations dining together without any intoxicating liquors whatever.

Of Priessnitz I must say a few words. He is about forty-three years of age; in height about five feet, eight or nine inches; his countenance expresses a penetrative intellect, extraordinary firmness, and a kindly heart; and,

although defective in regular beauty, is uncommonly pleasing and attractive; and one cannot gaze on it without feeling that one is in the presence of genius.

His neighbours can testify to his kindness; crowds, restored to health and the enjoyment of life, pay homage to his intellect; and facts constantly exemplify that firmness and decision which he exhibited in early youth, when, as related by Captain Claridge, he reset his ribs, which had been broken by an accident; in its results, fortunate for mankind.

My opinion of the cure I shall give in a few words. I am thoroughly persuaded of its superior efficacy and safety, and I am convinced that it can cure all curable diseases, including many incurable by any other known means. Let me give a few cases in support of my opinion.*

*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*

Having in the foregoing cases had occasion to use several German words, I think it better to give here a brief explanation of them and of the processes which they represent.

Umshlag—a wet bandage, of which there are two kinds, the cooling and the heating; the cooling one is entirely wet; the heating one which is well wrung out, has the outer folds dry.

Leintuch—a wet sheet well wrung out; this is wrapped tightly round the body, a coarse large blanket is wrapped outside it, a feather bed and counterpane placed over all; and thus enveloped, the patient generally lies from half-an-hour to an hour, when he quits it for the cold plunge bath, or the *Abgeschrecktebad*, or sometimes for an *Abreibung*.

Wanne—the large vat, or cold plunge bath.

Abgeschrecktebad—a tepid bath generally, of 14° Reaumur, which is equal to 62° of Fahr. ; the depth of water is generally from three to six inches; it is taken in a tub of between five to six feet long by two-and-a-half

* The cases are omitted here as they are given in other letters.

broad; the patient generally remains in from three to five minutes, and is rubbed during the time by himself and by the badadiener or bath servant.

Abreibung—a wet sheet sometimes entirely dripping, and sometimes well wrung out, thrown over the patient's head and person from behind, and rubbed briskly over the body, from two to five minutes, by himself and servant.

Douche—a stream of water falling from a height, sometimes of twenty feet, and as thick as a man's wrist; it is suffered to fall on the hands clasped high over the head, on the back, and on the limbs.

Sitzbad—a tub, of suitable construction and dimensions, (being generally eleven inches deep in front and fifteen inches behind, and nineteen inches diameter at the bottom and twenty-five at the mouth) in which the patient sits for generally fifteen or twenty minutes in five or six inches in depth of cold or tepid water. There are also some other words as, "*Kopfbad*," headbath, "*Fussbad*," footbath; &c., but if I shall have occasion to mention those baths, I shall do so by their English names. I have mentioned the general time for which the different baths are taken, but many of them are at times taken for much longer periods.

I wish I could have the pleasure of seeing you here before I leave. Would that men of influence would come here and judge for themselves! To my brother teetotalers I would especially say, You are bound by the principles you hold, one of which is to promote the good of others—you, above all men, are bound to inquire into the merits of a cause which claims to be *not only kindred but an auxiliary to your own*; and if you find it to be such as it is represented to be, it becomes your duty to promote its advancement.

My dear Sir, yours very faithfully,

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER VII.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq., etc.

[Republished from the Wexford Papers.]

“Wasser thuts freulich.”—DR. OTTO GRAF.

Græfenberg, April 20th, 1844.

MY DEAR RIDGE,—Allow me to direct your attention to a letter which has been recently sent from this to the Editor of the *Times*. It has been written in consequence of the misrepresentations of the water cure which have been based upon the death of Sir F. Burdett, and out of the twenty-three British gentlemen at present here, it bears the signatures of twenty-two, including one peer, one baronet, two clergymen, four military officers, and other gentlemen of the highest respectability. The letter bears testimony to the efficacy of the water cure, and to the harmlessness of the operations when skilfully and judiciously employed. It states that the umshlags or “wet towels,” as with so much good taste they have been termed, “may be and are frequently worn for months together by tender infants as well as by adults,” and that under the water cure cases of inflammation are very rare, and that when they do occur they are most effectually and speedily reduced. It draws attention to the fact of Sir F. Burdett having given up the water cure “several weeks,” I believe I am correct in saying two months, before his death; but with a most praiseworthy delicacy it forbears even to hint at more recent remedies prescribed by medical authority, although some of the subscribers have thought that perhaps it would be as just and as reasonable to ascribe Sir Francis’s death to those remedies, as to ascribe it to the water cure. The letter likewise gives an important extract from the published police reports, viz.—“That within the year 1843, from the first of January to the last day in December inclusive, the entire number of patients at Græfenberg was 1,050, among whom there were but four deaths, and that in at least two cases out of the four, the patients came to

Græfenberg too late to derive benefit from the cure, and from the first were pronounced by Priessnitz to be incurable." I had the curiosity to go over the list of the 1,050, and found that amongst them there were thirty-three physicians, seven surgeons, and four apothecaries, of whom ten physicians and two surgeons were British. It was my intention to have offered a few remarks on Sir Francis Burdett's case, but the letter to the *Times* precludes any necessity of my doing so. It has also been my intention to say a few words respecting the two deaths which are referred to in the letter, and which occurred since I came here, and I may as well fulfil that intention now as at another time. The first death was of a gentleman aged fifty-six, who had been for thirty-four years in the West Indies. For the last thirty-two or thirty-three years he had been subject to various diseases, namely, gout, rheumatism, congestion to the head, piles, prolapsus, and epileptic fits. Before he came here he had had two attacks of epilepsy, each of twelve fits. The first attack was in 1841, the second in 1843, at which time he was bled to fainting. In April 1843 he was bled to ward off a supposed threatened attack. In May he was also bled repeatedly, and otherwise violently treated for six weeks. He had likewise of late years been repeatedly subjected to severe bleedings. Since May he was in London, and treated there for gout and rheumatism: on his arrival here, Priessnitz, judging from the description of the fits that they were epileptic, refused at first to undertake the case, but a physician who had known the patient in Italy, having insisted that the fits were not epileptic, and another doctor coinciding in the same opinion, Priessnitz at length reluctantly consented to take the patient under his care. For some time the patient improved wonderfully, until he got an attack of his old enemy—epilepsy.

From the first moment that Priessnitz saw him in the fits he said that it was epilepsy, that the case was hopeless, and that he could not do anything for the patient. Between the hours of one at noon and twelve at night, he had a succession of thirteen fits, in the last of which he died. When in Paris, in 1841, he had been told by

an eminent physician that he could not survive another attack. Some difference of opinion having existed respecting the nature of the fits, an English medical gentleman, who was here at the time, examined the body, and wrote and signed a certificate, of which, except omitting the name of the deceased, the following is a verbatim copy :—

“I hereby certify that I this day examined the body of the late —, Esq., who died at Friewaldau, on Saturday the fourth instant, and it is my opinion that he died in an epileptic fit, having had a succession of such fits for some hours before his decease.

T. B. LLOYD, M.D.”

“ Member of the Royal College of Physicians,
“ and late Teacher of Anatomy.

“ Græfenberg, 6th November, 1843.”

Priessnitz constantly objects to undertake the treatment of epileptic patients ; however, he has treated one or two cases with some success, and in one instance the patient, who occasionally comes here on a visit, has not had a fit for twenty years, and yet Priessnitz hesitates to pronounce him perfectly cured, and says it is possible that he may yet have a return of the disorder.

The second death was that of a gentleman, who came here at the age of fifty-four, suffering from gout, bad dropsy, and various other complaints. From the beginning Priessnitz had no hopes of the patient recovering, and only subjected him to very light treatment, merely ordering him an *abreibung* daily, and this principally at the earnest solicitations of some of the patient's countrymen, who were here when he arrived. This last death took place on the twenty-ninth of December ; and it is right to add, that a death has not occurred since that date. Although the water treatment proved powerless in the above-mentioned cases, it has not proved so in others ; and, to quote again from the letter to the *Times*, it has performed “ many remarkable cures.” One of the most remarkable since my arrival, is the following case of apoplexy :—

Count M——, aged fifty-two years, who had long been a sufferer from gout, was found insensible in his

bed in an apoplectic fit. Four physicians were soon in attendance, and Priessnitz was called in. One of the physicians proposed to bleed the patient. To this Priessnitz refused to accede, if he was to bear any share in the responsibility. Another of them said that, if Priessnitz succeeded in restoring the patient, he would throw his drugs out of the window, and become an hydropathist. It was their unanimous opinion that the count could not possibly recover. Extreme unction was administered; and, according to the custom of the country, a lighted wax candle was placed in each hand of the apparently dying man. At six o'clock in the morning Priessnitz had him placed in a *sitzbad*, and kept him there until half-past three, p.m., cold water being repeatedly poured over his head during the time. On the second day, the count being still perfectly unconscious, had two *leintuchs*, and was washed all over as he lay on the bed; he also had two baths, one in the morning for an hour, the second for an hour and a half in the evening, and he had water poured over his head as on the first day. While he was in the last bath, a medical gentleman who was by, observing the unconscious state of the patient, the head hanging down, and to all appearance vitality almost extinct, gave it as his opinion that the count could not live an hour longer. In a few minutes afterwards Priessnitz wrote to the patient's son, to inform him that the count was out of all danger. On the third morning the patient broke out into a gentle perspiration, recovered his consciousness, and on the fourth day he drove out. I would ask any candid man, if this case of a man advanced in life, and long an invalid, with the case of the delicate infant which I gave in my last letter, do not, when taken together, afford satisfactory proof of the safety and efficacy of the water cure.

Before I conclude this letter, I wish to say a few words on the subject of hydrophobia. I lately read in Galignani, an account of a young Irish lady, who died of that horrible disorder, and the question instantly suggested itself if in such a case the water cure has not a remedy. I am not prepared to answer this question positively in the affirmative, the efficacy of the cure hav-

ing never been tried, that I am aware of, on the human subject, in a case of hydrophobia—at least, it has never been so tried by Priessnitz.* But if tried, I am disposed to believe that it would be attended with the wished for success. Priessnitz has frequently treated, and always succeeded in curing, the dog, by the following process; the animal has been tied up, and several buckets full of cold water have been thrown over him, until he shivered very much, when he was allowed to dry. This process has been many times repeated, until the cessation of shivering betokened the absence of fever, when, if the animal ate, he was considered entirely cured.

Is it to be believed that water can be thus rendered effectual for the relief of the brute, and that man is doomed to suffer without a remedy?

Yours very truly,
JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER VIII.

To the Editor of the Times.

[Republished from the *Times*.]

Græfenberg, April 12, 1844.

SIR,—A late melancholy event, the death of Sir F. Burdett, having been eagerly seized upon as a means of injuring the water cure in the estimation of the British public, we, the undersigned, at present residing at Græfenberg and Freiwaldau, feel that in inviting attention to this communication, we are but discharging a duty which we owe to those who are suffering from disease; we shall, therefore, be thankful if, in your widely-circulated journal, you will insert a few remarks which may help to disabuse the public mind of many erroneous impressions on the subject of Hydropathy. Sir F. Burdett's case is

* Sir John Floyer and other writers recommend cold baths in this disorder.

easily disposed of. We should be astonished if any considerate person should wonder that a gentleman of such very active habits, who had reached the age of man, and four years beyond it, should die, after having used for a short time, and then abandoned, some new remedy which had been recommended to him. Would it not be as reasonable and as just to attribute Lady Burdett's death to physic, as it is that of Sir Francis to the use of cold water? But to guide us to a correct judgment we are not left to mere reasoning or conjecture; we possess here authentic information on the subject. Sir Francis had left off the water cure several weeks before his death, and at the time he relinquished it, he declared that he had not been so well for many years. He returned to habits at variance with the cure; inflammation attacked him; grief for the loss of his wife overwhelmed him, and he died. We do not presume to say that if he had not left off the water cure he would not have suffered from inflammation; but experience has proved, and is daily proving, that among hundreds of patients under the water cure, it is very rare to meet with a single case of inflammation; and that, when it does occur, it is speedily and effectually reduced. As to the "wet towels," of which so much that is absurd has been written, we beg to assure you that when *properly applied*, they are not only perfectly harmless but highly beneficial, and may be worn, and frequently are worn for months together, by tender infants, as well as by adults. Even could it be proved that Sir Francis's death was the result of unskilful and injudicious treatment, it should not shake our belief in the safety and efficacy of the water cure, inasmuch as it could not blind us to the wonders which have been and are being continually performed by a skilful and judicious application of it. In support of our opinions we could adduce many extraordinary cases of cure, but their details would perhaps occupy too much space, and are more fitted for a volume than a letter. But, although we refrain from giving any cases, we request attention to the following statement, extracted from the published Police Reports. At different seasons of the last year, 1843, from the 1st of January to the 31st of December,

inclusive, there were at Græfenberg 1050 patients, amongst whom there were but four deaths; and it has come to our knowledge that in two, at least, out of the four instances, the patients had come too late to derive any benefit from the cure, and from the first were pronounced by Priessnitz to be incurable. We believe this report to be unparalleled, not only in hospital returns generally, but even in the ordinary bills of mortality. Let it be borne in mind that the majority of cases here had been long and vainly treated elsewhere, and that very many of them had been pronounced incurable by medical men; and also that those critical changes, accompanied by boils, fever, or diarrhœa, &c., which are here hailed as the safe and salutary efforts of nature, and as the harbingers of returning health, are elsewhere regarded as dangerous diseases, and would subject the patient to active medical treatment. We do not imagine that the members of the medical profession can all at once give full credit to the powers of a remedial agent which they have never tried; it is not likely that they should hastily relinquish the theories in which they have been brought up, and renounce their Pharmacopœia for the bold and wonderful appliances of cold water by Priessnitz, who, without any medical education, has originated a system of such wonderful efficacy. It is their wisdom and duty to watch against empirics of every kind; but, at the same time, it is but fair, honest, and philanthropic, to make full and impartial inquiry into a system that has benefited thousands. We presume not to regard it as a specific for every disease; assuredly God has not given anything which can infallibly cure beings who, by his decree, must die; but it is our most sober conviction that, under competent advisers, the water cure is capable of doing, and has done, for the relief of sufferers, what no medicines have ever effected. It must be admitted that if incompetent persons pretend to practice Hydropathy, worse than failure must ensue; and, while a failure, or anything which may be made to wear even the semblance of one, is eagerly blazoned forth, the public are not so quickly informed (though it is honourably acknowledged by many eminent medical

gentlemen) how many are the victims of the lancet and of minerals, and other poisonous substances. We recommend only a fair trial: "*Magna est veritas et prevalebit.*" For ourselves, we have heard, we have seen, we have tried, and whilst most of us have consulted very eminent medical practitioners, and strictly adhered to their prescriptions, we hesitate not to say, that though eventually we may not all be radically and entirely cured, yet, without having had a particle of medicine administered to us, many of us have already received more benefit under the water treatment than from anything we had previously tried. It is simple, safe, strengthening, necessarily connected with strict temperance, and so conducive to more equanimity and cheerfulness. But, while we are thus bearing our testimony to the efficacy of the water cure, we wish to guard against misconception by once more stating that it must be administered by skilful and judicious hands; and lest, while seeking to guide, we should possibly be guilty of misleading any individual, we also wish to add, that while some diseases may be cured in one, two, or three months, there are others which require one, two, or three years, according to the nature and standing of the disease, and the age and constitution of the patient; and there are also some few diseases which are as incurable by water as by any other known remedy. Trusting you will not consider this letter, on a subject of so much importance, too long for insertion in your influential journal, we beg to subscribe ourselves,

Your obedient servants,

LICHFIELD	T. C. TRENCH
G. WEBSTER, Bart.	F. WRIGHT
H. S. SINGLETON	S. P. SPARKES
H. S. VANDALEUR	G. BLISSETT, M.A.
W. B. HAYNE, M.A.	C. H. HOPPNER
J. ARCHER	T. M. GILBERT
J. H. O. MOORE, Capt.	W. YOUNG
A. BLAIR, Capt.	H. HAYCROFT
T. SMITHETT, M.A.	C. SEWELL.
R. BOWDEN, K.T.S.	W. STEBBING
T. ALLIN, M.A.	J. GIBBS.
H. C. WRIGHT, of Philadelphia, U. S.	

LETTER IX.

*To the Editors of the Wexford Independent, and the
Wexford Conservative.*

(Republished from the Wexford Papers.)

MY DEAR SIRs,—I have great pleasure in forwarding to you Mr. Gibbs's fifth letter from Græfenberg, as it is a communication which enters so explicitly into a detail of the ravages which that awful scourge fever has made of late years, and of the successful treatment of it practised under the water cure, by Vincent Priessnitz and other hydropathic practitioners. I think I may congratulate the public on having information of such paramount importance placed before them; "*countless cases of fever treated by the water cure, and scarcely a single death is ever heard of!*" Few there are, alas! in this country, who, in taking a retrospective glance over the circle of their relations, friends, and acquaintances, but would feel the sorrowful contrast there is in comparing the issue of fever during the past year, in this locality and at Græfenberg. Many an empty seat beside the social hearth will testify, that, like the besom of destruction, the plague has been there; and, that, notwithstanding the best advice, and the "usual medicinal remedies" had been had recourse to, some fond parent, some beloved child, some dear brother or sister had been swept from existence by the ravages of a disease over which medicine had no control. And when the eyes are dried which have wept in anguish over the couch, where lay mouldering the remains of all that was once dear, can it be possible that the heart can forget, that among the many cases of fever that have been near and around us, there has been many and many a sad death. Can those who thus remember, any longer feel satisfied with the power that medicine has over that disease? Will they be amongst the prejudiced throng who laugh and sneer at the very idea of water curing fever or any other complaint? The

doctors say they are so satisfied with the success of their own practice that they do not see the necessity of taking any trouble to investigate the merits of Hydropathy ; but what say the patients, or what say the relatives of those who were once patients ? When we hear of a desperate case of disease, and of powerful (?) doses of medicine having been administered, without producing any mitigation of suffering,—when we hear of such a case terminating in death, shall we believe the doctor who says that he is satisfied with the success of his practice ? If we do, we must likewise believe that he has a conscience hard as adamant ! But, when we hear of a similarly desperate case having been successfully treated by water—when we witness a case of disease, similar to that which produced death under medical treatment, perfectly cured, in a short time, on hydropathic principles, shall any be found, doctor or patient, who will deny the power which water alone has over *that* disease ? Prejudice may be, nay, I am sure, is very powerful, but it is not. I think, possible that it can make us doubt the evidence of our senses. Now I have seen many a case where medicine failed altogether, either to effect a cure, or to alleviate suffering, and I have also seen precisely a similar case of disease perfectly cured by water. I was, I confess, once greatly prejudiced against Hydropathy, but I cannot allow the prejudices of education, powerful though they be, to withstand such testimony as I have both seen and heard. The account which my friend Mr. Gibbs gives of the treatment of disease at Græfenberg has been fully borne out by my own experience ; I have seen cases of acute rheumatism, which had resisted leeching, stimulants, sudorifics, and poppy stupes, yield at once to vigorous applications of water ; I have seen the jerking, bounding pulse of catarrhal fever reduced to a healthy standard, without nauseating doses of tartar emetic, or the leech, or the lancet having been had recourse to ; I have seen repeated cases of bad sore throat completely cured, without medicinal gargles, blisters, or mustard applications, in twenty-four hours ; and, when I say that I have twice seen the powerful effects that the judicious application of water has in immediately

reducing vascular excitement of the brain, and thereby at once arresting delirium, attended with loud screaming, it cannot fairly be denied that water has an immense power over inflammatory disease.

To our domestic animals also, cold water is a most salutary remedial agent. It is a well known fact, that catarrhal fever, commonly called distemper, is, this season, most prevalent in all parts of Ireland, and that man is fortunate who has not seen this pest among his horses. One of my most valuable horses was on last Monday week attacked with this complaint; except one other, I never witnessed so bad a case; the violent inflammation of the mucous membrane of the throat nearly prevented the animal swallowing food or drink; the cough was sometimes so violent as to threaten the rupture of a blood-vessel; the pulse was eighty—that is double the healthy standard—and altogether the feverish symptoms ran high.

The lancet had long been the sheet anchor in overcoming inflammatory action in the horse, and yet though there is generally much vascular excitement in the distemper, bleeding has of late seldom been thought advisable, as the complaint speedily assumes typhoid symptoms, which when once set in usually baffle all remedies. I am thus minute in giving a detail of the peculiarities of this most treacherous disease, because I conceive that the treatment I adopted, and which was speedily successful, forcibly points out the power which Hydropathy holds in arresting preternatural arterial action, without producing the debility and long train of evils that follow bleeding. Inflammation is present, and yet we dare not use the lancet, but this inflammation must be overcome, and that speedily, or the animal is gone. How is this to be effected in a few hours by antimonials alone? Tartar-emetic may succeed in trivial cases, but in one like that which I am speaking of it would not have the desired effect. My treatment was this. I enveloped the animal's body and upper part of the neck in a wet sheet, over which were put three dry rugs. The wet sheet was changed every hour, and I found it each time so hot, that it warmed the water into which it was

dipped; in about four hours the pulse got softer and slower, and the quick breathing diminished a good deal; I had the legs covered with wet and dry bandages, up to the knees, but these were not changed, as my object was to determine as much blood as possible to the extremities. I persisted in this treatment, and tepid water injections for three days, changing the neck and body envelopments at longer intervals as the arterial action diminished, and am happy to say, that on Friday the animal was able to feed and drink without pain, and on Saturday the cough and defluxion from the nose entirely ceased, the pulse gradually coming down to the healthy beat. Here, then, is a case of epidemic distemper, which usually takes months to perfectly eradicate, and often destroys the after usefulness of the horse, completely cured in six days, by cold water, and without the animal losing its condition and stamina by blood-letting, or being tortured by rowels, blisters, and setons. Had I bled this animal in the commencement of the disease, so as to reduce the inflammatory action of the chest and throat, I am firmly convinced I should have been accessory to its death, for I never yet saw a well developed case of catarrhal fever, in which the lancet was used, but typhus commenced, and the animal sank beyond the reach of all stimulants to relieve it; had I not bled this animal, and been unacquainted with the water cure, the inflammation was so violent as would have destroyed the powers of life in twenty-four hours, even if repeated doses of tartar emetic, digitalis, and strong blisters had been had recourse to.

It is then in cases of this kind, when the vaunted powers of medicine fail, that water presents itself as a really powerful agent in assisting nature to relieve herself of disease. The rapid abstraction of a large amount of animal heat produces, in quicker time, all that can be effected by large bleedings, except, indeed, that it leaves not after it the debility attendant on venesection. Can any medical man pretend to doubt that this is a great desideratum in the art of healing?

But perhaps there are some who doubt that the abstraction of animal heat can have this effect, or that cold

water can be made use of as a safe agent (and far safer than the lancet), in reducing preternatural activity of the circulating system. Now, I challenge any medical man to come forward and disprove that cold water can be made to produce all the effects which can be attained by blood-letting, and that it is in every case a much more powerful and far safer agent than the lancet; and, that, in all cases where bleeding is not thought advisable, according to the most approved practice, Hydropathy is capable of effecting more towards the restoration of health than the whole host of pharmaceutical preparations. I make this offer in the best and most friendly spirit to the doctors; a wish to benefit the community is my only motive. I am sure that the doctors will not yield to me in such a wish, and that if I have advanced doctrines which they deem dangerous, they, as the guardians of the public health, will come forward and refute those doctrines, and prove, if they can, that the whole system of the water cure is fraught with danger.

Dear sirs, yours very truly,

ROBERT THOMAS RIDGE.

LETTER X.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq., etc.

(Republished from the Wexford Papers.)

"The glorious, potent, safe, and philosophical water-cure."—
DR. J. WILSON.

Græfenberg, April 30, 1844.

MY DEAR RIDGE,—Since I came here I have often received letters containing an account of the death by fever of some friend or acquaintance; and in our Fever Hospitals, as every body must be aware, the average number of deaths is very great. Let me instance the

London Fever Hospital, which I select only because I happen to have before me an authentic statement of the average annual mortality therein for a series of years. Dr. Quain, in his "Martinet's Manual of Pathology," page 430, quotes from Dr. Tweedie's "Clinical Illustrations of Fever," as follows:—"I have shewn in one of the tables the annual mortality in the London Fever Hospital since its establishment in 1822, by which it will be seen that it has varied even under the same physician, (the late Dr. Bateman, whose knowledge and judgment were admitted by all who knew him) between one in three and five-eighths and one in twelve. The variation in the annual mortality therefore cannot be imputed to any difference in the mode of treatment, but to the severity of the fever at different times; and more especially to the very late period of the disease at which patients are often sent in. Since the time of Dr. Bateman's retirement from the Fever Hospital, the annual mortality under the different physicians has varied from one in five to one in nine and one-half." "The mortality in the year included in this report, viz: from 1st September, 1828, to 1st September, 1829," says Dr. Quain, "is about one in seven one-sevenths; but it is proper to state, that of the seventy-three fatal cases there died

Within 24 hours after admission	5
" 30 " " 	5
" 36 " " 	9
" 48 " " 	3
" 3 days " " 	8
" 4 " " 	3
" 5 " " 	10
" 6 " " 	5
" 7 " " 	3
Beyond this period	22
	73

It appears therefore, that no fewer than nineteen patients died within thirty-six hours after they were received into the hospital, and were therefore quite hopeless when admitted; indeed, some of the cases were moribund and actually died a few hours after they were placed in bed." The learned Doctor's "indeed" covers at most only five

cases, which, according to the table, died within twenty-four hours after admission; and his "therefore" appears to me rather a curious one; but nevertheless I shall not attempt to dispute it. Let us then deduct the nineteen cases which are said to have been hopeless, and we still have fifty-four fatal cases within the year, which it is to be presumed were not hopeless when admitted. Now, let us suppose that in 1828 the water cure had been known in England; and suppose that hundreds were ready to bear testimony that under the water treatment death by fever was very rare—so rare that though they had known countless cases of treatment they had scarcely ever even heard of a single death; and let us further suppose that an Hydropathist had offered to show the processes by which the lives of all, or even of one half of those fifty-four could be saved; and, if you can bring yourself to imagine anything so extremely shocking and monstrous, go with me still further, and suppose that this testimony was scoffed at, and this offer peremptorily rejected, and tell me, do you not think that it would have afforded a very fair opportunity for, shall I say, ill-natured people, to exclaim, that the fifty-four, or as it may have been the twenty-seven who died, were so many victims to prejudice or interest, and had been sacrificed apparently for no conceivable purpose but to benefit the apothecary or the undertaker? What then shall we say to the fact that hundreds in our day proclaim with one voice that if timely and properly treated, fever should never terminate in death; and, if this be true, how shall a member of a learned, and honourable, and humane profession obstinately refuse to avail himself of the means of cure which are offered to him? and then, when all that is left to him on which to exercise his remedies is but a lifeless mass, how shall he answer it to himself, to his fellow-man and to his God? Let it not be said that this language is too strong—alas! it is far too weak—and it is on occasions like this, when I would earnestly denounce some great evil and recommend some great good, that I am chiefly compelled to feel how weak are words, and how feeble is my command over them. Let me then return to plain matter of fact.

Fever, when not the result of infection or contagion, is frequently welcomed by Hydropathists as the salutary effort of nature, and is generally reduced in a few days :—the means of cure are leintuchs, abreibungen, and abgeschrecktebad, the manner of applying which I have already explained—abreibungen are never taken for more than five minutes each, with five minutes' interval, during which time the patient lies in bed, and they are given chiefly in the cold stage.

Dr. Currie's practice of cold affusion, in the hot stage of fever, as appears from his Medical Reports, was attended with great success ; but he early discovered the injurious consequences attending not only cold but even warm affusion in the cold stage, and he was unable to discover a substitute—a want which the inventive genius of Priessnitz has supplied in the adoption of the rubbing-wet-sheet.

In acute fever, and in all feverish complaints in children, in scarlet fever, small pox, and measles, the leintuch has been found to be most safe and efficacious ; it should be changed as it becomes hot and ought generally, especially in small pox, to be followed by the abgeschrecktebad, the duration of which must be determined according to circumstances and to the skill and tact of the practitioner. When the throat is affected the heating bandage is to be applied. The patient should never be stinted in water. The room should be kept lightsome and well aired, and when the bowels require opening water injections should be used. When there is much headache, &c., a head bath should be administered, or a cooling umschlag, to be frequently changed, should be constantly worn round the head ; and, especially in small pox, the waistumschlag should be constantly worn and often changed. In delirium the abgeschrecktebad has been found efficacious, the patient being sometimes kept in it until the axilla and the back of the neck become of the same temperature as the rest of the body, but never any longer, lest the power of re-action should be lowered too much. In gastric fever, sitzbaths, with much friction to the back and abdomen, are employed.

When there is inflammation of the lungs the abges-

chrecktebad, with cold affusion on the head and shoulders, is sometimes used. A slight fever has been reduced by the following treatment:—Five leintuchs and abgeschrecktebad, alternately for five minutes each, followed by a walk in the open air; in the evening a leintuch, and two leintuchs the following day; on the third day the fever had entirely left. Another attack of fever was efficaciously treated as follows: two successive leintuchs and bath in the morning; two abreibungs after breakfast, a sitzbad, a walk, and two abreibungs. In the afternoon, two abreibungs, a sitzbad, two leintuchs, and two baths; and, lastly, two abreibungs. With some slight variation, this treatment, continued for a few days, reduced the fever. In a case of low fever, the patient took twelve abreibungs a day for eight or nine days. The greatest number of leintuchs which I have known to have been given in fever in the day was twenty-nine. In this case, which was a bad one, the patient had altogether very active treatment. On the first day he had abgeschrecktebad for one and a-half-hour, getting out of it every half hour to walk up and down the chamber in a sheet for ten minutes; for several succeeding days he had two abgeschrecktebads; the first for half-an-hour, the second for an hour—he had also several abreibungs. In measles, a young man had upwards of four hundred leintuchs in fourteen days. In a most extraordinary crisis, resembling confluent small-pox, which covered all the back, and also broke out on the chest and other parts of the body, the patient had one leintuch, and afterwards for many days he had daily two abgeschrecktebads for five minutes each. He wore an umschlag not only round the waist but all over the back; he also wore a cooling umschlag round the head, took injections, and drank freely of water. In this, and in the two cases immediately preceding, the patient did not go out until convalescent. The cold bath is also sometimes used in fever, as in the case of a lady who, with nervous weakness, had slow fever, the bath was left at her bedside, and as often as the nightly fever and sweat came on, she used to jump into the bath. This, of course, was in addition to other treatment, and she, too, recovered. In convalescence, and likewise in

feverish cold, a slight schwitzen is also sometimes used. In diarrhœa, which, as well as fever, is often considered critical, the water cure is also most efficacious, and the treatment principally consists of sitzbaths, drinking water, and wearing the waist umschlag, and sometimes injections are added; in one case I knew four sitzbaths in the day, of an hour each, with an additional one at night, to be taken for two successive days. I have given the foregoing details that I might gratify curiosity, and to convey some general idea of the treatment in fever, &c.; but, as to the treatment in particular cases, that depends, of course, on the complications that may arise, and which must be carefully attended to.

Ever yours,

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER XI.

To Dr. F. R. Lees, Editor of the National Temperance Advocate.

(Republished from the *National Temperance Advocate*.)

“Till taught by pain,
Men really know not what good water’s worth.”—BYRON.

Græfenberg, August 17, 1844.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have received the June No. of the *Advocate*, and as you have kindly given insertion to my letter, I am induced to write again, in the hope that it will not prove unacceptable, and may perhaps tend to some good.

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*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*

It would not be possible to crowd into this letter even an outline of the different cases of cure which have

taken place during my residence here ; I shall, therefore, confine myself to some of the cases which have occurred within the past month.*

Were I not apprehensive of trespassing too much on your valuable space, I could add to the foregoing many other cases of cure—some of dysentery, fever, small-pox, scarletina, gout, rheumatism, dyspepsia, costiveness, syphilis, fistula, piles, ringworm, deafness, nervous debility, &c. But why go on? Have I not given facts enough to justify the opinions which I expressed in my former letter, as to the safety and efficacy of the water cure? Let me draw particular attention to the fact, that in the foregoing cases of chronic disease, and indeed in most others under treatment here, with the particulars of which I have become acquainted, the patients had been for years under the best medical advice. How much longer, then, may it not be asked, will the suffering public and the guardians of the public health remain indifferent to a remedial agent of such efficacy as water? Shall the interests, the health and happiness of millions, never prevail against professional interests, professional prejudices, and (why should I not add?) professional ignorance? Let us look for a moment at the victim to mercury, who, had he come at first to the water cure, had been *infallibly* restored to health in a few weeks—perhaps days—and who had gone hence rejoicing in his strength; not as *now*—but it is a picture too revolting to dwell upon. Let us turn from him, then, to take a glance at the ravages of that dreadful scourge—fever. Most of us can recal the images of the loved and the lost, suddenly snatched from us in the freshness of youth and beauty, or arrested in the career of usefulness. I do not ask my readers to conjure up all the horrors of the bed of death—the ravings of the wise—the blasphemies, perchance, of the good—and that dread shout, that peal of maniac laughter, immediately preceding the disruption of the last ties between the immortal spirit and its mortal tenement. No! I would appeal not to their imagination,

* The cases, eight in number, are omitted here to avoid repetition.

but to their reason. I would not seek to win their conviction by what some may regard as but idle declamation. If they have private sorrows, and cherish too fondly the memories of the dead, I would beg, I would earnestly pray of them to dismiss, for a few moments, if possible, those sorrows and those memories from their minds, lest haply they should bias their judgments. Let us conduct our investigation with the cool calculation of men of business; and by the incontrovertible aid of figures, leave nothing for conjecture to assume, or for opposition to deny.

From the official tables of the London Fever Hospital it appears that, under the same physician, from the establishment of that institution up to the retirement of Dr. Bateman, the average mortality varied from 1 in 3 and 5-8ths to 1 in 12. Subsequent to Dr. Bateman's retirement, the annual mortality varied, under different physicians, from 1 in 5 to 1 in $9\frac{1}{2}$. In one year the number of deaths was 73, of whom it is stated that 19 were hopeless cases when admitted, leaving 54 cases not hopeless. And further, among 500 fatal cases, there died as follows: under the age of 10, 14; from 10 to 15, 40; from 15 to 20, 118; from 20 to 25, 84; from 25 to 30, 73; from 30 to 35, 25; and from 35 to 40, 39. Thus, it appears—so much for the certainty of medicine—that for a series of years the annual mortality varied from 1 in 3 and 5-8ths to 1 in 12; that, out of 500 fatal cases, 393 died before the age of 40, and yet they were beings to whom their gracious and benign Creator allotted an existence of three-score years and ten; and that, in one year, there died 54, whose lives, when admitted, it was possible to save—nay, who, if they had been properly and skilfully treated by water, would infallibly have been restored to health. Let no one cavil at this word “infallibly,” or tell me that it savours of arrogance and presumption. The operation of water in controlling and subduing fever is as unerring as any other law of nature, and it can no more fail in accomplishing its purpose, than the sun can desert its station in the heavens, and refuse its vivifying light to the world. No! I arrogate nothing to man. To Him who *made* the law, and gra-

ciously permitted it to man to discover its operations—to Him be all the praise and all the glory! But I call on man to dismiss arrogance and presumption from his mind, and not to reject the blessing that is proffered to him; and, should he persist in doing so, I may be excused for mourning over his folly and perversity—the same now as it was in the days when, in the wilderness, he scorned the bread that was rained upon him from heaven.*

I am, my dear sir,

Your very faithful and obliged

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER XII.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq., etc.

(Republished from the Wexford Papers.)

Castle, Carlisle, May, 1844.

DEAR SIR,—Having been requested by our mutual friend, Mr. Gibbs, whose acquaintance I made during my two months residence in Græfenberg, to give you my opinion of the “Water Cure,” as practised by Vincent Priessnitz in that place, I now hasten to comply. My residence at Græfenberg having been comparatively short, and not having kept a diary, it is impossible for me to enter into any minute details, which, however, would in any case be superfluous, as Mr. Gibbs has taken notes of all the cases, and can therefore give you any amount of information you may require. Before going to Græfenberg, I had entertained many ridiculous notions about the water cure, from reading puffs, which must tend to make all sensible men think it quackery. Now the water cure does nothing by starts: it will not

* Time and increased experience have only still further confirmed me in the opinions to which I have given expression in the above letter.

cure a man by magic, neither can it cure incurable diseases, such as cancer, etc. It is based on sound principles; if it were not, it long ago would have fallen to the ground. Many persons go from England to Græfenberg, with diseases of long standing, aggravated, or perhaps brought on by medicine. They have read in some water cure book that such diseases are cured in a few weeks, at the end of which time they return to England, having received little or no benefit, and call this giving it a *fair trial*; as if diseases which they have been contracting for years could possibly be cured in a few weeks. During my stay at Græfenberg I saw seven doctors, who stopped for about a week, received no information from any one, abused everything they saw, and then went away, professing to understand the water cure. Hence it is that Hydropathy is not more widely practised, being puffed up on the one hand by those who ought to know better, and abused on the other by those who know nothing about it. As far as I am capable of judging, I should say that water can cure *all* diseases which medicine can cure, and many others which are out of its reach; but with this difference—the water, by strengthening the system, enables it to throw off the disease, whereas, by medicine many acute diseases are changed into inveterate chronic complaints, which at last carry their weary victims to the grave. Water purifies the body, and works out of it all “morbid matter,” whereas medicine is continually filling it with poisons and minerals, which, at the very time they appear to afford relief, are laying the foundations of future diseases or premature old age. Acute diseases, such as fever, inflammation of the lungs, cholera, etc., and also venereal in its first stage, Priessnitz looks upon as trifles, and they are cured in a comparatively short time. The chronic diseases are often very tedious, and often take months before they are perfectly cured; but the patient is continually improving in general health. It must also be admitted that there are some cases which Priessnitz will not take in hand, and others which he does take, but which he fails to cure—but no man is infallible, and he also must make his mistakes.

As to the crisis, concerning which some entertain extravagant notions, it is, when judiciously treated, a mere trifle, and, though often unpleasant at the time, the patient always finds himself very much relieved afterwards. It shows itself in different ways—sometimes in a rash, sometimes in a fever, but more generally in boils, which are frequently large, and discharge a great quantity of matter. I think I have now stated as much as I can in this letter on this subject. Should you think any information I can give may be of use to you, I shall be most happy to answer any question you may put respecting the water cure.

Believe me, my dear sir, yours truly,

G. A. THOMPSON.

LETTER XIII.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq., etc.

(Republished from the Wexford Papers.)

“In reflecting upon the virtues of water as a remedy, when properly applied, for the alleviation or cure of many forms of disease, we find another occasion of gratitude to the great Creator, who has in his beneficence provided so convenient an antidote for numerous evils which flesh is heir to.”—SIR C. SCUDAMORE.

Græfenberg, May 20, 1844.

MY DEAR RIDGE,—I purpose in this letter, which shall be a very short one, to supply a few inadvertent omissions from former letters. When on the subject of Sir F. Burdett's death, I had intended to have given you a case of treatment in acute attack of gout; having forgotten to do so, I wish now to make amends for my forgetfulness. A Spanish gentleman, advanced in life, who had been long in the Havannah, and who for many years had

been a martyr to gout, arrived here while suffering under an acute attack. Priessnitz gave him his choice of a five hours' bath on the first day, followed by a four hours' bath on the second day, or else at once of a seven hours' rubbing bath of the temperature of 16° Reaumur. This temperature to be maintained by fresh supplies of cold water. He could not be prevailed upon to remain longer than three hours' in the first day's bath, so that he had to take, the following day, a bath of five and a-half hour's duration; and, for each of the next four or five mornings, a bath of from fifteen to twenty minutes. Priessnitz told him that if he would not take one or two long baths he had better not do anything at all, as any other treatment would only make him worse. The intention of such long baths is speedily to produce boil or other skin crises which invariably follow. After the acute attack had been reduced, his daily treatment consisted of leintuch and abgeschrecktebad, douche, and abreibung and sitzbath. For a second acute attack he had for several mornings a cold rubbing bath for one hour. He could not be prevailed upon to take the bath for a longer period, or the attack would have been much more speedily reduced. He did not remain more than two or three months, and consequently left without finishing his cure, to make which radically would probably be the work of years, if, indeed, it could be made at all. When persons, who, for ten, or twenty, or thirty years, have tried every other remedy, come, when descending the downhill of life, to the water cure as a last resource, the utmost they can reasonably expect is some alleviation. In the case of a young man who had not been long ailing, I have known a cure to be effected in nine weeks. In gout, as in other diseases, the more medicine that has been previously taken, the slower the cure.

By many persons ignorant of the water cure, and all that belongs to it, it is supposed that the boil crisis is always attended with a certain amount of danger, and that it sometimes proves fatal. I have seen boil crises innumerable, and they were invariably attended with beneficial results. The boil should be covered with the heating umschlag. In this crisis, as in the others, it is

generally better, and sometimes absolutely necessary to moderate the treatment, when, if the patient has been taking the douche, it, as the most powerful of all baths, and the great producer of crisis, must be discontinued. Every boil is not a crisis. When a boil or sore eats inwards, it is a proof that the system is too weak to throw out the morbid matter, and it is as much disease as fistula or piles. A crisis boil swells, suppurates, and heals.

I have seen in Galignani, that Lord Abinger has died of apoplexy, no person can venture to assert that the water cure, if tried, would have saved him; but assuredly no person, who has read the details of a recovery from an attack of apoplexy which I gave in a former letter, can venture to deny, that in his lordship's case, the water cure would have been worth a trial. Amongst the recent arrivals here, is one of a Belgian physician, who is both apoplectic and paralytic. Two months before he came he had a fit of apoplexy, and his is one of those cases which confessedly can derive no benefit from medicine; and, as he is aware, all that he can hope for from the water cure is some addition to his life, and less suffering while he does live. This is all that he hopes for, and all that Priessnitz promises. He is now here about three weeks, and within that time he has had a fulfilment to his hopes, and Priessnitz's promise. A week since he had a paralytic stroke, and could neither eat nor speak. His weakly state, and want of reaction, would not admit of his being put into the rubbing *abgeschrecktebad*, the usual remedy, and it was necessary to treat him with the utmost caution. For two days he had fifteen *abreibungen* a-day, and on the third day he could speak and eat as well as he could on his arrival. He is a thorough convert to Hydropathy.

As one of the objects of your society is to endeavour to procure authentic information as to the truth of what has been advanced by Captain Claridge and other authors on the subject of Hydropathy, it may be acceptable to you to learn that I have been enabled to ascertain the correctness of many of the statements made by Captain Claridge, Doctors Wilson, Johnson, and Sir C. Scuda-

more, and by Mr. Abdy and others. Having mentioned Captain Claridge, I should be practising too much self-denial if I omitted this opportunity of expressing the high estimation in which I hold the services which he has rendered to his countrymen on both sides of the channel, and which I cannot better express than in the words of Doctor Johnson, who says that "every person in England," for which I shall take the liberty to substitute—every person in the three kingdoms, "who is cured of his disease by the hydropathic treatment, owes a large debt of gratitude to Captain Claridge, whose indefatigable exertions and indomitable courage, in spite of all opposition, have succeeded in planting Hydropathy in this country—a soil in which, protected by humanity, and watered and pruned by science, it cannot fail to thrive, and grow, and flourish—a blessing to the public."

Yours very faithfully,

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER XIV.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq., etc.

(Republished from the Wexford Papers.)

"Lavatio corporis in frigida, bona ad longitudinem vitæ."

BACON.

Græfenberg, May 25, 1844.

MY DEAR RIDGE,—It is very difficult, if not next to impossible to write about the water cure, without at the same time writing about drugs and doctors. An English physician, a very worthy man, whose acquaintance I had the pleasure to make since I came here, has published to the world his opinion, that most of the diseases under which the patients here, particularly the British portion of them, suffer, may be traced to the use of intoxicating liquors, and, that he has ever been of opinion, that three-

fourths of the diseases which afflict mankind are traceable to the same source. I am far, very far from denying that there may be a great deal of truth in the learned doctor's opinion. I am ready to go as far with him as any one can go; but, why, in pronouncing sentence of condemnation on intoxicating liquors, forget that they are but one of a class, and that other drugs have their share in producing the ills which he deplures. The catalogue of the evils which flow from the bottle and the bowl is sufficiently long without adding to the list—let us deal justice with an even hand, and let us not, in our eagerness to crush one criminal, suffer a host of others to escape. Gout, dropsy, apoplexy, and delirium tremens, are dire visitants, and it is humane and wise to warn the thoughtless of their approach, and to teach mankind how to exclude them from their homes; but look at the victim to opium or mercury, and let us reserve some of our commiseration for him. You may perhaps remember Sir Astley Cooper's famous declaration, that the "science of medicine was founded on conjecture, and improved by murder." This admission, it is said, has recently received in this neighbourhood a curious illustration. A village doctor was called in to attend a tailor in fever; the doctor prescribed "sauer kraut" for his patient, who had the good fortune to recover, whereupon, the learned practitioner made in his diary the following entry—"sauer kraut, good in fever, cured the tailor." Some little time after, our doctor was called in to attend a carpenter, also in fever—the doctor again prescribed "sauer kraut." The carpenter took it, and died. The doctor made a new entry in his diary—"Sauer kraut in fever; bad for carpenters, good for tailors—killed the carpenter, cured the tailor." This little anecdote may perhaps provoke a smile; but to me it seems that it is also calculated to awaken melancholy reflections. It would be a great improvement in medical practice, if nothing more injurious than "sauer kraut" were ever administered, and if the number of the "killed" only included a carpenter or two. But, alas! the killed are a countless host—and who can sum up the wounded?—a large number of whom come here yearly to "wash

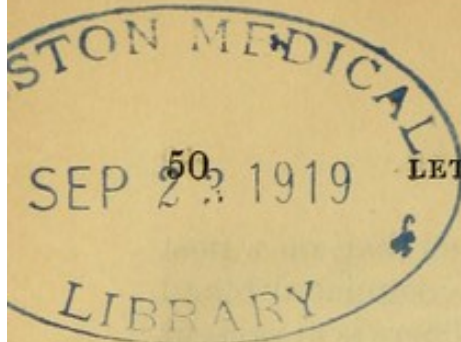
and be healed;" and it is in such cases that the superiority of water over medicine is most strikingly exemplified. There is a disease to which the "man of pleasure" is more liable than the sober citizen, and which is sought to be cured by mercury. Dreadful as is this disease, many can testify that, even when most successful, the remedy is often found to be as bad, if not worse, producing symptoms as alarming as those accompanying the original disease, and terminating in as fatal a result—death. For evident reasons I shall abstain from entering too minutely into details, and shall confine myself to stating generally that diseases which had been treated by mercury and other medicines, and which had been pronounced cured, have often, after the lapse of years, reappeared, under the water treatment, to be radically cured in a few days. Instances can likewise be given of persons who under the water cure had been salivated by mercury which they had taken years before. Yet powerful for good as water is, there are occasions when it is inefficacious owing sometimes to the fact of the patient being past recovery when he seeks for aid, and sometimes owing to the indiscretion of the patient in foolishly seeking to expedite his cure by taking a more active treatment than Priessnitz permits. Take the following as a case in point:—A young man who several times had been cured (?) by mercury, was obliged at last to have recourse to the water cure. To guard against danger, Priessnitz deemed it advisable to subject him at first to very light treatment, giving him, I believe, only leintuchs and abreibungen. Under this mild treatment he improved much in health and strength, when one day, contrary to Priessnitz's directions, he was fool-hardy enough to go into the wanne, or cold plunge bath; he instantly got a rush of blood to the head and dropped down in a senseless condition. By means of the rubbing abgeschrecktebad he was restored, and in a few days he was able to reappear in the saloon, but he soon relapsed, grew weaker and weaker, and sank into a torpor from which he never recovered. So saturated was this patient with mercury, that, as I am credibly informed, his nails rotted and dropped off, and globules of mercury it is said, have

oozed from his fingers' ends. It is stated that, on a post mortem examination, a clot of mixed coagulated blood and mercury was found on the brain. There is at present under treatment a gentleman with exfoliation of the skull, the consequence of the large quantities of mercury which he has taken; and yet, that disease, in the treatment of which mercury is deemed most indispensable, is frequently cured here in a few days, when timely treated, and solely by the agency of water with its adjuncts, air, exercise, diet, sweating and regular hours. How many who have experienced the destructive influence of mercury on the system—who have come here to repair the errors of the past—who while under a long and weary treatment, far from their homes and their friends—how many such must have bitterly bewailed the reliance which they had placed on a science that had doomed them to months and years of loathsome suffering; and still more bitterly, on beholding the speedy departures of others, whose happier influences, or bolder spirit, or greater intelligence, had led them at once to the new Bethesda. But what must be the feelings of those—one of whom has within these few days come and left again to die—what must be their feelings—those unhappy beings, who, when all other remedies have been tried in vain, come here as a last resource; loathsome to themselves and to others—what must be their feelings when they hear the fearful words—“It is too late”—doomed to return to “whence they came” to perish inch by inch—who but themselves can realize the intense agony of such a moment? Give imagination the wildest rein, and how far—how very far short of the dread reality must its conception fall! Before I conclude, let me repeat that I have known an instance of salivation, the effects of mercury which had been taken years before. I have known many instances of the reappearance and the cure of that disease which had been treated by mercury, and had been pronounced cured years before; and I have known the fresh disease cured without the infusion of any additional poison into the system—perfectly cured by water in a few weeks, and in one instance in eight days. Look on that picture and on this.

Ever yours,

D

JOHN GIBBS.



LETTER XV.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq., &c.

[Republished from the Wexford Papers.]

“The water-cure is a discovery which bids fair to spread its blessings wherever there is susceptibility to the worst of human sufferings, and employment to the best of human sympathies.”—
ABDY.

Græfenberg, June 11, 1844.

MY DEAR RIDGE,—Influenced by passing events, I have suffered myself to be diverted from laying before you, in the order in which I had intended, the information of which I have become possessed. Some of the information which I had intended to have reserved for my concluding letters I have given in my first, and some which I had intended to have given in my first letters, I have yet to lay before you. It is my purpose to give, in this letter, one or two cases of cure; but, as I have referred, in my letter of the 20th of May, to cases given by several British authors, I shall, in the first place, point out a few of those cases, the leading details, and, in some instances, all the particulars of which have been confirmed to me by the most credible testimony. Amongst those cases are two which are given by Captain Claridge, namely, the case of the Prussian Consul, in page 187, and the case of the countess, in page 190.* Subsequently to Captain Claridge's departure from Græfenberg both those persons left perfectly cured. I have likewise ascertained from an eye-witness the truth of the case of madness, given by Dr. Wilson, in page 160; as well as

* The case of this lady is a remarkable one,—she had been two years confined to bed, and was brought a journey of 150 miles to Græfenberg, extended on a mattress in her carriage, and enveloped in a wet sheet, which was constantly renewed. She was restored to excellent health, and has since borne three children—on each occasion she returned to Græfenberg to be confined.

the general accuracy of the following cases given by Dr. Johnson—case of paralysis, page 14; dyspepsia, page 22; gout and rheumatism, page 25; fistula, page 36; the case of the gentleman from Transylvania, page 39; case of a lady, page 45; scarlet fever, page 52; symptomatic fever, page 53; catarrh, page 56; baldness, page 57; the foregoing have all been cases of perfect cure.—To these I would add the two very interesting cases given by Mr. Beamish, viz.:—the case of a lady, in page 85, and the case of deafness, in page 97.

Allow me now briefly to give you the particulars of a recent cure of a case of stomach complaint of six years standing; the patient is a young man, twenty-seven years old; he was here last year for three months, and here this year likewise for three months, having come on the 1st of March and left on the 1st of June. His stomach was so bad that his food used continually to return into his mouth, and his medical adviser said that he should become a convert to Hydropathy if Priessnitz succeeded in effecting a cure. For a month before his departure he was perfectly well. He had not many crises, only eight or nine boils. His treatment was, in the morning, an *abreibung*, followed, after the lapse of five minutes, during which he lay in bed, by a *leintuch* succeeded by the cold bath; at noon he douched and took an *abreibung* and *sitzbath*, and in the afternoon, he took the *leintuch* and cold bath again.

The case I am next about to give has not been treated here, and the details are rather lengthy, but, nevertheless, they appear to me to possess sufficient interest to warrant me in giving them in full. This case, which has never yet been published, is now, for the first time, translated from an original letter, written to a friend, by the reverend gentleman who effected the cure.

“A cure effected in the Princess Sapieha’s house by the Pastor Klose, June 1st, 1843.

“A married woman, aged twenty-six, in eating saur kraut, swallowed a piece of glass, which stuck in her throat. After several ineffectual efforts either to cough it up or to force it down, she sent for a surgeon, who gave her an emetic, which also proved unavailing. He

next endeavoured to extract it with different instruments, and applied a large number of leeches to the throat, but all in vain; and on the second day, he said that he could not do anything more for her. Meanwhile, she got inflammatory fever, and as the medical science could not afford her aid, she was submitted to the water treatment by the before mentioned clergyman. She was packed in a leintuch, or wet sheet, with a heating umschlag, or wet bandage, with a dry one over it, round the throat, both being changed, night and day, as soon as warm. At the commencement of this treatment, the patient could not swallow even a drop of water; she could scarcely breathe, and a horrible stench came from her mouth; her medical attendant said that mortification had set in, and that she could not possibly live through the next day.

“Third and fourth days.—The same treatment was continued, with the addition of three injections, the effect of which was a small stool. The leintuch now, instead of being changed, was wetted with a sponge, because every movement of the patient caused her excessive pain. She threw up a great deal of phlegm and matter, which stunk so horribly that no person could remain near her bedside.

“Fifth day.—The vomiting and likewise the heat of the body increased. In consequence of the increase of fever, notwithstanding all the pain which she suffered on being moved, she was placed in a tepid bath of 18° Reaumur; and, while in the bath, the head, throat, and chest were frequently wetted with cold water, and the feet and abdomen were well rubbed. This bath afforded her great relief. While in it, she threw up quantities of matter with ease, and without pain or coughing. She remained in it thirty-five minutes, the same temperature being maintained throughout. At the expiration of this time the body was considerably cooled, but the pulse was still very high; for which reason, she was again packed in the leintuch, and the pulse became regular; after this she was able to swallow the first drop of water.

“Sixth day.—The mortification was pronounced to be subdued; but, as she could not take any nourishment, four injections of milk were administered; and, when

fever returned, then injections of water instead of milk were given.

“ Seventh day.—Besides the former treatment, a half bath was given, and the effect was the same as on the fifth day, viz., much vomiting; but, this time, with an increase of cough.

“ Eighth day.—Patient much better; therefore the treatment was changed, only large umshlags being applied to the chest, throat, and back; and in the afternoon she was able to swallow some cold water soup, (a light soup, similar to our beef-tea).

“ Ninth day.—Heat and fever returned, large quantities of matter were vomited, and inflammation of the wind-pipe took place. Leintuch and throat umschlag were resumed, both being often changed, and she had one half-bath.

“ Tenth, eleventh, and twelfth.—Same treatment.

“ Thirteenth.—Fever ceased, the vomiting diminished, and the patient was able to swallow some milk and water.

“ Fourteenth and fifteenth.—A great improvement: she ate a little apple sauce.

“ Sixteenth.—Some fever returned, but she swallowed some spoonful of milk without coughing.

“ Seventeenth.—After a quiet night there was found in the bed a piece of glass, which it is supposed must have been thrown up by coughing.

“ Eighteenth, nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first.—Great improvement in patient's general state, and diminution of vomiting, unaccompanied by the former bad smell. She drank and ate some light food, very slowly but without coughing.

“ Twentieth-second, to 8th of July.—Every day more improvement: patient regaining strength, and walking a little in the garden.

“ 9th July.—She went to church.

“ 10th.—She returned to her business quite well, except that when working she felt, where the glass had been, a slight degree of pain, which left her when she rested.”

It is not necessary to comment on this case; it speaks for itself; the wonderful efficacy of water, when judiciously

applied in reducing the most alarming symptoms, and placing nature in the best position to relieve herself, must strike every reader.

I have room in this letter for one more case of cure. In last October, a gentleman, aged forty-five, left after a seven months stay : he was perfectly cured of stricture, and fistula in perinæo. He had been here once before, and had been then also cured of stricture, but had contracted fresh disease. His treatment on his last visit consisted at first of, in the morning, schwitzen and douche alternately : noon and evening, leintuch and cold bath each. After the lapse of four weeks he took two leintuchs both in the morning and evening, and at the end of eight weeks he took the douche at noon instead of the leintuch and cold bath. I intend, in my next letter, to continue the cases of cure ; and am, my dear Ridge, your very faithful,

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER XVI.

To the Editors of the Wexford Conservative, and the Wexford Independent.

(Republished from the Wexford Papers.)

MY DEAR SIRs,—Your correspondent, Doctor B., has taken up much of your space in telling the community that “your correspondents,” Mr. Gibbs, and myself, “would have the public to imagine, that Priessnitz has been the discoverer of the water cure,” and in endeavouring to shew what he considers to be “the rise and progress of this herculean remedy,” and that “Priessnitz had not any claim to originality in the revival of an old and oft exploded theory.” Now, the conclusion which this “drug practitioner” wishes us to adopt, is, that Vincent Priessnitz is *not* the discoverer of *that system* of Hydropathy about which “your correspondents” have

occasionally written. And what are the premises from which he attempts to draw this sage conclusion? Because, forsooth, cold water has been used from time immemorial, even before the flood, in curing disease. The doctor was most learned on this subject, and, indeed, has given hydropathists much useful information; and, *did* their spirit fail them, a great deal of encouragement; (particularly, when he informs them that the man who cured the Emperor Augustus with cold water, had his statue placed next to that of Esculapius). But I would ask, Is it fair to infer, that, inasmuch as water has been a remedial agent from the remotest period, therefore Priessnitz is not the discoverer of that particular system which he so wonderfully and successfully practises. As reasonably might it be said, that as Watt discovered that steam could lift up the lid of a tea kettle, therefore, Sir James Anderson is not the discoverer of the present *improved* locomotive. All who advocate the water cure freely acknowledge that the "application of water as a remedial agent is by no means an invention of modern times. Moreover, it was the chief remedy which the intuitive instinct of man suggested to him in all prevalent diseases;" and, as another says, "the use of cold water, as we have already shewn, has been known from the remotest period." These few words briefly express that about which your correspondent has so verbosely written. They acknowledge what he has laboured so hard to set forth; but their writer arrives at a widely different conclusion; it is—"that the peculiar acuteness of Priessnitz invented new and efficient modes of application, by which he *diversified* the operation of cold water—using it as a refrigerant, sudorific, tonic, antiphlogistic, and, even as a powerful stimulant, until it became adequate to all cases." Surely, Dr. B. does not believe that the present system of Hydropathy consists merely in dipping patients into cold water, administering it internally, or applying it by means of wet clothes? If he does imagine such to be the case, he ought to go to Græfenberg, and take for his motto

"Tecum prius ergo voluta,
Hæc animo ante tubas."

In conclusion, I beg to say, that since I wrote last I have been most fortunate, in curing, by *cold water*, the most dreadful complaint to which animal nature is subject, and one which has rarely been successfully treated by medicine—I mean *tetanus* (lock jaw). It occurred in a young horse, about fourteen days after docking. The jaws were firmly fixed, and rigid for thirty-six hours before I saw the animal, which was then a pitiable sight; the spasm had become so universal that the animal could not turn round its body, and the neck was so hard as to feel like a stone. I had no hopes of saving the animal, but I used powerful applications of water for twenty-four hours. The spasm relaxed, the muscles became softer, and, after much trouble, the jaws could be slightly opened, so that some nourishment was given to the animal, which perfectly recovered in three days. My attention was chiefly directed to apply my remedies to the spine, and to produce a relaxation of the universal cramp by “tranquilizing the system.” My agent for so doing, was the long continued application of cold; and I found it a more powerful means of allaying general irritation than the usual remedy, bleeding. I kept the bowels free by tepid water injections, and then I had the animal put through the sudorific process, and powerful reaction brought on by a second *short* application of cold, namely, pouring a small stream of water over the animal from a height. Has your correspondent ever cured the lock jaw by drugs, or the usual remedies? Has he ever *seen* it cured? If he favours me with a visit, I shall be most happy to show him the patient, and explain the entire treatment to him. When he and I have conversed together, and he has seen “with his *own eyes*” conclusive evidence, I have such a good opinion of his intellect, that I would presume to hope that he might become a convert to the doctrines of Hydropathy. And I have now to add, that, within the last few days a pony belonging to a friend of mine, fell, and lacerated the integuments of both knees; and lock-jaw having set in, it was brought to me for my advice. It was not so bad a case as the one mentioned above. I ordered similar treatment; but a “drug practitioner,” who is in the

habit of visiting at the house where lives the owner of the poney, *ordered* bleeding and blistering. The water was thrown by, and death was the result.

Yours very sincerely,

R. T. RIDGE.

LETTER XVII.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq., etc.

(Republished from the Wexford Papers.)

“Water is a therapeutic agent, far surpassing in simplicity, efficacy, and universality every other that has been offered to man.”—
BEAMISH on the Water-cure.

Græfenberg, June 19, 1844.

MY DEAR RIDGE,—Mr. Haycroft, a respectable citizen of Cork (whose signature was amongst those appended to the letter from the British here to the *Times*), has left this early this morning; and yesterday afternoon I received from him a letter, together with a statement of his case, both of which I here transcribe in full.

“Græfenberg, June 17th, 1844.

“MY DEAR SIR,—I experience a very great pleasure in being enabled, under such happy circumstances, to hand you the annexed. You have here a plain, simple account of the manner in which I have been cured by the water treatment of a very troublesome disease, which for six years refused to yield to any of the almost numberless remedies which five skilful practitioners in the drug system could think of, and respecting which, when they saw their efforts to be unavailing, they declared it as their opinion, that if I ever got rid of it, it would be only when perhaps it might wear away by age. I now leave Græfenberg perfectly well; I have not a

single ache or pain to complain of; a very different story, I assure you, to the one I came here with. You are at liberty to make use of this in any way in which you think the knowledge of this rational and certain method of curing disease can be placed in a more striking light before our suffering fellow-creatures, so that their attention may be arrested to give it the consideration it so well deserves. I shall feel it my duty on every occasion to exert any influence I may possess in the small circle of my friends, in order to dissuade them from the use of drugs in any shape or form. I am convinced, that the use of spirituous and malt liquors never increased and strengthened the drunkard's malady with more certainty, than the administration of drugs do the diseases which mankind suffer under. Against drugs, as well as against the drunkard's beverage, I shall ever lift up my feeble voice. In both cases, I declare myself to be a Teetotaler. I would here, and on all occasions, express my unfeigned gratitude to God for blessing these simple means to the recovery of my health, and for enduing Priessnitz with the wonderful knowledge which he possesses; thus affording sinful erring man an opportunity of regaining the greatest blessing of this life, health, which, in nine cases out of ten, is destroyed by his own wilful folly and wickedness. I heartily pray, that many may have grace to lay these (God's) mercies to heart, and that they may be the means of leading many to a true repentance, and a consequent turning away from evil.

"I remain, dear Sir, with best wishes for your welfare,
your affectionate friend,

"HENRY HAYCROFT."

"CASE OF PSORIASIS.—The eruption made its first appearance on my head, when I was about twenty-three years of age—its cause unknown. Underwent medical treatment for six years, and tried every remedy which the experience of five skilful physicians could suggest. Was salivated thrice by the use of Plummer's Pills, and tried an almost numberless variety of lotions and ointments, some of the latter being of such a nature as to burn off the

flesh, the marks of which remain to the present day. Visited Harrogate three times, for three or four months each time, and derived great temporary benefit from the use of the waters there. On my second return from that place, the eruption became so bad on my legs, from my knees down, that I could not walk or stand without pain for any length of time. During the second and fourth years, the eruption spread over the entire surface of the body. It generally became better in warm weather, and nearly disappeared during two summers. I was obliged to make use of ointment continually, to keep the skin from cracking. My stomach and bowels were a constant source of annoyance. Arrived at Græfenberg, 27th July, 1843. At this period the eruption only appeared in two or three patches, on the head and ears, and one on the left leg below the knee. I had also two lumps on the back of the neck, each the size of a pigeon's egg. After consulting Priessnitz, I was ordered by him, the same evening, under his inspection, into a shallow bath of 14° (Reaumur), in which I was gently rubbed for about half a minute; after which I plunged into a cold bath, and returned again into the tepid one. Commenced the treatment the next morning, which, with the different appearances and changes of the eruptions, were regularly noted as follows:—

“First month, August.—Packed up at five o'clock in the morning in a wet sheet, in which I remained for a quarter of an hour: this was then exchanged for another, in which I remained one hour; after which I got into the shallow tepid bath for half a minute, then plunged into the cold one, and back again into the first.* At eleven o'clock, packed up in a wet sheet for one hour; after which (instead of the bath) I was rubbed well with a sheet wrung out of cold water. At five o'clock, p.m., the treatment was the same as at eleven o'clock. By the end of this month my stomach and bowels began to act more regularly.

* Dr. Ed. Baynard writes,—“I have known many cases in which neither hot nor cold baths have touched singly; yet joined, that is successively used, have performed the cure.”

“Second month, September 5th.—Douche for three minutes and sitzbath for half an hour, substituted for the mid-day leintuch. About this time began to experience a very painful sensation in my legs and thighs while in the cold bath, so that I could not remain in longer than while plunging the body two or three times. On acquainting Priessnitz with this, he ordered me to walk for a few minutes, after douching, with my legs exposed to the air.

“20th.—I had a violent attack of diarrhœa, which commenced in the morning, after bathing, and returned at intervals during my walk for two hours; on my return from which I felt very weak, and suffered much from cramps in my stomach and bowels. The treatment I underwent for this was as follows:—I was packed up in a wet sheet doubled, reaching from the arm-pits to the hips, till it became warm. This was renewed seven times, once every quarter of an hour: at the expiration of this time (one hour and three quarters) I felt free from pain, but very weak. The cramps returned again slightly in the evening, when I was ordered a sitzbath for one hour, and, if this did not answer, to use a clyster of cold water. The sitzbath removed the pain effectually. Up to this period, since my youth, I was always troubled with a pain in my left side, after any extraordinary exertion, such as running quickly or for any length of time, or when walking up hill; but since I had this attack to the present time, I have not felt it. The pain had been so constant and annoying that I at once noticed its disappearance.

“The smell from the leintuch during this month was very offensive, which Priessnitz said was caused by the quantity of bad matter thrown off through the skin. At the end of this month the eruption was evidently worse, spreading over the front of the head, the ears and cheeks. I could notice various small spots also on different parts of my body.

“Third month, October 10th.—Began to use but one leintuch in the morning, and discontinued the use of the tepid bath, and in the afternoon took the cold bath after the leintuch instead of the wet sheet. At this period I

found the re-action after each operation to be much better. During this month the eruption became very bad, particularly on my head and ears: it accumulated to such a degree that the skin cracked in various parts, and discharged a yellow gummy matter.

“Fourth month, November 12th. The eruption worse, causing my head to feel quite sore. I was ordered to have a wet linen covering on the head and ears, and over it a dry one of the same material, to be changed four or five times during the day. 25th.—Began to use the schwitzen twice during the week, sweating one hour each time; the pains which I felt in my legs on going into the cold bath gradually becoming less sensible.

“Fifth month, December 5th. Experienced a rheumatic pain in my right shoulder, which I had felt at intervals for many years. Was ordered to rub the part well with water after coming out of the cold bath. After eight or ten days the pain ceased to trouble me.

“29th.—Had a return of the rheumatic pain, more severe than the former, and in both shoulders. On mentioning this to Priessnitz he desired me to use abriebungs till I got rid of it. I took three the same night going to bed. Next day at twelve o'clock took four; after the evening leintuch, instead of the bath, took three: and same evening, when going to bed, took five more. I have not felt the pain since. At this time the eruption was worse, covering the entire surface of the head and ears, and making the parts very sore; the spots on the body neither increasing in size or number.

“Sixth month, Jan. 8, 1844.—Obliged to cease sweating, from a feeling of weakness. Towards the close of the month the eruption wore an improved appearance.

“Seventh month, February 6th.—Commenced again to sweat. The eruption during this month was vastly improved, and the inflamed appearance caused by it had a good deal subsided.

“Eighth month, March.—About the middle of this month, a large patch of the eruption made its appearance in my left armpit. At the end of the month my head and ears were greatly improved, the eruption disappearing, leaving the skin very much inflamed and con-

tracted ; the spot on my leg nearly quite gone, and the lumps on my neck decreasing in size.

“Ninth month, April 20th.—The spot on my leg had by this time entirely disappeared, and the lumps on my neck nearly so ; my head and ears so much better that Priessnitz desired me to take off the coverings from them by degrees, and expose the parts to the air when the weather was mild, washing them during the day with cold water.

“27th.—While sitting at the table after dinner this day, I experienced a sudden rush of blood to the head, which caused a burning sensation over it and the face, and the back of the neck. In looking in the glass, in about half an hour after, I was astonished and alarmed to see the entire surface of the head and parts of the face, on which I did not before notice the eruption, covered so thickly with loose white scales, that on rubbing them with my hand they came off in great profusion. After washing, the parts seemed a good deal inflamed, but next morning the flesh was improved in colour.

“Tenth month, May 2nd.—After dinner this day felt another rush of blood to the head similar to that noticed on the 27th ultimo ; the scales came off in profusion, but next day the flesh was improved in colour, and the skin less contracted. The patch under my arm was, at the end of this month, quite gone, as also were the lumps on my neck.

“10th.—My body is now quite free from all appearance of the eruption, and the only sign which remains to indicate that I was ever troubled with this disease (which for so long a period refused to yield to the application of drugs, and has in this short space of time been cured by the use of water) is a slight powdery substance on the crown of the head.

“I have gradually left off the various operations preparatory to my departure, and am happy to say that now, June 17th, 1844, every particle and sign of the eruption has disappeared. It may not be out of place to remark, that the physician to whom I first applied told me that he did not think it could be cured by drugs, having known so many cases which resisted every application of them,

and that if I ever got rid of it, it would be when by chance it might wear away by age. Another very eminent surgeon, after I had been under his care for some months, had the honesty then to tell me that drugs could do no more for me, and it was therefore useless to spend any more of my time or money in their use.

“H. HAYCROFT.”*

Such is Mr. Haycroft's case as related by himself. In offering a few remarks on this case, it may be useful to call attention to the fact of the symptoms becoming more and more aggravated up to the end of the fifth month,—this being quite in accordance with the principles on which the water cure proceeds, it being ever the object of this mode of cure to assist, instead of checking the efforts of nature to *expel* disease. Besides the remedies of which Mr. Haycroft makes mention in his case as here detailed, he has told me, on another occasion, that, during the course of his medical treatment, in addition to great quantities of sweet woods, he has taken diverse remedies of a poisonous nature—that he wore tar caps for weeks together, and *continually* used *sulphur* and *mercurial ointments*, and various *astringent lotions*, the tendency of these being merely to *repel* the disease from the surface, and yet, so strong was nature, that they never entirely succeeded; and even to the parts from which the eruption occasionally disappeared, he was obliged to continue the application of the ointments to prevent the skin from splitting. I have seen him when (from the state of his head and face, as may be inferred from the description which he gives of them during the third month) his appearance was anything but attractive, and I have seen

* It is proper to state here that, when Mr. Haycroft was leaving, Priessnitz declined to pronounce him perfectly cured, and wished him to remain somewhat longer, but Mr. Haycroft was anxious to return home, where four months after he left Græfenberg, he had a relapse, for which, after the lapse of a month, he called in Dr. Barter, under whom he took the water-cure treatment for six weeks, at the expiration of which time every unpleasant symptom had disappeared, and he has never had, for the last two years, the slightest return. I feel bound to add that Dr. Barter made very free use of the vapour-bath.

him depart with a skin and a bloom that many a fair one might envy. It should not be forgotten, that besides being cured of his psoriasis, he has likewise got rid of the lumps in his neck, and the occasional pain in his left side, in fact, of all his ailments; that he has not had a recurrence of his rheumatism since the 29th of December; and also, that his stomach and bowels now, and for some months back, regularly perform their functions, so that, as he told me, "he can now digest anything." You will agree with me, that great praise is due to Mr. Haycroft, for his manliness and philanthropic feeling in so kindly coming forward with his testimony; and I am sure that you will likewise agree with me, that it were to be wished that other gentlemen would as kindly communicate their cases, either with or without their names, and what a mass of evidence might be laid before the public! It may be fairly said, that it would be the labour of years to transcribe it.

Ever your very faithful friend,

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER XVIII.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq., etc., etc.

(Republished from the Wexford Papers)

"The water-cure, resting on its merits alone, cannot fail of eventually becoming general."—WEISS on Hydropathy.

Græfenberg, June 25, 1844.

MY DEAR RIDGE,—We have just been honoured by a visit from three English physicians, who, although their stay was exceedingly short, contrived, with most astonishing celerity, to excite a very strong feeling against them. One of them must be decidedly the cleverest professor of the healing art to be found under the

wide canopy of heaven; at least, there is very little doubt but that he so considers himself. "He can cure, by the exhibition of drugs all and every disease without fail, and in the shortest conceivable time; but, unfortunately, there are ignorant practitioners, who by their failures bring the profession into disrepute." The whole body of his professional brethren ought to unite in an address of thanks to him, their bold and skilful champion, who, in his eagerness to run a tilt at the water cure, charges right over the ranks of his own friends, and upsets them all without favour or affection. What! Abernethy, Sir A. Cooper, Sir B. Brodie, Guthrie, (not to mention a host of other eminent physicians and surgeons)—what! they have failed to make cures, and their patients (after years and years of suffering and drugging, and drugging and suffering,) have at length journeyed to Græfenberg for health. I have seen them here,—and, therefore, Doctors Abernethy, Cooper, Brodie, and Guthrie, you must be content to be put down, according to your brother doctor, as "ignorant practitioners, who, by your failures, bring the profession into disrepute." But comfort yourselves—those of you who still survive your glory—you are not the only "ignorant practitioners." Your compeers are many, and their name is legion. Let this be your solace, that last year there were here under Priessnitz ten hundred and fifty patients—this year there have been a few additional hundreds—and all were strangers congregated from no obscure locality, but from far and near, from almost every part of the civilized world—princes and dukes, counts and barons, British peers and Continental nobles, Russian aristocrats and citizens of America, captains, majors, colonels, generals, and field marshals, clergymen, Catholic and Protestant, artists, learned professors and fellows of colleges, attorneys, barristers, and judges—aye, and many members of your own profession; and, if you ask any one of them, probably you will learn that he has travelled far and wide in search of health, and consulted the most eminent medical men in Europe, to whose "prescriptions he has faithfully adhered;" and yet—how shall I pen it?—he had the misfortune to meet with

the "ignorant practitioners, who, by their failures, bring the profession into disrepute." All hail to Dr. ———, and may the profession never lack such defenders. But it may be asked, Why not give the name of this most extraordinary man who is not an "ignorant practitioner," in order that it may be emblazoned in characters of gold, and posted at the corner of every street in the British dominions, so that "all men may know where to seek him?" I reply, it is needless for me to do so, as he is about to trumpet forth his own praise in a work on the various modes of "curing disease practised in Germany," and to qualify himself to write a chapter on the water cure, he came to Freiwaldau on Friday, the 21st inst.; visited Græfenberg that evening, next day favored it with another short visit; conversed a little with half-a-dozen of the patients; and finally, he and his took their departure on Sunday morning, the 23rd instant, let us charitably hope, wiser men than when they came—and if they are not wiser, it is not the fault of two or three of the British here who took the trouble to lay before them several powerful facts, hoping thereby to convert them to the truth, a result of which I am not sanguine, for, when I recollect that it is asserted that no medical man of forty years of age ever received Harvey's doctrine of the circulation of the blood, I perceive all the difficulty of winning to the water cure men whose deeply rooted prejudices as well as whose interests are so strongly arrayed against it.

Postponing further remarks for possibly a future occasion, I shall now resume the continuation of the cases which I purpose to lay before you.

On the 8th of this month there left an Austrian commissary of police, who, on the 15th of the previous month, wrote down his case for me as follows:—

"In 1831, from exposure to wet, I caught cold, and got intermittent fever, which lasted three days. The physician whom I consulted treated it as a trifle, gave me ipecacuanha, and, after I had vomited, he prescribed six doses of quinine powder. After the use of these remedies the fever disappeared; however, I was much weakened, and felt a strange oppressive pain in the spleen.

When I called my physician's attention to this pain, he gave it as his opinion that the stomach had not been sufficiently cleansed before I took the quinine; but that it would be of no consequence, only that the fever would return in a fortnight, which really took place. This time the treatment and the result were the same as at first, only that I became weaker, so that I took six weeks to recover my strength. I took this quinine powder with apprehension, in consequence of my brother having taken the same remedy for intermittent fever, which was followed by pulmonary consumption, of which in two years he died; and when I felt the consequence of this remedy in my own case, I made up my mind that if the fever should return the third time, I would take family medicines recommended in 'Paulitzky's Rational Guide to Health.' Having used this remedy the fever became less and less, and at last entirely left me. My appetite and strength also became better; but from time to time I had a disgusting taste of ipecacuanha and quinine, until I got, in 1832, a severe inflammation of the liver and spleen. From this I recovered, but did not regain my former strength. The drugs which I then took I am not able to mention. Next year, 1833, I got severe pains in the chest, and threw up much blood, for which my physician gave me Iceland moss. In 1835 those pains got worse, accompanied by cough, and my hair, hitherto very strong, began to fall out. In 1836 I was confined to bed, and my physician declared that my disease was gastric and nervous fever. Some weeks afterwards he changed his opinions, and said that it was a chronic liver complaint. From that time, with few intervals, I remained under medical treatment till 1839, in December of which year I became very bad; and on the 13th of March, 1840, my physician and others consulted, and declared that I should be buried in eight days. In consequence of this *medical comfort* I started on the following day, the 14th, for Græfenberg, where I arrived on the 18th; and next day, the 19th, I commenced treatment by going into the tepid bath. On first seeing me Priessnitz refused to accept me, as he considered me too

weak to go through any treatment ; but I urged him to take me and keep me alive only for a few months, and he consented to take me on trial for a fortnight. On the fourteenth day he said that I might remain, as he hoped to save me. My treatment was sweating in the morning in the blanket, in which I lay until the skin became quite wet, and then I took the abgeschrecktebad, cold bath and abgeschrecktebad. At noon, and in the afternoon, I took a sitzbath for half an hour. After following this cure for thirteen weeks, Priessnitz ordered me to take only the cold bath after sweating, and two weeks later I began to douche for one minute the first fortnight, increasing it to two minutes the second fortnight, and to three minutes the third fortnight. On the 22d day of October, the same year, being called away by family affairs, I left Græfenburg and followed the cure at home in the same way, with this difference only, that instead of the large wanne, I sat in a small wanne, and had water poured over me. In spring, 1841, I built a douche, and douched during the summer for five minutes daily. In autumn of the same year I began in my morning walks to spit out lumps of thick phlegm, which increased in quantity through the winter, and partially continues even now. In autumn 1842, I felt a pain under the ribs on the right side, and Priessnitz wrote to me, desiring me to sweat thrice a-week, and on the other days to take a leintuch. Towards the end of this year I got many boils, which continued throughout the whole winter. Towards the end of May 1843, I returned to Græfenburg. My treatment now, instead of schwitzen, was only leintuch, which I took thrice a-day, and two sitzbaths, which I took for a quarter of an hour each. In August the same year I got a fever, which lasted twenty-four hours, and for which I took an abreibung every hour, until they produced in the night such profuse sweat, that all my bedding, even to the mattress, was wetted through ; afterwards I had the abgeschrecktebad instead of the cold bath for a fortnight, during which time there was expelled through the skin a slimy and stinking substance. Since that time the pain in the right side is

entirely gone, my hair is growing again, and now I continue the cure only to free the system from any remaining impurities.

“YOHANN.—Police Commissary.

“May 15, 1844.”

This gentleman, who is about fifty-five years of age, left on the 8th instant, with the intention to return in October, being determined to follow up a cure which has so wonderfully preserved and lengthened his life, until every lingering seed of disease is eradicated from his system. It will possibly strike the reader as singular that this gentleman should so earnestly desire to be kept alive “for a few months.” The reason for which redounds so much to his praise, that although it has, strictly speaking, no connection with the water cure, nevertheless, I cannot refrain from giving it. He only asked to have his life prolonged for two months, in order that his wife and family might be provided for, as he would then have completed his twenty-five years service, and they would be entitled to a pension.

While at home, after his first visit to Græfenberg, he had an addition to his family, and the child when born was very weak and sickly. It had very great difficulty of breathing, its respiration was sibilant, and it gasped much, as if being smothered. From these symptoms it is possible that it may have had the croup. The medical gentlemen in attendance drugged the mother, in order to act, through the medium of the milk, on the child, who, however, on the third day, refused the breast, and was obliged to be fed from a peculiar shaped glass used for that purpose. The doctor wished to physic the child, but the father would not consent; and on the sixth day, he gave it a leintuch until it got warm, when he changed it, and, after the second leintuch, he plunged the child into tepid water (16° Rea. 68° Fah.). After four days a lump appeared on the chest, which increased, until it became as large as a man's fist. On the eighth day this lump broke, and discharged nearly half a tumbler

full of matter, after which the child gradually became strong, and is now three years old, and the healthiest of his children.

I am, ever yours,

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER XIX.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq. etc.

(Republished from the Wexford Papers.)

“Capiti nihil æque prodest atque aqua frigida.”—CELSUS.

Græfenberg, June 27, 1844.

MY DEAR RIDGE,—Sometimes persons who formerly have been cured by Priessnitz come here for a day or two, influenced by feelings of gratitude and affection, to renew their acquaintance with the man to whose skill they consider themselves to be deeply indebted. In the course of this month I have seen two gentlemen who came here for this purpose. One was a young man apparently the very perfection of rude health; he remained here but one night, and I had no opportunity of learning his case. The other was an old officer who remained a couple of days, and whose case I shall briefly give. Colonel —— (then lieutenant, aged twenty-three) received at the battle of Leipsic, in 1813, a gun-shot wound through the right side of the belly, the ball coming out behind and splintering the osilium. At that time he enjoyed good health, and the wound soon closed. He made the campaigns of '14 and '15, and continued in good health till 1823. In that year the wound began to pain him, and became so exceedingly painful in 1826 that he was not able to go through with his regiment the usual autumnal exercise, which lasts for one month. Up to

1829 he was at intervals sometimes better and sometimes worse; at times being able, and at other times being unable, to attend to his military duties. In the latter end of autumn, 1829, there formed on the seat of the wound a large tumour, which finally opened and discharged more than half a pint of sanies with small pieces of bone. In a few weeks the wound dried again. Before the discharge of sanies the colonel was so sick that he could not move a limb, and was lifted out of bed by men; but afterwards he became better, and in 1831 was so well that he joined the Army of Italy as Chief of the General Staff of the Corps d'-Armée. In the autumn of 1831 pains returned again; and in spring of 1832 the wound re-opened, but without discharging sanies, and without confining him to-bed. As the wound opened the pains grew less and less, and he was still able to do duty, though with great difficulty. The wound continued open till 1836, when the colonel came to Græfenberg, where he took the following treatment. In the morning slight schwitzen (not quite a quarter of an hour's duration), followed by the full bath; at noon a sitzbath; and in the afternoon he lay in bed till warm, and then took the cold plunge bath. In two months he douched according to his inclination before dinner, and took a sitzbath in the afternoon. To the wound he wore the heating umschlag, many folds of it being wetted and kept continually renewed. Besides the wound he suffered from hæmorrhoids, which have also been entirely cured. He is now fifty-four and every way in perfect health. Last year he walked and rode with two Englishmen all over Switzerland, and ascended St. Gothard, Mont Blanc, and other mountains. The above particulars were given by the colonel to my friend the Rev. Mr. Smithett, from whom I received them, and who has kindly given me permission to communicate them to the Society.

Amongst the departures in the present month was one of a gentleman, aged about two-and-twenty, who arrived here towards the end of last July. He favored me with the following details of his case:—He was in good health until one day he fell from his horse and received a severe

blow on his chest, in which, for many subsequent months, he had excessive pain, which became much worse when he spoke, and he suffered so much that his nerves became completely shattered. He was copiously bled, cupped, and blistered, and took large quantities of medicine. Under this treatment his system was much reduced, and he became a wretched hypochondriac. Nine months after his fall, eight of which he was under constant medical treatment, a consultation of physicians advised him to proceed to Madeira, whither he accordingly went. On the voyage out he lost thirty-two pounds in weight. He remained at Madeira three months, during which time all his distressing symptoms became worse and worse, or, as he expressed it, "increased to the utmost." Unable to endure the climate any longer, he returned home by the advice of his medical attendant. During the voyage he felt somewhat better, and when he arrived at home he again called in his physician, under whose care he remained for three months, without experiencing any further improvement. On the contrary, his digestive organs became so much impaired as to have almost entirely ceased their natural functions. In this state, by the advice of his physicians, and at the recommendation of his friends, he came to Græfenberg, where he arrived towards the end of July, 1843. Almost immediately he commenced the following treatment:—In the morning, leintuch and cold bath; at noon, and again in the evening, abreibung and sitzbath. For the first month he derived but little benefit, but afterwards there was gradual, but steady and marked improvement. Long before he left, the distressing symptoms detailed above had vanished, his strength was restored, his appetite good, his functions regular, his sleep sound, and he had a keen relish for those social enjoyments which are natural to his years. He left on the 17th inst. I saw him shortly after his arrival, feeble, wan, and emaciated; he was the very personification of nervousness and general debility. When he left he was the image of health, with muscles tough as whalebone, and a complexion that, if divided and distributed amongst

twenty Parisienne belles would render rouge a superfluity. A few days before his departure, this gentleman read to me from his notes the following particulars respecting a friend of his who had already left. He, too, was a victim to hypochondriasis. He suffered much from indigestion, costiveness, frequent vomiting, and general weakness; and, I should not omit to add, secondary symptoms. He took in the morning the leintuch and cold bath; at noon an abreibung and sitzbath; in the evening a sitzbath; in addition to which, he sweated once a week, and douched occasionally. He was of a strong constitution, and within ten months he was perfectly cured.

On the 17th instant, there was also another departure of a young man of about two or three and twenty, who was here nine months, and was perfectly cured. For fifteen years he had suffered much from toothache, and had for seven years (originally caused by toothache) a large hard lump in the cheek. Under the treatment this lump softened, increased in size, suppurated and healed; and for some months back his cheek had been restored to its primitive appearance. He also suffered from a peculiar nervous disorder, which here I cannot particularize. His general treatment, which was varied occasionally to meet particular symptoms, consisted of a leintuch and cold bath thrice a day: a sitzbath at ten o'clock, A. M., and a head bath in the afternoon. Sometimes, instead of the mid-day leintuch, he douched, and when the swelling in his cheek was bad, he had schwitzen. This gentleman's brother left about three months earlier. He had been under treatment for a similar nervous disorder, and was perfectly cured in six months. Postponing to my next letter the further enumeration of my facts,

I am, your's very truly,

JOHN GIBBS.

* I heard of him lately from a friend who had seen him a few days previously, and he continued to enjoy excellent health.

LETTER XX.

*To the Editors of the Wexford Conservative and the
Wexford Independent.*

[Republished from the Wexford Papers.]

“ They who sit enthroned in antiquated and erroneous opinions find it easier to laugh at methods which threaten to hurl them from their high estate, than to offer a valid objection to them by argument.”

MY DEAR SIRs,—It would appear that Dr. B. has found out a new way of *proving* an assertion. He *came forward* to show that the water cure was a humbug: his mode of doing so is to mis-state and misrepresent; and when *he finds* this mode of attack to be of no avail, he calls on me to answer seven questions.* I have no hesitation in doing so. But even supposing I did not think it fit to comply, or could not from incapability, what would that have to do with the question at issue? Would it prove that the water cure is *a humbug*? Would my incapacity refute the facts which have been seen at Græfenberg?

If my answer to these seven questions would tend to show generally, that none but men acquainted with the animal economy can, with safety and success, practise the

* The following are D. B——’s seven questions.

“ 1st. Is a knowledge of the functions of life, both in health and disease, essential to the detective and curative treatment of disease?

“ 2nd. If so, by what means can such knowledge be arrived at?

“ 3rd. Has not every organ in the animal economy a separate and distinct function to fulfil?

“ 4th. Does not disease exhibit a multifarious and complicated variety, both internally and externally, varying in intensity and duration, in proportion to the importance of the organ or organs so affected?

“ 5th. If so, to what causes can such difference be ascribed?

“ 6th. Will the same remedy that cures one disease, have the same salutary effect in remedying another of an opposite nature?

“ 7th. Would Mr. R. give a valuable watch out of order to a common labourer to repair?”

curative treatment of disease *by water*, would it be sound logic to infer, from a proposition thus *morally universal*, a singular conclusion. We are told that “inaccurate speakers and reasoners deal much in propositions of this class, and that they ought to be met in argument with an absolute denial of their assertion, till it is so modified in its *expression* as to become strictly true.” For instance, if I were asked would I give a valuable watch, out of order, to a common labourer to repair, because it is *morally true* that few but watchmakers know anything of the internal mechanism of a watch, I would answer I certainly would not, except I *found* a common labourer, who, though he never served his time, had repaired so many watches, with such skill, and without abstracting any of the *valuable* works (which those who serve their time sometimes do), that he made each watch as good as before it went out of order, even when the real watchmaker had failed to do so; and to such a labourer I should have no hesitation in giving my valuable jewelled repeater to repair, notwithstanding that I had admitted that generally it would be absurd to put a watch, for any such purpose, in the hands of a *labourer*. Now, having premised so much, I answer, and consecutively, to Mr. B.’s interrogatories:—

1st, A knowledge of the functions of life in health and disease is generally necessary to the detection and curative treatment of disease.

2nd, This knowledge can be arrived at by many means: by study, by dissection, and, above all, by close observation and experience.

3rd, Every organ in the animal economy has a separate and destined function to fulfil.

4th, Disease does indeed exhibit a multifarious and complicated variety; it *does* vary both in intensity and duration, in proportion to the importance of the organ affected, and also of the *mode of living* adopted by the patient.

5th, This difference can be ascribed to many causes, some of which are not as yet clearly known. *Idiosyncrasy* of disposition and constitution, together with the different *grades of unnatural life* which people lead, some

being temperate, some otherwise, often *occasion* this difference.

6th, The same remedy or the same dose, and the same modes of application or exhibition of it, will not cure opposite diseases. "Mercury and arsenic are daily exhibited in different diseases; 5 grains of calomel, divided into ten doses, and one given every three hours, will generally salivate and not purge the bowels; the same dose taken at once will generally purge and not salivate; a quarter of a grain of opium will frequently keep the patient awake half the night, while a whole grain will keep him asleep the entire night; a quarter of a grain of tartar emetic will purge the skin, one grain will produce sickness of the stomach, and two grains will generally empty the stomach and bowels both. Minute doses of arsenic will cure the ague, a little larger will inflame the eyelids, larger will inflame the stomach and kill the patient. All efficacy of the *same* remedy depends both in physic and hydropathy, upon the *manner* and *dose* in which the remedy is exhibited."

7th, I would not give a valuable watch to a common labourer to repair, if I did not *find by experience* that he had repaired *many other watches*, with skill, I would not then mind whether he was called a labourer or a watch-maker.

Thus I reply to Mr. B.'s seven questions.

Mr. B. asks me, does Preissnitz know anything of anatomy, physiology, medicine, or disease? I regret to say, I do not know Vincent Priessnitz personally, neither have I ever enquired whether he ever studied anatomy or physiology, but I know that he understands every thing about disease, for I have the testimony of men of veracity to prove he can cure all curable forms of disease, and I have the words of the talented Dr. Weiss, that "though Priessnitz is totally unacquainted with scientific nomenclature, he well knows how to treat disease, let it be delirium tremens, or any other species of vascular excitement with which he may have to contend." In addition to the many other opinions of eminent men, I have them all confirmed by my friend, Mr. Gibbs, than whom I believe I could not place more im-

plicit reliance on the sound judgment and laborious investigation of any other person. I must prefer the following opinions of Drs. Hume Weatherhead, Behrend, and Macartney, to any which Dr. B. has yet advanced. Dr. Weatherhead says that:—

“He is free to confess, that he never read any thing on medicine that interested him more earnestly, or which developed views more in accordance with what he has ever considered the true principles of therapeutics, in disease, originating in a contaminated state of the humours, than those embodied in Priessnitz’s method of cure, who has by a natural sagacity so improved upon the manner of employing cold water, as not only to divest it of all injurious effects and properties, but greatly to add to its virtues as a remedy.” Dr. Macartney says—“Water, when its properties are known, will be worth all other remedies put together.” Dr. Behrend’s emphatic words on the Water Cure are—“Practitioner, as I am, of fifteen years standing, and editor for six years of a medical journal, I was at first a little mistrustful of this novelty, but that which I saw with my own eyes at Græfenberg, struck me with astonishment. I have seen old intermittent fever cured by cold water only, I have seen measles, scarletina, small-pox, typhus-fever, rheumatism, gout, scrofula, tracheitis, and other diseases of the throat, syphilis, tic dolooureux and other nervous affections, tumours of the glands, swelling of the liver from effects of mercury, and many other diseases cured by cold water, and in a shorter time and more favourable manner for the constitution than could have been attained by drugs. Cold water is administered in all diseases, but the method of application is varied according to the individual and the cure. Cold water serves sometimes as a revulsive, and sometimes as a depressive agent.”

Let Dr. B. lay aside all quibbles about originality and such like, and disprove these statements if he can.

In conclusion I beg to refer him to a work on Hydropathy, which has been “just published” by a medical man of much eminence, Sir Arthur Clark. This gentleman has become a convert to hydropathy, and he

offers to send this work, gratis, to any medical man who will apply for it, and who doubts, as he once did, the efficacy of water in curing disease.

I am, dear sirs, your much obliged,

R. T. RIDGE.

LETTER XXI.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq., etc.

[Republished from the Wexford Papers.]

“For many years medical men have felt that some new power is called for in the management of diseases of the chest: in the Hydropathic treatment we possess that power.”—DR. J. GRAHAM.

Græfenberg, July 3, 1844.

MY DEAR RIDGE,—Yesterday I received a communication which I hasten to transcribe for you. It is dated June 21st, and is written by Mr. Wright, the well-known American anti-slavery advocate, one of the gentlemen who signed the letter to the *Times*. He says, “You ask me for my evidence respecting the water cure as administered by Priessnitz. There is nothing remarkable in my case, yet such as it is I cheerfully give it; use it as you please. Diseased lungs was my complaint, occasioned by public speaking, and exposure to night air. My lungs, as I was assured by my medical advisers, had become ulcerated, and my speaking and breathing organs generally diseased; my chest, formerly very full and prominent, had fallen in. My breathing, once deep and strong, had become difficult and sometimes painful. My sleep, never very sound and quiet, had become much more disturbed. My nights had become very restless. I had had a very dry and sometimes painful cough for more than a year. A short walk made me perspire, and I used to sweat much at

night. I was conscious of great weakness compared with my former strength, and my constitution originally exceedingly healthy and vigorous, had received a shock from which I had no hope that it would ever recover. I am forty-six years old, and such had been the soundness of my constitution and my general health, that I never was confined to the house by sickness one day in my life. I had never been bled by leech or lancet, never had taken an emetic, never had taken a particle of calomel, never had taken ten shilling's worth of medicine of any kind, never had a blister, and never, by way of prevention or cure, had committed the keeping of my health to the medical profession. Indeed, I never could see the expedience or rightfulness of a profession whose interests naturally lead its members to wish that human beings might be sick. For what would become of the doctors if there were no sickness? And I do not believe that sickness is an essential element of human existence. Cold water had been my only drink for almost fifteen years—no alchoholic liquors fermented or distilled—no tea, no coffee, no chocolate—no warm drink of any kind had passed my lips during that time, and I had been exposed to the extremes of heat and cold, from 100 above to 10 below Zero (Farh.)—by night and by day—by land and by sea. But continual public speaking during the last twelve years in the United States, and in England, and Scotland, in connexion with Sabbath schools, teetotalism, anti-slavery, and anti-war, at length affected my lungs, and caused a general prostration of my physical nature. For three years past I had worn warm flannel next my skin summer and winter, thinking that I could not live without it. I had usually worn cotton, worsted, silk, or fur mufflers round my neck to keep, as far as possible, all cold fresh air from my throat, chest, and lungs. I had used every precaution to keep the pure air from the surface of my body, adopting, without reflection, the common opinion, that health and comfort are promoted by keeping the skin screened as much as possible from the direct action of the cold pure air. At the same time, I had for years practised bathing, and washing my whole body in cold water in the morn-

ing, winter and summer, I had no fear of the effect of cold water on my body, when applied as soon as I was out of my bed in the morning, while, at the same time, I was afraid to let the cold air circulate freely about me, not thinking that if my body could with benefit receive cold water to its surface, cold air could not injure it. I began to take the water cure at Græfenberg, under the direction of Priessnitz, the 10th of last January. It was exceedingly cold, the thermometer (Farh.) nearly at Zero. At once all my flannels, in the shape of shirt and drawers, were laid aside. All my silk, cotton, worsted, and fur mufflers were cast aside; cotton shirts, too, were thrown off, and linen ones substituted. I was ordered two leintuchs per day, at five in the morning and five in the evening, for an hour each time, and with a cold bath after each. At first, for about a week, I took the abgeschrecktebad instead of the cold bath after the leintuch. At 11 A.M., I had a sitzbath for fifteen minutes. I wore the umschlag round my body, and changed it four times a day; took a walk, fair or foul, calm or storm, of from three to four, and often, of from six to eight miles, and drank from six to ten tumblers of water before breakfast. I also always took a walk after the sitzbath and evening leintuch to get up reaction, and often before to prepare for them. This treatment lasted for three months; since then I have had the douche once a day, and, instead of the evening leintuch and wanne, two abreibungs at intervals of an hour. As to the effect, from the first I found the cure exceedingly stimulating; the various external and internal applications of the cold water, the out-door exercise, and the pure air, which in my walks I allowed to circulate about my neck, throat, and chest, as much as possible, letting my head, neck, throat, and bosom be open to the free action of the air in all weathers, for nearly three months, braced me up greatly. There was also something like a rash that came out on my neck, chest, and shoulders, and around my body under the umschlag, which was at times annoying from the burning and itching it occasioned. I had also a voracious appetite. I also found that my breathing grew deeper,

stronger, freer, and easier, and that I could climb the mountains more rapidly and with less panting than at first. My cough ceased. About the first of April, all my joints, and especially my knees, began to grow stiff, and sore, and weak. It often pained me to walk, and after sitting a few moments, I found it difficult to straighten my knees. I became low and gloomy in my spirits, and altogether disheartened, but was assured by those around me that it was a good sign, being evidence that the cure was taking effect, and it was taking effect on body and soul. The whole surface of my body, even my hands and face, became very sensitive to the touch of cold water. It seemed as if my nerves were laid bare. I had a perfect horror of cold water,—a kind of hydrophobia. As the spring advanced, and the weather grew milder but damper, the cure became more intolerable. I found the damp weather of April and May far worse in which to take the cure than the cold of January and February. I became afflicted with acute and throbbing pain in my teeth, jaws, and face, for which I was directed to rub the back of my head, and neck, and face with my hands wet in cold water. I was also ordered to rub my knees frequently in the same way. This was the crisis of my misery under the water cure. For three or four weeks, I was as miserable as the most enthusiastic admirer of the water cure could desire; for the only way to a cold water heaven is through a cold water purgatory. I was often congratulated in my misery as one making a speedy and good cure. The last of April, I had boils breaking out on my arm, on my hands and fingers, and on my chin, and had them all over me. They came to a head and discharged, and during the month of May, they all healed, and none others have appeared since.

“ I have gone on taking the cure : that is, cold water in various ways, externally and internally; free circulation of cold pure air over the whole surface of my body, as far as practicable; and much out-door exercise. A few days since I left off the cure as a cure, and what of it I now take I take as a luxury. I feel that all disease, or danger of disease, is removed from my lungs. This

is the opinion of Priessnitz. My chest has recovered its natural fulness, and my breathing its natural ease and freedom. My cough is entirely gone; my voice is as strong and as deep-toned as it ever was. Altogether my physical nature has experienced a great renovation. I can now walk six or eight miles before breakfast without fatigue, which I often do; put it altogether, I have walked on an average over ten miles a-day since I have been here. I think great violence must again be done to my lungs before disease can again fasten upon them. What of life, of usefulness, and comfort remain to me in this world, I owe to the Water Cure, under Providence, and to the kind friends who, as it were, much against my will, compelled me to come here. During my experience of the cure, nothing surprised me more than the perfect safety with which I cast away my comfortable warm flannels and mufflers: a terrible cold upon my lungs, and an increase of my cough, was the least that I expected. But I was agreeably disappointed; for, under it all, and in all my exposures, being frequently wet through all my clothes, and my open neck and bosom, and my hair frequently filled with snow, (for in my walks now for three months I have had no hat or cap on my head, and no handkerchief around my neck, not even my shirt collar buttoned), I have not had the slightest cold upon my lungs, nor any which a leintuch or one night's umschlag has not cured. I have very often been completely drenched with snow and with rain. My only remedy has been, when I came to my room, to take off all my wet clothes, take an abreibung, and then put on dry clothes. This simple process has not only saved me from taking cold, but also from the effects of too long walks and over-exertion.

“From what I have experienced in my own person, and from what I have seen in others, I can never again have any fear of colds, influenza, or fevers of any kind. If attacked by a fever of whatever kind, or however violently, I should have no fear or anxiety for myself if I could get at the means of taking the Water Cure in some of its simplest forms. I should not hesitate to administer it to myself rather than commit myself to the care of the

medical profession. None of the guests here seem to have any fear of fevers, or of any of the common acute diseases. It is impossible to have any, after seeing the most malignant fevers so easily and speedily subdued, and that, too, by a remedy that leaves no sting behind. It is amazing to see the confidence which is reposed in the Water Cure, and in the skill and judgment of Priessnitz to apply that cure.

“ We have just had a case of small-pox of the most malignant kind ; the patient was sick with it in the main building, near the passage through which we all passed to and from meals three times a-day. The same bath-man that attended him attended other guests. Guests went in and out to see him. His wife attended him. No one thought of taking the disease, or, at least, no one feared it, knowing, from what he saw before him, that if he should take it, it was entirely under the control of the Water Cure. I do not believe that a single individual stepped one step from his ordinary path, influenced by fear. The patient was confined to his room fourteen days, completely broken out from head to foot. Then he walked out with the other guests ; and the wonder of it is that nearly every trace of the disease is passing from his face. Abreibungen at first, leintuchs, abgeschrecktebads, and cold baths were the only remedies, together with a constant full supply of pure fresh air. It is impossible not to feel confidence in the system as administered by Priessnitz, when we see such events passing before us.

“ P.S.—June 30th.—Before I close this I wish to add that I suffered much from toothache and pain in my jaws, the upper teeth especially were much affected, and my face became very sore. I applied to Priessnitz to know what to do. He ordered me to dip my hand in cold water and rub the back of my head, and down on my neck often and long. I did so frequently, getting up at night to rub my head with wet hands. While rubbing, from the first I found relief. Soon, by rubbing ten or fifteen minutes with my hand, often dipped in cold water, the pain would cease for hours, then return, when another rubbing would remove it. Soon the pain re-

turned at longer intervals, till at length it was entirely removed. I have learned a certain remedy, which I shall apply to myself should I ever again have need of it. And Priessnitz's prescription is based on true philosophy, for who does not know that all the nerves of the teeth centre in the back of the head? and it is natural that, by rubbing there, the pain should be drawn from the teeth. I have now been three weeks without taking the cure as a cure, but have continued the use of the wanne and of the sitzbath and abreibungen as a luxury. And they are luxuries, especially when I am fatigued or very warm. I shall never give up the wanne and abreibungen: they are not only luxuries, but preventatives of disease. If I were compelled to make a choice, I had rather, during the rest of my life, be deprived of one of my usual meals than of those baths. Of one thing I am sure—that the fact of my having taken no alcoholic, or narcotic, or warm drink for many years, has been a powerful aid to my recovery from the disease of the lungs: and the fact that I never had taken much medicine was also in my favour. If any man would make cold water his only beverage, and abstain entirely from the use of medicine of every kind, he would find the Water Cure all-sufficient to remove any disease that might assail him, if such disease be not absolutely incurable by any means. I have tested cold water in summer and winter as my only drink for fifteen years, and under all circumstances, in heat and cold, have drank of it as freely as I wished, and it has done me only good. I have tested its qualities as a beverage; now I have tested it as a remedy for disease.

“I am now about to leave and return to the field of my labours. I came here resolved to submit implicitly to Priessnitz's directions, whatever they might be in regard to health. I did so and have been restored to health. I believe that whoever is sick, and is not past recovery, may find health by the Water Cure, as administered by Priessnitz, provided he is willing to *work* for it. But if anybody expects to find health by the Water Cure, while wrapped up in flannels, and lounging in easy chairs, and on sofas, in a warm, tight room, without personal

exertions, he will certainly be disappointed—for personal, persevering exertions in the pure fresh air, is an essential element of the cure. Thine for the Water Cure,

HENRY C. WRIGHT,*
Of Philadelphia.

I have neither time nor space for much comment on the foregoing valuable testimony to the water cure. With respect to Mr. Wright's case I shall only request your attention to the fact of his abstinence from medicine, together with the quickness of his cure, as corroborative of my sentiments expressed in a former letter. As to the case of small pox which Mr. Wright gives, you ought to be informed that the woman who washed the sheets and bandages caught the disease. This I mention as illustrative of its nature. Ever yours,

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER XXII.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq.

[Republished from the Wexford Papers.]

“That Priessnitz's system has been successful beyond all precedent is a fact.”—A. COURTNEY, Surgeon, R.N.

Græfenberg, July 8th, 1844.

MY DEAR RIDGE—In the report of the proceedings at the sitting of the French academy, held on the 18th of last March, is the following paragraph: “A paper by M. Leroy d'Etiolles, on the removal of cancer by the knife was next read. This gentleman asserts that the extirpation as far as it is practicable by surgical operation does not stop the progress of the malady, and, that as a ge-

* I had the pleasure to meet Mr. Wright at the World's Temperance Convention, and to learn from his own lips that he had had no return of his disorder.

neral rule the knife should never be resorted to except for cancer of the lips and skin. In other cases extirpation should never, he says, be attempted, except when the life of the patient is placed in danger by hemorrhage from ulceration. There is information deemed of sufficient importance to interest and enlighten one of the most learned bodies in Europe, and yet, months before that paper was read, Vincent Priessnitz, of whom it has been absurdly, if not maliciously, but certainly disparagingly insinuated, that he is so ignorant that he does not even know where the liver is situated, gave expression, not with the dogmatism of a learned lecturer, but in the course of common conversation, to opinions nearly similar, except that they are much more consistent. He maintained that in no case should the knife be employed to remove cancer; for that its employment never retards the course of the disease, but invariably hastens the death of the patient; and an occurrence confirmative of his opinions took place here some short time since. A peasant residing close by, had been for a long time under medical treatment for cancer; at length his medical advisers said that all that remained to be done was to employ the knife. The poor fellow then, at the last hour, turned his hopes towards the Water Cure, and sent for Priessnitz, who at once pronounced him to be incurable, but strongly advised him not to submit to the operation, as it would only shorten his life. Unfortunately, he again had immediate recourse to his medical advisers, the knife was used, and in six or seven weeks he was a corpse. I shall only observe, that cancer is one of those few diseases which will not yield to water any more than to medicine, or the knife, except in its earlier stages, when it is said to have been cured; and without subjecting the patient, either immediately or remotely, to the chances attending a dangerous operation. But I would ask the reader to reflect for a moment, and must he not perceive that a truth, which it has taken centuries of study and experiment to teach, and even then but imperfectly, to the members of the French academy, the *self-taught* Priessnitz has acquired before them, a fact, which it must be admitted, is but little calculated to increase our venera-

tion for the "learned lumber" of the schools. I have only to add, that in this case the cancer was on the lip, so far disproving one of the exceptions made by M. Leroy d'Etiolles; and that the patient had been operated on once before, about four months previous to the last operation; and that, as need scarcely be said, the cancer had grown again.

Mr. Wright, whose case I sent you in my last letter, before he left, put some questions to Priessnitz, a copy of which, together with their answers, I transcribe, hoping that they may be found useful.

1st. What should be done in a case of severe cold settled on the lungs, and attended with much cough and expectoration? Answer: Rub the chest and throat with cold water, holding cold water in the mouth—occasionally in cold climates an umschlag round the throat would be of service—in warm climates washings alone are better.

2nd. Inflammation and soreness of the throat, attended with hoarseness of voice and difficulty in speaking? Answer: Same as first.

3rd. In much exposure by sea and land, extremes of heat and cold, wet and dry, and becoming chill? Answer: Abreibungen.

4th. Continual public speaking between the hours of eight and eleven, and even until twelve at night in close hot crowded rooms, and going out in the damp chilly night air afterwards? Answer: Abreibungen on returning home, washing the head well, and taking a footbath, to be continued a little longer than the washing.

5th. In colds, accompanied with fever and restlessness at night? Answer: Same as fourth.

6th. Headache, occasioned by great and continual excitement in public speaking, and consequent want of sleep? Answer: As fourth.

7th. Shooting pains and tightness across the chest, caused by long speaking at a time? Answer: As fourth, with rubbing on the chest as in answer to first query.

8th. How to guard against the effect of an atmosphere much damper, thicker, and foggier than the one to which I have been accustomed? Answer: Keep the throat

and chest always bare, if possible ; if kept close and warm, relaxation of the parts will soon again ensue ; those parts which are much used should be exposed to the air.

It ought to be remarked that the foregoing directions were given to a man in full health, and that as regards other persons, cases may arise requiring much more active treatment. In illustration of portions of Mr. Wright's letter I shall relate two little incidents which at the time of their occurrence were rather amusing, although I have some misgivings lest, like flowers that will not bear transplanting, they may lose their interest on the voyage. Such was the confidence of one patient in the cure, that one day in the depth of winter, having found his favourite bird insensible from the cold, between the double windows, he instantly wrapped it up in a bit of wet linen cloth, with a dry one over it ; in fact he gave it a leintuch, and to his great joy his pet recovered.

Mr. Wright states that some of the baths have become luxuries to him. Some persons will doubtless think that he has very strange ideas of comfort. But "habit," it is said, "is second nature." I one day found a gentleman asleep in his sitz-bath. When I spoke to him he did not answer ; and, being at that time a novice, I became alarmed, and apprehending that something serious must have occurred, I gently raised his head, when he opened his eyes in a very languid manner, and, to my great surprise, saying, "There, like a good fellow, don't disturb me," he reclosed his eyes, and was instantly fast asleep again. But "did not he get his death of cold ?" Not a bit of it—he was none the worse of his nap.

Among the late arrivals is a Spanish doctor, who states that he has been appointed by the Spanish government to inquire into the cure ; he says, "that the 'Pharmacopœia' ought to be rammed into a cannon and blown to pieces" —a summary and rather Spanish way of dealing with it. There has been here for some weeks a Danish physician, who has been sent by his government also to make inquiries, and he says that "his conscience will never cease to reproach him for all the medicine he has administered during the last thirty years ;" but, in my opinion,

he may find consolation in the reflection that he was acting *through ignorance*, and *not* from "*malice prepense*." I mention these facts because I should like to ask, when will the British government follow this example?—an example which has been set by the French and Prussian governments; and I think I hear somebody answer, "When they find a society, like the Anti-Slavery Society for instance, strong enough to coerce them."

We have also had among the latest arrivals a Chilian, who heard of the cure at Valparaiso, and has come all the way from thence to try and be healed of a drug disease. The warfare between water and drugs is extending into every land; and though the struggle will be long and desperate, I cannot think so meanly of the common sense of mankind as to doubt of the result.

Yours very truly,

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER XXIII.

To the Editors of the Wexford Conservative, and the Wexford Independent.

[Republished from the Wexford Papers.]

"In proportion as any branch of study leads to important and useful results—in proportion as it gains ground in public estimation—in proportion as it tends to overthrow prevailing error—in the same degree may it be expected to call forth angry declamation from those who are trying to despise what they will not learn, and wedded to prejudices which they cannot defend. Galileo probably would have escaped persecution if his discoveries could have been disproved, and his reasonings refuted."—Dr. WHEATLY.

MY DEAR SIRs,—Mr. B—— says, that I have not answered his seven interrogatories. I regret that *any* "circumstances" should have made him so forget what is *due* to fact, as not to have blotted that statement from

his manuscript before sending it to press. They who have read both sides of the question will appreciate with what credit to himself Mr. B—— came forward as the champion of physic and the exposé of what he calls humbug, and now retires from a contest which he finds untenable, not candidly confessing his weakness, or rather not avowing the strength of the stronghold he *vainly* attacked, but seeking refuge in mis-statement. He affects not to know who are Doctors Weiss, Weatherhead, and Behrend, and, therefore, will not attempt to disprove their statements respecting the powers of water as a remedial agent. It would appear, then, that it is to the man, and not to his arguments, that Dr. B—— attaches importance. How true are the words of the talented Dr. Butler, who says:—"Fashion rules the world in every thing, and why not in physic? It is so, and ever will be as long as man is man. Electricity, galvanism, tractors, and stethoscopes, steaming, shampooing, rubbing and inhaling, bleeding, sweating, and cathartising, animal, vegetable, and mineral remedies, all have their rage and different periods, and even diseases themselves are subject to the same vicissitudes. Once they were all nervous, next they became sanguineous, then gastric, and then bilious; and we only now wait for some fashionable doctor, for of a verity there is a fashion in doctors as well as disorders and remedies, to give them another translation and name, and we shall one and all subscribe to his views:—

"For doctors, now-a-days, like flocks of sheep,
All follow when the first has made the leap."

So it is with Dr. B.; he will not try to refute the doctors from whom I have quoted, because they are not, as he deems, among the list of fashionable practitioners, and as he could not affect the same sentiments respecting Dr. Macartney, ("who was one of the first physiologists in Europe,") he attempts to set aside this great man's opinion by asserting that I have misquoted him. On referring to the work from which I extracted Dr. Macartney's opinion, I find his words are;—"Water, when its properties and modes of application are well

known, will be worth all other remedies put together." Now, I shall tell Dr. B. who are Drs. Weiss and Weatherhead. The former was a "drug practitioner," who was offered a lucrative situation under the Prussian government in 1826, and who received from the University of Leipsic, "the prize for his dissertation on the use of narcotic medicines." If Dr. B. consults the "Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal," he will learn that "Dr. Weatherhead is a man of great eminence in his profession," and from the same authority he will discover that Dr. Behrend "is known as a man distinguished for his learning and judgment." As to Sir Arthur Clarke, he is too well known as a man of erudition and talent to require a word of comment from me.

Dr. B. has not proved that a single doctrine of Hydropathy is contrary to sound physiological principles. It is true that he quotes from Charles Kidd, Esq., M. R. C. S., "on the monstrosity of Mr. Ridge's Catholicon." Before I proceed to show how ignorant is Mr. Kidd of the first elements of hydro-therapeutics, I ask, Why does Mr. B. again misrepresent the Water Cure by calling it a "Catholicon?" when it has been so often said, that "we do not advocate the use of cold water as a catholicon; we pretend to the possession of no miraculous pentagogue; we have neither found the philosopher's stone, nor discovered the elixir vitæ."

Now, to Mr. Kidd's condemnation of the Water Cure; this gentleman, as quoted by Mr. B., says, "experience teaches that in actual disease we must lay the axe to the root; that we cannot stay the progressive march of affections of the stomach, or lungs, or heart, by increasing the action of the skin by wet bandages." This is a bold straightforward statement. But from Mr. Kidd's words, I presume his experience of water is very limited indeed. He has not, I presume, been at Græfenberg: had he honoured that place by a professional visit, we would not find him stating that diseases of the kind he mentions are treated there only "by wet bandages." He has exposed at the very outset his own ignorance, for no hydropathic practitioner

would even attempt thus to cure violent disease of either of these organs. Lest I should take up too much of your valuable space, I shall confine my remarks to one of the complaints alluded to, and shall take one which is of frequent occurrence, and is often attended with fatal consequences, I mean affection of the lungs; and shall, I trust, prove into what an error Mr. Kidd has fallen when he states that it is "something like beginning at the wrong extremity to confine our attention to the skin in curing lung complaints." I shall, as briefly as possible, elucidate what is the mode adopted in the Water Cure, to relieve and cure these affections; and shall explain that the practice is in strict conformity with the physiological principles of the present day. The chief aim of the hydropathist in lung, and in all other affections, is, to use his remedies so as to "place the body under the most favourable circumstances for resisting or throwing off disease," in other words, to allow the curative process of nature, the "*vis medicatrix naturæ*" to exert its influence; for it is the golden principle of hydrotherapeutics, as it ought to be of medicine, though it is seldom observed in the practice of the latter, "that the cure of all diseases must be effected by the powers of the living system." Let us then presume that a patient attacked with pleurisy or acute inflammation of the pleura is offered to be cured by water. I select this species of chest inflammation, because it is very common and its name is well known. It is highly important that this disease should be subdued as speedily as possible, it cannot continue long without producing other diseases, such as adhesions between the several thoracic organs, by which their vital functions are impeded, and sudden or premature death occasioned.

For the information of my unscientific readers I would remark, before explaining the principles of the treatment, that, "at every inspiration, we take into the lungs a certain quantity of oxygen from the air. This oxygen finds its way into the most remote tissues of the body, by means of the blood which is circulated through the lungs." The oxygen immediately attaches itself to the globules of the blood, by which it is carried to the heart

first, and then distributed to every part of the body into which it is absorbed. "*These blood globules, then, are the carriers of oxygen.*" In contemplating the condition of a pleuritic patient, we find the membrane lining the lungs red and swollen, and its vessels gorged with florid blood. This red colour is *entirely* owing to the presence of *too much oxygen*, and the swollen condition is owing to the rapid circulation, by which more blood is brought to the part by the arteries than can be carried away by the veins. There is also an increase of *temperature* at the inflamed part. Now since animal heat is produced by the combination of oxygen with the materials of the body (carbon and hydrogen), it is plain that this increase of heat is owing to the increased activity with which oxygen is combining with the diseased pleura. In the pleura of the sick man some cause has weakened the resisting energy of the vital force; and it is a fixed law of nature that oxygen *always* unites with that which is endowed with the least vital resistance. In all healthy parts the affinity for oxygen is resisted with equal energy."—Liebig's "Organic Chemistry." Medical men in a case of pleurisy, and in all cases of this class, effect a cure by diminishing the velocity and force of the circulation, and lessening the general excitement. "The means by which they endeavour to accomplish these objects are low diet, bleeding, blistering, salivating, nauseating doses of antimony and foxglove. The reason why it is desirable that these two effects should be produced is, that a diminished quantity of oxygen may be conveyed to the inflamed part, that thus the destructive process may be arrested in time to allow the curative power of nature to manifest itself, before irremediable alteration of structure has been produced.' The Hydropathist acts on the same golden principle, but he produces the same effects by different applications of a different agent. He abstracts a large amount of heat from the patient by the half-bath, or the *repeated* use of the wet sheet half wrung out, which is changed as often as it gets warm. This treatment is pursued until the skin becomes soft and more prone to exhalation. "Wet bandages" are applied also to the chest, and changed even oftener than the sheet. When

the skin becomes more prone to perspiration, the body envelopment is not changed, but being closely covered so as to exclude air, the patient is allowed to perspire. The length of time to remain enveloped is indicated by the state of the pulse and feelings of the sufferer. An ablution with tepid water at 70° Fahr. is then performed, and the greatest care is taken to re-establish moderate diaphoresis by giving the patient in bed repeated draughts of water—a small quantity at each time—and by local bandages round the chest and throat. The sitz-bath, or foot-bath, is also used to create reaction in the extremities. This is a brief outline of the general treatment. Let us now see if this is any thing like beginning at the “wrong extremity,” as Mr. Kidd says:—“The immediate effects of cold on the living system are to diminish the velocity of the heart’s action, to lessen sensibility, and to decrease the number of respirations in a given time.” (*Liebig.*) “Under the *protracted* influence of cold, the pulse becomes slower, feebler, and thready; the respirations, like the pulse, sink from eighteen to twelve in a minute. Whatever excitement, too, might have been present, as for instance, the excitement of danger, rapidly vanishes.” (*Johnson.*) “These effects of cold are known to almost every one, and have been repeatedly proved in the case of persons accidentally exposed to severe cold—as when they have fallen asleep travelling in frosty weather, or have been accidentally nearly covered by snow. The effects of cold in lowering the vital energy of the skin hardly require any illustration. The frozen nose, frost-bitten toes, common in severe winters, and that condition of the fingers when we say ‘our hands are numbed’ with cold, are all instances of the power cold applied in any way has in lowering or even destroying the vitality of the skin.” The pleuritic patient is either covered with a cold wet sheet or put into a half-bath, of about 65° of Fahr. “The first effect is to lessen the frequency of the respiration—by this, a large quantity of oxygen is taken into the system. The next effect is to diminish in a remarkable and striking degree, the force and frequency of the pulse. By this a diminished quantity of oxygen is conveyed to the inflamed

part. Here, then, are all the effects which are sought to be produced by bleeding, tartar emetic, foxglove, calomel, and opium ; there only remains the blister. The good effects of a blister are produced by diverting the circulation from the inflamed part to the skin, that is, determining the force of oxygen to the blistered part. The blister effects this by weakening the vitality of the skin so much that the resistance offered by the natural vital force at the blistered part shall be even smaller than the resistance offered at the inflamed part." I have before pointed out the power cold exercises in diminishing the vitality of the skin. "When, therefore, the entire surface of the body, or a part of it, is submitted to the repeated influence of cold, the vitality of the skin may be lowered to any extent. The force and power of oxygen is thus drawn from the inflamed pleura and determined to the skin, whose reddened appearance demonstrates that this effect has been produced ; for this red colour is owing to, and can *only* be occasioned by the increased quantity of oxygen which has been brought to it."—*Johnson*.

Liebig (a name which stands at the very head of scientific philosophers) says, in his "Organic Chemistry," a work which has excited the admiration of all the learned societies in Europe, "the resistance of the living tissues to the action of oxygen is the weakest at the *cooled part* than in the other parts, and this in its effects is equivalent to an increase of resistance in those other parts ; the *whole* action of the inspired oxygen is exerted on the *cooled part*." It is therefore obvious that the judicious application of cold can produce all the effects of bleeding, antimony, foxglove, calomel, and opium, and much more than the blister and in a much higher degree. The blister produces its effects on a small portion of the skin. Cold produces its effects on the whole surface of the body. If, then, hydropathists have, as Mr. Kidd asserts, commenced at the wrong extremity, it seems passing strange that they can produce the same effects by the cold water, as the doctors do by drawing away the vital fluid and introducing vegetable and mineral poison into the system. Perhaps Dr. B. could inform us, does

he call his practice beginning at the *right* extremity, when by bleeding he saves a patient from dying of inflammation of the pleura, only that he may afterwards die of a dropsy ; or when, by similar practice, he prevents a patient from expiring of a hemorrhage from the lungs, that he may soon after waste away in a rapid consumption. The sole object of bleeding is to diminish the number of blood globules, because it is these absorb the oxygen from the air. But it unfortunately happens that Mr. Kidd, who fancies he begins at the right extremity, “cannot take away these blood globules *without* also abstracting the *nutritious* parts of the blood along with them, as fibrine and albumen,” &c. Can any man call that the right extremity to begin at, where he “so empties the body of the vital fluid, and thereby reduces it to such extreme weakness, as not only to make convalescence slow and precarious, but often to entail on the sufferer the foundation of a new disease,” certainly more slow in effects, but not less deadly in its nature, than that which he attempted to relieve ? I call it beginning at the right extremity when we can produce, by means of water, all the good which can be effected by bleeding, blistering, &c., without any of their evil consequences and direful sequels.

Believe me, dear Sirs,

Yours very sincerely,

R. T. RIDGE.

Dunsinane, Sept. 19, 1844.

LETTER XXIV.

To the Editors of the Independent and the Conservative.

[Republished from the Wexford Papers.]

“Scribimus indocti doctique.”

“Now hear what an unskilful friend can say :
 As if a blind man should direct our way,
 So *an unknown*, though seeking to be taught,
 May yet impart a hint that's worth your thought.”

Dunsinane, October 15, 1844.

DEAR SIRs,—I send you my friend, Mr. Gibbs's fourteenth letter on the water cure. I take this opportunity also of transmitting two anonymous communications which I have received, relative to the late discussion on the merits and demerits of Hydropathy. The letter signed “subscriber,” I received some time after I published my reply to Doctor B's seven interrogatories. The other letter I received after an essay appeared in your columns, headed “Fallacies of Hydropathy.” Both these epistles plainly point out that the public is beginning to think for itself on matters which involve its own interests. The iron age of feudalism is past, and men will no longer allow their judgments to be held captive by professional *ipse dixit*.

I am, dear Sirs, Yours most truly,

R. T. RIDGE.

LETTER XXV.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq., etc.

[Republished from the Wexford Papers].

MY DEAR RIDGE,—As you have brought the doctor to adopt the system of question and answer, keep him to it as much as possible; do not let him depart from it—it is one of the surest ways of discovering truth and falsehood. But take care how you answer his first question; it is captious, equivocal, and ambiguous; as men

ignorant of the functions of life might discover disorders and cure them too. Thus the circulation of the blood is undoubtedly a function of life, and yet men ignorant thereof, have both discovered and cured disease. Therefore the knowledge of all the functions of life, both in health and disease, is not essential to the detection and curative treatment of disease. But a knowledge of some of the functions is necessary; for, a being totally ignorant of all the functions of life would be either not a man at all, or at most a perfect idiot. Thus seeing, hearing, speaking, eating, drinking, walking, are functions of life, and a being ignorant thereof ought not to be placed or ranked among rational creatures; these functions we know, not by research, or anatomical investigations, but as it were by bare intuition alone, just as we know that two and two make four. Therefore, a knowledge of some of the functions of life is essential. A knowledge of all is not essential; and perhaps some may be unknown even to the doctor himself, learned as he is. His second question, and the third, fourth, and fifth, involve no difficulty. It may be said in answer to the sixth question, that the same remedy frequently cures opposite diseases. His seventh question may be answered thus:—If I knew on incontestible evidence that a common labourer had discovered an unerring mode of repairing watches, I would send my watch to him as soon or sooner than I would to the watch-maker; firstly, to reward him for his discovery, and secondly, on account of the smallness of his charge. The doctor thinks his propositions are all self-evident, and thereby gives the world to understand that he does not know the meaning of a self-evident proposition. This proposition—namely “The whole of a pig’s head is greater than its part,” is self-evident, because it neither needs proof nor can be proved. All men know its truth intuitively, without research, investigation, or labor. When the doctor shall be able to prove that his first proposition, viz., that, “Physiology is the basis of all medical knowledge,” is as self-evident as the above-mentioned proposition, the Ethiopian will change his skin, and the leopard his spots. Do you call on the doctor to show that his propositions

are self-evident. Why should he ask you to refute self-evident propositions? He has asserted they are self-evident; the *onus probandi* lies on him; call upon him to do his duty.

I am, for the present, yours,

SUBSCRIBER.

LETTER XXVI.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq., etc.

[Republished from the Wexford Papers.]

“Complaints arising from suppressed perspiration and exposure to cold, as fixed and shifting rheumatic pains, which are sometimes so intractable as to resist mineral waters and other means, are also not unfrequently cured by this treatment.”—Mr. C. LEE on the Water Cure.

DEAR RIDGE,—The presumption of the writer of the letter headed “Fallacies of Hydropathy,” but which might more properly be termed fallacies of the writer, is apparent in the superfluous opinion paraded in the opening sentence, where we find him censuring the manner in which two combatants deal their gigantic blows, while his own infantile arms strike as one beating the air; and we may safely draw the conclusion that in this gentleman’s future productions concerning Hydropathy, we shall find absurdity, like the snow ball, “gathering as it goes” until it becomes, “like the avalanche,” a mighty mass. We deem it would be waste of time to enter on an argument with one who is so totally ignorant of the subject which he brings forward. This gentleman seems to make one of the number of those who are “easily excited;” but he will yet find, if he studies deeply enough, that Priessnitz’s Hydropathy is, indeed, “a novelty” to him. We wish he would inform us, by what other than “contemplative brains” are any theories begotten. Or, does it follow that, because some or many false theories are begotten by “contemplative brains,” all theories begotten by “contemplative brains” must, of necessity, be false: any more than, because some fools are begot-

ten of women, that all the human race must, of necessity, be idiots? We do not wonder at the "natural suspicion and astonishment" of this medical student, at Priessnitz's vaunted power over disease, with water as the agent; we opine a clown's would be of like texture if he were shown by a chemist some bluestone saturated with water, and were told by him that by a simple process (simple to the chemist who thoroughly understood it), he could from that blue liquid produce solid copper; yet there are "princes, peers, and peasants," who can testify that the chemist with the proper apparatus can do even as he hath said. Let this gentleman, then, learn more before he again sneers at the idea of "princes, peers, and peasants" vouching for the "Silesian's" power, with water as his agent, to restore the human flesh to its pristine purity. We find also that this gentleman sneers at the first circumstance that led Priessnitz's contemplations to rest on the curative properties of water; but we beg to remind him, if he ever read of young Watt's first discovery of the power of steam—when he sat with a tea spoon over the spout of a kettle, unconscious of all else around him—how his mother impatiently and ignorantly exclaimed that "her heart would be broken yet by that foolish boy!" Need this student be told that steam, powerful as it is in all its appliances, is but the offspring of water? —. —.

LETTER XXVII.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq., etc.

[Republished from the Wexford Papers.]

"The water cure is applicable to all who ail—to all who would not only cure a complaint, but strengthen a system and prolong a life."—SIR E. L. BULWER.

Græfenberg, August 15, 1844.

MY DEAR RIDGE,—In compliance with your wishes I shall for the future substitute English instead of German

words, to designate the various processes employed under the water cure, although I am not satisfied that the readers of these letters will gain anything by the exchange.

Instead of calling the rubbing with the wet sheet the "Abreibung," I shall name it the "Wet rubbing."

The packing in the wet sheet, or "Leintuch," I shall name the "Wet sheet."

The "Schwitzen," or sweating in the blanket, I shall simply call the "Blanket;" and the "Abgeschrecktebad," or shallow bath of tepid water, in which the patient is rubbed, I shall term the "Shallow bath."

The "Umshlags," or wet bandages, I shall designate according to their kind, as "Heating," or "Cooling bandages."

The "Douche" is a word too well known to require any change in it.

The words which I purpose to substitute for "Leintuch" and "Abgeschrecktebad" are the words already employed by Dr. James Wilson for those processes.

Among the cures during the past month are the following, which I shall detail as briefly as possible. A gentleman aged about twenty-four, had quotidian fever for six months, during which he was under medical treatment. He has been here three months, and has been quite cured. He had daily two wet sheets and two shallow baths, and one sitz or hip bath (cold), and wore the large waist bandage. In acute attacks he had three wet rubbings, at five minutes' interval, followed by three wet sheets and the shallow bath.

A gentleman aged about thirty, suffered for nearly two years under various ailments, to which his medical advisers could give no name. For the first seven months he was continually under medical treatment, and took a great deal of medicine. After an interval of ten months his ailments returned again, with affection of the liver; when, not being satisfied with the opinions of his medical attendants, he came to Græfenberg and is in seven months perfectly cured.

A gentleman, aged about fifty, suffered from general debility; his head was much affected, and he had very

great general pains and sleeplessness. He was under medical treatment for twenty years, during which he took an immensity of medicine, and at length his medical attendant told him that he could do no more for him. It is more than four years since he first came to Græfenberg, and since then he has paid it frequent visits. The first time, he stopped for nine months, and left, as he thought, quite well, but Priessnitz told him that he was far from being so. During his absence he suffered so much from mental anxiety, and became so very ill again, that he returned at the end of three months. Since then he has left and returned many times, and now leaves for the last time quite cured. He has had a vast deal of crises of all kinds, boils, fever, and diarrhœa, and has taken a most varied treatment; at no time the same for three months together. This is one of the longest cases I have met with.

A gentleman upwards of forty had hereditary gout. Had the first attack two years before he came here. This attack was in both feet, and was very slight. Has had repeated attacks since. The third attack confined him to bed for three days. Last winter he was confined to bed for three weeks. His arms as well as his feet were attacked this time, and for six days and nights he neither ate nor slept. He was under medical treatment from the first attack; and as soon as he was able to leave his bed after this last one, he came here. He took here a wet sheet for one hour in the morning, followed by a shallow bath of 12° (R.) at noon, and in the afternoon he had a wet rubbing. During the first month he had two attacks, each of which was followed by several large and many smaller boils, some of which continued to discharge matter most abundantly for four weeks. He wore the waist bandage, and, in acute attacks, heating bandages on the feet and arms. He drank from ten to fifteen glasses of water daily, and ate heartily of the ordinary diet. At the end of the second month he was well, but he remained here three months. During the third month he took a much stronger cure, but no crises made their appearance.

A gentleman caught cold five years ago, and he has ever since had a chronic disease of the larynx (phthisis

laryngea). He has often been told by skilful medical men that his throat was incurable. His treatment here was, morning and evening, a wet sheet, followed by the cold bath, and at noon a wet rubbing and hip or sitting bath. He had a great many boils, and also had fever. Has been quite cured in two months, and has been pronounced cured not only by Priessnitz, but by Dr. Marcher, the physician sent here by the Danish Government.

A Bath servant has had nervous fever. His sickness commenced with very great headache and excessive weakness, particularly in the legs. He was so weak that he could not even stand. At first he thought that he had got a bad cold, and he took a wet sheet and bandaged the head without consulting Priessnitz. On the fourth day he became so bad that he sent for Priessnitz, who ordered him fifteen "abreibungen" or wet rubbings, and three or four head-baths daily. The sheets for the wet rubbings were not at all wrung out, but they failed to check the fever, which continued to increase for two days, and, the patient then feeling himself so weak that he could no longer bear the wet rubbings, Priessnitz ordered him daily twelve wet sheets barely wrung out and but very slightly covered over; four, of a quarter of an hour each, to be taken at a time, and to be succeeded by a shallow bath for a quarter of an hour. In this bath he was rubbed for ten minutes, and as his head was very feverish he was obliged to lay with it in the bath for the remaining five minutes. Under this treatment the fever entirely left him in the course of a fortnight, so that the treatment was diminished to three wet sheets daily, and he was out again before the third week was over. In the second week he got, besides abundance of smaller crises, four large boils, which opened in the third week and discharged matter copiously for a fortnight; in consequence of which he daily felt considerable improvement, and before the end of six weeks he was so strong again that he was able to return to work.

I have still many cases to lay before the society, but, as my sheet is now full, I must reserve their details for future communications.

And am,

Yours very faithfully,
JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER XXVIII.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq., etc.

[Republished from the Wexford Papers.]

“No man can deny that the sweating blanket and the wet sheet possess immense powers over most diseases.”—SIR A. CLARKE, M.D.

Græfenberg, October 5th, 1844.

MY DEAR RIDGE,—I have heard it objected to the water cure by anxious fault-finders (who could discover nothing else to which to object) “Oh! but it is *so* long.” Now I do not think that this is an objection which can be sustained by facts: length of time, like length of distance, is relative. A month would be considered a very long time to take to build a hut; a year is a very short time in which to build a castle. Now there can be no doubt of the relative shortness of acute diseases when treated by water, as compared with the same diseases when treated by medicine. Facts are incontrovertible arguments. A gentleman who had one of the most malignant cases of small-pox, leaves his bed, and, in a fortnight, is out walking a long distance, and lightly clothed. Another gentleman, with a lighter case, is only confined to bed and the house for two days. A girl in scarletina is scarcely confined at all, and within a week is quite restored. A servant-man, in one of the worst cases of dysentery, is well and able to return to work in two days. A gentleman having been confined for a fortnight with an exceedingly bad attack of nervous fever, leaves his bed for the first time and walks to Freiwaldau and back again, a distance of about three English miles going and returning, and down and up a hill with an ascent of 594 German feet. Such instances could be multiplied to the filling of this sheet, but it is needless. Contrast the length of time occupied in the treatment of those cases, with the time ordinarily consumed in similar cases under medical treatment, of which your own experience must be able to furnish you with many examples; and then say

how long, in all probability, would it be before a patient, in a bad case of fever, supposing him to recover, would be able, if treated by medicine, to walk down hill a mile and a half, and up again, against an ascent of 594 feet—is it exaggeration to answer, “about three months?” There are few, if any, who have had opportunities of observation, who will not admit the shortness of the water cure in acute diseases. But then break in your cavillers and grumblers with another “oh!” followed by “but in chronic diseases it is a very different thing.” Let us see. It may seem long at first to a man, when he is told, “Your case will, in all probability, take one, two, or three years to effect a cure.” But, just ask the same man, “How long have you been under medical treatment?” and hear his answer: “Five, six, or seven years.” Ask him next, “Are you any better?” Again mark his answer: “Better! alas! no. I have swallowed an incalculable weight of the most nauseous poisonous compounds; I have submitted to the most frightful and excruciating operations; but, day by day, month by month, and year by year, I have become worse and worse, until, at length, I have been told by my medical attendants that they have done all that can be done for me—that there is no further hope—that I am perfectly incurable—and that I have not much longer to live.” Then say to him, “Well, no doubt, you long for death?” “Long for death!—why should you think so? Oh! no—life is sweet. Let me live—let me live!” “What!” may it not be fairly replied, “what! you have submitted to be poisoned and tortured for seven years! Your tormentors have now pronounced upon you sentence of death. A city of refuge is opened to you; you are required to reside there for three years, to submit to a wholesome, and by no means very burdensome, discipline; and then you will be permitted to return to the world a new man, blessed with sound health, freed from your tormentors, and with long years of life before you—and you demur! Was I not then justified in inferring that you were weary of life and longed for death?” This, it is true, is an imaginary conversation; but it is equally true that it faithfully embodies facts which are of no unfrequent occurrence in

chronic cases, which require a lengthened treatment. Let it not, however, be supposed that all chronic complaints do so, as some of them are completely cured in a few months. As contrasted with medicine in the treatment of acute disease, the water-cure, as it is the safest and surest, so it is likewise the shortest; and in the treatment of old chronic disease it is also the shortest, inasmuch as it is the only cure. I look, then, on this cry of "length of time" as unsupported by reason. In short, I can only account for it by supposing that it emanates from designing knaves, and that it is senselessly echoed by unthinking—I had well-nigh said—fools. But I must not consume all my space in disquisition. Let me now give some of the cases of cure which have taken place since the date of my last letter.

Baron —, a large heavy man, received a severe hurt from the pommel of his saddle, his horse having violently started. He suffered great pain, and was obliged to return home, when he instantly sent for a surgeon who ordered him a cold poultice. After the lapse of some time he became better, but the part continued swollen as large as a goose egg, and when he ventured on horseback the swelling increased. This time the surgeon gave him a warm poultice, and he became a little better. He rode again, and again the swelling increased, and now he had twelve leeches applied, and thus it continued for a year and a-half, sometimes getting a little better, and sometimes worse. The swelling having increased again, the senior regimental surgeon undertook to cure him, and gave him the "Zick mensche Kur." For seven weeks he lay in bed and passed through that cure twice, and again he became a little better. After the lapse of a fortnight he rode out again, and the swelling, as usual, again increased. He was now confined to his bed for four weeks, and wore all the time a warm poultice, but this time, instead of diminishing, the swelling increased. One morning he remarked a tumour in the right groin, which the surgeon pronounced to be syphilitic, and said that the original swelling was an entrance of the bowels into the pel. pub. sacrum, and that he should return the bowels again into their proper place;

and to effect this he used such violence, and caused the Baron such excruciating pains, that he fainted several times, until at length a brother officer interfered and turned the surgeon out of the room. The next day the Baron set off for Pest by steam, and on the voyage thither was continually tormented with the most agonizing pains. On his arrival he called in two physicians and told them his case. They agreed in pronouncing the regimental surgeon a blockhead, and said that, probably, the disease was hydrocele, for which he should hereafter submit to an operation, but, that for the present, as the S. chord was so much bruised and injured by the violence of the regimental surgeon, they would not risk an operation lest they should inflict further injury, in which case he should submit to an operation most dreaded by man: but, nevertheless, that at all hazards the S. chord should be instantly operated upon, and they thereon made an incision and poured in an injection. After this, suppuration took place, from which he derived some benefit. After some days the physician punctured the original swelling, and more than a quart of water ran out, and the swelling in the groin, being only sympathetic, disappeared. The physicians now said that they would do nothing further while certain symptoms remained, and they added that he must have syphilis, and must take mercury, to which he would not consent, and the following morning he set out for Vienna. There he was recommended Homœopathy, which he tried for four weeks without the slightest effect, all the time suffering the greatest pain. It should have been mentioned that, in three days after the puncturing, the swelling became as large as before, and that he was obliged to lay in bed for four weeks, during which he suffered continual pain. At Vienna he called in Dr. M., who is considered skilful in the iodine cure, and who said that he would at once perform what he termed the great operation—namely, make an incision and inject boiling wine. To this the Baron would not consent, and called in another physician, Dr. W., who said that it was fortunate for him that he had not consented to the operation, for in that case he should have had to submit to a further one

already alluded to by the Hungarian doctors. The swelling was now as large as an infant's head, and he was obliged to support it with a bandage. The doctor now administered the iodine cure to him. He took full baths of iodine and water, and also took iodine internally. After the third bath the pains were entirely gone. After the seventh bath the part became shrivelled and snowy white, and grew less and less until it stopped and remained of the size of a goose egg. It was then punctured, and half a pint of water ran out, and it seemed restored to its natural state. He now had ointment given him to rub in, this he did for ten or fourteen days, but after the third day he observed that the water was collecting again, and now, for the first time, he felt pains where he had previously been exempt from them. Leeches were next applied, and mercury rubbed in. He now suddenly became lame of the whole right leg, and the doctor said that he must take iodine baths again! This he would not do, but again called in the former physician, Dr. M., who told him not to take any more iodine baths, but to allow the swelling to become as large as possible, and that the larger it became the better it would be for the radical operation which should unavoidably take place sooner or later. For the pains in the legs he was ordered to go instantly to Baden, near Vienna. He was obliged to be carried to the bath. After the third bath the pains were quite gone, and the use of the limb was entirely restored. He remained at Baden a fortnight, during which the injured part began to pain him more and more, the water increased in quantity, and the swelling attained half its former size, or half the size of a child's head. He now determined on coming to Græfenberg, where he underwent the following treatment:—Every morning he had the sweating in the blankets in which he lay for four or five hours. He wore heating bandages to the part day and night, and those bandages became so incrustated with the ointment which had been rubbed in, that they clung to the skin until they were forcibly torn away, and the ointment was subsequently scraped off. He also took daily a sitting or hip bath of one hour's duration. After

the seventh month the water was entirely gone, and has never since re-appeared. After fourteen months he got an eruptive crisis on the body. After sixteen months, dartres, which had apparently been cured eighteen years before, under medical advice, by the use of iodine, re-appeared under the arms and on the breast. He now went to Vienna to amuse himself, and the doctors there said, that the crisis, which still continued, was a strong syphilitic eruption, and offered to cure him with mercury. He laughed at them, came back, and in five weeks the eruption was gone. He left after a stay of about two years and seven months. The disease for which he came here has been perfectly cured, but it is right to add, that the pain in his leg which Priessnitz considers to be rheumatic, has not been entirely removed. Otherwise in high health and spirits, his eagerness for amusement lured him away, although assured of a perfect cure of his rheumatism if he would persevere a little longer. It should not be concealed that he never followed the cure with energy. I have given this case so much in detail, that I must condense the others as much as possible.

A young man had fistula, caused by stricture, for three years before he came here; during that time he was constantly under medical treatment, and amongst other remedies submitted to several most painful operations. His treatment here consisted of, in the morning, a wet sheet followed by a cold bath;—at 11 A. M. a wet rubbing followed by a cold hip bath for ten minutes, and in the afternoon a wet sheet and cold bath. He also wore the small and large heating bandages. In the third month he was ordered to douche for from three to four minutes, and to take the one day the wet rubbing and tepid hip bath, and the other day a foot bath for about fifteen minutes. He has been here exactly six months, and has been perfectly cured.

Conversing with a medical friend on the subject of this cure, he said that he “would not venture to publish a case of cure of fistula by the water-treatment, for that if he did no medical man would believe him; neither could he see the need of a new remedy for fistula, the

ordinary means being always potent to effect a cure, a failure never occurring except by design, when it is to be apprehended that a cure may be followed by disease of the lungs." In vain I urged that such a result need not be apprehended under the water-treatment. To resume,—

An elderly gentleman had last April a slight paralytic stroke, for which he was profusely bled. Since then, prior to his coming to Græfenburg, he has never been well, although continually under medical treatment. His stomach and bowels have been constantly deranged, and he had always had severe attacks either of costiveness or diarrhœa succeeding one to the other. He left home to visit some mineral baths, but turned aside to Dresden, to consult Dr. Ammon, the King of Saxony's physician, who strongly advised him to come to Græfenburg, adding that he was in a very dangerous state. He has been at Græfenburg two months, and has left quite restored to health, all his functions being regular. His treatment was in the morning the wet sheet, followed by the shallow tepid bath; at noon a wet rubbing, and in the afternoon another. When he arrived he was able to walk on level ground but a few hundred yards without resting. Before he left he was able to ascend the mountain a couple of miles, and return again before breakfast.

The servant of a gentleman who is here under treatment was continually trying to persuade his master to give up the cure and to place himself again under medical advice, as it was his (the servant's) opinion that "cold water would certainly kill" his master. He continued his solicitations until at length being attacked by dysentery, and becoming hourly worse, and, in fact, dangerously ill, under medical treatment, he determined to give the water-cure a trial. He consequently sent for Priessnitz, and in less than forty-eight hours' use of the usual remedies he was quite restored, and, as may be supposed, now sings the praises of Priessnitz and water.

A gentleman, aged twenty-three, was attacked with fever: he had much headache, slight sore throat, icy cold feet, slight sickness of stomach, and bad taste in the mouth. The first day he had three wet sheets, followed

by the shallow and cold baths, going from one to the other three or four times. In the afternoon he had a head-bath for a quarter of an hour and three wet rubbings. In about a quarter of an hour he had another wet sheet, followed as before by the tepid shallow bath and the cold bath. It may be as well to remark here that when these two baths are thus taken, the shallow bath is both the first and last. On the third day he had three wet sheets, followed each time by a shallow bath of from six to ten minutes' duration. On this day he had much pain in the stomach, and for some time could not speak, but was relieved by a large heating bandage enveloping the entire body. On the fourth day small-pox appeared, and he had the same treatment as on the previous day. This treatment was continued to the end. He was confined to bed only two days. On the nineteenth day he douched. Only one small spot remains on his forehead to indicate the nature of his disease.

A gentleman aged about forty had rheumatism for several years, and tried all the usual remedies without success. In three months he was cured by the water treatment. He had the wet sheet and cold bath in the morning, douche at noon, and hip-bath and wet rubbings, and wet sheet and cold bath in the afternoon. He had several boil crises.

I believe I have not yet spoken of one feature of life at Græfenberg—I mean its amusements; and I am now reminded of the omission by the festivities of last Thursday. Yesterday was Priessnitz's birth-day, when he attained his forty-fourth year; but as it fell on Friday, a day on which all festivities are prohibited, it was celebrated on Thursday with a ball and illuminations. The group of houses comprising the establishment were all lit up by the guests; and there were several transparencies, the most prominent of which bore the motto, "Lang leben unser Priessnitz," "Long live our Priessnitz." On Friday at dinner his health was proposed, and drank in bumpers of water, amid the prolonged "Vivas" of the guests. Balls and concerts are of frequent occurrence here, and last month we had a series of theatricals; and on Sundays and festivals a band always

attends in the gallery and plays during dinner. Priessnitz is very favourable to music, as he believes that it has a beneficial effect on the mind, and is consequently conducive to health.

Ever yours,
JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER XXIX.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq., etc.

[Republished from the Wexford Papers.]

“ Calida lavatio at pueris et senibus apta est.”—CELSUS.

Græfenberg, Oct. 14, 1844.

MY DEAR RIDGE,—Since I wrote to you I have received a letter from Mr. B., a gentleman whose case I have given you in my last letter. He says: “ Last Easter I was attacked with paralysis. The doctors were sent for, and I was bled most copiously, besides being cupped in the back. In less than fourteen days I was able to go out again, but was very weak, and my weakness increased from time to time, till at last Professor Hegwisch deemed it absolutely necessary to order me to Marienbad, and gave me a letter to Dr. Ammon, of Dresden, the king’s physician, in order to consult with him whether the waters of Marienbad were adapted to my cure, or whether any other might be more eligible. Dr. Ammon gave my case due consideration, and would not suffer me to proceed to Marienbad, but warmly recommended Dr. Priessnitz and the method adopted at Græfenberg; in consequence of which I went thither and arrived on the 30th of June.” Mr. B. then proceeds to give his treatment, and adds: “ After following this cure for ten weeks I felt myself strong again, and as well as ever I was. You are aware that I performed my share of walking up the hills, and enjoying the fresh breezes of the mountains, and pure

water at Græfenberg; and it is alone through Mr. Priessnitz's excellent management, and the help of a kind Providence, that I am now in possession of such good health and strength. Had I not left home, and bent my steps to Græfenberg, I doubt whether I should have been alive at the present moment, as my body was worn down, and my strength annihilated from the loss of blood, the system of medicine adopted, and the complete derangement of my digestive powers, so that I could scarcely stand, much less could I walk two hundred yards without repose; yet from the second day of my arrival at Græfenberg, I felt my entire system changed, and my health gradually and completely restored. Give my best regards to Mr. Priessnitz, and tell him that I shall think of him with a grateful heart as long as I live."

Since my last letter I have not become acquainted with any new case of cure, so that I shall turn back on my notes and fill the remainder of this sheet with extracts therefrom. The first I shall give bears some resemblance to Mr. B's case in some of the particulars of the disease, and in the quickness of the cure, and I shall likewise give it in the patient's own words: "For the sake of promoting the water cure, I gladly state my case as follows: From the 24th February to the 24th June, 1843, I was confined to my bed with a severe inflammation of the lungs and liver, together with a pleurisy. During this time I was bled, blistered, and leeches, and took large quantities of mercury, belladonna, and other medicines, without deriving any other benefit beyond the reducing the inflammation of the lungs. I now determined on proceeding to Græfenberg, where I arrived on the 24th July, in so great a state of weakness as to be unable to walk from my carriage to my room without support. I still was labouring under the pleurisy and inflammation of the liver, which from the time I left my bed, my doctors vainly endeavoured to subdue. My recovery under the skilful hands of Priessnitz now proceeded so rapidly that in six weeks time I was able to walk before breakfast, without fatigue, to the summit of a mountain, the distance of more than three English miles from, and twelve hundred feet above the level of Græfenberg. I

now leave Græfenberg quite recovered, and with the deepest feelings of gratitude ; and the more so that my physicians expressed their opinion that my recovery would be little short of a miracle, if not impossible.

“Græfenberg, Sept. 30, 1843.—Stephen Ambrosy, of Seden.”

Mr. Ambrosy's general treatment for the first two weeks consisted of wet sheets, shallow baths, wet rubbings, and hip baths ; the third week he had the douche. When one of his physicians was informed that he was getting better, that gentleman said that he could not believe it unless he saw him.

The next case I shall give in full, as it exemplifies the working of the cure in this respect—that the last virus received into the system is the first to be expelled therefrom, until at last the system is entirely purified and renovated.

Count—— had a weak nervous system from boyhood, and never knew what it was to enjoy a day's good health. On his first visit he remained here ten months. Nine years previous to coming here he contracted syphilis, of which he was apparently cured. He came here for gonorrhea, which he had for eight years, and for which he took immense quantities of medicine, and remained under medical treatment until he began to fall into decline. At the end of ten months he left, perfectly cured of this disorder, and considerably improved in general health. At home, where he remained for twenty-two months, he pursued partial treatment, consisting principally of hip baths and cold ablutions. While there he had a constant succession of crises. He had one fever crisis which lasted for five days, and for which he took wet rubbings and drank freely of water, but otherwise, to use his own words, “left the fever chiefly to nature.” After the fever he had an eruption all over his body, for which he wore wet bandages and thereby cured it. Afterwards there re-appeared the disease of which he thought that he had been cured nine years before. For this also he wore wet bandages, and was quite well in ten days. He returned here hoping to get rid of the nervous disorder, which he had as long as he could re-

member. He remained here six months, and left quite restored, saying, that he "never knew what health was until now." His general treatment on his second visit was, in the morning, two wet sheets in succession, followed by the cold bath; in the forenoon a douche and hip bath; in the afternoon a wet rubbing and hip bath.

A boy aged seven years, whose father had ringworm, suffered from the same disorder. He had ringworm over the eye and behind the knees. He was cured in six months. He had daily two wet sheets, followed by the shallow bath, and wore the waist bandage and similar bandages round the knees.

A gentleman, somewhat past thirty, had a fever in his tenth year, immediately after which a hard lump formed in the abdomen, for which much mercury was rubbed in. This treatment dispersed the lump, but he became at the same time deaf, and continued so up to the time of his coming here. He remained here six months and was perfectly cured. He is a very powerful muscular man, and had the sweating blanket thrice a week, and on the other four mornings he had the wet sheet: both were followed by the cold bath. His other daily treatment consisted of a wet rubbing, a hip bath, a douche, a wet sheet, and two head baths. He wore plugs of cotton in his ears, and took away with him two hundred of those plugs stained quite green. He passed in his urine a large quantity of red sand, which he likewise preserved and took home, congratulating himself that he had escaped the stone, a disorder of which his grandfather died. He had enormous boil crises, the largest I have seen.

—was taken suddenly ill with intolerable griping of the bowels and sick stomach. He threw up water soon after drinking it, in fact it acted as an emetic. He supposed that eating citron had made him ill. He was ordered the shallow bath, enemas, and four wet rubbings—did not take the bath—took four wet rubbings the first day, and five the second, and took altogether twelve enemas—quite well.

—contracted syphilis, and was cured by mercury, secondaries appeared, and a syphilitic ulcer broke out in the throat, and was of between two and three years

standing when he came here. He also had piles. His treatment was the wet sheet and cold bath in the morning; douche, wet rubbing and hip bath at noon; and the wet sheet and bath in the afternoon. He sweated twice or thrice a week. On the eighth day he had crisis, and had a succession of crises for two months. He had diarrhœa for a fortnight, and voided much slime and blood, and his piles entirely disappeared; the ulcer subsequently healed, and his voice which, on his arrival, he could scarcely raise above a whisper, became strong and clear. He was here altogether five or six months.

A gentleman, aged sixty, had psoriasis for two years; he was cured in about six or seven months. He took daily three wet sheets, followed by cold baths. In the second month he commenced to douche. He was not allowed to eat butter or salt. He was ordered to wear an oilskin cap in all his baths (for a similar reason to that for which sitzbaths and eyebaths were forbidden in the case to be mentioned farther on). About two months after he left, there was a letter from him, and he continued quite well.

It may not be out of place here to offer a few remarks on the use of salt. There seems to me to exist a very unreasonable prejudice in its favour. It has often been asserted, both in books and conversation, that the use of salt as a condiment is absolutely essential to health; but I never yet met with a single fact or argument, which went to support this assertion. On the contrary, it is well known that many tribes, as the New Zealanders for example, abstain entirely from the use of salt, and yet enjoy the most robust health. And, farther, it is often necessary to forbid the use of it in various disorders. In various cuticular eruptions, even in the simple water-rash, the irritability of the part affected is often considerably increased by the use of salt, and inflammatory action in gonorrhœa is also frequently increased by the same cause. I have known more than one case of sloughing secondary ulcers, which had obstinately resisted all the usual medical remedies, perfectly healed by decoctions of simples, and the following regimen—unleavened barley cakes, made without

salt, the only food, and spring water the only drink. Priessnitz has tried some experiments on pigs, which render it desirable that such researches should be pushed still further;—he fed some pigs with the usual allowance of salt, and others without any salt in their food, and, on dissection, he remarked that the intestines of the latter were sound and healthy, and those of the former as soft as brown paper, and easily torn with the finger. I am not aware that any reason has ever been advanced in favour of the use of salt that might not with equal force be advanced in favour of the use of iron, or lime, at one or all of our daily meals. It may be said in reply, as it often has been said; “But salt is absolutely necessary in the animal economy, and nature, therefore, provides it in the food—one can’t even eat a potato without eating salt.” Well, and is not that a reason the less why we should eat it in the raw state? Nature provides iron and lime in our food, and, *therefore*, we should eat them in the raw state—such is the logic displayed by the advocates for salt. But the pigeon eats salt, and the wild animals in America, frequent the salt ticks for that purpose, and therefore man should eat salt. Indeed! The ostrich eats stones, and therefore man should eat stones; the lion eats human flesh, and therefore man should be a cannibal; herbivorous animals eat many poisonous herbs, and therefore man should eat them too! Now, take the converse of the proposition—parsley will poison a parrot, and *therefore* will poison a man! Precious logic! Floyer classes salt with tobacco, wine, &c.

To return—

——— contracted syphilis and gonorrhœa both together. He had immediate recourse to the water cure-treatment:—wet sheet and shallow bath; douche, wet rubbing, and tepid hip bath for fifteen minutes; in the evening wet rubbing and tepid hip bath again. The syphilis was cured in eight days, and the gonorrhœa in three weeks.

——— contracted gonorrhœa. He was ill three days, when he commenced the cure. He took the wet sheet and cold bath in the morning, douche at noon, and wet

rubblings and tepid hip bath for twenty minutes in the evening. In three months he was cured.

The Baroness — was for fourteen years under medical treatment; she had had headache, cramps in the stomach, indigestion, and costiveness. She frequently threw up her food, even while eating. She was perfectly cured in fourteen months. General treatment: wet sheet and bath, douche, wet rubblings, and hip bath.

A lady who came here with her husband was always very delicate and subject to sick stomach; being in the family way her stomach became much worse, and she daily wasted away and became very thin and weakly. Observing the beneficial effect of the cure on others, she was induced to put herself under Priessnitz's care. He gave her two wet rubblings daily, and occasional hip baths. In a short time her stomach became well, her health daily improved, and she grew quite stout. On the day of her confinement she was out walking, and when she went home and found her pains coming on, she sent for Priessnitz, who caused her to sit up to the last moment. She wore the waist bandage, and, during parturition, it was changed every six minutes. She was speedily and safely delivered.

—— contracted gonorrhœa three years previous to coming to Græfenberg. During that time he took all kinds of medicine, and neglected no means of cure, but continued to get worse. He was cured here in eleven months. He took daily a wet sheet and cold bath; douche, wet rubbing, and hip bath; and wet sheet and cold bath. A few days after he contracted the disease he got a swelling in his leg, which obliged him to leave his regiment, and continued until a few days after the disease was cured. His friend, who left at the same time with him was cured in seven weeks of both syphilis and gonorrhœa of recent contraction. He took no medicine, but came to Græfenberg at once.

In the treatment of gonorrhœa the sitzbath is used, sometimes tepid, sometimes cold—it is always tepid when there is much inflammation. The duration of this bath is generally from fifteen to thirty minutes, sometimes more; when there is much relaxation, a succes-

sion of short baths from five to ten minutes duration, with intervals of equal length, and continued for an hour or more, are often found beneficial. The usual depth of water is five or six inches.

A very robust peasant, aged about thirty, contracted syphilis. Before he came to Græfenberg he was ill for a month, one week of which he was under allopathic treatment, but he thought that he was getting worse. Treatment here : for the first five days, the blanket twice a-day, (sweating for an hour in the morning, and for half an hour in the evening), followed each time by the shallow-tepid bath, and that by the cold bath ; after five days he took the cold bath, without the preparatory bath ; in a week he douched, for from two to five minutes, at 11, a.m. ; he wore the waist bandage, and a similar one on the sores, which were five in number, and which he bathed frequently during the day ; he was allowed only to take moderate exercise, and forbidden to eat meat or butter. In between six and seven weeks he was perfectly cured. It is to be remarked in his case that the patient had no crises of any kind.*

A gentleman was under treatment but a few days when a gonorrhœa, of which he imagined that he had been cured eighteen months before, re-appeared. In three weeks it was in reality cured.

But I must by this time have nearly wearied you of dry details, so that I shall avail myself of the space that is left to make a few remarks. For obvious reasons, I refrained from giving some of those cases at the time of their occurrence, being solicitous not to supply even the doubtful clue of a date to the names of the parties. You will have remarked that, in two or three cases, diet was carefully attended to ; and yet we have been told that there is no attention whatever paid to diet at Græfenberg ; and I regret to add that an author to whom the hydro-pathic cause owes much, has fallen into the same error, although he himself gives a case in which the strictest

* With respect to wearing the waist bandage, it is generally to be understood, as it is likewise with respect to the small bandage, in all cases of syphilis and gonorrhœa ; the same may be said with respect to the drinking of water.

attention to diet was paid. Had he confined himself to saying, that it is to be regretted that still greater attention is not paid to diet in every case, one would not gainsay him. We are also taught by some writers to believe that the diet at Græfenberg is of the very worst possible kind, and that musty meat, bad pork, indigestible sausages, and saer kraut form the staple comestibles. I can only say that I have been here about fourteen months, and never once saw musty meat on the table; that I have seen pork and sausages only about six or seven times; and that I have seen saer kraut only once for many weeks. Beef is the usual meat, varied occasionally with mutton, veal, chickens, ducks, geese, and, in the season, with hares, venison, and partridges. Trout and carp are also sometimes given. There is always a second course of pudding or pastry of some kind, generally of rice, or (I believe) coarsely ground wheat; or apple, or other fruit puddings. Baked pears and stewed prunes are also common dishes. No soup is given now. Priessnitz has always been opposed to its use; but a large portion of the guests murmured, and he was obliged to give it. It is now given up as it were by consent. It must be confessed that this fare is not calculated to give a false appetite to a pampered English stomach. There is no boiled or roast joint nicely done to a turn, flanked with fat, and swimming in gravy—no highly-spiced pies, and no rich gravies; but the food, though plain, is, I believe, wholesome. It is unaccountable to me how the same writer can represent the diet here as so very disgusting as to compel some persons, of better educated palates than minds, to commit the indecency of spitting it out on the table; and in the same breath blame Priessnitz for not attending more strictly to the appetites of his patients, most of whom, he says, gorge themselves to excess. It is true that there is occasionally to be met with a man of diseased appetite, who, notwithstanding the remonstrances of Priessnitz, will eat enormously, whatever be the quality of the food; but, from my observation, I am led to believe that, in general, the patients here eat with that healthy appetite which is the usual result of early rising and constant out-door exercise; but if I am wrong, still

I cannot conceive how richer fare could lessen the temptation to excess. Priessnitz, whose great experience cannot be denied, is of opinion, that it is a very great error to give invalids a small quantity, but that of a very nourishing quality; he maintains that bulk should be united with nourishment,* and that if the patient will not eat of plain food, it were better that he should abstain until his appetite returns.

Another error into which superficial observers are apt to fall, is, that all cases are treated very nearly alike, while, in fact, scarcely any two cases, even of the same disease, are subjected to exactly similar treatment, the duration of the various processes either varying considerably, or one or other of them, being given in one case and withheld in another. Take the following examples, which just occur to me:—Two patients with nearly similar symptoms were treated for headache—one was ordered the douche; the other, who was subject to congestion of the head, would not be allowed to take it. Two other patients were under treatment here—each had piles and weak eyes: the one had hip-baths and eye-baths; the other was forbidden to use them. In the latter case, the whole system was so full of impurities, that Priessnitz would not allow the use of any local bath, lest too much morbid matter should be determined to the part, and irreparable injury be the consequence.

I had some other observations to offer, but must reserve them for a future communication.

Ever your sincere friend,

JOHN GIBBS.

* An opinion also maintained by Dr. Wm. Beaumont, who, in his "Experiments on the Gastric Juice," says:—"Bulk is, perhaps, nearly as necessary to the articles of diet as the nutrient principle." I know not, if in thus showing an accordance in opinion between the self-educated and disowned, and the diplomad and recognised experimentalist, I am not subjecting the former to a renewal of insolence on the part of a medical student, the author of two very silly letters in the *Wexford Independent*, who sneers at Priessnitz for holding "that every acute disease is an attempt of the system to expel diseased matter;" and that "fever is not a disease itself, but the consequence of it, being an effect of an exertion greater

LETTER XXX.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq., etc.

[Republished from the Wexford Papers.]

“Er machte viele bedeutende Kuren, und wodurch? durch blosses kaltes Wasser.”—Der Wasser Geist von DR. OTTO GRAF.

Græfenberg, October 23, 1844.

MY DEAR RIDGE,—You may perhaps have heard that Priessnitz often receives letters full of expressions of gratitude from many of his former patients. I have been much interested in the perusal of some of those letters; and to give you some idea of the terms in which they are generally couched, I shall commence this letter with extracts from one or two. One of the latest letters was from a French gentleman, who expresses himself as follows:—

“My Dear Mr. Priessnitz,—I flatter myself that, notwithstanding the number of persons who confide themselves to your care, you still remember us, and I take the liberty of addressing these lines to you, that I may repeat how great is the gratitude of my wife, as well as of myself for the care which you have bestowed upon her, and to which she owes the inappreciable benefit of excellent health.

“It is to you that she owes this happiness, and she desires me to tell you so, and to express her gratitude. Will you reckon us amongst those who are most devoted to you, and who never will forget how much they are indebted to you?”

The German Duchess of — has recently written in terms no less warm. She says:—

than the power of the system.” And this gentleman’s sneers are levelled, forsooth, because “the first of these [passages] contains the very doctrine of the *vis medicatrix naturæ*, whereon Cullen founded his theory of inflammation; and the second gives in almost identical words the condition described by the immortal John Hunter as action without power.” *Risum teneatis!*

“ Dear Priessnitz,—I write from this place to acknowledge particularly the beneficial results which have attended your treatment in my case. Here—where I used the salt springs, with many other medical remedies, for three summers before I visited Græfenberg—where my ailings were continually increasing, so that at last I was entirely given over—where I was obliged to be carried in a chair, and could scarcely bear even that—I now walk with ease, rapidity, and strength, over these steep and dizzy heights. Every one is astonished, and scarcely trusts his eyes. My sufferings here were formerly so exceedingly great that I was very much moved and affected to see this place again.”

The Duchess proceeds in this strain throughout a long letter, describing the horrors of the past, when, to use her own strong word, she was “boiled,”—and mingling her reminiscences with expressions of the warmest gratitude to Priessnitz.

It is much to be regretted that very many errors respecting the efficacy of the water cure, and the manner of employing it, should be circulated even by its advocates. I am led to make this observation from having recently read a pamphlet on hydropathy, which accidentally fell into my hands, and which is evidently a compilation. It states that “the worst cases of gout can be cured in eight weeks!” and that “all Priessnitz’s patients are cured.” Both these assertions are very wide from the truth, and are calculated to do much harm by exciting unreasonable expectations, and thus to injure the cure in the estimation of many. Suppose, for instance, that a person with gout of long standing should read this pamphlet, and, influenced thereby, should undertake a long journey, and come here and find that he cannot be cured in less than many months, or perhaps two or three years, or, may be, that all the benefit he can expect is some alleviation; or suppose that he discovers, as he must soon do, that *all* Priessnitz’s patients are *not* cured, would it not be very natural that he should feel disappointed? and does not disappointment as naturally beget hostility? and would it be very surprising (for

there is no reasoning with passion) if he should go away denouncing the water cure as a humbug?

It may here be asked, "Why are not *all* Priessnitz's patients cured?" I shall endeavour to answer this question as briefly as possible.

In the first place, some of them are incurable; and although informed of this, they will still remain on, perhaps hoping against hope, or, at least, looking for some alleviation, which several of them find.

Secondly, There are others who either cannot, or will not, give the time necessary to make a cure.

Thirdly, There are others in whom Priessnitz has confidence, and who are in that state that they can leave; and, by following certain directions, can and do finish their cures at home.

Fourthly, There are some, of weak minds, who take alarm at the approach or appearance of a crisis, or at some trifling but unusual symptom, and who fly away. One of this class of patients—a lady, came here about six years ago; she took the treatment for three or four weeks, when one morning she observed a silver hair among her tresses. This she mentioned to some of her acquaintance, and inquired if it was an usual effect of the treatment. She seemed a fair mark for waggery, and she was gravely assured that the water cure invariably turned the hair grey. Her vanity took the alarm, and she instantly returned home. Some of my readers may smile at this characteristic trait, but the sequel of the anecdote will soon chase the smiles from their lips. On her return home she immediately again called in medical attendance. In six weeks she was bed-ridden, and has so continued ever since, if, indeed, she still lives. About two months since she wrote to Priessnitz, asking him to receive her again as a patient, but he declined doing so. When health was offered her, she fled from it; when it was for ever lost, she would have returned to it.

Fifthly, There are others, several of whom I have known, and some of whom have been advised by Priessnitz not to stay here "losing their time and their money, and doing themselves injury," by leading a life quite at

variance with all the principles of the cure, living in rooms heated to a most unhealthy degree, drinking occasionally a bottle of wine, and indulging in other dissipations. Such persons cannot and do not make good cures.

Sixthly, There are others who do an exceeding great injustice to Priessnitz and his system, and no less injury to themselves, by having frequent recourse to medicine in an underhand manner.

Seventhly, Others are in a hurry to get quickly well, and think the more treatment the better : they are almost certain to do themselves serious injury.

Eighthly, and lastly, There are some who will not take the prescribed treatment ; as an illustration of which it may not be out of place to relate an anecdote, which was current here when I arrived :—Two gouty gentlemen, the one a German, the other a Hungarian, arrived on the same day and occupied the same chamber, both being suffering from acute attacks, were ordered to be rubbed in the shallow bath. The German was rubbed first ; and all the time he remained in the bath, he roared most lustily. The Hungarian's turn came next : he lit his pipe, took his place in the bath, and calmly smoking, without uttering one exclamation, or moving a muscle, bore the operation with the fortitude of a stoic. The German looked on in amazement and admiration, and, when the bath was over, he eagerly asked the other, " How did you endure it so well ? you saw and heard me how I writhed and roared—but you, you never stirred a limb—you never moved your lips except to smoke—how did you manage to bear it ? " " Bear it ! " replied the Hungarian ; " very easily—I am not the fool they took me for—do you think that I gave them the bad leg to rub ? Not I—I gave them the sound one. "

Another instance of shirking the treatment was narrated to me, in the case of a lady who used to take her sitzbath without any water in it.

But to return to the pamphlet. It likewise states that " sweating is always used for piles. " I never knew it to be so employed. It is astonishing to what an extent the rage for sweating prevails in some quarters. Some hy-

dropathic practitioners employ it for diseases of the stomach and bowels. Priessnitz never uses it for intestinal disorders; on the contrary, he often forbears to use it in cases where it might otherwise be beneficially employed—if the patient should happen to have strongly marked intestinal disease, or a disordered nervous system, or an apoplectic tendency. One hydropathic practitioner uses sweating in cases of paralysis, and deters patients from coming to Græfenberg, by representing the treatment there as being very severe in amount, as well as in kind; when, if he knew the truth, he would know that a patient whom he sweats twice a-day and douches, and to whom he also gives other baths, would, at Græfenberg, be subjected to the gentlest treatment—namely, three wet rubbings daily, with perhaps the addition of a foot-bath.

Once more to return to the pamphlet. I have noticed another error in it. It recommends that “water should be drank freely after dinner to assist digestion.” Water taken some time before eating promotes digestion by imparting tone to the stomach; taken, in moderation, at meals, it assists digestion by its dissolving properties; but taken immediately after meals, it interferes with and retards digestion. Such is Priessnitz’s opinion; and he illustrates it by the following homely simile:—He says that no maltster, although he employs water to produce fermentation, would think of using it after fermentation had commenced.

As I am noticing errors, I think that I may as well offer a remark or two on another which is very prevalent. It is asserted that, as the water cure supersedes medicine, so it likewise altogether dispenses with the aid of surgery: an assertion which just amounts to this, that a broken bone is to be left to nature to reset. But it is not only in cases of dislocation or fracture that surgery dispenses its blessings. This science, although it has some errors to abandon, has been brought to a high state of perfection, and is deserving of every honour. What can be more beautiful, for instance, than the operation which restores a club foot to its natural form. This is an operation which (especially after the patient has been puri-

fied and strengthened by a course of the water cure) is performed with consummate skill and the desired success by Dr. Dieffenbach, of Berlin ; and the only thing left to be desired on the part of the learned doctor, is that, instead of oil, etc., etc., he should use water dressings.

The doctor has repeatedly declared that those persons who have previously undergone the water treatment, recover from an operation much more speedily, and with a less amount of inflammatory action, than any other class of patients.

Another error is the belief that Priessnitz *never* feels the pulse. He sometimes, though not often, feels it at the wrist, and he continually does what amounts to the same thing—he feels and counts the pulsations of the temporal artery.

I believe that I have already noticed the fact of persons who had formerly undergone the water treatment in this place, and been restored to health, occasionally paying visits of gratitude to Priessnitz. But it sometimes happens that persons who had been cured, but who have not continued to live in accordance with hydropathic principles, return here (after the lapse of years) to be treated for new diseases, and I think that they thereby give substantial proof of their confidence in the water cure. As an example, I may mention that there is here at present a gentleman who had had, some six or seven years since, sentence of amputation pronounced upon one of his legs. He came to Græfenberg, and, in a few weeks (I think six) he was completely cured. He is now here for some affection of the chest. 'Tis true that he had recourse at first to medical aid, but, becoming continually worse, and being taught by experience, he has done at last what he should have done at first ; and I think that his having tried, for the second time, the efficacy of medicine, and being, for the second time, obliged to abandon it for water, adds considerable weight to the latter fact.

Another gentleman, who is at Freiwaldau, was cured, I am informed, about eight years ago, of tic dolereux. His cure was completed in about three months, and he

never had a return of this distressing disorder. He is here now for some disease of the eyes.

It is astonishing that persons who have once proved the inefficacy of medicine and the efficacy of water should ever again, especially under similar circumstances, have recourse to the former uncertain and dangerous mode of treatment; and that such is sometimes the case can only, in my opinion, be accounted for, by supposing an almost incredible deficiency of the reasoning powers. A remarkable instance of what I do not hesitate to call the most consummate folly, came under my notice about three or four months ago.

A gentleman contracted disease and went through all the usual course of medical treatment, and continued to get worse and worse. He came here and was cured. Again he contracted disease—again he had recourse to medicine—again it failed, and again he came here and was healed. A third time this occurred—physic was once more proved to be worthless, and once more water triumphed. He *contracted* disease the fourth time. It is to be supposed that now he set out for Græfenberg at once; but no—doctors were first to be feed, and nauseous noxious compounds swallowed and paid for. As I have said, he came here for the fourth time, about three or four months since; Priessnitz refused at first to receive him, but he said that he had already been three times cured, that he knew that Priessnitz could cure him again, and that go he would not until he was cured. I do not know the termination of his case, or when he left; as, not taking any particular interest in his case, I soon lost sight of him in the crowd of patients who were then here.

Priessnitz has recently treated another case of a fit of apoplexy. A lady who had had an apoplectic fit, and who had been bled, as she states, *two hundred* times, to prevent a recurrence of the disease, came here very recently. On the day of her arrival she had an interview with Priessnitz, who refused to undertake her treatment. Agitated perhaps by thus having her hopes disappointed, or from some other cause, she was that night seized with

an attack of apoplexy. Priessnitz was sent for, and of course he attended her; and, I had nearly repeated, "of course," he brought her through. Now, she will not leave; she says that he can cure her, and that he must do so.

From amongst the cases of cure which have occurred since the date of my last letter, I shall give you two. About six years ago a gentleman caught cold, it was followed by disease of the throat and chest, for which he took large quantities of digitalis, and the affection was apparently cured. In a few days a large boil broke out on his leg; for this he rubbed in ointment, and the boil was cured. Shortly several ulcers formed on the leg, and continued eating in, up to the time of his arrival here. There was one open sore in the calf of the leg, which had eaten into the very bone, and into which a man could almost thrust his clenched hand. For the first month this patient had wet rubbings and three tepid hip baths daily; he afterwards had the wet sheet, and two hip baths daily. He never had a cold bath. He has been here about five months, and before he left all his sores were healed. It is remarkable, that under the operation of the cure, his old disease reappeared and was also cured. It is interesting to trace, as one can do in this case, the progress of disease under medical treatment, and the return to health under the water cure.

Another gentleman has also been cured of a running sore in the leg; he had it for about a year. His daily treatment was four wet sheets and the douche. He was here about two months. About eight years ago he was cured here of gout in the hands and feet.

Before I conclude it might be perhaps useful to give the treatment in sprain. It is the result of an accident to which every one is liable, and as it requires only local applications, may be safely treated by the patient himself. I have met with two or three cases of sprained ankle, and they were all treated in the same way. The foot was bathed and rubbed with cold water about three times a day, and a heating bandage was worn. This in a few days produced either boils or a rash, and a cure speedily followed.

The Americans have this day posted a letter to be published in New York, as a testimony to the water cure. I have obtained permission to make a copy of it for the society, and shall avail myself of my first leisure hour to do so.

Believe me, your very faithful,

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER XXXI.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq., etc.

[Republished from the Wexford Papers.]

"The water cure as yet has had this evident injustice,—the patients resorting to it have mostly been desperate cases."—SIR E. L. BULWER.

Græfenberg, Oct. 30th, 1844.

MY DEAR RIDGE,—I forward you a copy of the document of which I made mention in my last letter. It bears over a hundred signatures, and I am informed that, had it been deemed desirable, the number could have been considerably increased. Amongst the signatures are those of Mr. Greenough, the American sculptor, and other American citizens; likewise those of several continental noblemen, including Prince Ruspoli; and also the signatures of several medical men, one of whom, Dr. Marcher, was sent here on the part of the Danish government, and the other, Dr. Hallman, was sent here on the part of the Prussian government. The document gives a sketch of Priessnitz's career, and notices his having been condemned to imprisonment, a fact, of which, perhaps, you were not aware, and respecting which it may be worth remarking, that the sentence was not carried into execution pending the appeal. His enemies (for notwithstanding all the good he has effected, he still has

enemies), do not think of prosecuting him now, but they omit no opportunity of persecuting him in a petty way. To convey some idea of the paltry spirit which animates them, I shall mention two incidents which have come under my immediate observation. But first it may be necessary to remind you that the censorship is established in this country, and that the faculty is represented at the board. Immediately subsequent to the decease of Sir F. Burdett, a long article, copied from an English paper, and attributing his death to the water cure, appeared in the Vienna press. Soon afterwards, a very short paragraph, likewise taken from an English paper, and containing, in a few words, a full answer to the base, but not unworthy, calumny, was translated by an Austrian nobleman into German, and forwarded to Vienna for publication, but it would not be received. On another occasion, although it is usual to notice in the papers the movements of great personages, insertion was refused to two or three lines, merely stating the fact of Prince Lichtenstein's arrival at Freiwaldau, without one word in reference to the water cure. On such exhibitions of puerile malice, I shall leave it to my readers to make their own reflections, but must be allowed to express my gratification that I am a native of a country where the press is free.

With respect to the cases of cure which are detailed in the document, I have already given you three out of the four, together with their treatment; but as to the fourth, namely, the case of small pox, I am uncertain if I have heretofore made mention of it, and so I shall now give the treatment in it; and should I be guilty of a repetition, I must only console myself with the reflection, that "a good thing cannot be done too often." It will be sufficient to give one day's treatment when the fever was at the highest. The patient had nine wet sheets, six wet rubbings, and three shallow baths, going from the latter to the cold bath, and back again. After the eruption appeared, the patient had daily three wet sheets, followed each by a shallow bath, of course, without rubbing.

You will observe that a postscript to the document

contains a statement of the death of one of the subscribers. Subsequent to that melancholy event, another patient has died, being the second out of 942. I think I cannot take a better opportunity to relate the particulars of his case. The patient was a young man of perhaps about twenty. He had enjoyed good health up to the year 1843, when he had a gastric fever, which was succeeded by a rheumatic and scrofulous tumefaction of the vertebra cervicales; so that he could not move his head. For this he took many remedies, amongst others iodine inwardly, and he had the actual cautery, but without any benefit. On his arrival here, he was extremely weak and emaciated, but at first he seemed to acquire some little strength, and was enabled to move his head, all tumefaction disappearing from the neck. However, he wasted more and more from day to day, until death closed the scene. For some time he had diarrhœa, but it was stopped. Amongst his symptoms may be mentioned, great and increasing emaciation, pulse weak, from 90 to 92. Marasma and œdematous tumefaction of inferior limbs, from groin to foot. Pain in abdomen on pressure, skin dry and muddy. It is strange how many invalids one meets with who trace back their sufferings to a fever or a common cold, up to the period of which they had enjoyed good health. How such persons, when witnessing the facility with which water completely cures a cold or a fever, and restores the patient to his wonted or better health, must mourn over the delusion which influenced them ever to put their trust in drugs.

Ever your very faithful,

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER XXXII.

To the Editor of the New York Tribune.

[Republished from the *New York Tribune*.]

Græfenberg, Austrian Silesia, July 21, 1844.

SIR,—The undersigned natives of the United States and other countries, desirous to alleviate human suffering, and to promote the health and comfort of human beings, wish to draw the attention of the American people to the water cure as administered in this place by Vincent Priessnitz, and they would esteem it a favour, if you would allow them to offer through the medium of your columns the following statement.

Vincent Priessnitz, the founder of this new system of curing disease is now in his forty-fourth year. In his sixteenth year he met with an accident by which two of his ribs were broken, and he was otherwise seriously injured. The surgeon, who was called in, pronounced an unfavourable opinion, whereupon Priessnitz dismissed him, and having previously tested the efficacy of water in the treatment of cattle, he resolved to undertake his own cure. His first care was to replace his ribs, which he effected as related in Captain Claridge's *Hydropathy*, "by forcibly pressing his abdomen against a table, at the same time resolutely holding his breath, so as to swell out his chest." This painful operation being successful, he next applied wet bandages—and by their aid, the use of cold water as a beverage, strict attention to diet, and repose, he finally effected a permanent cure. The reputation which he thence acquired amongst his neighbours induced many of them to seek his aid; other cures were effected by him, and by degrees his fame and reputation so spread, that the number of patients who flocked to him from far and near so increased, as to excite the jealousies and apprehensions of the neighbouring physicians, who instituted proceedings against him before the local authorities, charging him, amongst other things, with using medicated baths and bandages, and

claiming the intervention of the tribunal to prohibit him from unlawfully healing the sick and afflicted. In consequence of this he was condemned to imprisonment,* and forbidden to resume his practice, but from this decision he appealed to the Aulic council, who sent a committee to investigate the matter on the spot, and the result was, that his enemies not being able to substantiate any of their charges against him, the sentence was reversed, and the whole proceedings, and the facts which were thereby elicited, contributed still more to extend his fame and to increase the number of his friends, amongst whom are comprehended many of the highest rank in the empire. The number of patients from the 1st of January, 1829, to the 1st of January, 1844, has been 8,573, and there are here, at present, about 364 persons of both sexes, and all ages, from fifteen different nations. The number of patients last year was 1,050, amongst whom were 100 noblemen, including seven princes, 112 military and naval officers, including one field marshal and five generals, many clergymen, and fellows, and professors of colleges, about thirty lawyers, including several judges, and forty physicians and surgeons, and four apothecaries, and many others, by far the greater portion of whom are from amongst the educated and influential members of society in their respective places of abode. Amongst this large number of 1,050, although, if we may judge by the patients who are here at present, the greater number of them came here suffering under old chronic complaints, for which medicine had exhausted its remedies in vain, there were but four deaths, with the particulars of two of which we have become acquainted, and it appears that from the first Priessnitz pronounced both cases to be perfectly hopeless.

Not a particle of medicine, no tonic, no stimulant, no emetic, no purgative, no vegetable or mineral poison is

* It was not only from the medical profession that Priessnitz met with persecution; he was likewise denounced from a neighbouring altar; but the clergyman who denounced him, having been given over at a subsequent period, in fever, by three medical men, was indebted to the ministrations of Priessnitz for his life.

ever administered in any form or quantity here. No bleeding, blistering, or leeching, is employed. Water variously applied, externally and internally; the sweating process; pure fresh air; out-door exercise; plain diet; regulated clothing; early hours; and retirement from the distracting cares and pleasures of the world, constitute the only remedies. It is not pretended that the water cure is an universal specific for all diseases. Priessnitz sometimes refuses patients because he regards them as incurable, and there are diseases which when arrived at a certain point no remedy can arrest, but there are sufficient facts to prove that all diseases curable, and many incurable by any other means, can be healed by the proper application of the water cure. It often occurs, in medical practice, that medicine proves far more difficult of expulsion from the system and a far greater source of suffering to the patient than the disease it had been employed to cure, but water purifies and renovates without leaving a sting behind. It should be remarked, that while the action of water is to strengthen the system so as to enable it to throw off disease, medicines so lower it, that in proportion as the patient has taken them, does his restoration to health become more tedious and difficult; and the superiority of water is apparent in the fact, that symptoms, which years before had been suppressed by medicines, reappear under the water treatment to be, together with their cause, entirely and radically removed. It were much to be desired, that there should spring up in all lands water cure establishments, presided over by persons properly qualified by study and observation, so that a system, which has been made a blessing to thousands, might be made a blessing to millions, but it is to be apprehended that much harm will be done by speculators, who, because they visit Græfenberg for a few days, consider themselves qualified to practise; although they cannot have had sufficient opportunities to learn any thing of the real theory and practice of the water cure. There is no mystery, no quackery in the water cure as here administered. The guests meet one another three times a day in the common dining hall, and mingle

together in the walks and in the rooms, and the treatment and progress of each are frequent and general topics of conversation, and all can attest to the simplicity and truthfulness of Priessnitz. Besides being exemplified in chronic complaints, the efficacy of the water cure is most astonishing in its control over all acute diseases. Colds, influenzas, croup, whooping-cough, measles, small-pox, scarlet-fever, typhus, cholera, etc. etc., are all entirely under the control of the water cure, in which for the certain and speedy cure of all those diseases, so prevalent and often so fatal to old and young in the United States, the patients at Græfenberg have the utmost confidence.

Perhaps you would kindly afford us space for the details of two or three of the latest and best known cases which have been treated here.

Count Mitrowski, a gentleman aged fifty-four, who had been long afflicted with gout, and whose name we are permitted to use, was found insensible in his bed in an apoplectic fit. Some medical men were quickly in attendance, and Priessnitz was sent for. The medical gentlemen considered the count was past recovery, and one of them said that he would throw his drugs out of the window, and become an hydropathist, if Priessnitz restored the patient. It was proposed by another to bleed the patient. To this Priessnitz would not consent if he was to bear any part of the responsibility. So far gone was the patient, and so nearly extinct did vitality appear, that the priest administered extreme unction, and, according to the custom of the country, a lighted wax candle was placed in each hand of the apparently dying man. By cold water alone, under the sagacious direction of Priessnitz, this gentleman recovered consciousness on the third day, drove out on the fourth and gradually returned to his former habits.

The only son of a sovereign prince, aged three years, suffered for fifteen months from chronic obstruction of the bowels, which baffled the skill of his medical attendants, and resulted in total atrophy. For eighteen days the child had had no relief, and, by his physician's advice, Priessnitz was called in. He saw the child, and,

at his recommendation, the prince and his family came here in order that Priessnitz might daily superintend the treatment. The disease yielded to the water cure, and, in less than three months, the child returned home quite well.

A lady of rank suffered severely from frequent headaches, cramps in the stomach, indigestion, and vomitings. She was under medical treatment for fourteen years ; in little more than a year under the water cure, she was perfectly restored.

A gentleman, aged about thirty-five, had one of the worst cases of small pox complicated with measles. From the fact that he threw up blood, any medical man will be convinced of the malignity of the disease. In a fortnight, he was out walking,—that is, about four weeks since, and *all* traces of the disease are rapidly disappearing.

Here is one case of a gentlemen advanced in life, and long an invalid ; another of a tender infant ; a third of a lady ; a fourth of a gentleman labouring under, generally speaking, a most fatal disease, and all restored. Is it necessary to adduce further facts to ensure to the serious consideration of this subject the attention of the public, and especially of the medical profession ?

The undersigned trust that you will kindly insert this statement, which they are impelled to offer from a desire to make known to others the benefits derivable from a system in the efficacy of which, as well as in the skill and sagacity of its founder, Priessnitz, they have the fullest confidence, and to which, humanly speaking, some of them owe their lives, and are, Sir,

Your obedient servants,

Henry Davis, of Syracuse, New York, U.S.

Alonzo Draper, New York, U.S.

J. V. Ganahl, New Orleans, U.S.

C. V. Ganahl, Innsbruck, Tyrol.

Henry C. Wright, Philadelphia, U.S.

H. d'Avrainville, Philadelphia, U.S.

A. Grenfell, M.A., England.

Baron Rodolph Lüttichau, Austria.

- Comte Guillaume d'Aicholt, Westphalia.
 Charles de Pickler, Grätz, Styria.
 Baron de Leutsch, Captain, Austrian Army.
 Compte Pierre de Goëss, Styria.
 Baron Koller, Captain, Austrian Army.
 Count Zelenski, Chamberlain and Captain, Austrian
 Army.
 Hugh Barr, Paisley, Scotland.
 Edward Birch, British Consul, Kiel.
 Gustav Hirschfeld, Holstein.
 H. K. Marcher, M.D. Denmark.
 Le Comte Wallowitez, Poland.
 F. Le Moile, late French Consul.
 Charles, Baron de Wrede, Austria.
 Count Henkel de Donnersmark, Silesia.
 C. Balsch, Grand Logothet, Moldavia.
 J. Baron de Pabst, Holland.
 Philip Charles Würzner, Medical Student, Vienna.
 J. P. Hitchcock, London.
 G. N. Spencer, Surgeon Dentist, London.
 Hon. E. H. Tracey, England.
 F. Bagner y Ribas, Spanish Consul, Russia.
 Hugo Harnisch, Apothecary, Breslau.
 L. J. E. Rudnick, Dr. Phil., Prussia.
 Edward C. Ellery, London.
 G. Pietsch, Leeds, England.
 Sigm. Goetzel, Vienna.
 Count Joseph Schaffgotsch, Prussian Silesia.
 Baron Francis d'Unrug, Poland.
 Henry Mackenzie, Derby, England.
 Baron Schmidburg, Secretary to the Austrian go-
 vernment.
 Andrew B. Mills, Glasgow.
 J. Prieto de Warnez, son of the ex-President of
 Chili, South America.
 H. A. Müller, }
 Carl. Burmester, }
 H. Schierholz, }
 Theod. Heymann, }
 E. Hölzmann, }
 } Hamburg.
 P. Szismay, Chaamberlain, Pest, Hungary.

Henry J. Robinson, Yorkshire.
Ladislav de Grotoski, Poland.
Napoleon Matecki, Poland.
James Slater, Isle de Jersey.
J. Hailes, Major, Bengal Army.
Charles R. W. Lane, Lieut.-Colonel, Bengal Army.
Le Chevalier de Montiglio, First Secretary to the
Sardinian Legation at Vienna.
L. Auguste, Prince Ruspoli, Rome.
Francis Kronwald, Knt. of the Order of the Em-
peror Leopold, Court Councillor, Austria.
Count Zeno Saurau, Austrian Chamberlain.
Baron Tindal, of Holland, Secretary of Legation.
Captain Kehrs, Austria.
James Hamilton, Cornacassa, Monaghan, Ireland.
Demitri de Gallette, Captain, Russian Army.
Alexander de Hurmusaki, Moldavia.
V. Hake, Lieut. Col. Prussian Army.
V. Cr ty, First Lieut. do.
Otto Schram, Oeconomic Councillor, Prussia.
Edward Hoffman, Lieutenant, Prussian Army.
Edward Calvas, First Lieut. Austrian Army.
Edward Josephi, Tabular Cancellist, Siebenb rger.
Charles Freyher, V. Radriz, Bavaria.
Michael Avrial, Merchant, Paris.
Francis Rieger, Cracow.
Johann Gotthilf, Criminal Judge, Prussia.
Comte Oscar Roswadowski, Austrian Lieutenant,
Gallicia.
Joseph, Baron Wallisch, First Lieutenant, Fourth
Austrian Cavalry.
Maritz, Baron Lyncker, Lieutenant, Prussian In-
fantry.
Metzenthin, Prussian Major.
Joan Antonia Roiz Vianna, Brazil, South America.
Captain Nicholas Evreinoff, Prussia.
Paul Arnault, Paris.
Giuseppe Weyher, Trieste.
Augustus Navez, Lieut., Belgian Army.
Wilhelm Lommatsch, Theol. Candidate, Saxony.
Baron August Lederer, Austrian Colonel.

John Gibbs, Enniscorthy, Ireland.
 Ignace Schwarz de Sonnenwald, Austrian Major.
 Henry de Stragen, First Lieut. Austrian Cavalry.
 Charles Niemann, Provincial Deputy, Prussian Pomerania.
 Victor Kurnatowski, Poland.
 Baron N. de Höpken, Stockholm.
 George Seibel, Lyons, France.
 Karl Quvos, Prussian Poland.
 Ad. Seigl, Barrister-at-Law, Austria.
 V. de Lanken, Lieut. 1st Prussian Hulan Regiment.
 Seigler, Austrian Captain.
 V. Orotz, Secretary Excise Bureau, Vienna.
 V. Pethoe, First Lieut. Austrian Army.
 Leibshang, Austrian Postmaster, Schartenberg.
 Bardel, First Lieut. Austrian Army.
 Von Kutzel, Lieutenant, do.
 Bovelino, do. do.
 Baron Hackelberg, do. do.

I am happy to have an opportunity of expressing my adhesion to the sentiments of the above letter. Not having been at Græfenberg when the cases mentioned were treated I can only say that I have heard unanimous and unquestionable testimony of the truth of the statements, and have witnessed in my own family, and among my own acquaintances, facts not less surprising, not less satisfactory.

Horatio Greenough, U.S.

We cannot vouch for the exactitude of each particular in the cases related above, not having been at Græfenberg during their occurrence, but are happy to state our convictions and experience to be fully in favour of this mode of treatment.

E. Hallman, M.D., Berlin.
 Peter Wilson, of Scotland, Writer to the Signet.
 R. L. Jones, England.
 A. J. Colvin, New York, U.S.
 B. Bright, England.
 A. Schrötteringk, M.D., Hamburg.
 W. Cybulka M.D., Prag.
 Doctor Hamplin, Lemberg.

P.S.—One of the subscribers, Mr. Davis, having been attacked by paralysis, it was considered best to delay the transmission of the foregoing testimony to the water cure, in order that the result in his case might be appended. In doing so it is proper to state that about two years ago he had an attack of paralysis in the United States. Being at Rome, from symptoms which developed themselves just at that period, he became persuaded that he was about to have another attack, and being strongly impressed with the idea that he could not recover therefrom, he hastened to Græfenberg to try the water cure as a last resource. On the third of August the threatened attack deprived him of the power of speech, and totally paralysed all the right side of his body. On the first of September, we regret to say, that he breathed his last. A post mortem examination has been held by four physicians, and their report states that there was visible “A strong and marked injection of the veins of the pia mater, which, as well as the arachnoid membrane, appeared here and there thickened by a serous infiltration; but there was no effusion of coagulated lymph or other trace of inflammation. There was no softening of any part of the convolutions of the brain. The cerebral substance was much injected with venous blood. The lateral ventricles being opened, it was remarked that on the left side the corpus striatum and the thalamus opticus protruded in a very marked manner, while in the right ventricle the same appeared sunken in and flattened. The cause of this latter appearance is explained by the softening of the substance of the brain just outside and between the right corpus striatum and the right thalamus opticus. The extent of the softening (evidently of some standing), was that of an inch in length, half an inch broad, and a quarter of an inch thick; its shape was that of an elongated square, laying under the lower paries of the ventricle, and towards the outside. This softening was of a yellowish colour, and upon pouring water upon it, small flakes of softened cerebral substance floated away, showing a sort of tender cellulous web,* in which the softened cerebral

* This is an interesting fact.

substance was contained. (This morbid appearance was evidently the cause of the paralytic stroke which occurred two years ago, and was probably then of much greater extent.) The left hemisphere shewed a recent softening of the centre of the thalamus opticus, about the size of a small filbert, or the tip of the thumb; no injection, only a slight yellowish tinge; but here no cellular web was to be seen, when the flakes of softened cerebral substance were washed away by the water poured on. This," it is added, "was the cause of the paralytic stroke and dumbness which took place at Græfenberg, and was clearly the disorder which terminated in death." Thus it appears that there was an *old* "softening of the substance of the brain" in the right ventricle, and a *more recent* softening of the *centre* of the *thalamus opticus* in the left hemisphere—facts which assuredly require no comment. This, it should be remarked, is the first death which has occurred here, out of nine hundred and eleven patients, since the first of last January. It is true that another death is reported in the police lists, but on enquiry it appears that the deceased came here in the last stage of illness, having a complication of disorders, and that Priessnitz declined to receive him, and that up to the period of his death, he continued to be attended by his own physician who had accompanied him here. To the foregoing, the undersigned countrymen of the lamented deceased have only to add, that the melancholy event here recorded has in nowise shaken their belief in the superior safety and efficacy of the water cure.

Alonzo Draper,
T. V. Ganahl.
J. Colvin.
Horatio Greenough.
H. D'Avrainville.

September 20th, 1844.

LETTER XXXIII.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq. etc.

(Republished from the Wexford Papers.)

“Who shall decide when doctors disagree?”

“Oh, that my enemy would write a book.”

Græfenberg, Nov. 2d, 1844.

MY DEAR RIDGE,—I have been handed a number of a Wexford paper of the 11th of September, which contains a letter on hydropathy, dated “Gorey, September 7th, 1844,” and signed “W. D. B——.”* It appears from that letter that it is the fourth written on the subject by Mr. B., who is, I presume, a medical gentleman, and that he reiterates, for the fourth and last time, seven interrogatories which he appears to deem of paramount importance, and which he requires you to answer serialim.† I confess to so much of the weakness of our first mother, as to wish to see those important questions; and I should also like to see all the correspondence which has passed between you and Mr. B., who prefixes so triumphant a motto to his letter, and assumes so much the tone of a conqueror. How far he is entitled to do so, I must admit my present incompetency to judge, as all I have seen of the correspondence is the letter in which he trumpets forth his victory; but even that letter furnishes, as it appears to me, many weak points, from which I am led to doubt the justice of his claims.‡ Mr. B. begs to assure his correspondent “that it requires very little phi-

* This writer having recently died, I suppress his name, but I republish my reply to his letter, because he has unfortunately left many inheritors of his sentiments.

† Dr. B——’s seven questions are to be found elsewhere.

‡ Since my return from Græfenberg I have seen the rest of Dr. B——’s letters, and there is only one passage which appears to me to call for another word in reply. He quotes J. E. Wilmott, Esq., as a gentleman, who “went to the torture school (a water cure

losophy, erudition, or contemplation, to answer the meanderings (what a metaphor!) of his quixotic pen;" and as if to make good his assertion, he concocts a reply in which we look in vain for either "philosophy, erudition, or contemplation." He says, "that the greatest insult that could be paid to the memory of departed glory is to misrepresent it." He might have added, "and, in like manner, the greatest insult that can be offered to living worth is to misrepresent *it*." He tells us that, "to endeavour to enlist the sympathies of the public by a one-sided view of a subject of vital importance, is a moral enormity of no ordinary magnitude." To this truism I most willingly subscribe; and I would humbly beg leave to warn Mr. B. lest he incur the guilt of this "moral enormity." He quotes from the late Dr. Macartney as follows:—"The feelings of the patient are a valuable test of the propriety of warm or cold applications." And he adds, "But in Græfenberg we have only the ONE remedy." I would not wish to believe that Mr. B., or any other

establishment) to get cured or relieved from some malady, and who regrets that his credulity should have led him into such an indiscretion; and who, being a gentleman of high station in society, and of unimpeachable veracity, with the laudable intention to prevent such dangerous tricks being practised on the community, gives a lively description of his tortures in one of those abodes." In reply to these assertions, I shall only offer an extract or two from Mr. Wilmott's book, which is entitled "A Tribute to Hydropathy." The first extract I shall make is the opening sentence in Mr. Wilmott's book: "Ye who have hitherto sought in vain to recover that invaluable blessing (health), too good friends of the chemist, who have spent much upon physicians, and yet grown worse; who no longer know that joyousness of heart and elasticity of spirits which made existence happiness, before pain and languor overcame you; hearken to the grateful words of one till very lately a fellow sufferer with yourselves, but now, through the mercy of the Divine Physician, restored to health and strength by the simple agency of water." In page 51, he says, "It is an extraordinary circumstance in favour of hydropathy, that no invalid who has once tried it, although he may not derive benefit to the full extent of his expectations, is willing afterwards to return to the old system." One more quotation; "I should be inclined to think that all diseases curable by medicine are curable by water." Such are the real, not the imputed, intentions and opinions of "a gentleman of unimpeachable veracity, who cannot be supposed to be influenced by mercenary motives"—I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.

gentleman, would willingly state an untruth, and am therefore compelled to attribute his assertion to ignorance, and would take the liberty to advise him to pay a visit to this place before he again ventures to assert what "we have" or have not "in Græfenberg."

Mr. B. next favours his readers with a short hypochondriacal essay on hypochondriacs, from which he abruptly breaks off to quote from his esteemed friend, "Charles Kidd, Esq., M.R.C.S.," who, it appears, in a little bit of learned rant, tells us something which he says "we are told," but which he does not believe, about a "catachlysmal rush through the capillaries, sweeping cancer, gout, and headache," and the saints know what beside, to the saints know where! And at all this Mr. Kidd appears very innocently, and, it must be confessed, very naturally surprised, as I assure him his readers at Græfenberg must likewise be—the doctrine of this most extraordinary "rush" having never before been heard of here. Would Mr. Kidd favour us with the source of his very strange and exclusive information?

He next proceeds: "The reciprocal dependance of each particular organ, it is true, is complete, that no one function can become seriously deranged without affecting other and distant parts of the organism." Very good! and he adds, "yet (why yet?) experience teaches that, in actual disease, we must lay the axe to the root (good again)—that we cannot stay the progressive march of affections of the stomach or lungs, or heart, by increasing the action of the skin by wet bandages," (who says that we can?)—"or,"—let me supply an omission, it must be of the printer's devil—"or stay the progressive march of the general lymphatic system (!) by water internally."

Mr. Kidd seems never to have heard of any of the hydropathic remedies but wet bandages and drinking water. He forgets the sweating blanket, the douche, the cold bath, the tepid bath, the wet sheet, the wet rubbing, the enema, and the various partial baths; to which we may add air, regular hours, diet, exercise, and repose for the mind; and he prates about the oneness of the remedy, although some of the processes employed

produce the most opposite effects, as experience has shown. But would Messrs. Kidd and B. condescend to inform their readers why one remedy should not be sufficient to cure every curable disease? * The healing power of nature or "*vis medicatrix*" is one; and I presume that neither Dr. B., nor any other physician, will attempt to maintain—although medical men often act as if they thought so—that there is one *vis medicatrix* for "the stomach," another for the "lungs," a third for the "heart," and so on for every organ—but, one for the entire system. Add to this that several medical authors are of opinion that there is in reality but one disease.

Dr. Samuel Dickson maintains, "that, *abstractedly speaking*, there is but ONE DISEASE." He likewise says, that "it was one of the boasts of Radcliffe, that he could write the practice of physic on half a sheet of paper; but," adds Dr. Dickson, "the whole might be comprised in one line—ATTENTION TO TEMPERATURE!"

Dr. Rush also held the doctrine of unity of disease; and Hippocrates penned the following passage:—"Omnium morborum unus et idem modus est."

Dr. Gregory, in the preface to his *Practice of Physic*, says: "It will be shown that acute and chronic, local and constitutional disease, are blended together in an infinite variety of ways, which it is in vain to attempt to unravel by the most ingenious contrivances of an artificial system. They have not only their points of *dissimilarity*, but of *analogy* also; and it is an object of con-

* In Doctor John Forbes's recent article on the water cure, there occurs the following passage: "It is one of the most formidable difficulties with which the ordinary physician has to contend, that nearly all his remedies reach the point to which they are directed, through one channel. If the brain requires to be placed under the influence of a sedative or a stimulant, if the muscular system demands invigorating by tonics, if the functions of organic life need correction by alteratives, the physician has no means of attaining his object, except by inundating the stomach and bowels with foreign, and frequently to them pernicious substances. In being thus made the medical doorway to all parts of the system, and so compelled to admit every description of therapeutical applicant, the organ of digestion is contorted to a purpose for which it was never intended."

sequence to determine these analogies, to show the great features of resemblance which all diseases bear, and to trace the almost insensible gradations by which they run into each other, and which enable us either to view them as separate objects of inquiry, or as the closely connected members of a great family. This beautiful mixture of uniformity and variety in the phenomena of disease, presents one of the most formidable obstacles which a work of this nature has to encounter, and it can only be surmounted, and that partially, by occasional digressions into the obscure doctrines of general pathology. Upon these the science of medicine may be said strictly to depend."

"With regard," says Dr. E. Johnson, "to the oneness of the effect to be produced, in treating diseases, notwithstanding the hosts of different drugs and chemicals with which our national pharmacopeia groans, Dr. Billing has the following observations:—'I have explained how some medicines become useful in such a variety of diseases as almost to realise the dreams of the ancients and alchemists respecting a panacea or an elixir vitæ; and thus why one empirical remedy, antimony, held the reins of *currus triumphalis*, until superseded by the more modern blue pill. I have shown that tonics are not stimulants, and why they may be combined advantageously with sedatives, with stimulants, or with narcotics (the ultimate effect of all being the same)—how stimulants are tonic, how sedatives are tonic, how narcotics are tonic. I have shown how every medical man has his hobby to carry him to the same point, which, though he thinks it different from his neighbour's, is as like it as one four-legged jade to another.'" "Thus, then," adds Dr. Johnson, "it will be perceived that the reason why we have such a multiplicity of drugs, is not because there is a multiplicity of effects to be produced, but because there is not one of all our drugs which can be relied on, at all times, for producing the one effect desired. That one effect is the constringing of the capillaries to their normal diameters, when they have become weakened, enlarged, and congested; and in producing this effect, water never fails. These last observations of Dr. Billing (and, indeed, his whole theory) are a

complete answer to those who object to the water cure on account of its apparent oneness and simplicity ! since he shows that there is but one proximate cause of all diseases, and that but one remedy is necessary, and that the great multitude of drugs has only arisen from the inefficiency of any one of them, at all times, to produce the desired effect."

And again, in another place, Dr. Johnson remarks : " But it is not necessary further to multiply quotations from Dr. Billing's first principles—the whole scope and tendency of that work is to prove the position that there is but one immediate cause of disease, viz., weakness, or exhausted nervous energy—but one disease, viz., a relaxed and congested condition of the vital capillaries ; and but one remedy, viz., the restoration of the capillaries to their normal or natural dimensions."

" Thus, then," to quote once more from Dr. Johnson, " however numerous be the forms or symptoms of disease, there is, *de facto*, but one disease ; and however numerous be the means and appliances of the healing art, there is but one intention to be fulfilled — the restoration of the capillaries to their normal or natural dimensions, by constringing their coats." Now, before Dr. B. again ventures an unmeaning sneer against the oneness of a remedy, I would recommend him to disprove Dr. Billing's theory of the oneness of disease ; and having done that, he will next have to prove that there is not one healing power, but many healing powers, to be roused into activity.

Dr. B. also sneers against the " action of the skin," but will he inform his readers, how else (save in cases of bleeding, cupping, and leeching,) the medical practitioner essays to " stay the progressive march" of disease, except through the action of the skin. Dr. B. seems to think, that the hydropathist attaches too much importance to a healthy action of the skin ; but may it not be that it is himself who attaches too little importance to it. Respecting the skin, Dr. James Wilson says, " An error which has existed too long, is the abuse of applying all remedies to the stomach and through the alimentary canal. Nature relieves herself of refuse matter or superabundance in something like

the following ratio, which has been pretty accurately ascertained by the experiments of several physiologists ; one of them weighed himself, and all that passed from the body every day for thirty years, and he found that more than half of all he took passed through the skin, many times as much by the kidneys as by the bowels, part flying off by the breath. Thus we see that, in fact, there is very little secretion by the alimentary canal, even part of what is thrown off being undigested matter and refuse, which the apparatus of nutrition has refused to take up. With these glaring facts, it is a matter of the greatest surprise that the skin should hitherto have been so much neglected, and that all the attention should have been directed to physicking the unfortunate bowels. The drugging system in England has arrived at such a pitch as to merit the reprobation of every man who wishes well to his profession." On the same subject Dr. Johnson expresses himself thus :— " When the great extent of the skin is considered, its structure, its great sensibility, its exceeding vascularity, and the great abundance of nerves with which it is supplied ; it cannot be doubted, I think, that so elaborate a piece of machinery was constructed in order to fulfil some very important functions in animal life, and whatever those functions may be, it must manifestly contribute to the due performance of those functions to keep the skin clean, and to have it frequently refreshed by general ablution ; and again, whatever its functions may be, it must, I think, materially interfere with them to have the skin constantly covered from contact with cold air, which all experience proves to be so invigorating to the system generally, and to have it perpetually smeared and choked up with the grease of perspiration. But, independently of this, we know for a certainty, that the office of respiration—that falling weight, that bent-spring which keeps the clock in motion—respiration is as certainly performed by the skin as by the lungs ; nothing can be more certain, than that nature, in her anxiety to ensure the full and perfect accomplishment of the all-important functions of respiration has provided us with a double set of respiratory apparatus, viz., the

lungs and the skin; in order that no means should be neglected which could assist in the fulfilment of an office more absolutely essential to life, even than food itself. For if, by any accident, an animal be deprived of food, he may still live for several days and succour may arrive. But if any accident deprive him of air, only for the brief space of a few minutes, he inevitably dies. The most indisputable experiments have shown that the animal breath consists of carbonic acid, the vapour of water and nitrogen; and the same experiments of the same experimenters have as indisputably proved that the exhalation from the body—the breath of the skin—is also composed of the very same constituents—carbonic acid, vapour of water, and nitrogen: and that, therefore, perspiration and respiration, as the very words themselves would indicate, are essentially the same. But another most important office of the lungs is to impart oxygen into the system. Experiment proves that this office is also performed by the skin. From the first moment that the functions of the lungs or of the skin are interrupted or disturbed, says Liebig, compounds rich in carbon, appear in the urine, which acquires a brown colour. Here we find that the same effects are produced, whether the functions of the lungs or of the skin be disturbed, which clearly shows that the functions of both are the same. In either case the same effect follows, that is, carbon appears in the urine, that carbon which ought to have been given off, either by the lungs or the skin, whichever of these two apparatus happens to be in fault. Again, this carbon (i. e., of the metamorphosed tissues) disappears in the animal body, and the bile, likewise, disappears in the vital process. Its carbon and hydrogen are given out through the skin and lungs as carbonic acid and water. Again, physiologists have established beyond all doubt the fact, that animals give out pure nitrogen through the skin and lungs in variable quantity. Thus, then, the office of the skin, like that of the lungs, is to rid the body of hydrogen, nitrogen, and carbonic acid. But the lungs also impart oxygen into the body. So, also, does the skin. Over the whole surface

of the body oxygen is absorbed and combines with all the substances which offer no resistance to it (Liebig). Thus, then, it seems that the skin fulfils precisely the same offices as the lungs themselves—viz., that of removing from the body carbon, hydrogen, and nitrogen, and of maintaining the temperature by the importation of oxygen. Therefore, the skin is an assistant organ of respiration.”

In Dr. Erasmus Wilson’s “Practical Treatise on the Skin,” we find the following statement:—The exterior is continuous with the internal skin, similar in structure, not to be distinguished when they pass from one another, as at the lips and eyelids, and capable, like the roots and branches of a tree, of changing places, the skin becoming mucous membrane when made to occupy an internal position, and mucous membrane becoming skin when placed externally. Thus we may learn how disease affecting any part of this membrane, either externally or internally, may extend to any other part, and affect the whole. We also see how restoring tone to the skin may cure dyspepsia. The skin supplies the office of the kidneys—in it the nerves of sensation commence, and the nerves of volition terminate. The senses of touch, of hearing, of smell, of taste, are all exercised by the skin. By the vessels terminating in it, all the phenomena of nutrition, and decay of appetite and sensation, health and disease, are produced. Whatever may be the climate or temperature in which the body is placed, it is kept at nearly an uniform and vital heat by the varying and adapting operations of the skin. It is also the organ by which electricity is conducted into and out of the body. “It consists of two layers, the one horny and insensible, guarding from injury the other,” highly sensitive, the universal organ of feeling, which lies beneath it. “Taken separately, the little perspiratory tube, with its appended gland, is calculated to awaken in the mind very little idea of the importance of the system to which it belongs; but when the vast number of similar organs composing this system are considered, we are led to form some notion, however imperfect, of their probable influence on the health and comfort of the individual.”

“To arrive at something like an estimate of the value of the perspiratory system in relation to the rest of the organism, I counted the perspiratory pores on the palm of the hand, and found 3,528 in a square inch. Now, each of these pores being the aperture of a little tube of about a quarter of an inch long, it follows that in a square inch of skin on the palm of the hand, there exists a length of tube equal to 882 inches, or $73\frac{1}{2}$ feet. Surely such an amount of *drainage* as 73 feet in every square inch of skin, assuming this to be the average for the whole body, is something wonderful, and the thought naturally intrudes itself—what if this drainage were obstructed? Could we need a stronger argument for enforcing the necessity of attention to the skin?” “To obtain an estimate of the length of tube of the perspiratory system of the whole surface of the body, I think that 2,800 might be taken as a fair average of the number of pores in the square inch, and 700, consequently, of the number of inches in length. Now, the number of square inches of surface in a man of ordinary height and bulk is 2,500, *the number of pores, therefore, 7,000,000, and the number of inches of perspiratory tube 1,750,000; that is, 145,833 feet, or 48,600 yards, or nearly 28 miles.*” This is only a specimen of the extraordinary structure. Besides the perspiratory vessels, the skin is provided with vessels for secreting an oily substance, which is of a different nature at different parts of the body; with vessels to repair abrasion, and provide for growth, and carry off its decayed parts; with nerves and blood vessels that are probably as numerous as the perspiratory vessels. It must, at the same time, be remembered, that the interior skin, or mucous membrane, is of a similar structure with the exterior skin, is provided with equally numerous and complicated vessels, to answer some analogous purposes. The whole of them may be affected by applications to the external skin; and “this supplies a possible explanation of those methods of cure, some of them merely quackish, which have proposed to remove internal complaints by external applications.” In Dr. A. Combe’s “Physiology of Digestion,” there occur some very sensible remarks to the same effect. I

trust that Dr. B. will now see the folly of his sneers against the "action of the skin," and that he will perceive how the suppression of its due functions produces disease, and how their restoration tends to the renovation of health.

Messrs. Kidd and B. next present us with two ingenious little similes, wanting nothing but applicability, and then with a "mutatis mutandis" present us with "Hydropathy in a nutshell." Hydropathy may lie in a nutshell, but it is evident that Messrs. K. and B. have made a slight mistake in their nut—we break it, and lo! it is blind. We are next informed, that "Many cases of actual disease of chronic kind," (I thought all chronic disease was actual disease) "are best treated on the let-alone system; in other words, by the sanatory effort of nature (*vis medicatrix naturæ*)."

I always understood that it was solely through the action of the *vis m. n.*, that the medical practitioner professed, and I know that it is solely through the same agency that the real hydropathist seeks to cure disease; but I never before heard that the let-alone system, and the *vis m. n.*, are regarded by medical men as one and the same; and I very much doubt that Dr. B's learned brethren will thank him for the discovery or the confession. Dr. B., in Mr. Kidd's name, next indulges in an assertion as wide from truth as it is possible to be, and which we can only regard as a very poor jest, or a most base and dishonest invention. He says—you shall have the whole sentence—"Yet there are cases requiring the utmost discrimination from that sad majority which are with no less certainty, hurried to a premature grave, by the indiscriminating and avaricious grasp of this monster of empiricism;" meaning, I suppose, Priessnitz. Alas! poor Dr. B.! He may rave and call abusive names; if that were all, who would heed him? The basest and the worst of men can thus spit their venom at the best and the wisest. But his assertion—his "monster" of an untruth demands an answer, and he shall have it in plain figures. Last year there were at Græfenberg 1050 patients, a large number of whom were, when they came here, the dying victims of Dr. B.—'s learned brotherhood, and its wholesale sys-

tem of slaughter with poison and lancet; and of this large number, under Priessnitz's skilful care, there died but four. This year, up to the date of this letter, there have been here over a thousand patients, out of whom there have been but two deaths, with the particulars of which my readers are already acquainted. And now I would ask my readers, what must they think of a system which requires to be supported by, and of the advocate who unblushingly puts forward, such mis-statements as Dr. B— has advanced? This champion for systematic quackery and humbug, styles, with marked courtesy, Priessnitz "a common peasant, whose pretensions to research in the investigation of human maladies are as visibly naked as are his mental acquirements." Your proofs, courteous, truth-telling Doctor B—. "What pretensions to the physical sciences can an uneducated peasant possess?" asks our Doctor. I shall tell him where to find the pretensions of the uneducated peasant; let him look for them in the fact that Priessnitz yearly cures a large number of the most opposite diseases, which had long and vainly employed the skill of the most eminent medical men in Europe—men who have been educated in the physical sciences—and that many medical men come here to receive health and instruction at the hands of the "uneducated peasant." Is Dr. B— satisfied now? If he is not, I should like to ask him what he wishes us to believe. Does he wish us to believe that Priessnitz has no knowledge of those sciences? If he succeed in proving that, why he just proves their utter worthlessness, inasmuch as—it is worth repeating—Priessnitz yearly cures a large number of patients, who had been long and vainly treated, and had at length been given over by men educated in the physical sciences. Or, perhaps, Dr. B— would have us doubt the evidence of our senses, and disbelieve the facts because he cannot make his theories to square with them. On one side are his theories, on the other a host of facts. Now if he succeeds in proving that the theories and the facts are irreconcilable, he must allow us to regard his theories with very great contempt. Let us examine a little more closely into the worth of

Dr. B—'s darling sciences ; and first of physiology, of which Dr. E. Johnson says ; " Physiology, the science of all others from which the art of healing diseases hoped to derive assistance, has rendered her no service. By the aid of her microscope, indeed, she has enabled us to count the number of terminal monads which go to make up an inch of muscular fibre ; but on the nature of the living actions she has thrown scarcely a ray of light. With regard to these she has occupied herself in spinning a succession of theoretical cobwebs, on each of which in its turn the practical art of healing has sought to erect an improved method of treatment. But these improved methods were introduced into practice by theory, only to be expelled by experience. But a new era is beginning to dawn, and organic chemistry, which indulges in no flight of fancy — quantative organic chemistry, which deals solely in facts, and does nothing without her scales, weights, and measures, has of late, speaking with the voice of Liebig, promised to rescue the curative science from the darkness and mystery in which centuries of dreaming have so fatally involved it. The airy nothings of physiology only serve, like the *ignes fatui* of the fens, to lead the passenger astray ; but the products of chemical analysis are as fixed and unerring as the products of geometrical calculation." Here, then, is a science, quantative organic chemistry, of which Dr. B., by his silence respecting it, would seem to know nothing whatever ; and it is to this science that the hydropathist has recourse for facts, on which to raise the superstructure of his theory. But all physicians are not, happily for the respectability of the profession, like Dr. B., worshippers of ignorance because it has assumed an academic garb, or opponents of truth because it has had a lowly origin. Many medical gentlemen of all nations have had sufficient intellect and energy to burst the bonds of prejudice, to fling from them the errors in which they had been instructed, and to educate themselves. I need not go over the list of those gentlemen, or, I should rather say, that portion of it with which I am acquainted ; but I cannot take my leave of physiology without quoting the opinions of another medical convert to the truth.

Dr. Yates, one of the most eminent medical men in the United States, writes as follows to a friend who was on the point of starting for Græfenberg: "Tell Priessnitz, from me, that I admire his principles, his course, and his practice, and that I have no better opinion of the theories of physiological humbug of our profession than he has, and probably not so much, as I know them better. For my part I wish him 'God speed,' and if he sends my friend back with a restored nervous system, I will make a liturgy in his praise.* Farewell, dear C. May heaven prosper you, and a kind Providence restore you to health, is the sincere wish and prayer of your old and sincere friend, C. C. Yates." Dr. Yates seems to have no very high opinion of the theories of the medical profession, and not without reason, if he only found it in the case of his friend. This latter gentleman has been an invalid for years. He consulted several physicians as to the nature of his disease. The first physician pronounced his disease to be spinal—the second rheumatic neuralgia—the third hypertrophy of the heart—the fourth menengel apoplexy—the fifth differed from all the others, but declined to give it a name—and a sixth pronounced it to be rheumatism. Priessnitz also pronounced it to be rheumatism, having its origin in the large quantities of mercury which had been administered to the patient. "The obscurity," says Dr. Gregory, "which is acknowledged to pervade all parts of general pathology, is in some only faintly broken in upon by the glimmerings of conjecture." So much for physiology and pathology. And now for the so-called science of medicine. Dr. Pereira, in his "Elements of Materia Medica," writes as follows: "Several physicians, as Dr. John Murray and Dr. Anthony Tod Thompson, consider opium to be primarily stimulant; some, as Drs. Cullen and Barbier, regard it as sedative; one, viz.:—Doctor Mayer as both—that is, a stimulant to the nerves and

* He has been sent back with a restored nervous system. The day he came to Græfenberg he looked as if he could not live twenty-four hours: two days after he relanded in America, he married.

circulatory system, but a sedative to the muscles and digestive organs. Another, viz., Orfila, regards it as neither; while others, as Müller calls it, alterative. Commenting on this passage, Dr. Johnson says: "Now here are five different men, holding no fewer than five different opinions, with regard to the effect produced on the body by this deadly drug, opium. When these five physicians give opium, it is clear that they give it with the view of producing five different and contradictory effects." With respect to mercury, Dr. Pereira says—"Again, mercury is by several writers, as Drs. Cullen, Young, Chapman, and Eberle, placed in the class sialogogues; by many, as Drs. A. Thompson, Edwards, Vavaseur, Trousseau, and Pidoux, among excitants; by some, as Conradi, Bertele, and Horn, it is considered to be sedative; by one, Dr. Wilson Philip, to be stimulant in small doses, and sedative in large ones; by some, as Dr. John Murray, it is placed among tonics; by another, viz., Vogt, among the resolventia alterantia; by one, viz., Sundelin, among the liquifacients; by the followers of Broussais, as Begin, among revulsives; by the Italians, as Giacomini, among contra stimulants, or hyposthenics; by others, as Barbier, among the incertæ sedis, 'or those drugs whose *modus operandi* is not understood.'" "After reading such a statement as this," says Dr. Johnson, "one can hardly be surprised that the word physician should have been defined to signify, 'a man who puts drugs, of which he knows nothing, into a stomach of which he knows less.'"

A few words from Dr. James Wilson, and then I shall have done. "In the chaos of medical practice, where are we to hunt for the universality of a fact? It would be more easy to find it in Mr. Murphy's weather guide. One eminent doctor tells you that a rational treatment of disease, according to a sane physiological doctrine is all nonsense, and that it is better to trust to blind empiricism and try anything that comes uppermost. Another swears by the lancet; while his equally learned friend asserts with equal assurance, that the former gentleman and those that follow the same practice, with their tiny weapons despatch more people to their 'long homes'

than was ever done by the sabre. One sleeps with the pharmacopœia under his pillow, and thinks that the world would not turn round if wholesale druggists were not admitted on 'change, or if anything stopped the importation of drugs. An equally learned professor, with a class of three hundred students, declares to his intimates, that 'if there were no such things as drugs, it would be the greatest boon to humanity.' How are we to reconcile the contending parties, and get at the universality of a fact. I know of no better method than by washing out their differences with water." "Errors in the treatment by drugs," says Dr. Wilson, "bleeding, blistering, etc., etc., are more fatal than errors committed by the 'water cure.' The water cure has common sense to recommend it, many agreeable accompaniments, and few deaths. The practice of medicine has custom, prejudice, and influence, no enjoyment, and great fatality. In the most severe and dangerous diseases the action of water is certain, that of medical measures uncertain and often hurtful; or, as a celebrated practitioner said: 'It is often sad guess work with the best of us.' By the water cure we may arrive at the universality of a fact; by the practice of medicine, I fear never." When doctors thus differ as to the nature of the agents which they employ to remove disease; and when they also differ, as in Mr. C., (the American gentleman's case,) as to the nature of that which they seek to remove through the influence of their doubtful agents—while they thus disagree, I do not hesitate to question their right to dignify their vague theories and uncertain practice with the title of a science.

Dr. B. pays a tribute to the "industry" of an Aristotle, the "character" and "system of description," (pity he could not add, and "system of healing") of a Linnæus, and to the genius of Cuvier. Now to this I have nothing to object, but I confess that I am rather disappointed that he has brought from the writings of those very eminent men, neither facts nor arguments bearing upon the subject he is discussing. Perhaps, however, that I am wrong—perhaps he has done so in former letters—if he has I most sincerely beg his pardon. After some remarks on our corporeal structure, he adds:

“ But extraordinary to say, the subject has not met with due regard from the unmedical portion of mankind ; for of all subjects of scientific interest, men in general seem to have the weakest curiosity as to the structure and functions of their own body ” (quere bodies ?). There is no disputing the truth of this passage, which I join with its author in deploring, but unhappily can derive no consolation from the same source from which he does. It appears to me that the unmedical portion of mankind deliver up the care of their health to the medical profession, with about as much reflection and reason as was exhibited by our countryman, who refused to labour at the pumps when the vessel was sinking, because, as he said, he “ was in no danger, having insured his life.” Dr. B. is not at all felicitous in his assertions—he says, that the water cure deprived Sir F. Burdett of his life—an assertion which has been disproved over and over again. He next tells us of diseases which “ lie concealed in some of the interior recesses, some holier and far more sacred penetralia in this temple (like eastern idols, I suppose) than any into which the hand of investigation has led the adventurous and progressive mind of man ;” and he concludes by saying, “ whether they are scrutable to the capacity of the German waterman, (courteous again !) is a question I shall leave to the public to decide.” What ! Is Dr. B. so unreasonable as to expect that the “ German waterman should explore that holier and far more sacred penetralia ” (I wish the doctor would tell us where it is, and give it a “ local habitation and a name ”) “ than any into which the hand of investigation has yet led the adventurous and progressive mind of man ?” Fie ! Fie ! Doctor ! Pray learn to be a little more reasonable, and strive to acquire, if possible, a little common sense.

The remainder of Dr. B——’s letter consists of personalities, the value of which, I am sure you know how to estimate, so that I shall not follow the writer any further, and I trust that you will not consider me to have trespassed on your province in offering these remarks. Taking the doctor’s letter as a whole, it is a rambling disquisition, without facts or arguments, of which but

little bears any reference to the water cure, and the small portion which does touch upon that subject is composed of a few unmeaning sneers and unsupported assertions ; in this place, it has only drawn from its readers the running commentary, — “ Nonsense — nonsense.” In short, it may be fairly characterized as “ a fine specimen of what the learned call rigmarole.”

On reading the life of Columbus, by Washington Irving, I was much struck by many points of resemblance between the respective characters, and to a certain extent, careers of Columbus and Priessnitz, and the difficulties and opposition each had to encounter. Speaking of those who were appointed to inquire into the pretensions of Columbus, Washington Irving says :—“ No tribunal could bear a front of more imposing wisdom ; yet Columbus soon discovered that ignorance and illiberality may sometimes lurk under the very robes of science. The greater part of this learned junta (body) it would appear, came prepossessed against him, as men in place and dignity are apt to be against poor applicants. There is always a proneness to consider a man under examination as a kind of delinquent or impostor, upon trial, who is to be detected and exposed. Columbus, too, appeared in a most unfavourable light before a scholastic body ; an obscure navigator (peasant), member of no learned institution, destitute of all the trappings and circumstances which sometimes give oracular authority to dullness, and depending upon the mere force of natural genius. Some of the assembly (profession) entertained the popular notion that he was an adventurer, or at best a visionary ; and others had that morbid impatience of any innovation upon established doctrine which is apt to grow upon dull and pedantic men. The friars of St. Stephen alone paid attention to him. The others appeared to have intrenched themselves behind one dogged position, namely, that after so many profound philosophers had occupied themselves in geographical (physiological) investigations, and so many able navigators (physicians) had been voyaging (experimenting) about the world for ages, it was a great presumption in any ordinary man to suppose that there remained such a vast

discovery for him to make. Several of the objections opposed by this learned body have been handed down to us (are known to us), and have provoked (and provoke) many a sneer at the expense of the university of Salamanca (of the medical profession). Thus —, Columbus (Priessnitz) was assailed with citations from the Bible, and the works of the early fathers of the church (physiologists and physicians) which were thought incompatible with his theory (practice), doctrinal points were mixed up with philosophical discussions, and even a mathematical demonstration was allowed no truth, if it appeared to clash with a text of scripture or a commentary of one of the fathers (physicians). Thus the possibility of the existence of antipodes in the southern hemisphere, though maintained by the wisest of the ancients, was disputed by some of the sages of Salamanca, on the authorities of Lactantius and St. Augustine. 'Is there any one so foolish,' asks Lactantius, 'as to believe that there are antipodes opposite to ours, men who walk with their feet upwards and their heads hanging down?—that there is a part of the world in which all things are topsy turvy; where the trees grow with their branches downwards, and where it rains, hails, and snows upwards? The idea of the roundness of the earth,' he adds, 'was the cause of inventing this fable; for these philosophers having once erred, go on in their absurdities defending one with another.' Such were the unlooked-for prejudices which Columbus had to encounter. To his simplest proposition, the spherical form of the earth, were opposed figurative texts of scripture. St. Paul compares the heavens to a tabernacle or tent spread over the earth; hence these casuists maintained that the earth must be flat, like the bottom of a tent. Others admitted the globular form of the earth, and the possibility of an opposite and inhabitable hemisphere, but maintained that it would be impossible to arrive there in consequence of the heat of the torrid zone. As for steering to the west in search of India, they observed that the circumference of the earth must be so great as to require at least three years to the voyage, and those who should undertake it should perish of hunger and

thirst from the impossibility of carrying provisions for so long a period. Not the least absurd objection advanced was, that should a ship even succeed in reaching the extremity of India, she could never get back again, for the rotundity of the globe would present a kind of mountain, up which it would be impossible for her to sail with the most favourable wind. Such are specimens of the errors and prejudices, the mingled error and erudition with which Columbus had to contend. It is but justice to add, that many of his hearers (observers) were convinced—among the number was Diego de Deuga—a worthy friar of the order of St. Dominic. He was an able and erudite man, above the narrow bigotry of bookish lore, and could appreciate the value of wisdom, even when uttered by unlearned lips. Still there was a preponderating mass of inert bigotry and learned pride in the erudite body, which refused to yield to the demonstrations of an obscure foreigner, without fortune or connections or any academic honours.” Substituting one name for the other, and making a few more alterations such as I have marked in brackets, the foregoing extracts might as well have been written for a life of Priessnitz as of Columbus. Each of these great men has been gifted with a bold, penetrative, and inventive genius, great firmness and perseverance, and a kind heart, and a clear head; each had to contend with the ignorance of the educated, and the prejudices of learning, and each at length triumphed and opened up a new world to mankind. May the parallel end here, and unlike Columbus, may the last days of Priessnitz be unembittered by the ingratitude of those whom he has served and benefitted.

I cannot omit so favourable an opportunity of expressing, not so much my hearty thanks to the editors of both the Wexford papers, for their great kindness to me, as my gratification that, at a period of almost unexampled political excitement, the organs of the two contending parties can find time, attention, and space, to bestow upon a subject, which has nothing to recommend it to the partisan, but every thing to recommend it to him to whom “all men are brothers.” Would

that all leaders and followers of party would thus, on all occasions where the interests of our common humanity are concerned, lay aside for a while their differences on other matters, and we should soon see the dawn of the day when peace, happiness, and prosperity should smile upon our long distracted country.

Ever your sincere friend,

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER XXXIV.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq.

[Republished from the Wexford Papers.]

“The general adoption of the Water Cure principles and practice will induce a much more healthy framework of society, physically, mentally, and morally.”—DR. BALBIRNIE’S *Philosophy of the Water Cure*.

Græfenberg, Nov. 27th, 1844.

MY DEAR RIDGE—A gentleman having obtained from Priessnitz advice as to the treatment of cattle in the disease which has been prevalent this year in Ireland, I have been favoured with a copy of the directions, and transcribe them for you in the hope that they may be useful. “On the first symptoms of disease, such as the coat staring, etc., the beast is to have a cold bath, in which he is to remain till shivering has been produced, and longer, until shivering has ceased or greatly decreased, this will take one, or generally two or three hours. Should the water not be deep enough to cover the whole body, then water is to be continually thrown over the back. During the whole time the beast is in the bath, the body and legs are to be rubbed with the hands, or with a coarse cloth—it will require two men to do this properly. Should the water be sufficiently deep to cover the back of the beast, then he is to remain five

minutes in the water, then to be taken out and well rubbed for five minutes, and so continually, till the shivering above described has been produced. Should the shivering not be produced, the case is hopeless. On coming out of the bath, the beast is to be rubbed for five minutes, and then to have half an hour's walking exercise, with a warm rug over him. The bath is to be repeated twice each day. After the exercise, a piece of coarse cloth, large enough to cover the body and chest, is to be dipped in cold water, then well wrung out, and swathed round the beast. The wet cloth is to be covered with a thick, warm, dry one. As soon as the wet cloth becomes dry, it is to be taken off and re-wet; but, before replacing it, it would be well to rub the beast for a few minutes. This wet cloth is to be worn as well by night as by day. Each day the beast is to have two injections, each to consist of a quart of cold water. The beast is to have green food—should that not be possible, he is to have bran wet with cold water—the more cold water he can be got to drink the better. This treatment is to be continued till the coat becomes smooth and healthy, and the appetite regular. The first cold bath, if carefully applied for two or three hours, will check the disease.” As the value of the foregoing advice depends greatly on the symptoms of the disease, having been properly detailed to Priessnitz, you will oblige me by sending me a clear statement of those symptoms, in order that I may be enabled to learn if such has been the case.

Since I last wrote, I have received a letter from an American gentleman, Mr. Ganahl. This letter is too long to transcribe in full, but I shall make some extracts from it. Mr. Ganahl says: “Since your sentiments in respect to hydropathy are also entertained by myself—since the esteem I felt for Mr. Priessnitz before I knew him, has, through my personal acquaintance, become the most exalted, in consequence of his open and friendly way—since I rejoice in the fame of his virtues, and his knowledge and practice of the water cure, through the beneficial effects of which I shall feel under lasting obligations to him; and since you wish for a detailed state-

ment of my case, for the benefit of others, I comply with ready will, permitting you to make what use of this letter you may think proper." Mr. Ganahl then proceeds to state, that he was born in the "healthy and beautiful Vorarlberg, bordering on the Lake of Constance; that, in his twenty-third year he went to the United States, and resided for the first twelve years in Augusta, State of Georgia, a warm southern climate; and that he went from thence to New Orleans, State of Louisiana, the most southern commercial city of the United States, where he resided ten years. In 1836, he went by land to the north; and on the route through Alabama from Blakely to Montgomery, a distance of one hundred and ninety-seven English miles, there was, instead of a four-horse coach, only a cart upon two wheels, with a rough board nailed on two hoops over the sides, over which a common homespun was fastened for a covering. We were," he continues, "three passengers and a driver. The cart was filled with meal bags and our trunks, between which the legs of two passengers, sitting on the board, were fast; the other passenger, with the driver, sat with their legs dangling between the horses' tails and the cart; and so we journeyed day and night, changing our places every change of horses. During this journey we had three heavy falls of rain, and were, of course, entirely wet through. We had Cognac, and the best Holland gin, which, not being able to change our clothes before our arrival at Montgomery, we poured into our boots, and drank out of the bottles. Notwithstanding this, I very soon, on the continuance of my journey northwards, began to feel that those duckings had entailed on me the rheumatism, slight at first, but with gradually increasing pain. It was, however, confined to the legs, from the hips down to the toes. I became a perfect barometer. Slight attacks at short intervals gradually returned still more quickly, and with increasing severity. I had often to get out of bed, because there the pain was most acute, to walk it off at one, two, or three o'clock in the night. In 1842, these attacks became less frequent. In 1843, I left New Orleans for Rotterdam, and having no attack

on the voyage, I began to hope that my plague had left me. From Rotterdam I proceeded to Innspruck, in the Tyrol, where there sometimes prevails the Sirocco, called there the Phöh. When this warm wind descends, it causes head and other aches to many of the population. At Innspruck, rheumatism made its re-appearance, and increased in severity in three or four weekly intervals, till I suffered the most acute and rapidly-repeated pains. On the 12th of April, 1844, I had an attack, which commenced at four, p. m. In the evening, from six to eleven, I was in constant motion through the streets, but without the least relief, as formerly; and I passed the greater part of the night going up and down a passage in the hotel where I lodged. In May I departed, with my brother, for Græfenberg, where I arrived on the 21st."

Mr. Ganahl next proceeds to describe his treatment. He says,—“On the 22nd of May, at four p. m., Priessnitz came to my room, and requested me to undress, and lay in bed till his return. In half an hour I went, with a dry sheet, and my cloak around me, in company with Priessnitz and the bathing servant, to the bathing room, where, at a small wanne (bathing tub), I washed my head, face, and breast, and then sat in the water four inches deep, when Priessnitz, the servant, and I rubbed the body with tepid water several minutes, after which I took one plunge in the deep wanne, on coming out of which I was well rubbed with a dry sheet, and returned to my chamber, where I received wet bandages with dry ones over them round my body and from the knees to the ankles. This treatment lasted a week, after which I was, at four a. m., wrapped in a wet wrung out sheet and thick blanket, and swathed up to the neck like a mummy, the wrappings being crowned with a feather-bed. After the lapse of an hour, the servant came and freed the feet, and shoved the corners of the sheet and blanket up between the legs until I could take them in my hand; then he put straw shoes on my feet, and wound a dry sheet round my head and neck. I was then led to the bathing room, where my covering was speedily taken off, and having wet my head, I plunged

into the bath, and under three times. Having been well dried, I returned to my room, where I put on my umschlag, and immediately after dressing, commenced ascending the hill to the springs, at each of which I drank a glass of water, making in all two decanters full. At seven I took breakfast, consisting of cold milk, butter, and rye bread; at supper I took the same. At half-past ten A. M., I had the wet sheet abreibung (wet rubbing), after which I had fresh umschlags; at one I dined, and at half-past three P. M., I had two abreibungen, lying for twenty minutes in bed between them. After some time I requested my bath servant to wrap me up at half-past three in the morning. The whole treatment was quite agreeable to me." Mr. Ganahl next gives a detail of his various crises. He says, "After the first twelve days, there appeared round the body an aushlag (rash), which increased rapidly; at the same time a boil on the right hip grew to a considerable size, and seemed to promise a speedy opening, and I repeatedly warned the bade-diener not to touch me there during the abreibung; he, however, rubbed it one day, and some drops of blood flowed out, and in a few days the boil was level with the skin, and, of course, driven back. A few days after this first boil was spoiled, another appeared on the left elbow, and grew so rapidly that in four days it opened with thick matter. I umshlaged it four times a day." Mr. Ganahl, who goes very minutely into details, thus continues to describe a succession of boils, and then says, "I must here observe that for fifteen years I wore, from my neck to my ankles, thick flannels in winter and thin in summer, and left them off in a week after my arrival, although there was at the time a ten days chill rain with strong wind; and three weeks later, I put summer clothes on without neckcloth. For a month I had full aushläge (rash) about the feet and body. Having business to transact at Feldkirch, I obtained leave of absence for three or four weeks, promising to continue the treatment as much as possible until my return. I had to extend my journey as far as Bregenz, and was absent a month. My treatment during this time consisted of umshläge (bandages), and abreibung with a wet towel, morning

and evening; after which I took an air bath for a quarter or half an hour. I generally went to bed at nine and got up at four, and in my morning walks, found good cold water at every place except at Olmütz. My aushläge round the body and feet increased on my journey out, and began to decrease on my way back. During this journey, I felt but little rheumatism. The only place where I could get a cold clear bath was at a private house in Lintz. On my return, my treatment (for three days) was the same as before, after which, instead of the morning abreibung, I was allowed to douche for two minutes. In a few days, two boils appeared on the back, and I permitted the douche to fall on them; they were driven back, upon which I consulted Mr. Priessnitz, who observed, 'They should be protected with the hands.' Mr. Ganahl continues a detail of several other crises, amongst which he mentions "a nest of thirty-four blasen" (small boils or pimples), and then describes an acute attack of rheumatism which lasted eleven days. During this time he was ordered to discontinue the douche, and to take instead thereof three abreibungen, and three more in the afternoon. These he took for five minutes each, with intervals of five minutes, during which he walked about his room wrapped in a dry sheet. During this treatment, "fresh aushlage appeared," and the "rheumatism changed its locality" two or three times, "The pain," adds Mr. Ganahl, "was always equally acute; yet I continued my usual morning walks to the springs with rheumatism and boils on me." "The rheumatism," he continues, "was probably driven away by the abreibungen and by means of the boil," which, he computes, discharged a "glass and a half" of matter on its opening. After this Mr. Ganahl resumed the douche. In a few days his boils and "aushläge" were entirely healed, and during his stay of over two months no more crises appeared, and he had no return of his rheumatism. By Priessnitz's permission he gradually left off the cure, and left Græfenberg, in his own words, "with a clean body, and a sincere wish for the speedy cure of all my acquaintance whom I leave behind, under the safe care of our virtuous and sagacious friend, Vinzanz

Priessnitz." Mr. Ganahl was here a little less than six months. The sweating blanket is also often employed in rheumatism, and sometimes, in *acute* attacks, instead of being followed by the cold bath, it is succeeded by several wet sheet rubbings (*abreibungen*), in which case the sheets are applied in the dripping state in which they are taken out of the water, and not wrung out after the usual manner. Sometimes in the treatment of delicate patients the rubbing sheet is wrung out to the utmost; sometimes the rubbings are merely topical, and then towels are employed. In no case is the rubbing *with* the sheet, as I find it very generally supposed by persons who have not been at a water cure establishment, but *over* the sheet; that is, the sheet is not moved, but the hand is passed up and down briskly over it, otherwise in some cases there would occur considerable abrasion of the skin. The wet sheet is wrung out, for the rubbing or the packing operation, in the following manner: it is passed round a stationary horizontal bar, and the ends are twisted round a stout short stick, which is grasped in both hands and employed as a lever by the bath servant.

I shall now give you the case of a lady who was two years under medical treatment for a derangement of the digestive organs. She was ordered India pale ale and pills, of which the more she took the more she required. On her arrival at Græfenberg she was very thin, and in general bad health. Her treatment was, in the morning the wet sheet, followed for the first few days by the tepid bath, and afterwards by the cold bath; at eleven o'clock a wet rubbing and hip bath, which were repeated in the evening. She wore the waist bandage, and drank about ten glasses of water in the day. At the end of three months she was perfectly cured, but continued as an amateur to take the wet sheet and cold bath in the morning, and a wet rubbing at noon, up to the time of her departure, at the end of fourteen months. She became so strong that she was able to accompany her husband in very bad weather to the summit of a neighbouring mountain, called the Hochschaar. The height of the mountain above the sea is 4,436 German feet, and the distance from Græfenberg and back, from eighteen to

twenty English miles. This lady was out nine hours and a half, during which she was several times wet to the skin. On returning home she took a wet rubbing, and after lying in bed for a short time, took a second, and the same evening she walked to Freiwaldau and back again, thus adding a distance of over two English miles more to her day's journey. The next day she did not feel as if she had exceeded her usual exercise, and did not take the slightest cold. Though previously an inveterate tea drinker, she latterly, at breakfast and supper, gave the preference to water, and acquired so healthy a bloom, that she was called the rose of Græfenberg.

I mentioned in a former letter that some persons leave before they are entirely cured, and complete the cure at home. In illustration I shall give you a case of chronic affection of the mucous membrane. It is the case of a gentleman aged twenty-two, who states that, "from a boy he was subject to constant colds in the head, and to constipation; that both were increased by a sedentary life; the whole mucous membrane was affected, and especially the larynx; and that his disease was increased by the prescribed change to warmer climates, and by sulphur and steel waters." His treatment at first was the wet sheet and cold bath in the morning, and the wet rubbing and hip bath before and after dinner. In ten days the douche was substituted for the first wet rubbing and hip bath. In boil crisis he had daily three wet sheets, each followed by the tepid bath. For a cough contracted during crisis he had a twenty minutes' tepid bath, after the mid-day wet sheets, and was ordered to rub his throat and chest with a wet hand frequently during the day, and to wear heating bandages on them at night; he was also ordered to throw his throat open to the air after each operation, and to cover it when the body became warm with exercise. For congestion and giddiness he wore a wet bandage round the head, lay in bed, and constantly changed the waist bandage; afterwards he took a hip bath for forty minutes, and was ordered, if he did not feel better after some hours, to take a wet sheet and tepid bath. After crisis he returned to his former treatment, viz.:—wet rubbing and hip

bath, in the morning, douche at noon, and wet rubbing and hip bath in the afternoon. When he arrived, the slightest attempt at reading aloud exhausted him; before he left he could read for hours, and his voice was strong and clear. He has recently written to say that he is now quite well; and he adds that a lady and gentleman who left about the same time, are also now quite well.

Among the other cures which have come under my notice are two; one, of a gentleman who had a secondary ulcer in the throat, and the other of a gentleman who had hæmorrhoids and syphilis.

Another case of small pox has just been treated by Priessnitz. The patient is the daughter of a peasant in the neighbourhood, and is about twenty years old. She was confined for eight days, and was most profusely covered with the eruption. An Italian physician said that he never saw the eruption come out better. She had at first the usual treatment—wet sheets, wet rubbings, and tepid baths—and after the eruption appeared, three wet sheets, and three tepid baths daily. She will not have the slightest mark. Under the water cure the small pox appears to be deprived of half its terrors; as far as my observation extends, it neither robs man of life nor woman of her beauty. How different is the result under medical treatment. From the registrar general's quarterly return of mortality it appears that there is a vast increase in the summer quarter over the corresponding period. "In the metropolis, the average of the summer quarter for five years, 10,020, is extended to 11,825. In the western districts, the five years' summer average of 1617 was increased to 1822. In the north districts, the average 1966 rose to 2293. The increased averages of deaths has been chiefly from typhus; the average rose from 352 to 414; of scarletina the average rose from 476 to 1020; and small pox from 130 to 556—the average of all epidemics increased from 2,357 to 3243. There have also been a large number of deaths from diarrhœa. In one district one half of the deaths are of infants under twenty weeks old, and the average age does not exceed thirteen and a half years." One of the Nottingham registrars, in his report, adverting to the

deaths from small-pox states, that a great majority of the working classes are so utterly regardless of their children's welfare, as not only to reject the proffered boon (vaccination), but frequently to insult the surgeon appointed to carry the law into effect, although the children are vaccinated gratuitously ;" and on this statement, the writer of an article in one of the daily journals, has the folly to remark, that the "proportion of the dependant and the real pressure on population is fearfully increased by these infanticides ;" and he audaciously adds, "Ignorance and crime must not surely continue to be sanctioned by merely permissive and *laissez faire* legislation ; and the appointment of officers of health, with powers adequate to the protection of the community should be loudly called for !" The note of admiration is the writer's, and it is well placed. Had he brought his charge of "ignorance and crime" against the vaccinators instead of those who reject vaccination, we should still admire at his superlative folly in proposing that health should be dealt out by Act of Parliament ; but as the proposition stands, it is difficult to decide which predominates, its absurdity or its atrocity. However, I should not be surprised, if some intermeddling booby, adopting this writer's views, should bring in a bill to that effect, in which, perhaps, he may do us the favour to insert a clause compelling all her Majesty's lieges to swallow annually a prescribed amount of physic. Be this as it may, I must avow myself one of those whom this writer, in his wisdom, denounces as "infanticides." I shall not stop here to inquire how far vaccination is reconcilable with the principles of religion. I shall indulge in no sneer at the source from which, through inoculation, we have primarily derived it. I shall not stay to consider how far it is answerable for the spread of other diseases. especially scrofula. I shall not even pause to point out in how many cases it has failed in attaining its object—its total inutility should be a sufficient reason why rational beings should entirely and gladly discard so great a brutality. Is it in vain to hope that they will do so ? I know not, but I must say that I often have cause to be struck with the very little use

which even educated men make of their reasoning powers. A German physician, Dr. Waitz, who for twelve years filled a medical situation at Samarang, in Java, and who seems to be a man of considerable observation, has published a work, containing the results of his experience, in which, without any reference to the water cure, he has the following passage: "Of small pox transplac'd to bones (*metastatis variolosa*), I knew but one case incident to a young Javanese. I must notify, however, that this nation is wont to plunge repeatedly into cold water the patient when in the first or second stage of small pox, with a view to expel the fiery heat;" and, without quoting a single case where evil consequences ensued, and with a most marked want of logical inference, he immediately adds: "It is easily to be conceived that such a practice, if not paid with life, may repel the disease." Had the doctor understood the true action of water he would have known that it was the very opposite of repellent.

It would almost appear that water is a remedy to which we are directed as it were by instinct. And not only man, but other animals. Sir John Floyer has the following passage in point: "*Ælian* affirms, that wild pigs will be vehemently convulsed by eating of henbane, but by going into the water, and by drinking of it, they will recover; and from hence we may learn the use of cold baths in narcotic poisons and sleepy diseases." A modern traveller in Kordofan, states, that when labouring under a serious malady, which would not yield to the medicines with which he was provided, he was lifted out of bed by some native women, who, he says, "seated me down on a bundle of straw, with my back to the door, took off my shirt, and, as I was too weak to sit in an upright position, held me up by passing their arms under mine—I suddenly felt a shock through my whole frame which deprived me of breath for a few moments; for they poured a whole bucket full of cold spring water over my feverish body. Hundreds of others would have instantly expired, but my sound constitution enabled me to survive this douche. I was immediately dried, returned to bed, and covered with empty sacks and sheep skins. I

felt somewhat relieved, and fell asleep, a refreshment I had not enjoyed for a long time. On awaking, the women told me that I had perspired but very slightly, and that the douche must be repeated to put me in a thorough sweat. I allowed this hazardous proceeding to be repeated, because I had no other choice. The operation was performed in the same manner as on the former occasion, but it did not produce so violent a shock, because I was prepared for it. After this bath, I perspired so freely, that on waking I believed myself to be in a second bath. This proceeding, however, broke through the chain of morbid symptoms, and I felt so much relieved, that I was able to rise from my bed, and walk about for a short time in the shade of the palm trees. My convalescence proceeded now very rapidly, and I was in a short time able to resume my journey." In this case the remedy was rather roughly administered, but it is amusing to observe the evident confusion in our author's ideas as to its efficacy.

I fear that this letter is already rather too long; but even at the risk of proving tiresome, I must avail myself of this opportunity to draw your attention to some of the most recent scientific discoveries. One surgeon has discovered that making an incision into the lungs is a certain way of curing tubercles. If science continues thus to progress, its victims will have need of more than Spartan stoicism or Indian fortitude. Justly did a Scotch gentleman of my acquaintance, who had had the actual cautery several times, thus address an American gentleman—"I know not what amount of torture your Southern planters inflict on their slaves, but I cannot conceive it to be greater than has been inflicted on a British gentleman by the members of a learned profession." A French surgeon has recently informed the French academy that he has succeeded, where Hunter failed, in inoculating cats, rabbits, and dogs with syphilis. The value of this discovery, either to the inoculated or the inoculator, is not all at once apparent, and an over-zealous philanthropist might unthinkingly apply the epithets "base, brutal, and bloody," to the ingenious operator, and rave about a "Society for the sup-

pression of cruelty to animals ;” and in a tone of indignant remonstrance demand to know “ of what possible benefit such a discovery could be to the healing art ?” But a little reflection must, I think, teach any one the injustice as well as the folly of such a waste of indignation, as it must make it apparent to the slowest comprehension that the term “ healing art ” has a derivation very similar to that of “ *lucus a non lucendo* ”—and that he must be a traitor to his profession who employs his knowledge to any other purpose than the extension of disease as widely as possible and through every imaginable agency—mercury, opium, strichnine, iodine, alcohol, cinchona, vaccination and inoculation ! Let me not be misunderstood. I am not of those—if such there be—who would raise the cry of assassin, and point the finger at every medical man who passes by. I war not with individuals, but with a system. It is natural to shudder when we behold the knife with which the murderer has dispatched his victim, but we cast no blame, we wreak no vengeance on the passive instrument. Medical science—so called—is the murderer, against whom our indignation should be directed ; the physician is only the instrument, and should we be reminded that he is not altogether a passive one, let it disarm our resentment, and soften it into pity, when we behold him too the victim in his turn. In the course of my desultory reading, I have recently met with the following passage,—“ There are exceptions no doubt, but taken as a body, medical men are the very souls of kindness and generous humanity. How many have I known whose voices were as music in a sick chamber, who instead of taking, gave, ever ready to alleviate and sustain.” These sentiments must find a ready response in every breast ! Every reader must be able to supply ample illustrations of their truth ; they are no less justly conceived than well expressed. How then shall we sufficiently loathe and execrate a system, which from instruments of good can convert such men into instruments of evil to their fellows ?—Adieu.

Ever yours,

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER XXXV.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq., etc.

[Republished from the Wexford Papers.]

“Oh, that my enemy would write a book.”—OLD AUTHOR.

“Such is the force of education and the obstinacy of habit, that even the great and good Sydenham, who, by adopting Hippocrates, followed a more rational mode in the cure of disease attended with fever, was for this innovation, denounced by the majority of his medical brethren as a quack. So difficult it is for those who have grown old in any preconceived notion to admit of their error; and for this reason no physician who had attained the age of forty would allow of the discovery of the circulation of the blood.”—DR. ROBERT HAY GRAHAM’S *True Report of the Water Cure*.

“Harvey,* who first discovered the circulation of the blood, was styled ‘vagabond or quack,’ and persecuted through life. Ambrose Paré, in the time of Francis I., introduced the ligature as a substitute for the painful mode of staunching the blood after the amputation of a limb, namely, by applying boiling pitch to the surface of the stump. He was, in consequence, persecuted with the most remorseless rancour by the faculty of physic, who ridiculed the idea of putting the life of man upon a thread, when boiling pitch had stood the test of centuries.”—DR. SAMUEL DICKSON’S *Fallacies of the Faculty*.†

Græfenberg, March 20, 1845.

MY DEAR RIDGE,—A recent publication entitled a “*True Report of the Watercure*, by Robert Hay Graham, M.D.,” has called forth from the British and Americans, now here, a joint protest, of which I forward you a copy.

* Dr. Dickson says of himself, that, as a preparation for the reception of truth, the greatest difficulty he encountered was to unlearn the errors in which he had been instructed.

† The following letter, extracted from Miss Costello’s “*Summer among the Bocages and the Vines*,” chronicles another melancholy instance of persecution:—

“Paris, Feb., 1641.

“MY DEAR EFFIAT,—While you are forgetting me at Narbonne, and giving yourself up to the pleasures of the court, and the delight of thwarting M. le Cardinal de Richelieu, I, according to your express desire, am doing the honours of Paris to your English lord, the Marquis of Worcester; and I carry him about, or rather

As that document being necessarily limited in its scope, does not enter into details; and as in conjunction with one of the subscribers thereto, who is intimately conversant with the German language, I have closely investigated the various allegations respecting Priessnitz, advanced in the aforesaid work, it is my intention, for the information of the members of your society and in justification of my signature to the protest, to show in this letter of what materials "A True Report of the Watercure" is composed. Instead of attributing the reputation of Priessnitz to his unexampled success in the treatment of disease, the author consumes five pages in proof of the enthusiasm of the German character, on the which he would persuade his readers that that reputation is built, to which assertion the mere fact of the protest being written is sufficient refutation. He endeavours to rob Priessnitz of the right of being considered the inventor of the watercure, which he informs us, "is an old English method accidentally revived by Priessnitz."

he carries me, from curiosity to curiosity, choosing always the most grave and serious, speaking very little, listening with extreme attention, and fixing on those whom he interrogates two large blue eyes, which seem to pierce to the very centre of their thoughts. He is remarkable for never being satisfied with any explanations which are given him, and he never sees things in the light in which they are shown him; you may judge of this by a visit we made together to Bicetre, where he imagined he had discovered a genius in a madman. If this madman had not been actually raving, I verily believe your marquis would have entreated his liberty, and have carried him off to London, in order to hear his extravagancies, from morning till night, at his ease. We were crossing the court of the madhouse, and I, more dead than alive with fright, kept close to my companion's side, when a frightful face appeared behind some immense bars, and a hoarse voice exclaimed, 'I am not mad! I am not mad! I have made a discovery which would enrich the country that adopted it!' 'What has he discovered?' I asked of our guide. 'Oh,' he answered, shrugging his shoulders, 'something trifling enough; you would never guess it; it is the use of the steam of boiling water.' I began to laugh. 'This man,' continued the keeper, 'is named Solomon de Caus; he came from Normandy, four years ago, to present to the king a statement of the wonderful effects that might be produced from the invention. To listen to him, you would imagine that with steam you could navigate ships, move carriages—in fact, there is no end to the miracles which, he insists upon it, could be performed. The cardinal

Thus, at the very outset, does he give a specimen of the sort of "impartiality" we are to expect as we proceed. He would have us believe that this "old English method" is vastly superior to that adopted by Priessnitz. How was it then that the author was necessitated to go to Græfenberg to test the efficacy of water, and how is it that with all his professional learning he did not sooner discover its healing properties? That in certain cases some of the water processes were employed by a few physicians in former times is undoubtedly true; but it is equally true, that those processes had fallen into disuse, and that Priessnitz was the first person to combine them into one system with others hitherto unknown, and without any aid from drugs, to treat with unparalleled success almost every imaginable disease. On the same grounds on which the author seeks to rob Priessnitz of his right to be regarded as the inventor of the water cure, he might proceed to rob Watt of the invention of the steam engine—Harvey of the discovery of the circulation of the blood—and, indeed, every successful genius of his peculiar invention or discovery. He censures Priessnitz for having changed "his practice;" whereas a fair and

sent the madman away without listening to him. Solomon de Caus, far from being discouraged, followed the cardinal wherever he went, with the most determined perseverance; who, tired of finding him for ever in his path, and annoyed to death with his folly, ordered him to be shut up in Bicetre, where he has now been for three years and a half, and where, as you hear, he calls out to every visitor that he is not mad, but that he has made a valuable discovery. He has even written a book on the subject, which I have here.' Lord Worcester, who had listened to this account with much interest, after reflecting a time, asked for the book, of which, after having read several pages, he said, 'This man is not mad. In my country, instead of shutting him up, he would have been rewarded. Take me to him, for I should like to ask him some questions.' He was accordingly conducted to his cell, but after a time he came back sad and thoughtful. 'He is indeed mad now,' said he; 'misfortune and captivity have alienated his reason, but it is you who have to answer for his madness: when you cast him into that cell, you confined the greatest genius of the age.' After this, we went away; and since that time he has done nothing but talk of Solomon de Caus. Adieu, my dear friend and faithful Henry. Make haste and come back, and pray do not be so happy where you are as not to keep a little love for me.—MARION DELAMORE."

honorable writer would have commended him for having from small beginnings gradually improved it, until he had brought it to its present high state of perfection. He states that Priessnitz was indebted to a Russian patient for the introduction of the cold bath after sweating, the truth being that Priessnitz had thus employed the cold bath amongst the neighbouring peasantry long before any strangers came to him for treatment. He also states that Priessnitz obtained his first knowledge of the treatment by water from a book lent him when a boy by an Austrian officer. I have Priessnitz's word for it, and that is quite sufficient for me, that he never in early life read any work on the treatment by water; but even if he had, I cannot conceive how any one possessed of a sound head and heart could deny his right to be considered the inventor of the water cure.

The author doubts that Priessnitz ever broke his rib, and for this doubt assigns as a reason the "great exaggeration prevailing at Græfenberg." It were to be wished that he had exhibited an equal dislike of exaggeration *in his statements*, "Be this as it may," admits the author, "whether the rib was broken or not, the treatment could not have been better;" but as if sorry for having exhibited even so trifling an amount of candour in conjunction with his very palpable bull, he immediately adds—"but, as is seen, it was in a great measure the effect of chance"—meaning by "chance," the reading of the book which, as has been shown, Priessnitz *never read*; and which even if he had read it, could not have taught him to act as he did.

The author represents Priessnitz as "obscure in his directions and curt in his answers," whereas his directions are so plain as to be understood by the meanest capacity, and if asked for them, he is ever ready to assign his reasons. He may indeed not condescend to be equally communicative when medical men, (who, with some honorable exceptions, his early and indefatigable persecutors, have taught him to regard them as inveterate enemies,) presumptuously, with a tone of authority, assume, as it were, the right to catechise him as if he were a student seeking his diploma at their hands.

The author would make it appear that Priessnitz pays attention only to his wealthy patients, and that others have an opportunity of consulting him only twice a day for "five minutes" each time; the fact being, that all patients in the establishment who are able to come to the saloon, have ample opportunities of consulting him three times a day; that, if needful, they can send for him to their rooms at other times; and that, to such as are confined to bed, his visits and attentions are fully proportioned to the exigencies of the case, irrespective of the rank or wealth of the patient. Here I should like to ask, How many medical men are there, who would not pay more attention to a duke than to a simple yeoman?

The author states, that Priessnitz keeps in pay certain of the patients, who, acting as spies, inform him of any deviation from his directions, and who, at his instigation, on the death of a patient, "as in the case of Miss S. S.," propagate reports, that the catastrophe was occasioned by the patient's own fault in deviating in some respect from the prescribed treatment. This charge is likewise utterly untrue. In all matters relating to the cure, the bath servants constantly make their reports to Priessnitz, just as nurse-tenders in an hospital do to the visiting physician; and as to the case of Miss S., one of the subscribers to the protest, was told by Priessnitz, many months since, that "no person could have taken the treatment better than that lady."

The average number of patients rejected is stated by the author to be one-fifth. I do not believe that it exceeds from ten to fifteen in a thousand. In this category, of course, must not be included those whom Priessnitz, in his correspondence, advises not to come to Græfenberg, either exposing the hopelessness of the case, or prescribing treatment which may be followed at home, and this advice repeated as often as necessary is invariably given gratis.

The author reproaches Priessnitz with the inconsistency of being not only a distiller and brewer, but of having built the brewery, when he is no more the one or the other than the landlord of any brewery or distillery

in England, and never built either of them, both having been on his estate when he purchased it. The author says: "His wife and himself, as I was informed, are in the habit of partaking of both wine and liqueurs. Perhaps this may not be true." I shall offer no comment on the taste and feeling thus displayed by one, who can not only circulate a calumny of which, confessedly, he has no proof, but even seeks to make a female one of his victims, but shall content myself with pronouncing it to be untrue.

The author pretends that Priessnitz, when baffled in his treatment of a case, in order to get rid of the patient, is accustomed to "pick a quarrel" with him under the pretext that he has not adhered to the prescribed treatment; and, to illustrate this untruth, he instances the case of Dr. Bulard. From the author's statement it appears, that in consequence of having been "imperfectly cured" of an intermittent fever by quinine, Dr. Bulard got "*congestion*" of the liver, "*a frequent result of fever*;" and that enlargement attended by ascites succeeded. Here, then, is a physician "emblazoned with the orders of France, Russia, Austria, and Turkey," suffering for "two years" under disease, the result of improper medical treatment, and at last coming to the "illiterate peasant" in search of health. The doctor, it appears, deviated from Priessnitz's instructions. This was very natural on the doctor's part, and who could blame him? It must doubtless have been sufficiently galling both to the amour propre and esprit de corps of a medical man virtually to confess the inutility of his art, and the incompetency of its professors, by placing himself under the care of an "illiterate peasant," and how could he make himself amends for his humiliation, and soothe in some degree his wounded vanity, except by an occasional act of rebellion? But is it just to condemn Priessnitz, if under such circumstances he should intimate that he would consider himself no longer responsible for the cure? Would Dr. Graham, or any other Dr., continue to attend a patient who would not follow the prescriptions ordered,—who should venture to treat himself? Dr. Bulard, it is stated, received his

“ death warrant,” and “ left for Dresden, where he died about four months afterwards.” Cruel case ! Amongst all his learned friends, was there not one able and willing to reverse his doom ? How is it, that even Dr. Graham, the tearful historian of this sad narrative, under whose “ immediate observation ” these things occurred, with all his superior knowledge and uncommon sensibility, suffered his brother thus to perish without even an effort to save him.

The story respecting Professor Munde is a pure invention ; but the intensity of the author’s ill-feeling is most especially manifested when he states, on the alledged authority of Captain Wollf, that, in reference to Miss S.’s case, Priessnitz said : “ That it was his practice to judge of the inside by the skin, but that he was restricted in his observation in her case, and therefore could not tell what was going on inside.” On the same authority the author adds, “ He (Priessnitz) then mimicked the tone of her voice and her retiring modesty, when he once attempted to remove her bathing-dress. He afterwards ridiculed the English ladies for wearing bathing dresses at all, so different from the custom of his own countrywomen, and all this was said and done with a sort of acting or imitating their manners, highly amusing to his hearers, who burst out into repeated shouts of laughter. Such is the great, the immortal Priessnitz ! Proh pudor ! ” Anybody at all acquainted with Priessnitz and his natural kindness of heart, would immediately acquit him of the vile accusation brought against him in the foregoing extract ; but those who do not know him, will naturally require proof. We have already seen that Priessnitz cast no blame whatever on the mode in which Miss S. took the treatment ; and I am informed, that it is in general customary for ladies of every nation to wear bathing dresses, whenever, which is not often, Priessnitz has occasion to see them in the bath, and that he rarely requires to see more of the person than is freely exposed by every lady in an evening dress. Can the author state as much in behalf of himself and his medical brethren ? Let it be remembered, that, as will be seen by reference to the protest, the

author's principal witness, his friend and interpreter, Captain Wollf, to whom he dedicates his work, contradicts his statements, and thus helps to expose the vileness of his calumnies.

I shall now produce the author against himself. There are various passages in which his contradictory statements are apparent, but it will be sufficient to point out two or three. In one place, with reference to the mode of treatment, he says: "He (Priessnitz) never treats any two cases, that are precisely similar, in the same way, though proceeding from the same cause;" and shortly afterwards he says, "the fact is, he pursues nearly the same routine with them all, whatever may be their ailments." In narrating his own case he states: "I was now sadly reduced by the disease, by the severity of the treatment, and by my great abstinence,—my food consisting merely of a small quantity of bread and milk, and at dinner a sort of hasty pudding;" and immediately afterwards he adds, that, (doubtless with intent to recruit his lost strength), he now resolved "to pass one entire day without eating or drinking, and afterwards to eat and drink but sparingly for several days, limiting himself to two small rolls, and one glass of water." The preceding gross contradictions must forcibly remind the reader, as they did me, of an old saying which I shall forbear to quote. There are several other palpable contradictions in Dr. Graham's work, but it would occupy too much space to notice them.

We now come to the consideration of the author's cases. Out of fifteen cases he gives five of death, of which only one occurred during the time of his stay. The others, it is to be presumed, occurred previous to his arrival, and consequently, must be scattered over a period of at least fourteen months, and amongst an aggregate of one thousand seven hundred patients—two facts which the impartial author is careful not to communicate. The first case is that of Miss S. S. The author states, that this lady died of "congestion," caused by the excessive application of cold water; that, during fever she was rubbed twice a day in the cold

bath, for two hours each time; and that, "in the hour of danger Priessnitz was entirely at a loss how to act, and for two days attempted nothing." These statements are untrue. Miss S. did not use the cold bath. During the fever, a month previous to death, she used prolonged tepid baths, which reduced the fever; afterwards she had the tepid bath twice a day, for only half a minute. Priessnitz, moreover, attended constantly, sometimes three or four times a day, during her illness; and to the very last, did all that human skill could dictate to avert the fate to which he saw her hastening. Thus, then, she was neither neglected in her last moments, nor did she die of congestion from the prolonged use of the cold bath.

The next case is that of the Princess L——, which is also given as a case of death from congestion. Of this lady the author states, that in eight or ten months she was cured of a complaint—that she was afterwards again attended by Priessnitz at the period of her accouchement; that the treatment subsequent to delivery caused congestion, of which she died; that Priessnitz "exonerated himself from all blame by declaring, as usual, that his orders had not been followed;" and that the prince "a few days afterwards quitted Græfenberg, but not without accusing Priessnitz of having been the cause of his sad bereavement." If this were true, it is scarcely probable that the prince's brother should have come here since to place his only son under Priessnitz's care. But what must my readers think, when informed that the prince, who was himself perfectly restored under Priessnitz's treatment, did not leave Græfenberg for eighteen months after his wife's decease; and that the princess, as the period of her accouchement approached, was attended by a medical gentleman, and that she did not die after, but before delivery—the cesarean operation having had to be performed, when it was discovered that it was utterly impossible for birth to take place. Here, then, are two out of Dr. Graham's five cases of death, to prove his assertion, to which he "defies contradiction;" that, "in every instance of death which

was brought under his notice, he ascertained that it proceeded from congestion, and not from disease."

The case of a gentleman who is said to have died immediately after his first bath is a pure fabrication.

Captain Dzabo—fortunately the name is mentioned—did not die of a tumor in his throat. Given up by the physicians of Vienna, he arrived in a state approaching corruption, with fistulous sores that had eaten quite through his abdomen. Nothing could save him. Of the remaining case of death, not having a clue to it, I cannot say any thing, but surely I have shown sufficient proof why one should doubt the accuracy of any statement advanced by Dr. Graham; yet I should wish to offer a few remarks on two of his other cases. The case of an English gentleman who is said to have contracted disease at Græfenberg, and to have become worse under the treatment, appears, on inquiry, to be a gross exaggeration and perversion of facts.

The last case I shall notice shall be Dr. Graham's own. He states that he had been subject to gout for "ten years" previous to his coming to Græfenberg. "Two years before, he had a severe attack in both feet and knees—since then he had constantly suffered from slight rheumatic pains." "He also had frequent cramps in the thighs," "restless nights," and he "suspected an organic disease of the heart." Amongst his symptoms were; "Skin, dry and somewhat harsh, hot or cold, never soft or moist, pulse contracted, hard, from seventy to eighty, perfect intermissions every fifteenth or eighteenth pulsation, imperfect ones every fifth or sixth; palpitation; shortness of breath; profuse perspiration; exhaustion after a little muscular exertion. It seemed as if the gouty matter had since the last attack been accumulating in the system without there being sufficient strength of constitution to throw it into the extremities, or bring on the paroxysm." In this state of health he came to Græfenberg, where he "did not purpose remaining more than a month to try the effect of the water cure, but fate ordained it otherwise." On this occasion "fate" visited him in the shape of a fall which he received on the seventeenth day after his arrival; at a later

period she came in the shape of that "paroxysm" of the gout which, for the two previous years, "his constitution had not sufficient strength to bring on." Dr. Graham appears to have acted not unlike his brother Dr. Bulard, for we find him, by his own confession, "generally shirking the moist sheet in the afternoon"—taking advice from Herr R. whom he styles his "new doctor," perspiring in the blanket at the bidding of Captain Wollf, and subsequently calling in Priessnitz again. By Priessnitz's directions he was rubbed, he says, twice a day in the "demibath" for half an hour each time—after this bath it seemed "as if he never should be warm again, and thus he lay shivering and shaking for at least a couple of hours." It does not appear, at least if it be so, the doctor does not inform us, that he got "congestion" from this treatment; on the contrary he states that it was "the means of suppressing the fever and procuring him a comfortable sound and refreshing sleep." He adds; "Two years previously, while under an attack of gout, I took in one night four hundred drops of laudanum, without their producing the least effect—on a former occasion I had taken the same quantity of the black drop, Bateman's liquor sedativa, and other powerful medicines. I believe, whilst suffering under the paroxysm of this disease, I could have swallowed an ounce or two of these tinctures without feeling any other inconvenience than that of slight stupor. Hence we may infer, that the sedative effects of cold very much surpass those of opium or perhaps of any other known remedy." In thirteen days he was able without the aid of a stick "to hobble across the room," but was, he tells us "sadly reduced." Notwithstanding the remonstrances of Captain Wollf, he now resolved "to abstain from the use of the wet sheet," for which he substituted the sweating blanket, in which he lay for "from six to seven or eight hours" a day—thus, in addition to his rigid abstinence from food as mentioned before, he represents himself, while still in a state of great debility, as discarding the wet sheet, which he had been ordered by Priessnitz, and using to excess the sweating blanket, which is considered too weakening for any except those patients who origi-

nally possess, or from previous treatment have acquired, a considerable amount of strength ; and then, as a matter of course, the doctor deliberately blames Priessnitz for the consequences of his own absurdities. After a residence of not quite three months, nineteen days of which he passed at Græfenberg and the remainder at Freiwalldau, his friend Captain Wollf being on the eve of leaving, the doctor, like a silly frightened child "dreading" to be left without his nurse, takes his departure, and actually parts from his friends, as he states in a most sentimental passage, "with tears in his eyes." It is now twenty-six months since he left Græfenberg, but, after all his efforts to excite the sympathies of his readers, he does not condescend to acquaint them with his present state of health. I submit that I have now fully justified my signature to the protest.

I might, also charge Dr. Graham with ignorance of the water cure, of which he affords an instance in his own case in his use of the sweating blanket. We might likewise take as instances his ridiculous assertions that "constipation pretty generally takes place" under the cure ; that two or more crises are considered as connected with a similar number of diseases—that "from seven or eight, to twenty or thirty, or even forty tumblers" of water are a daily allowance—that it is a maxim that much strength of constitution is needed to enable the patient to go through the water cure, and that the more experienced portion of the patients say that it is enough to do half what Priessnitz orders. I am not aware of water being drunk to the excess that Dr. Graham mentions, except that it is stated by Dr. James Wilson, that he once of his own accord, by way of experiment, took thirty tumblers before breakfast without suffering any inconvenience. As to much strength of constitution being required to enable one to go through the cure, it is very true that if the system is so greatly lowered that reaction cannot take place, the case may be considered past a cure ; but it by no means follows that, as Dr. Graham asserts, much strength of constitution is needed to endure the treatment. On the contrary, numerous cases in which the patient has been restored from the lowest state of debility,

and there are such here at present, might be cited to show that the treatment is eminently strengthening. Thus, then, when the doctor exhibits his ignorance in the minor details, would it not be fair to infer that he is equally ignorant in more important matters?

In his eagerness to write down Priessnitz, Dr. Graham labours hard to prove that from the prolonged application of cold water, death from congestion is of frequent occurrence at Græfenberg. I have shown that the cases cited in proof have failed him, and I now wish to add that, although from post mortem examinations, and other sources, I am in possession of the particulars of some cases, in no instance, with which I am acquainted, does it appear that death was the result of congestion from the prolonged application of cold water:—add to this that Dr. James Wilson gives a table of the deaths at Græfenberg from 1831 to 1841 inclusive, and that we do not find mention therein of a single case of death from such a cause. Perhaps I might avail myself of this opportunity to correct an error into which Dr. Wilson, in compiling his table, has fallen. He states that there were eight deaths at Græfenberg in 1841—whereas there were only six. There were two deaths at another establishment of a different kind (the hunger-cure establishment) in the neighbourhood, and it is evident, that in running his eye over the registry he unwittingly transferred, by a very natural mistake, those two deaths to his table. As it would be foreign to my present purpose, I shall not follow Dr. Graham into the scientific part of his work, further than to say that, in my opinion, his argument, properly considered, goes rather to prove, that congestion is as likely to be caused by heat as cold. No one will contend that congestion may not result from the improper or too long continued application of cold—but this can only happen in careless or unskilful hands, or from the patient's own foolhardiness.

With all the author's ill-feeling, he is constrained to admit that Priessnitz has "high authority" for his theory as to the action of drugs, and that there is "no doubt of his having performed many successful cures in cases which had baffled the treatment of the medical

practitioners of his own country ;" he might have said of almost every country. It is in this astonishing success of Priessnitz, and not in his failures that we can discover the secret of Dr. Graham's hostility.

In the gratification of his ill-temper, Dr. Graham does not spare even his own profession. He says that " the modern professors of art, rejecting every theory, have become strictly empirical ; and like other empirics, rely entirely on the force of their remedies, without attending to the directions of nature or the crisis of disease," and he tells us, with apparent approval, that, " it is an old saying that a physician knows not his profession until he has thrice filled a churchyard."

Notwithstanding his hostility to Priessnitz, Dr. Graham does not appear to have the same antipathy to water. In one passage he says ; " The medicinal use of cold water either arrests the inordinate action of the heart and arteries or stimulates their energies, as may be desired ; it resolves the spasm, allays irritation, provokes perspiration, excites the kidneys, and gives a tone to the stomach.—Thus we may derive from it all the effects of sedatives, anti-spasmodics, diaphoretics, diuretics, and tonics ; of digitalis, opiates, antimonials, without disturbing the functions of the animal economy, and without the danger of accumulation, which so frequently arises from the injudicious and long-continued use of those drugs. We also derive from it all the good effects of fomentations, rubefacients, blisters, and other counter-irritants." Dr. Graham's object, which he is at no pains to conceal, is to wrest this powerful remedial agent from the hands of Priessnitz ; to bring it under the control of the faculty ; to juggle with it, perhaps, under the name of "*aqua fontis*," and by combining it with medicines, " especially with the watery infusions and decoctions " to re-establish the tottering empire of quackery ; and his motives may perhaps be found in his intimation " that the water treatment will soon have a fair trial in this country " (England), and in his advice to those who are desirous of experiencing it to " seek out some establishment near at home." To whom should invalids fly for health, but to Dr. Graham ? who tells us that his

medical brethren are empirics, and that Priessnitz is an "impostor"—to Dr. Graham, who alone understands the true action of remedies, and the real nature of disease. Had not Dr. Graham, as in his own case, where he does not pretend to derive his information from others, exhibited his want of candour and his ill-feeling, one might have been disposed, perhaps, to believe, that he himself had been deceived by plausible misrepresentations; but as it is, justice sternly compels truth to tear away the garment with which charity would seek to cover his sins.

As to Priessnitz, I do not contend that he is either faultless in conduct or unerring in judgment. There is no one perfect or infallible. But I am convinced of his uprightness; I have evidence of the kindliness of his heart; I have witnessed his skill: and I cannot conceal my belief that when his friends and his foes, his admirers and his maligners, shall alike be forgotten, his memory will be cherished by posterity as that of a great genius and benefactor of his race.

Ever your very faithful friend,

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER XXXVI.

To the Editors of the Albany Atlas.

[Republished from the *Albany Atlas*.]

Græfenberg, April 4, 1845.

MESSRS. EDITORS,—The importance which has been attached, in certain quarters, to the work of Dr. Graham on the water cure, and the efforts which have been made, it is understood, to give it circulation, have occasioned the document, a copy of which I send to you. Will you insert it in the *Atlas*? The original has been

forwarded to the London *Times* for publication. Mr. D—— also sends a copy to the *New York Tribune*, with a letter (which I should be pleased if you would republish) addressed to the Enniscorthy (Ireland) Hydro-pathic Society, by Mr. Gibbs, one of the subscribers, exposing some of the most flagrant misstatements which the doctor has made.

Who are most competent to estimate Priessnitz, his patients, who have been under his care for periods varying from three months to two years and upwards, and who have been in habits of constant intercourse and consultation with him, or Dr. Graham, who spent nineteen days at Græfenberg.*

Sir Isaac Newton was led to discover the laws of gravitation by observing the fall of an apple; Priessnitz the art of curing disease with cold water from witnessing its effects in producing *auschlag*, or eruption in cases of trifling injuries. Thus, from circumstances so simple and apparently so trivial in themselves, are great truths evolved by the observant mind of genius.

Some kind friend, I learn, has imposed upon the *New York Tribune* (unintentionally, I suppose) by informing its editor that I have had consumption and paralysis for several years, and that I will return in six months perfectly restored! One would suppose that either affliction were sufficiently formidable without superadding the other; and then a perfect cure in six months! My disease, Priessnitz says (and in this opinion he and Dr. C. C. Yates agree), is chronic rheumatism, obstructed circulation, and impaired nervous influence, the result of medication and depletion.

I have no expectation that my disease, which proves to be more obstinate than I anticipated, will be eradicated within the period limited for my stay, but I shall be greatly better, and shall have received, I am persuaded, from the progress I have made, an impulse which, with such of the treatment as I may follow at home, will

* Dr. Graham was nineteen days at Græfenberg, and two months at Freiwaldau.

ultimately re-establish my health. A short application of the water cure, when I was first attacked, would have prevented, probably, all my protracted sufferings and indisposition. Be the result in my case, however, what it may, I can never cease to entertain the opinion, which personal observation and experience have led me to adopt, that hydropathy is the true, and in general, the only effectual method of curing disease, be it acute or be it chronic.

Would the cause of hydropathy had taken as deep root with us as it has in Europe! However, the day cannot be far distant when its health-preserving, life-prolonging, influences will be felt throughout the length and breadth of our beloved land. Twin of the temperance cause, it should be cordially embraced by every friend of that benign movement. It will prove a mighty auxiliary. It is a remarkable circumstance that about the time, if not the very year, the temperance reformation began to dawn with us, the discovery of Vincent Priessnitz broke upon the startled medical faculty of Germany!

Millions yet unborn will have reason to bless the day which gave birth to the Silesian peasant! Through his humble instrumentality, they will probably be spared the nauseating draught and the potent vegetable and mineral poison, with which their fathers were scientifically dosed, and too often, alas! ignorantly slaughtered. "It is an old saying," remarks Dr. Graham, in his work on the water cure, "that a physician knows not his profession until he has thrice filled a church-yard!" Spared, too, will they be the torture of the caustic and the blister, and still more fortunate! Their life currents will be suffered to meander quietly through their bodies without assault from the leech, the cup, or the lancet.

"Less slaughter, I am convinced," says Dr. Reid, in his work on Hypochondriasis, "has been effected by the sword than by the lancet—that minute instrument of mighty mischief."

Let me not be misunderstood. It is the medical system which I condemn, not the practitioner. Six months'

residence here has convinced me that it is false and pernicious, if not eminently destructive of human life. May it not be hoped that the water cure, under Providence, is the destined means of its subversion?

Very truly yours,

ANDREW J. COLVIN.

LETTER XXXVII.

To the Editor of the London Times.

[Republished from the *Times*.]

Græfenberg, Feb. 11, 1845.

SIR,—We, the undersigned British and Americans, who have resided here for periods varying from three months to two years and upwards, and who, consequently, have had ample opportunities of acquiring correct information, deem it our duty publicly to assert, that a work, entitled, “A True Report of the Water Cure, by Robert Hay Graham, M. D.,” abounds in gross exaggerations, misstatements, and calumnies respecting Priessnitz. It would lengthen this document too much to go into a detailed refutation of all those portions of Dr. Graham’s work which we could contradict. We therefore refrain from noticing any in particular. It will be sufficient to say that, *from personal observation*, we can deny several of Dr. Graham’s allegations, and, from information upon which we *can* rely, we are convinced that many more are totally devoid of foundation.

We have seen a letter, dated January 15th, 1845, from Captain Wollf, whom Dr. Graham gives as his authority for some of his most unfounded assertions, and to whom he dedicates his book, and we beg attention to the following extracts from that letter:—

“I not only,” says Captain Wollf, “was a passionate hydropathist, but am still, to this day, known as an out-

and-out one. * * * The information which I gave Dr. Graham concerned solely the scientific part of the water cure, and could not, of course, be otherwise than favourable, I being, as above stated, an hydropathist. With regard to the wretched stuff you allude to, as to whether Mr. and Mrs. P. drink wine or grog, whether Miss S. S. and other English ladies were treated with or without clothes, the tiresome story about Munde, or whether the Princess L. did or did not employ the cure, with such like I have never concerned myself, for I lived at Græfenberg exclusively for the water cure."

Thus does Dr. Graham's principal witness fail him! It is only necessary to add, that we do not place the least reliance on any of Dr. Graham's statements. We are led to say thus much from regard to truth, and from esteem for a great and good man, who has been basely vilified.

In our opinion, Priessnitz, from long practice, varied experience, and close observation, guided by his extraordinary genius, has acquired so intimate a knowledge of the action of water,* of its dangers and advantages as regards the human body, both in health and disease, that the most delicate invalid may safely rely upon his judgment; and in this opinion we are sustained by the fact of his great success in the treatment of almost every variety of disease, which surpasses that of any physician on record. The patients who seek his aid may be divided, with few exceptions, into two classes, those who by medical men have been pronounced incurable, and those whose diseases are the result of medical treatment, and, out of the large number whom he yearly treats, it would be absurd to expect that he should never lose one; but we cannot believe that the water cure is the best remedy for disease without also believing that he, its discoverer, is the best practitioner of it; and to convince us to the contrary would require somewhat stronger and more unexceptionable testimony than that of Dr. Graham.

* Priessnitz has tested the operation of the various processes by numerous experiments on his own person; such as taking forty abreibungen, or a large number of leintuchs in succession, or remaining for a considerable time in the various baths.

From the portrait which Dr. Graham draws of Priessnitz, one who did not know him, would be apt to imagine him as full of assumption and charlatanism, whereas he is as far from either as any man, being as remarkable for his simplicity and truth as for a native modesty and unassuming propriety of demeanor, which, combined with his kindliness of heart, win respect and regard from almost all who approach him. Requesting that you will do us the favour to give insertion to this letter, we are, sir, your obedient servants,

Lichfield (the Earl of).
 E. H. Tracey (the Hon).
 W. S. Ellis.
 Richard L. Jones.
 Gratton Bright.
 Augustus Blair, Capt.
 J. H. O. Moore, Capt.
 Thomas Smithett, M.A.
 Andrew B. Mills.
 C. Sewell.
 Horatio Greenough, U.S.

W. D'Arley,
 John Gibbs.
 William Murray.
 Robert Murray.
 Andrew J. Colvin, U.S.
 Alonzo Draper, U.S.
 G. Pietsch.
 James Hamilton.
 Henry J. Robinson.
 C. H. Meeker, U.S.

LETTER XXXVIII.

To the Editors of the Friend.

"Audi alteram partem."

Græfenberg, March 22, 1845.

GENTLEMEN,*—I have recently read in number 26, vol. 3, of your Journal, a letter from Dr. Edward Johnson, which appears to me to call for a few remarks, which I trust that you will allow me to offer through the medium

* It is necessary to account for this letter being now published for the first time. It was refused by the editors of the "Friend," on the grounds that they had already given notice that they had

of your columns. I should be content, perhaps, to leave Dr. Johnson in the hands of some of your excellent correspondents, but that I conceive, that from the information which I have acquired from a residence here of over eighteen months, and also from having closely investigated the subject on which Dr. Johnson writes, I am thereby in a better position than persons, who either never have been here, or only for a short time, to set in its true light the matter under discussion.

Dr. Johnson states that he "was already intimately conversant with the whole of the facts" in Miss S.'s case; that he is rejoiced to see them "made public," and that he is convinced that their publication can "do nothing but good to the true interests of hydropathy." How is it then, that he, who is so interested in the success of hydropathy, and who has published a laboured work thereon, was not the person to communicate those facts to the public? But it would appear that Dr. Johnson was not in previous possession of the *facts* in

closed their columns to any further discussion of the subject treated of, and that, if they were to give it insertion, the matter could not end there. In order that my readers may be able to judge correctly of this decision on the part of the editors of the "Friend," it will be necessary briefly to state a few facts. In the month of December, 1844, the editors, in a favourable review of "Dr. Hay Graham's True Report of the Water Cure," adopted and gave further circulation to some of the calumnies respecting Priessnitz contained in that work. This review, as might have been anticipated, provoked some discussion, and the editors accordingly gave insertion to four letters on the subject. One of those letters appeared in the January number for 1845, and is written by Dr. Courtney; and of the other three, two are from the pens of Dr. Weeding and a correspondent who signs himself "Subscriber." Of these gentlemen, Dr. Weeding is the only one who has been at Græfenberg, and he was there only for a comparatively short time. The fourth letter is the one to which the above is a reply. Dr. Weeding's, Dr. Johnson's, and "Subscriber's" letters appeared simultaneously in the February number, which is *the only number* that reached Græfenberg; and in the number for March, the editors announce that "no further communications on the subject of hydropathy will be admitted." When I wrote the above letter in the same month, I was ignorant of the announcement from the editors of the "Friend;" but even had I been acquainted with it, I should still have written and forwarded my letter, believing that the principles of justice are of paramount importance to the ill-judged resolution of an editor.

this case, but that he has borrowed his knowledge of them from Dr. Graham; part of whose statement, in particular, we find him reiterating in his assertion, that Miss S. was in the enjoyment of "perfect health" previous to being placed under Priessnitz's care. If such be Dr. Johnson's belief, he exhibits, notwithstanding all his *theorizing*, very great ignorance as regards *practical* purposes, of the action of water, in asserting that under such circumstances "any treatment at all" would have caused death. But, by a happy coincidence, we are informed, in the same number of the "Friend," by Dr. Weeding, on the authority of a statement made by the young lady's father, that Miss S. left home for the expressed purpose of trying the cure and making "the experiment of its efficacy on her *debilitated frame*." This statement was made in a sermon which I have only recently seen for the first time, and in which it is further stated that: "It has been no small satisfaction to know that the English physicians who were present, have given it as their decided opinion, that no human wisdom

When the editors of a public journal open their columns to the discussion of a subject, they should be prepared to suffer the discussion to run to its legitimate conclusion. Have the editors of the "Friend" done so in the case in question? A man is basely calumniated; he is a foreigner, a thousand miles away, and ignorant of the language in which the calumny is circulated, and thus every way unable to offer any defence; the editors of a religious periodical help to give those calumnies a wider circulation, and to stamp upon them an additional fictitious value; they give insertion to the corroborative testimony of a party who represents himself as fully acquainted with the matters under discussion, and to the exculpatory evidence of different parties who have confessedly only a very partial knowledge of those matters; they wrong an absent man; they open their columns to his calumniators; they adopt the calumnies; they admit an incomplete defence; and they refuse insertion to a full and authorative exculpation, written under the very roof of the man whom they have wronged. But perhaps they retract the calumny, and offer an apology? Not they. And what plea do they give for this continued injustice? They plead *an act of their own*—a recorded resolution not to open their columns again to the subject. The resolutions of the editors of the "Friend," *when it suits their purposes*, are as unalterable as the laws of the Medes or Persians. What matters it that, to maintain them, calumny is to be held sacred, character blasted, the public misled, and the plainest dictates of justice disregarded?

could have foreseen the result, nor any human aid prevented it."

Dr. Johnson says that Priessnitz is "utterly incompetent to practise his own treatment in any case of real difficulty."* How is it, then, that he performed the cures of which Dr. Johnson is himself the historian? In his work on hydropathy, Dr. Johnson frequently refers his readers to a former work of his, and now in his letter he shews that he has not forgotten his old practice; for, he reminds us of a fact which I shall endeavour to keep in view, that he also has written a work on the water cure, and written it, too, at Græfenberg. Dr. Johnson informs us that in this work he has already "given the same opinion of Mr. Priessnitz, though in gentler terms than those used by Dr. Hay Graham." It would seem as if Dr. Johnson were so morbidly vain that he becomes unhappy if it should appear that another had anticipated him in aught—it matters not whether it be good or evil. It is true that, in his work, Dr. Johnson *evinces a disposition* to assail Priessnitz; but, however desirous, yet, less bold than Dr. Graham, he merely, while

"Willing to wound, but yet afraid to strike,
Just hints a fault, and hesitates dislike."

Let it be conceded, for argument's sake, that the water cure was a failure in Miss S.'s case; but is it fair to weigh it, and in fraudulent scales, too, against the numberless cases in which Priessnitz has been successful; and is it just and honourable to assail him as Messrs. Johnson and Graham have done? Let a quotation from Dr. Johnson's letter supply the answer: "Opium, arsenic, calomel, prussic acid, etc., may produce, and have a thousand times produced the same melancholy effects, in the hands of those who knew not how to use them; *sometimes, IN THE HANDS OF THE MOST EXPERIENCED.*" How candid, then, in the writer of the foregoing sentence to seize with such avidity on a single case of failure, and, in conjunction with Dr. Graham—arcades ambo—to blazon it abroad with the intent to injure another, and

* Will it be believed, that, after penning the above passage, Dr. Johnson sent a patient to Græfenberg? Yet such is the fact.

that other the founder of the very system in the efficacy of which they endeavour to persuade the world to believe! Whilst professing himself a disciple of this new school of the healing art, Dr. Johnson would depose the master. But, although it must be evident to every candid mind, which has been at the trouble to investigate the subject, that Priessnitz is, as even Dr. Johnson has formerly styled him, the "founder of the water cure;" perhaps the doctor, like some others celebrated for having bad memories, may now, copying Dr. Graham, deny that Priessnitz is thus rightly entitled. Be it so. I shall content myself for the present with Dr. Graham's admission, that Priessnitz is at least the "reviver" of the water cure. But I should like to ask from whence did Dr. Johnson derive the conviction, which he expresses in his work, that he "*can cure a greater number of diseases, and in a shorter time, by the hydropathic treatment, than he can by the exhibition of drugs; and that there are many diseases which he can thus cure, which are wholly incurable by any other known means.*" Did he derive this conviction from the works of the ancient authors? Did he derive it from the example of the modern practitioners of medicine? Did he *not* derive it from the successful practice of Priessnitz? of whom he says: "I little thought, while writing that treatise (his former work), that there was a primitive philosopher in the person of Priessnitz, who was, at that very moment, actively engaged in *reducing to practice* all the great *principles* laid down by me in that very treatise, and demonstrating the truth of my views by *a degree of success unparalleled* in the history of disease and its treatment." For the line of conduct which Drs. Johnson and Graham are pursuing, not even charity can surmise very worthy motives. It is a common trick in trade to hang out the notice: "No connection with the house over the way." The downfall of the honoured and the successful is ever grateful to vulgar ambition. The envious and avaricious scruple at no means to overthrow whoever may appear to stand in the way of their grasping desires, and it is only worldly wisdom to seal up, if possible, the springs of knowledge from those who might

chance to prove successful competitors. If there be any parties actuated by the former motives, they shall find themselves miserably deceived; for Priessnitz has deserved too well of humanity, and is too firmly seated in the grateful memories of thousands, to be overthrown by even the joint efforts of all the doctors in Christendom. If there be any actuated by the latter motive, they could not have devised a more ingenious plan of operations than has been adopted by Drs. Johnson and Graham. The former by publishing in *his* book, *without their permission*, the names of persons who had confided to him their cases, has succeeded in filling the minds of many with distrust of the honour of a medical man; and the latter's vilification of Priessnitz cannot be expected to smoothe the way for such physicians as may still wish to visit Græfenberg for information. But let it be hoped that the innocent may not be punished for the guilty, and let Dr. Weeding's manly conduct atone for the crimes of Drs. Johnson and Graham.

Dr. Johnson says, that Dr. Graham's book is "the best which has been written concerning the doings at Græfenberg." Now, by the united voices of seventeen British and four American gentlemen at present here, this "best book" has been publicly condemned in a letter to the *Times*, as "abounding in gross exaggerations, misstatements, and calumnies respecting Priessnitz;" and those gentlemen state that they "do not place the least reliance on any statement advanced by Dr. Graham." Such is the verdict of twenty-one gentlemen, competent to form it from having been residents at Græfenberg, "for periods varying from three months to two years and upwards," and who inform the public that, "from *personal observation*, they can deny several of Dr. Graham's allegations, and that, from information on which they *can* rely, they are convinced that many more are totally devoid of foundation." Of those allegations which "are totally devoid of foundation," and which will serve to give some idea of the materials of which Dr. Graham's work is composed, are those contained in the *fabricated* case of the Princess L., of whom Dr. Graham states that she died of "congestion," the

result of the treatment employed subsequent to delivery, and that Priessnitz "exonerated himself from all blame by declaring, as usual, that his orders had not been followed." The truth is, that the princess was attended by a medical practitioner, and that she died not after, but prior to delivery, the cesarean operation having been performed subsequent to her decease. These facts I had from the medical gentleman who attended the princess. In his eagerness to make this case as circumstantial as possible, Dr. Graham, like other over clever people, is rather too minute in his details. He states that the husband of the princess left Græfenberg "shortly" after her decease, but "not without accusing Priessnitz of having been the cause of his sad bereavement." *The prince did not leave Græfenberg for eighteen month's after his wife's decease.* I particularize this fact because it is one, of the truth of which, any person who may hereafter visit Græfenberg, and who, from lapse of time, or from any other circumstance, may be debarred from any other source of information respecting the real facts of this case, can satisfy himself by referring to the registry kept by the police authorities, and because it will serve to show how little trouble Dr. Graham took to arrive at truth when he neglected so obvious a source of information which is open to all. What confidence, Messrs. Editors, can be placed in any statement from the pen of an author who can thus mislead? You, as well as any one, know the use which has been made of Dr. Graham's assertions. Must you not reflect, with mingled indignation and regret, that you too have been beguiled, by such artifices, into lending your aid to the enemies of a great and good man, in their base attempts to rob him of his well-won reputation? Dr. Graham's book has been received with the most indecent and malignant triumph by the enemies of Priessnitz; so much so, that, if I am correctly informed, the reviewer of it, in a leading medical journal, concludes his article by styling Priessnitz the "Water Demon of Græfenberg." The case of Miss S., as given by Dr. Graham, has been especially harped upon by the interested, the envious, and the malevolent. Dr. Graham states that this lady

also died from "congestion," resulting from the prolonged application of cold water; and, on the professed authority of Captain Wollf, to whom he dedicates his book, he represents Priessnitz as, when speaking with reference to the cause of her death, indulging in mirth which would disgrace a barbarian. No person, at all acquainted with Priessnitz, could for a moment believe him guilty of such conduct, even if Captain Wollf had not disclaimed, as he has done, having had any share in the fabrication of so vile a calumny. That Miss S. did not die from congestion, resulting from the prolonged use of cold bathing, is apparent from the fact, that she did *not* use prolonged *cold* baths. A month previous to death, while labouring under fever, she used prolonged tepid baths, which reduced the fever. Subsequently she used tepid baths twice a day for *half a minute* each time. These facts I had from the attendants who waited on her during her last illness, and from the people of the house at Freiwaldau, in which she lodged. It is deserving of notice, that in prosecuting my inquiries further, I waited on the chief physician at Freiwaldau, without acquainting whom, it is contrary to usage to hold a post mortem examination, and he expressed much surprise at hearing that there had been one in this case, declaring that it had been held without his privity. It had also been held without the privity of Priessnitz, and, I am informed, without authority from the friends of the deceased. Such an underhand proceeding is assuredly characteristic of the author of a "True Report of the Water Cure," of whose veracity let the foregoing specimens suffice for the present. It is with regret that I feel compelled to make these remarks, especially as regards Dr. Johnson, whose really clever book, notwithstanding its faults, has done much to recommend the blessings of the water cure to the British public.

And now, Messrs. Editors, that I have done with Drs. Johnson and Graham, allow me to take the liberty of addressing a few words of advice and remonstrance to you. Let me request that, before you again venture to "condemn the rashness and unfounded pretensions of Priessnitz, and the folly of those who suffer themselves

to be deluded by them," you will make yourselves more intimately acquainted with the subject on which you hazard an opinion. Do not flatter yourselves into the belief that "the ground on which you have taken up this subject is so strongly confirmed" by the letters of Drs. Johnson and Weeding—(I wish that I could avoid coupling the names)—that you may securely rest upon it. Read attentively the extract which I have given above from Dr. Johnson's work, and let me ask you, what can you glean from that passage confirmatory of your opinions in favour of drugs? And next, pray consult once more, what you characterize as Dr. Johnson's "able" letter, but what, many others, taking the liberty to differ with you, consider as Dr. Johnson's very discreditable letter, and put your fingers on the sentence which makes in support of your views as to the *necessity* of any other remedy than water and *its adjuncts*. Of Dr. Weeding I shall only say that it is to be hoped that, sooner or later, he will suffer the full light of truth to break in upon his mind. Let me here correct an error into which you have fallen. Although many, among whom the writer of this letter avows himself to be one, have the "folly" to imagine that drugs should "hereafter be abandoned," yet no one, not even Priessnitz, cherishes the "absurdity" that the water cure is a "specific for *all* diseases," but only for those that are curable. Permit me also to say, that I do not contend that Priessnitz is without his faults; but, as the good which has been accomplished by Drs. Johnson and Graham is as nothing compared to the benefits which have been conferred on mankind by him, so his faults fade into utter insignificance when contrasted with their criminality. I would also request of you, Messrs. Editors, to read the letter from the British at Græfenberg, published in the *Times*, in March, 1844;—the letter from the Americans and patients of all nations, published in the *New York Tribune*, in October last, and the letter from the British and Americans, which, I presume, will be published, ere you receive this, in the *Times*. You will there have the testimony of persons who, perhaps you will allow, cannot be supposed to have given "an inte-

rested verdict;" and you will then, perhaps, be better enabled to form your opinions as to the character and "pretensions" of Priessnitz, and you will also, probably, be the better judges whether an "English parent" may venture to "trust a daughter in his hands." Hoping that you will excuse the liberty I have taken in offering you advice, and that a sense of justice and impartiality, to which alone I appeal*, will influence you to give insertion to this letter,

I beg to subscribe myself your obedient servant,

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER XXXIX.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq., etc.

[Republished from the Wexford Papers.]

"He is able to cure all diseases by the simple and various applications of water, which medical men declare curable by the aid of drugs."—SMETHURST'S Water Cure.

Græfenberg, March 29, 1845.

MY DEAR RIDGE,—In this letter I purpose bringing down my statement of facts to the 1st January, 1845. It is probable, that on the eve of my departure I shall condense into a concluding letter such occurrences of the present year as may seem worthy of notice.

The first of the cases which I have now to chronicle, I shall give more at length than the others, because it shows how a patient, while suffering constantly from fever, which indeed was critical, and brought on by the cure, can gradually progress until entirely restored to health. The patient suffered for years from dyspepsia, constipation, violent head-aches, and excessive nervous irritability. In following the progress of his restoration

* And appealed in vain.

to health, I shall prefer confining myself as much as possible to his own statement, as extracted from his diary.

He says : " I commenced treatment, 4th July, 1843. Wet sheet and tepid bath in the morning, wet rubbing and hip-bath at noon, the same in the afternoon. On the 6th, had diarrhœa ; on the 9th, constipation returned, ordered to douche daily for two minutes ; 10th, a week here to-day, and what a change already ! I feel braced, and strong, and more cheerful and happy than for many a day ; have left off my flannel, and am now clothed in linen. 13th, Left off tepid bath, and took cold. 29th, On complaining of my constipation to-day, Priessnitz told me to wet the waist umschlag very frequently, and to saw or chop wood, but not to use lavenments. 31st, First appearance of aushlag (water-rash)* round my body ; great improvement in the state of my bowels. August 7th, More regular. 10th, Splitting headache, countenance of a bilious hue to the tips of the ears ; ordered a slight sweating, head-bath and head umschlag (bandage). Bilious fever till the 24th. Treatment : tepid and cold bath, and two abreibungs of five minutes each, with intervals of five minutes, during which I lay in the blanket. On the 24th, well of the fever, and feel much improvement. Have a very troublesome aushlag (rash), which emits a most offensive smell, resembling that of a distempered dog. 31st, A large boil on each leg, between the calf and the ankle ; blotches great and small all over my body, and smell from aushlag worse. September 4th, Fever again ; for the last three or four days, a rash on the face and hands and arms, which, after half an hour's continuance, disappears and re-appears several times a day, has now appeared on other parts of the body ; treatment, three wet sheets and tepid bath. 9th, All right again. 11th, Bowels more regular. 15th, Crisis on legs still discharging ; have also had great aushlag from knees to

* That the water-rash was known to Floyer, we learn from the following passage : " I observed that some hot tempers had a rash produced by bathing, and they were eased of pains thereby." And Dr. Rutty, in his essay, notices the water-boil.

ankles; a third boil burst on left thigh. October 1st, Head baths twice a day, in and out of them for six minutes; umshlags round hands for a considerable time, day and night. Nothing particular during this month. November 1st to 4th, Have felt of late very uneasy and restless, and as if a great fermentation going on within. On the 4th, in hopes of some good effect being produced, joined a pedestrian party to Neisse, and performed the distance, twenty English miles, without the least fatigue. On the 6th returning, had only walking from Nicholasdorff, about nine or ten miles. 8th, Very ill—violent fever and diarrhœa; treatment, two wet sheets and tepid bath morning and evening; diarrhœa continued till the 14th. 22nd to 29th, fever. December 26th, fever for a week; three wet rubbings in the forenoon, four in the evening. Nothing to note during January and February; going on very steadily, with occasional fever, but not sufficiently severe to stop douching. March 1st, having made up my mind to quit the cure, consulted Priessnitz as to the manner of leaving off, preparatory to my departure on the 15th, to which he consented very unwillingly, as he wished me to remain longer. From 11th to 20th, so strong a fever that Priessnitz prevailed on me to give up my intention of leaving; from this to 1st of July, more or less fever, and unable to douche for more than two days in succession. Priessnitz tells me that I am gaining strength, and that the system is purifying itself through the fever. On the 1st of July consulted him again about leaving, and he advised me to stay on. From the 7th of July to the 15th of September, douched daily, and have had very little fever, except occasionally for a day; headaches less frequent and less violent, and, with the consent of Priessnitz, I purpose leaving Græfenberg on the 26th September, (after persevering in the cure for fifteen months) in the full confidence of being in a better state of health than I have been for years, with stomach and system purified. I have also gained another great benefit; I have reformed my habits. From being a lover of wine, I have become a lover of water. In the use of the latter, and in abstinence from the former, I

intend to continue, and to my dying day I shall bless the hour which led me to the acquaintance of Vincent Priessnitz and the water cure." On the 20th of October, this gentleman wrote to a friend at Græfenberg, and in his letter expresses himself as follows: "Every day gives me greater confidence in the efficacy of the cure I have made, and I think its good effects will be permanent." He again wrote, on the 31st of December, more than three months after his departure, and he says:—"For myself, I am able to make a report as favourable as my best friends would desire. I continue quite well, and am as lively as a bird escaped from its cage, and scarcely know how sufficiently to enjoy my restored health. I have greatly surprised my friends; firstly, by dropping in among them, and secondly, by my improved and robust appearance."* I am at liberty to mention this gentleman's name in private to any person desirous of knowing it.

A lady aged forty-two suffered from hæmorrhagical uterine losses, during a period of over four years. Treatment, principally leintuchs and abreibungen; on one occasion as many of the former, extending only from the shoulders to the knees, as fifty during the day; to this was added perfect repose. After cessation, the leintuch twice a day was followed by the cold bath. Sitzbaths are never employed in this disorder.

M., aged about forty-four, case of general nervous weakness, cerebral congestion, bad digestion, obstinate constipation, and incontinence of urine. Obligated to give up his professional duties as a minister of religion; tried all medical means in vain; under the water cure has been perfectly restored and enabled to return to the discharge of his duties—treatment: abreibungen, umschlag, eight to ten glasses of water daily; after eight days, two sitzbaths of 14° Rr., and footbath in addition; umshlags on perinæum and hypogastric region; had many crises on body and thighs, large boils which discharged a good deal—crises being attended by

* I had a letter from him recently, and he continues to enjoy excellent health, as also does his wife, who likewise underwent the treatment.

fever, when the half bath with friction was used ; was injured by degrees to the leintuch and cold bath, and afterwards to the douche.

A gentleman aged forty, hypochondria for many years, in consequence of chronic derangement of bowels ; having lost wife and children, was in a state of mental prostration ; two days after arrival at Græfenberg, after a walk on a very hot day in July, he was struck with rush of blood to the head, lost speech and consciousness, and convulsions and spasmodic movement of the arms ensued. Priessnitz ordered him a bath of from 7° . to 8° ., Rr., with strong friction for half an hour ; he was afterwards packed in a leintuch, in which he became delirious ; he was then put in a bath of 14° . Rr., and rubbed by four men ; symptoms, loss of consciousness, and yet susceptibility on being pinched. Occasionally, affusion on the head caused a slight cry ; great heat in head on cessation of affusion ; pulse began to be felt, though compressed,* eye fixed, conjunctiva inflamed—frictions were continued for two hours, discontinued for half an hour, and commenced again ; in an hour the spasms of the members ceased, the eyes began to move, but without seeing—left in bath till half-past nine, P.M. (put in the bath at half-past four), when he closed his eyes and appeared exhausted ; pulse having resumed its power, though it still often intermitted ; the upper part of the body being very hot, the lower so cold that it could not be warmed all night ; consciousness had not returned in the morning, pulse better, but still frequent : sleep interrupted by groaning ; tried to raise himself but could not, involuntary emission of urine ; whole night wet bandages to head ; at six next morning packed in blankets, sweated and returned to consciousness ; up to this moment patient perfectly unconscious of all that occurred ; after half an hour's sweating rubbed in bath of 15° . Rr., and put to bed, and then ate semmel with milk ; at two awoke covered with perspiration—fresh

* It is a mistake to suppose that Priessnitz never feels the pulse ; he sometimes, though not often, does so, but he continually does what amounts to the same thing—he feels and counts the pulsations of the temporal artery.

ablutions—slept off and on till next morning—pulse regular; consciousness; talked calmly and rationally; pulse and bowels normal; next day, wet sheet and perspiration—bath at 14°; temperature of body still high; only feeling of fatigue, which disappeared after a good night's rest—convalescence and appetite; on the following day crises appeared on legs and arms.

A boy aged seven years was first attacked with croup when six months old, and has since had repeated attacks. For the first attack he was given calomel and ipecacuanha; on other occasions, tartar emetic was administered till vomiting ensued. In proportion to the quantity administered this treatment always left much debility for a couple of days, and the greatest care was taken that the child should not approach an open window, or in any way run the risk of catching cold. Shortly before coming here he was treated, for what appeared to be a serious attack, by homeopathic medicine, administered every half hour for several successive hours. The attack which occurred here was preceded by cold in the head, and hoarseness for two days.

When the croup set in, he was rubbed with cold water between the shoulders and on the chest; then taken out of bed and rubbed in a wet sheet, particularly on the legs. He was then dried, and heating bandages put round his waist, and a large wet handkerchief with a dry one over it, put round the neck and shoulders. He was then put into bed, all the violent symptoms having subsided. In ten minutes the same treatment was repeated, after which all symptoms of croup disappeared. In the course of the day he had a bath, and although the weather was cold, he walked out twice for some time. A younger brother had an attack of croup subsequently, and was instantly relieved by similar treatment once applied. These two cases occurred in December, and neither of the children have since had any return of the disorder.

Mr. ——— having been severely frost bitten, was cured by wearing a heating bandage on the part afflicted, and by rubbing it often with lukewarm water. When taken

in time, the remedy is friction with snow. This case recalls to my mind an anecdote of the Baroness A——, which, shortly after my arrival, I was told by her husband. When the baroness arrived, Priessnitz looked at her hand, and said, "Oh! your hand has been once frost bitten." "Yes," she replied, "Fifteen years ago, but it was cured at the time." "It was not cured," answered Priessnitz, "only now will it be cured;" and in the course of the cure a rash appeared on the hand which carried off the appearance on the skin. I don't know the particulars of this lady's case, except that she was restored to health.

An adult was cured of worms in three or four months, by the packing wet sheets, cold baths, wet rubbings, and hip baths.

Miss——— had small pox; the symptoms at first were much fever with headache, general debility, and pains in the limbs. For the first two days she took three wet sheets, followed by a quarter of an hour's tepid bath, in which cold water was poured on the head—for the next two days, she had three wet sheets, followed by an hour's tepid bath. On the fifth day, she had three wet sheets in succession, followed by an hour's bath. On the sixth day the eruption began to appear, and she had three wet sheets, followed each by half an hour's bath. For the following eight days she had three wet sheets, followed by a quarter of an hour's bath. All the baths were tepid. After the eruption began to discharge, wet bandages were applied to the face while in the wet sheet. The eruption now began to scale and fall off, and at the end of four weeks there only remained some slight marks, which have since disappeared.

Count —— was confined to bed with small pox for a fortnight. Miss —— was confined for three weeks with the same disorder. Three children, a boy of two years old, a girl of eight years old, and a girl of thirteen, were each confined for a fortnight; these five patients had the wet sheet and tepid bath varied in duration according to circumstances. The children had also wet bandages applied to the face. The girl of thirteen is the

only one of them marked, and that but very slightly. I have not known a single case prove fatal under the water treatment.

Since I last wrote to you detailing cases, several paragraphs have appeared in the English papers noticing the continued ravages of small-pox ; and with reference to another dread scourge, an article has appeared in the *Britannia*, from which I extract the following passage—“The typhus fever is now very prevalent in the poorer districts of Liverpool. Some ministers have offered up prayers that its progress may be arrested.” Reliance on the goodness of the Creator is a virtue on the part of the creature ; but I cannot help thinking that the petitions offered up in the churches of Liverpool would have been much more efficacious if that remedy, whose efficacy has been so fully proved, and which He in his goodness has given to man, had been employed by the petitioners. Let no one affect to blame the expression of this opinion. The faith of the Christian and that of the Turk is or should be widely different. The latter may smear himself with honey and sit in the sun, and, when the wasps sting him, content himself with saying “God is good :” — the former professes to believe, that a departure from the laws of nature which are the laws of God, brings its own punishment, and that except for some great purpose, the Almighty works his will through human agency. Surely it is not consistent with this creed to neglect the means which the Great Being places at our disposal, and at the same time to expect that he will reverse in our favour the operation of those laws which have emanated from his wisdom.

In 1844 there were here 1080 patients, amongst whom there were five deaths, with the particulars of two of which you are already acquainted. I shall now state such particulars respecting the other three as have come to my knowledge.

Mr. ———, aged 23, suffered for years from a white swelling of the left knee, for which, previous to his coming to Græfenberg, amputation had been proposed as the only remedy. His case excited much interest here, both among his acquaintance and the medical visitors.

His medical attendants in England had pronounced the joint to be ankylosed, but to his great joy he was able to move it for some short time previous to the unhappy accident which terminated in death. The swelling had also been considerably reduced. In crossing a plank his foot slipped, and he fell on the back of his head, but unhappily he assiduously concealed all knowledge of the accident from both his family and Priessnitz. For about a fortnight he suffered from a dull pain at the back of the head, attended with much feverishness and sleepiness. In crossing his room he suddenly fell insensible on the floor; and it was only on his recovery from this fit that Priessnitz was made acquainted with the cause, but too late to save the patient's life. Thus he died in consequence of an accident from the effects of which, had he made a timely confession, he, in all probability, would have sustained only a temporary injury. Priessnitz was much affected at this melancholy occurrence. A *post mortem* examination was held by two surgeons. Their report states that he died in consequence of the injury received from the fall. The following appearances presented themselves:—"At the back of the head there was observable an œdematous swelling about the size of a dollar, from which exuded a serous fluid wetting the skin and hair. On this part the scalp adhered so firmly to the skull as to be separated with difficulty by the knife. A still stronger adhesion existed between the dura mater and the skull. The former was likewise found to be congested with blood, and thickened to the depth of two lines for the breadth of an inch from the occiput to the tuberosity below. The pia mater, and the vessels between the convolutions of the brain appeared strongly injected. In the transverse blood-vessels was contained much dark red blood, and in the right sinus about half a teaspoonful of bloody serum had exuded."

Madame ——— caught cold shortly after her confinement. Inflammation of the womb ensued—induration next followed—to this succeeded cancer, of which she died. In every stage of her illness, previous to her coming to Græfenberg, she was under medical treatment. All the approved remedies, including, of course, mercurial

ointments, were tried in vain. At the time of her decease she was actually under salivation from the effects of her former treatment. This is a short tale and soon told, but it suggests many reflections for which we have no space. One, however, is so obvious that it must present itself to the mind of every one at all acquainted with the efficacy of water; and who, thus informed, but must join me in deploring, that, aggravated by ignorance, or something worse, so trivial a cause should eventuate in so sad a catastrophe? Of the remaining case of death I am not able to state any particulars, except that I have heard that the invalid came to Freiwaldau in a very precarious state.

It is probable that the number of patients who come yearly to Græfenberg would be still larger, but for the great increase of water establishments, not only in Germany, but in other countries; and also, but for an edict of the Prussian government, that persons, filling any office under the crown, who are desirous of undergoing the water cure, shall go to some establishment in their own country, or else forfeit their salaries while absent from their duties. Some Prussian regimental surgeons also, with a mean jealousy of Priessnitz, refuse sick certificates, without which an officer cannot obtain the necessary leave, unless the patient promises not to go to Græfenberg. An instance in point occurred not long since, when the officer, who was desirous of placing himself under Priessnitz, was refused his certificate until he consented to select another establishment.

In laying before the society the facts contained in these letters, it has been my desire to enable the members to form as just and satisfactory conclusions as it is possible for them to arrive at from testimony and not from personal observation; and as it would be impossible within any reasonable limits to notice all the cases with which I am acquainted, I have deemed it but fair, both to my readers and to the water cure, to confine myself chiefly to such cases as have arrived at a termination, either by a restoration to health or by death. To guard against misconception I should here observe that, although I have given all the cases which have terminated fatally,

yet, it is not to be supposed that I can have given more than a small proportion of those which have ended in a cure. A death is a matter of public notoriety, whether it takes place in the establishment or in private lodgings; not so with a cure. On his restoration the late patient does not go about proclaiming the result to every body he meets. Although not so great as formerly, when the recollection of Dr. Johnson's conduct in publishing the names of parties without their permission was fresh in the minds of the patients, still there are many difficulties in the way of obtaining extended information. It is impossible to make the acquaintance of every patient—many persons come and go of whom one knows nothing except that their names appear in the registry, and while some make no scruple of communicating their respective cases to any casual acquaintance, there are others who will not disclose theirs even to their intimates;—many patients, of whose cases I am entirely ignorant, have assured me when taking their leaves, that they were perfectly cured, and doubtless many others unknown to me must have been likewise restored to health. Here it should be remembered, as I have had occasion to intimate in a former letter, that many when far advanced in the cure, depart in order to perfect it at home. Here I would likewise briefly observe, that the water treatment is considered ineffectual in the following diseases; epilepsy, and, except in the earlier stages, consumption, paralysis, apoplexy, various forms of heart disease, cancer, dropsy, cases of structural degeneration, and also all cases where the power of reaction is lost to the patient: and that in some diseases of the heart or brain the more stimulating appliances, the douche or sweating process, may be absolutely dangerous. That, when its properties are still better understood, water may be rendered more effective, and its application extended to cases where it is now considered powerless, or even injurious, I think highly probable. When it has achieved so much, I cannot conceive why it should not be made to achieve still more. Priessnitz has built up his system by degrees to its present high state; but it has not yet, I believe, arrived at full perfection. Why should not

his increasing experience add yet to its efficacy; and when organic chemistry is still better understood,—when a clearer light is thrown on physiology,—when a more certain pathology obtains, then with fewer prejudices and errors to encumber the understanding, and the experience of the past to serve as a beacon or a guide, why should not others also improve a system less complex than the one it is destined to replace?

In stating my facts, I have endeavoured, while omitting as few interesting details as possible, to avoid entering into such, however important, as might be considered offensive to a sense of propriety. It is possible, however, that I may have occasionally overstepped the line which I had marked out for my guidance; but the candid, who, I trust, are by far the greater portion of my readers, will make due allowance for any such deviations in consideration of the delicate and onerous duty I have had to discharge; and to the over-fastidious or hypocritical, if such there be, I deign to offer no apology. I shall only recommend the over-fastidious to meditate on the following lines from a female pen: “It is not the nature of things that constitutes indecency, neither the words, nor even the ideas. It is the INTENTION of those who speak, or the DEPRAVITY of those who hear.” For the hypocritical, I have another passage, at the author of which I shall leave them to guess,—“To the pure all things are pure.” If I have had occasion sometimes to speak harshly of a system, it was because my convictions would not allow me to remain silent; and if I have also felt constrained to express myself harshly towards individuals, you, at least will do me the justice to believe, that I have obeyed the necessity with regret.

Ever, my dear Ridge, your very faithful,

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER XL.

*To the Editor of Galignani's Messenger.**

Græfenberg, June 7th, 1845.

SIR,—Desirous of bearing our testimony to the value of hydropathy, the merits of which cannot be too widely circulated nor too highly appreciated, we beg the insertion of the accompanying statement (which appeared in the *New York Tribune*, 30th November, 1844), in your extensively circulated journal, conceiving it to be a subject of great interest, not only to invalids, but to the general reader. We are, sir, your obedient servants,

J. H. O. Moore, Capt., H.B.M.S.
 Thomas Smithett, M.A., Cambridge.
 John Gibbs, Ireland.
 A. F. Webster, Lieut. R N.
 C. H. Meeker, U.S.
 William Murray, Ireland.
 R. T. Claridge, Capt.
 J. L. Locke, U.S.
 T. F. Sherlock, Ireland.

* This letter was not published, but its receipt was acknowledged and noticed as follows :—

“THE WATER CURE.—We have received a letter from Græfenberg upon this interesting and truly valuable discovery, which bears the signature of the following English and American gentlemen :—Captain J. H. O. Moore ; Th. Smithett, M. A. Camb ; John Gibbs ; Lieut. A. F. Webster ; C. H. Meeker ; W. Murray ; Captain R. T. Claridge ; J. L. Locke ; and T. F. Sherlock. These gentlemen express themselves desirous thus to bear public testimony to the virtues of the system of Priessnitz, and we are further assured that this wonderful curative discovery, which has rendered the little town of Græfenberg celebrated throughout Europe, continues this season to be more followed, and, if possible, more successful, than in any former year. Accompanying this letter is a document from a New York Journal, for which, owing to its extreme length, we regret that we cannot afford space, bearing still further testimony to the value of this wonderful system, and having annexed to it upwards of one hundred highly respectable signatures. The public and voluntary testimony thus borne to the merits of the water cure,

LETTER XLI.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq.

"This new system of treatment more than doubles our power of doing good."—DR. HERBERT MAYO.

Græfenberg, 23rd June, 1845.

MY DEAR RIDGE,—Perceiving by the papers that the cholera has made its re-appearance in England, it has occurred to me that it would be well to state that I have learned that, when it visited this country, Priessnitz treated over twenty patients, and did not lose a single one. On the appearance of the first symptoms of this disease, which are generally those of languor and chilliness, the patient should be treated with *abreibungen*,—that is, the rubbings with the wet sheet. When the more alarming symptoms appear, enemata of cold water may be administered; the patient should drink freely of the same liquid, and he should be placed as quickly as possible in a cold hip bath, or half bath, in which the abdomen should be well rubbed. After the bath, the patient should be well wrapped in blankets, and slight perspiration encouraged. When cramps in the extremities take place, the patient may be laid on the bed, and the parts affected should be rubbed with wet hands. The heating bandage round the body may also be found serviceable. These general directions are only meant for those who already know something of the principles and practice of the treatment by water; those who are totally unacquainted with both should be cautious of undertaking any responsibility. "In Asiatic cholera," says

while it proves that the celebrity of Priessnitz is not confined to this side the Atlantic, also shows that the tribute thus paid is only a just homage to truth, as the document contains detailed accounts of cures effected by the system—some of which seem almost miraculous—and which really entitle the founder to be ranked as one of the benefactors of mankind."

Dr. Combe, "almost all the fluids of the body are carried off by this channel (the mucous coat of the stomach and bowels), leaving the blood too *thick* in consistence to circulate longer through the smaller vessels."

I shall take this opportunity of making a few remarks on an article, which, though it appeared some months since, I have only recently seen, in a number of the *Dublin Medical Press*, and which is an attempt at a review of *one* of these letters. Had the writer of that article confined himself to the very easy task of lavishing abusive epithets on me, I should not have condescended to notice his ravings; but as, not content with "drawing on his memory for his wit," he has likewise "drawn on his imagination for his facts," I feel bound once more to expose the paltry artifices which an advocate of the "fallacies of the faculty" does not scruple to employ. The very first sentence of his article contains a falsehood. He asserts that my letter, which does not once mention Dr. Graham's name, and which was written before I had even heard of Dr. Graham's work, was "a reply or defence to the charges therein contained." The letter in which I have replied, not indirectly, but directly, to Dr. Graham's calumnious assertions, should convey a lesson to the writer for the *Medical Press*, from which he should learn the prudence of at least clothing his future inventions in the semblance of truth. But the pervading falsehood of the article—false in itself, and doubly false, inasmuch as he pretends to have found it in my letter—is the one which especially demands exposure. He ushers in this falsehood by affecting to warn females of the "dangers to which they are exposed at Græfenberg," and he then asserts that the cases which I have enumerated "tell pretty plainly that persons leaving their old complaints behind them at Græfenberg, may possibly carry new ones away with them." And how does he draw this inference? Why, from an invention of his own, that the "sheets, and baths, and rubbing cloths" in use here are common property! There is an invention worthy of your true pen-and-ink assassin, who cares not how deeply he lies in his eagerness to lie away the reputation of whomsoever or whatsoever he desires to injure. One

could scarcely imagine that it would be necessary to state that each patient at Græfenberg has his own "sheets" and "rubbing cloths," and also all the smaller vessels for bathing purposes. As to the larger plunge baths, there are ten of them in the group of houses comprising the establishment, exclusive of the number in the neighbouring cottages, each of which has at least one. Through each of these one of the mountain streams is continually flowing, except for a short period, three times a day, when the stream is turned for the purpose of scouring out the bath. Neither is it true, as the writer for the *Medical Press* would have us believe, that females use the same baths as the men. Ladies have plunge baths and douches, exclusively for their own use. To what contemptible shifts the opponents of the water cure have recourse! I shall only notice one more passage, in the article in the *Medical Press*, which is curious as betraying the writer's estimate of the members of that profession whose advocate he is. Adopting the editorial "we," he says, "We submit these matters from time to time to our readers, to enable them to meet the senseless efforts of simpletons to judge and argue respecting such things, and to prevent medical men from giving way to the silly clamours of feeble minded and uneducated persons respecting subjects they cannot by any possibility understand." How much indebted medical gentlemen must be for this writer's kind concern lest *they* should be unable, from their own resources, and without the aid of his falsehoods, to "meet the senseless efforts of simpletons," and lest *they* should "give way to the silly clamours of feeble minded and uneducated persons!" Could the bitterest enemy of the medical profession hurl at its members a keener sarcasm? I would recommend the writer for the *Medical Press* to abstain for the future from his "senseless efforts" against truth, and from his "silly clamours" respecting a subject which *he* "cannot by any possibility understand." Ne sutor ultra crepidam. Let *him* confine himself for the future to that for which he seems best qualified, namely, stringing together abusive epithets. Abuse from such a source is a distinction to be highly prized. From the first moment

when I took up my pen in favour of the water cure, I felt assured that, unless my letters failed to attract notice, I should be honoured with my portion of those revilings which had been heaped even on the great reformer of the healing art, and I now accept the share that has been accorded to me, in proof that my humble efforts for the advancement of truth have not been wholly ineffectual.

As I have acknowledged my obligations to the *Medical Press*, perhaps the writer of a note—not of note—to the *Wexford Independent* might justly complain of partiality and neglect on my part if I passed him by without notice. I regret that I have mislaid the article to which I allude, as I should like to quote the exact words which claim my attention. However, they are to the effect, that the writer is influenced by a praiseworthy anxiety lest certain medical terms which I have employed should injure the morals, not only of females, but of young men! With a thorough contempt for reasoning, this writer offers no argument in support of his apprehensions. I am not able to imagine how the youth of either sex can be corrupted by meeting with dry scientific terms, which do not describe any thing, and which probably are not understood. I should rather be inclined to suppose that the terms which I have employed would be more likely, if understood, to tend to the preservation than to the detriment of morals, inasmuch as they point to the punishment awaiting transgression. But, if this writer be serious in his apprehensions—if he really believes that acquaintance with mere scientific terms is indeed injurious to morals—then he must, of necessity, regard the tens of thousands of “young” medical students, and, by consequence, the tens of thousands of *adult* medical practitioners, as the most debauched and profligate race in existence. We learn at school that, “Just as the twig is bent, the tree’s inclined;” and we are taught that the “boy is father to the man.” Nevertheless, I have no doubt that this writer *professes* to regard those men as most respectable characters, and that he would not scruple to permit his wife, or sister, or daughter, or other female relative, to admit them to that

unparalleled intimacy which is accorded only to gentlemen of the medical profession. But when I find this would-be guardian of the public morals neglecting to remonstrate against the publication of such advertisements as those recommending the perusal of *Manhood*, *The Silent Friend*, and *Manly Vigour*, and other similar works, and praising the virtues of "Perry's Pills," and the "Cordial Balm of Syriacum," I must class him amongst those hypocrites, respecting whom, half suspecting their existence, I have already, in a former letter, expressed my sentiments. I believe that I have now acquitted myself of all obligations to my kind and candid critics. If I have omitted any, I beg that they will attribute the omission either to my not having as yet heard of them, or, perchance, to the accident of forgetfulness.

I am, my dear Ridge, ever yours,

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER XLII.

To the Editor of Galignani's Messenger.

[Republished from *Galignani's Messenger*.]

Græfenberg, July 9, 1845.

On his return from the East, where he has been lately travelling, Lord Anson, together with Count Nicolay, Count Szirmay, Count de Beaufort, and Baron Beckmann, gave an interesting entertainment to the fashionables at Græfenberg and Freiwaldau, in Silesia, among whom were her serene highness the Duchess of Hanault Cöthen, the Prince and Princess Gotscharkow, Princesses Oginska and Sappieha, the Earl and Countess of Lichfield, Lady Harriet Anson, Lady D'Arley and family, General Sir Henry Bethune and family, the Hon. Hanbury Tracey, Baron Tindal, the Count and Countess Czacka, Count and Countess Thurn, the Count and Countess Morawski,

Countess de Burghes, Countess Wratislau, Baron Radritz, Captains Moore, Blair, and Claridge, Miss Claridge, Mr. and Miss Parker, Mrs. Macdowel, Miss Walker, Messrs. Smithett, Gibbs, etc. The fête commenced at five o'clock in the afternoon by a pigeon match, between Lord Lichfield, Lord Anson, Counts Szirmay, D'Arblay, de Beaufort, de Gouvello, Nicolay, Zielinski, and Olizar, Barons de Beckmann, de Lotzbeck, and de Smitburg, in a meadow in the neighbourhood, where a natural amphitheatre was enclosed by an artificial plantation, which sheltered the ladies from the heat of the sun. There were five prizes to be delivered to the best shots by the hand of the fair. The first was delivered to Lord Anson, by the Grand Duchess of Hanault Cöthen; the second to Count Szidlrnay, by the Countess of Lichfield; the third to Count d'Arblay, by the Princess Oginska; the fourth to Baron de Beckmann, by the Countess Czacka; the fifth to Baron Lilien, by the Countess Olizar. In a neighbouring field, a maypole, decorated with flags and prizes, was exciting the cupidity and efforts of the rustics, to the great amusement of a crowd of spectators. The company next proceeded to the summit of the Eisenberg, amongst whose shrubbery an arena, tastefully decorated with garlands, evergreens, and flags of all nations, offered a pleasing invitation to the votaries of Terpsichore. Polkas, mazurkas, and waltzes, preceded an elegant repast; which, but for the absence of wines (altogether prohibited in this region), would have pleased an epicure. Dancing was now resumed; but a change had come o'er the scene, the soft twilight of evening being succeeded by a brilliant illumination, which converted the spot into a fairy grove. On the termination of the evening's amusements, the variegated lamps that had been scattered around were set in motion as if by magic to conduct the visitors to the town below. Preceded by a band of music, and thus lighted on their way, the party descended the tortuous windings of the hill. The *cortége*, as seen through the different vistas, had a very picturesque and novel effect."

LETTER XLIII.

To the Editor of the London Morning Post.

[Republished from the *Morning Post*.]

Græfenberg, Oct. 20, 1845.

SIR—At the desire of many of the British here, I take the liberty to request that, if possible, you will spare a corner in your columns for the following communication.

I have the honour to be, your obedient servant,

JOHN GIBBS.

On Saturday, the 4th instant, the Archduke Franz Carl, heir presumptive to the throne of Austria, attended by a numerous suite, arrived at Græfenberg, when he was immediately waited upon by a deputation of the following noblemen and gentlemen, patients of Priessnitz:—The Earl of Lichfield, Don J. M. Gutierrez Estrada, late minister from Mexico to the Court of St. James, Count Czacki, grand marshal of Poland, Baron Lotzbeck, Chamberlain to the King of Bavaria, Count Schaffgotsch, Chamberlain to the King of Prussia, Captain Moore, and Monsieur La Moile, who presented an address, numerously signed by persons of consideration, from almost every civilized nation in the world, expressive of their confidence in hydropathy and its distinguished founder. In the evening the pretty little town of Freiwaldau, the surrounding mountains, the road up to Græfenberg, and the establishment were illuminated. His Highness attended a ball at the establishment, the spacious saloon of which presented a blaze of light. His entrance was greeted by an enthusiastic welcome. Struck with the novelty and brilliancy of the scene, and the healthy and joyous appearance of the crowd around him, his Highness expressed himself astonished to find so extensive an undertaking in this retired part of the Austrian dominions. On enquiring for the patients, he was answered: "You are now surrounded by hundreds of them." Amongst the guests of distinction invited to meet his

Highness, were the Grand Duchess of Hanault Cöthen, and the Prince Bishop of Breslau, both of whom spoke of Priessnitz in the most enthusiastic terms, and declared that to him they were indebted for their lives.

The Rev. Theobald Mathew has written a highly complimentary letter to Priessnitz, enclosing a temperance medal, of which he begs the latter's acceptance, as a trifling mark of the high estimation in which he holds him.

LETTER XLIV.

To Dr. F. R. Lees, the Editor of the "Truth-Seeker."

[Republished from the *Truth-Seeker*.]

"Magna est veritas et prevalebit."

Græfenberg, Oct. 28th, 1845.

MY DEAR SIR—As so many testimonies in favour of hydropathy have been published, I have forborne for some time to write to you on the subject, but resume my pen, on the present occasion, to furnish you with copies of two interesting documents, which may now be considered part of the history of the water cure, and to request that you will be kind enough to give them a place in the columns of the 'Truth-Seeker.' One is an address presented to the Archduke Franz Carl, the heir presumptive to the Austrian throne, and is perhaps the first address ever presented to a prince of the house of Austria; and the other is a letter from the very Rev. Theobald Mathew, enclosing a temperance medal to Priessnitz. The Archduke having arrived on the 4th inst., the pretty little town of Freiwaldau was brilliantly illuminated in the evening, and his Highness attended a ball given on the occasion in the large saloon at Græfenberg. He expressed himself highly pleased at the recep-

tion of the address, and with all he saw and heard of the hydropathic system. Amongst the principal guests invited to meet him at the ball, were the Grand Duchess of Hanault Cöthen, and the Prince Bishop of Breslau ; both spoke in the warmest terms of Priessnitz, to whom they declared themselves indebted for their lives. The address would have been much more numerously signed, but that it was hastily got up, and that the Austrian officers were restrained by etiquette from signing it. Priessnitz is exceedingly gratified at the very handsome and appropriate compliment which Father Mathew has paid him. This act of Father Mathew's has been already attended with good, as it has brought up the subject of temperance, and led to my being requested to draw up the pledge of total abstinence, which was instantly signed by two English, one Irish, one Scotch, and two American gentlemen, and I have every hope that their example will be followed by others. With best regards, ever,
my dear sir, your very faithful,

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER XLV.

Translation of an Address presented to the Archduke Franz Carl, at Græfenberg, October 4th, 1845.

[Republished from the *Truth-Seeker*, the Wexford and other Papers, English and American.]

SIR—We, the undersigned natives of divers countries, enjoying here the hospitality and protection of a paternal government, seize, with respectful haste, the propitious occasion which the presence of your Imperial and Royal Highness offers at this place, to lay at your feet our profound homage. How could we fail to give utterance to the sentiments of gratitude which animate us towards your illustrious house for the favour it has deigned to grant for the development of a system which has pro-

duced such happy results on ourselves, on those who surround us, and on so many other invalids who have preceded us. The protection of government having been extended to the establishment at Græfenberg and Freiwaldau, your Imperial and Royal Highness has judged it not unworthy to see with your own eyes the marvellous effects of a treatment, which, spreading itself more and more, will preserve the human race from the double curse of intemperance and disease. For this condescension we tender our thanks. In all times and in all countries the use of cold water, as a curative means, has been tried. The great physicians of past ages had preconceived it. Travellers relate singular cures effected by its means amongst even the most savage people. In recent times we see from time to time its light feebly penetrate through the darkness of prejudice and routine, and reveal the neglected virtues of this simple gift of nature; but those facts had remained isolated; the germs of such a noble discovery have hitherto always failed. It was reserved to the soil of Austria to give birth to the immortal author of a system which can already rank amongst the number of the sciences. Priessnitz, a simple peasant, still young, in a poor and retired hamlet, notwithstanding all obstacles, obeying only his genius, marched, with rapid step, towards the destiny of great men. Relying solely on observation and experience, he realized truths which the science of ages could not reveal. The fame of his marvellous cures resounded at first in the surrounding neighbourhood; then his star, always rising, and never vacillating, ended by shining throughout the world. Invalids from the most remote countries hastened in numbers to submit themselves implicitly to his directions. Many disciples of medicine even hesitated not to throw aside their prejudices, and enlighten themselves with his discoveries. His cottage became the refuge of suffering humanity, his hamlet the seat of a new doctrine; still, far from being intoxicated with so much success, and so much unexpected fortune, Priessnitz has in no way changed his simplicity and primitive manners. His greatest ambition is the accomplishment of the laborious task which he has imposed

on himself, his sweetest recompense the affection and veneration of all those who surround him. We do not know which to admire most, the rare genius of this gifted man, or the firmness and modesty which characterize him. Guided by gratitude and the admiration we feel for the hydropathic system and its celebrated originator, we have ventured to present this humble address to your Imperial and Royal Highness, not doubting that the visit of such an enlightened prince will be a good augury for the further development and extension of this healing system, from which we have experienced such happy effects.

Lichfield (Earl of).	J. B. y Ribas, Spain.
Le Ct. Czacki, Poland.	Le Ct. E. Lubinski, Poland.
Le Ct. Olizar, do.	V. Debschitz, Prussia.
Le Ct. Szotdowski, do.	P. Hosowitz, Odessa.
Le Ct. Gradzinsky, do.	O. Kodolitch, Gratz.
Morawski, do.	L. Des Arts, Hamburg.
Baron Tindal, Holland.	Le Court J. Schaffgotsch, Breslau.
Le Ct. G. de Nicolay, France.	V. Wroehem, Prussia.
Le Ct. R. de Nicolay, do.	J. Hailes, Major, England.
F. La Moile, do.	D. Ranawski, Poland.
Marie, Princess Oginska, Poland.	W. S. Ellis, London.
J. de Courcey Laffan, Bart., M.D., England.	J. D'Erlam, England.
Baron A. de Lotzbeck, Bavaria.	J. Marsden, M.D. do.
Don J. M. Gutierrez Estrada, Mexico.	P. Frauerstadt, Prussia.
L'Abbe Murat, France.	C. Ganahl, Innsbruck.
Le Ct. Zielinski, Poland.	T. Dumba, Greece.
Le Chevalier H. Malizewski, Poland.	Prenner, Saxony.
Lady D'Arley, England.	Aphenbar, Prussia.
Maitland D'Ashwood, do.	A. Mülher, Stutgard.
Le Ct. de Gouvello, France.	K. Biernacki, Posen.
A. B. Mills, Scotland.	Thalheim, Prussia.
J. Moore, Capt., England.	Behrens, Hamburg.
	A. Mackenzie, Capt., England.
	Mezenthin, Prussian Major.
	Delmer, Hamburg.

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| F. Doormann, Hamburg. | J. H. Meyer, Hamburg. |
| Le Ct. Bassany, Hungary. | L. Parker, England. |
| E. E. Lindo, Hamburg. | T. H. v. Schultz. |
| Diedo, Posen. | A. de Zayas, Africa. |
| Grattmann, Prague. | Le Ct. Tolstoi, Russia. |
| P. Meyer, Hamburg. | Y. Podgorsiski (the Rev.), |
| S. Sinclair, M.D., Eng- | Trieste. |
| land. | Countess Friedenthal. |
| Przibilski, Collegien Rath, | F. Bazan, M.D., Spain. |
| Russia. | M. Bazan Albogardo, do. |
| Carl Kupfer, Wurzburg. | E. Hoelzmann, Hamburg. |
| John Gibbs, Ireland. | F. Kehrens, Hungary. |
| C. Anderson, Ohio, U. S. | W. Bridgeman, England. |
| America. | W. Murray, Ireland. |
| R. V. de Basle, Switzer- | C. Kock, Dresden. |
| land. | L. Lagier (Rev.), Switzer- |
| C. Meeker, U. S. America. | land. |
| T. Sherlock, Ireland. | H. Tessdorff, Hamburg. |
| August Agricola, Berlin. | C. B. Elliott, M.A., F.R.S. |
| Kurnatowski, Poland. | England. |
| L. Garski, do. | R. T. Claridge, Capt. do. |
| Illmer, Beslau. | J. Hamilton, Ireland. |
| T. Maghierro, Wallachia. | A. Blair, Capt., England. |
| G. Zisso, do. | P. Mejanel, D.D., France. |
| E. Kaiser, Munich. | Kupuseinski, M.D., Po- |
| E. Kaszner, Frankenstein. | land. |
| F. Kosciesca de Zamorden, | La Princesse Sapieha. |
| Poland. | La Countesse S. Mycieffis, |
| J. Piechowski, Moscow. | Poland. |
| N. Matecki, Posen. | Madame De Zwowitich, |
| T. Levy, Dresden. | ditto. |
| F. Fehland, Hamburg. | E. Whyte, England. |
| A. Leonhards, Petersburg. | Le Ct. Majinski, Poland. |
| H. Meyer, Hamburg. | La Baronne de Wilkins. |
| A. Niemann, Leipsic. | La Baronne de Bergh. |
| Severin, Hamburg. | A. Nowage, Breslau. |
| G. Pietsch, do. | Mrs. Col. Lane, India. |
| Salaman Porges. | Madame de Lydow. |
| T. Wyganowski. | Prussimalei, Polak. |
| Baron N. de Hopken, | W. D'Arley, England. |
| Stockholm. | W. Rogers, M.A., do. |

Goerlitz, Breslau.
 Dr. Klee, Posen.
 Chizanowski, Poland.
 Dobzebewski.

Mrs. M'Dowel, England.
 Miss Walker, do.
 C. B. Lane, C.B., Lieut.-
 Col., Bengal Army.

LETTER XLVI.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq., &c.

[Republished from the Wexford Papers.]

Græfenberg, Oct. 23rd, 1845.

MY DEAR RIDGE—When I last wrote, I did not anticipate that I should have occasion to write to you so soon again; but I cannot lose a moment in acquainting you with a circumstance which has just occurred. One great and good man has just paid an appropriate and well-merited compliment to another. Our venerated friend, Father Mathew, has sent Priessnitz a temperance medal enclosed in a letter of which I forward you a copy. This, as I have said, is an appropriate compliment from the former of these celebrated men to the latter, from the great moral reformer to the great physical reformer of the age. It is deserving of notice that ere either of these reformers had, perhaps, even heard of the other's name, each should have adopted as his instrument the same element—that element which ages ago had been selected as typical of man's regeneration. While Priessnitz numbers such a man as Mathew amongst his friends, he may well afford to disregard the calumnies of his enemies.

Ever, my dear Ridge, sincerely yours,

JOHN GIBBS.

Cork, Sept. 25th, 1845.

MY DEAR MR. PRIESSNITZ—Though this is the first time I have had the honour of writing to you, I look upon you as an old and much loved friend. This feeling

has encouraged me to address you as such, and to solicit a favour. You have proved yourself the benefactor of the human family, and have much promoted the sacred cause of Total Abstinence. As a trifling mark of the high estimation in which I hold you, I presume to present the enclosed Temperance Medal.* Condescend to accept it, and to wear it, and you will confer a deep obligation on,

With profound respect, dear Mr. Priessnitz,

Your devoted friend,

THEOBALD MATHEW.

LETTER XLVII.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq.

“Experience, to which Science is but a handmaid.”—JAMES.

Græfenberg, Jan. 6th, 1846.

MY DEAR RIDGE—It has been suggested to me, that this correspondence would be incomplete unless I took some notice of the theory of the water cure. It would be impossible within the compass of a letter to go into any lengthened argument on the subject. I shall, therefore, only endeavour to sum up, as briefly as possible, what I conceive to be the *received* theory of this new science.† But in doing so it will be necessary to take a

* Since my departure from Græfenberg, Priessnitz has been presented with another medal, as appears from the following extract from a private letter:—“The leading event of this summer is undoubtedly the presentation to Priessnitz of a medal from the emperor. The governor of Troppau presented it on the 7th of July (1846), and Priessnitz gave a splendid ball in the evening. There were seven or eight hundred present,” &c. Another letter states it to be a gold medal, and terms it a “verdienst medaille.”

† See the *Dangers of the Water Cure*, by Drs. J. Wilson and J. M. Gully; *Hydrophathy*, by Dr. Edward Johnson; the *Philosophy of the Water Cure*, by Dr. J. Balbirnie; the *Water Cure in Chronic Disease*, by Dr. Gully; and *Hydrophathy*, by Dr. Weiss.

glance at those three states which are comprehended under the terms life, health, and disease. Without a clear perception of the essential conditions of those three states, we can only guess at how the restoration from a state of disease to a state of health is effected in the animal organism; and in so far as we are deficient in this knowledge, in so far, likewise, must any theory of the healing art be but a system of guesswork. We are told by Liebig, that the chief conditions of animal life are, "firstly, what is commonly called nourishment; and, secondly, the continual absorption of oxygen from the atmosphere." We are also told by him that, "that condition of the body which is called *health* includes the conception of an equilibrium among all the causes of waste and supply, and thus animal life is recognised as the mutual action of both; and appears as an alternating destruction and restoration of the state of equilibrium:" and we have it on the same authority, that "*disease* occurs when the sum of vital force, which tends to neutralize all causes of disturbance, (in other words, when the resistance offered by the vital force,) is weaker than the acting cause of disturbance:" and, again, "to the observer the action of a cause of disease exhibits itself in the disturbance of the proportion between waste and supply which is proper to each period of life. In medicine, every abnormal condition of supply, or of waste, in all parts, or in a single part, of the body, is called disease." And, further, that "a diseased condition, once established in any part of the body, cannot be made to disappear by the chemical action of a remedy;" and that "in the animal organism we are acquainted with only one cause of motion; and this is the same cause which determines the growth of living tissues, and gives them the power of resistance to external agencies; it is the vital force:" and that "*all vital activity arises from the mutual action of the oxygen of the atmosphere and the elements of the food;*" and that "a complete *cure* of the original disease occurs, when the external action and resistance in the diseased part are brought into equilibrium." Thus, then, the chief conditions of animal *life* are waste and supply, and an equi-

librium between the causes of waste and supply is essential to *health*, and any disturbance of that equilibrium is a cause of *disease*, and the restoration of that equilibrium is a restoration to health, and that restoration can only be effected by the vital force.

Having arrived at these truths we are now the better enabled to enter upon the question of the remedial agency of water, and, in doing so, let us first have recourse again to Liebig. He says, "the restoration of force is effected in the animal body, by the transformations of the separated parts, destined for the production of force, and by the expenditure of the active vital force in causing the *formation of new parts*;" and that "practical medicine, in many diseases, makes use of cold in a highly rational manner, as a means of exalting and accelerating, in an unwonted degree, the change of matter;" and that, "by the abstraction of heat, provided there be a full supply of food and free access of oxygen, the change of matter must be accelerated, and, along with the augmented transformation, in a given time, of living tissues, a greater amount of vital force must be rendered available for mechanical purposes;" and again, "if we surround a part of the body with ice or snow, while other parts are left in the natural state, there occurs, more or less quickly in consequence of the loss of heat, an accelerated change of matter in the cooled part. The resistance of the living tissues to the action of oxygen is weaker at the cooled part than in other parts; and this, in its effects, *is equivalent to an increase of resistance in those parts*." "But when the cooled part, by the union of oxygen with the elements of the metamorphosed tissues, has recovered its original temperature, the resistance of its living particles to the oxygen again increases; and, as the resistance of other parts is now diminished, a more rapid change of matter now occurs in them, their temperature rises, and, along with this, if the cause of the change of matter continue to operate, a larger amount of vital force becomes available for mechanical purposes. Let us now suppose that heat is abstracted from the whole surface of the body; in this case the whole action of the oxygen will be

directed to the skin, and, in a short time, the change of matter must increase throughout the body." Hence it is apparent, that whether disease be occasioned by too weak or too strong an action of the causes of waste, the abstraction of heat, or in other words the action of water, can be rendered conducive, in combination with diet, to a restoration of the equilibrium between the causes of waste and supply, or, in other words, to a restoration to health.

Cold is likewise often effectually employed in inflammation to constrict the capillaries; and its action on the nerves, those conductors of vital force, is exemplified by the effect produced by sprinkling the face of a person in a faint, and, still more decidedly, in recalling the vital functions in the case of a dog which has been subjected to the influence of the suffocating vapor of the grotto del cane, or of a cat or rabbit which has been rendered apparently lifeless by the action of prussic acid. I have elsewhere dwelt on the effect of bathing in determining morbid matter to the surface, and restoring tone to that highly important organ, the skin.

Taken internally, water promotes reaction after the douche, plunge, or other bath; it has a decided action in promoting the different secretions and excretions; and we are informed by Liebig, that "its presence is essential to the continuance of the vital motions," and that it contributes to the greater part of the transformations in the body, and that its dissipation hastens death. We are at once struck with the importance of the part which it plays in the animal economy, when we learn that there is eighty per cent. of water in healthy blood—that fluid which conveys both nutrition and oxygen to every part of the body.

To sum up, it appears that water, applied externally, acts,—

- 1st. By the more rapid liberation of caloric.
- 2nd. By accelerating the change of tissues.*
- 3rd. By constringing the capillaries.

* Dr. Brown, who wrote in 1707, terms water "the greatest alterative in nature."

- 4th. By increasing nervous power.
- 5th. By restoring tone to the skin.
- 6th. By derivation.
- 7th. By forwarding the elimination of morbid matter; or, in other words, as a sedative, alterative, tonic, stimulant, derivative, and counter-irritant.

And, taken internally, it acts,—

- 1st. As a solvent, and contributes to the greater part of the transformations.
- 2nd. It gives tone to the stomach.
- 3rd. Promotes the secretions and excretions, particularly from the skin, bowels, and kidneys.
- 4th. It is a most important and indispensable element in the blood.

And the different modes of applying it are,—

- 1st. Partial or full frictions with wet hands, towels, or sheets.
- 2nd. Partial or full packings in the wet sheet.
- 3rd. The tepid half bath.
- 4th. The cold plunge bath.
- 5th. The half bath and full bath in combination, passing alternately from one to the other.
- 6th. Cold or tepid affusions.
- 7th. The douche.
- 8th. Cold or tepid sitzbaths,* or other local baths, as headbaths, legbaths, footbaths, fingerbaths, elbowbaths, eyebaths, &c.
- 9th. The cooling bandage or compress.
- 10th. The heating bandage.
- 11th. Cold or tepid potations.
- 12th. Cold or tepid enemata, or other injections. And these different processes are modified and controlled in their action by their duration for longer or shorter periods, the number of times they are repeated, the intervals between their repetition, and the variety of ways in which they are combined.

* Mr. Lane, in his *Life at the Water Cure*, terms the sitzbath “hatching health.”

And the adjuncts of water, on the importance of which it is unnecessary to dwell, are,—

- 1st. The sweating process (which is only employed in particular cases).
- 2nd. Regular exercise.
- 3rd. Airbaths.
- 4th. Regulated diet, including abstinence from all stimulating condiments and intoxicating liquors.
- 5th. Regulated clothing.
- 6th. Music, and other cheerful and soothing influences.
- 7th. Early hours.
- 8th. Withdrawal from the operation of the various causes of disease, including “retirement from the distracting cares and pleasures of the world.”

It should be remarked that a bare enumeration of the various processes of the watercure, and of the *modi operandi* of those processes can give but a very faint idea of the various effects produced; and it remains to be told distinctly what and how manifold and powerful those effects are, as regards different diseased conditions. But, to enter upon such a detail would be to commence a Treatise embracing an entirely new “Practice of Physic,” and requiring in the execution, instead of a letter, a volume of no inconsiderable size. As illustrating what I mean by the manifold effects produced by the various processes on different diseased conditions, take the following examples. Holding water in the mouth and wet frictions to the throat and chest, facilitate expectoration; the outward application of cold water, or the sweating process, affords relief in retention of urine, without the aid of an instrument; and, again, in other cases, the wet sheet frictions remove pain, or, employed preparatory to the sweating blanket, facilitate perspiration where it otherwise would be difficult of attainment.

The exudations on the heating compress, packing sheet, or sweating blankets, are often remarkable for quantity, colour, and smell, but sometimes they afford occasion for exaggeration and mystification. An instance

came under my notice in which a wag presented, for examination and judgment, a bandage stained with fruit juice, to a medical gentleman, who very gravely pronounced it to be a most extraordinary instance of the expulsion of mineral matter through the pores of the skin.

In some cases the sweating blanket is previously warmed to expedite its action. Abreibungen are often found a good preparation for the sweating blanket, when it has been found impossible or very difficult to produce perspiration without their aid. I find that the sweating blanket and the wet sheet packing are often confounded together by persons who have but very imperfect notions on the subject of the water cure.

It is not to be inferred that in every case the patient is obliged to undergo all the various processes enumerated. In some establishments there are in use several other processes—the most of them ingenious trifles to amuse grown children—but there are two, the shower bath and the ascending douche, which might perhaps be used with advantage—especially the shower bath, which in some cases might be beneficially employed in private practice, in houses where neither plunge bath nor douche is to be had. The vapour bath, where the vapour is excluded from the lungs—might, perhaps, be economically substituted in hospitals in some cases for the sweating blanket, as it would require a less outlay of capital and fewer bath attendants to administer it.

It cannot be affirmed that this powerful system of treatment, if improperly administered, is wholly free from danger; but it differs from the practice of drug-medication in this, that, while drugs are confessedly dangerous in the most skilful hands, the water appliances are dangerous only in *unskilful* hands. The dangers to be apprehended in such hands are,—

- 1st. Congestion, from the violent or too long continued application of cold.
- 2nd. Congestion, from the violent application of heat.
- 3rd. Over waste, from the too long, or too often repeated, application of cold.

- 4th. Over stimulation of the nerves, or of the circulatory system, from the improper or too often repeated use of the cold bath, douche, or sweating process.
- 5th. Oversedation, from the too prolonged application of cold.
- 6th. Loss of tone, from the improper or too long continued application of heat.
- 7th. Local injury, caused by injudicious derivation through the improper topical application of cold.
- 8th. Over work for the stomach, kidneys, or skin, from the imbibition of too much liquid; and
- 9th. Loss of tone to the digestive organs from over exercise.

Examples of the fatal results attending improper stimulation, will be found in letters fourteen and forty-nine. It is not advisable to take any bath for an hour after any meal, nor, excepting the wet sheet friction, when the body is chilled, or exhausted from over exercise. In letter thirty-nine I have enumerated the forms of disease in which the treatment is ineffectual, but even in such cases the daily employment of one of the milder applications is to be generally recommended. A daily ablution is likewise to be recommended to every person in health.

But though danger is to be apprehended from improper treatment, it is impossible, as I have said, that, with ordinary care, any danger can occur from the water treatment in skilful hands; while the exhibition of drugs is dangerous, even in the *most* skilful hands. I am so impressed with these truths that I would rather submit to be douched or sweated by the most ignorant and rash pretender to a knowledge of the water cure, than allow myself to be bled, or permit my system to be subjected to the influence of mercury, opium, iodine, or prussic acid, by the most learned and cautious exhibiter of drugs. The treatment, pursued by the latter, in almost any given disease *must*, of necessity, be more or less radically wrong—the former *may* possibly occasionally blunder right.

With respect to any attempt to combine the two modes

of treatment, I cannot but regard it as arrant quackery ; and, after what I have witnessed, I must believe, that if any hydropathist has recourse to drugs in the treatment of any disease, the necessity does not arise from any imperfection in the water cure as a system, but from some lingering prejudice on the part of the practitioner.*

And now I have only to add that—whatever may be thought of the foregoing brief exposition of the water cure—whether it be accepted as sound, or condemned as unsound—it shall occasion me no anxiety, for its reception or rejection, can in no wise affect the merits of a system founded on facts, and recommended by experience. If I have a wish on the subject it is only because the reception of a theory, admitted to be based on sound scientific principles, would be the means of recommending the system to many who have no opportunity of personally examining into its merits, and who are unwilling to accept the testimony of others ; and because it would enable students of the system to acquire a speedier knowledge of its practical details.

Ever yours,

JOHN GIBBS.

* To these opinions it has been objected by a leading hydropathist, for whose opinion I have great respect, that the hydropathic practitioner would be perfectly justified in employing—nay, that he would be blamable in not employing—emetics, in certain cases of poisoning. Now, admitting this to be true, I do not think that it in any way invalidates my position. The poison is not disease, but the cause of disease : it is an accidental substance, whose *forcible* ejection from the stomach by the aid of an emetic is just as reconcilable with the hydropathic treatment, as the rescuing a man from the jaws of a tiger by shooting the brute through the head. In the latter case the man, though badly wounded, may be restored to health by judicious treatment ; but nobody will venture to affirm that shooting the assailant is part of that treatment, or that powder and ball shall be regarded thenceforth as therapeutical agents. The same line of argument is applicable to the *poisoning* of an *acarus scabiei*, or of a tapeworm. With respect to the newly discovered use of æther to produce insensibility to pain in surgical operations, still it cannot be classed amongst remedial agents, but must be considered as a part of surgery and not of medicine.

LETTER XLVIII.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq.

“The blood is the life.”—OLD AUTHOR.

“Less slaughter has been effected by the sword than by the lancet—that minute instrument of mighty mischief.”—DR. REID.

Græfenberg, Jan. 19th, 1846.

MY DEAR RIDGE—I intend this letter as a sort of postscript to my last, and shall proceed to offer a few remarks on bleeding, and the employment of alcoholic stimulants. And first I must recal to your recollection what I have stated in my last letter, viz. that the chief conditions of animal life are waste and supply—that an equilibrium between the causes of waste and supply is essential to health—that any disturbance of that equilibrium is a cause of disease—and that the restoration of that equilibrium is a restoration to health. You will also recollect that I have stated, that the blood conveys nutrition (the cause of supply), and oxygen (the cause of waste), to every part of the body. Having recalled the foregoing passages we are prepared to perceive the full force of Liebig's assertion that, “the vivifying agency of the blood must ever continue to be the most important condition in the restoration of a disturbed equilibrium,” and that “the blood must, therefore, be considered and constantly kept in view, as the ultimate and most powerful cause of a lasting vital resistance, as well in the diseased as in the unaffected parts of the body.” If this be so—what an absurdity is blood-letting! Is it not, in reality, a lessening of the action of the “most powerful cause of a lasting vital resistance,” and how can it possibly tend to the restoration of an equilibrium of the causes of waste and supply, while at the same time it must diminish in equal proportions both those causes?

Dr. Dickson says: “It was once a question whether or not the blood be *alive*. That question is now definitely settled. John Hunter, to the conviction of everybody, proved that the blood lives;—and every drop that

artificially leaves the system is admitted, even by those who take it away, to be a drop of life. He who loses a pint of blood loses a pint of life."

Let us follow up this subject a little further; let us select for our investigation one or two of those cases in which bleeding is principally employed; namely, apoplexy, hæmorrhage, and inflammation. Now, what are the symptoms attending a fit of apoplexy, and what, after death, are its anatomical characters? The principal symptoms, with slight variations, are greater or lesser degree of paralysis both of sensation and motion; weakened perception or profound coma; respiration more or less stertorous; pulse, at the commencement, hard and full, but no fever; constipation; occasionally, convulsive movements, or rigidity of the muscles and limbs, &c. The anatomical characters are:—more or less effusion of blood, or serous fluid, or both, &c. Now, in an article in the "Medical Gazette," Dr. Seeds tells us that "All the larger veins of the legs were opened in a small dog. At first the pulse was accelerated; soon after it became slow and languid. The breathing, at first, was hurried, &c. Slight spasmodic contractions took place, first in the femoral and abdominal muscles; then the head, neck, and fore legs, were likewise powerfully affected with spasms. At this time a deep sleep seized the animal; he breathed slowly, and with difficulty, and, for a little time before death, respiration was suspended altogether." Such were the symptoms—what were the anatomical characters? "The membranes of the brain were loaded with turgid vessels, the larger of which were of a very dark colour. A bright red spot was observed near the cornea, where some degree of sanguineous effusion had taken place. The sinuses were *full of blood*. In all the ventricles there was more or less water effused; the base of the brain, and the eighth and ninth pairs of nerves, were inundated with water, &c. &c." The very symptoms and the very anatomical characters of apoplexy; and yet, men who claim the epithet of scientific, bleed for this disease! Commenting on this, Dr. Dickson says; "If any thing in this world could open the eyes of pathological professors;—if facts or reasonings of any

kind could possibly move those mechanical-minded persons, who plan their treatment of *living* men from what they see on dissecting *dead* bodies ; this, and similar experiments, ought surely to do so. For here you not only find dilated pupils, convulsions, deep sleep, slow and difficult breathing, with other apoplectic symptoms, the effect of literally bleeding a healthy animal to death ; but, to complete the deception of such as constantly ascribe these phenomena to pressure on the brain, the cerebral and other veins of the same animal were found, after death, loaded and congested with blood throughout. Nay, in addition, there was water on the brain, with some degree of sanguineous effusion even." It is well known that apoplexy sometimes results *from starvation*, and instances in point are mentioned by Dr. Latham. Dr. Copeman published a collection of cases, one hundred and fifty-five in number, to show that the results do not justify the prejudice in favour of bleeding in affections of the brain, and Dr. Turner supplies us with the following tables, compiled from those cases :—

“ Number not bled, 26 Cured, 18 Died, 8		
„ bled ... 129 „ 51 „ 78		
Proportion of cures in cases treated by bleeding	1 in $2\frac{1}{2}$	
„ deaths in ditto, about.....	1 „ $1\frac{2}{3}$	
„ cures in cases <i>not</i> bled	1 „ $1\frac{1}{2}$	
„ deaths in ditto	1 „ $3\frac{1}{4}$ ”	

What is the immediate cause of apoplexy, then ? Is it an excess of blood, or a weakness of the coats of the vessels of brain ? The reader's common sense must supply the answer. The same questions may be asked in cases of hæmorrhage, and the same authority appealed to. Look at some pale and emaciated sufferer, who is constantly spitting blood, and who can believe that it is from an excess of that fluid which is “ the most powerful cause of a lasting vital resistance ?” Dr. Heberden says ; “ It seems probable, from all the experience I have had of such cases, that where the hæmorrhage proceeds from the breach of some *large* vein or artery, there the opening of a vein will *not* stop the efflux of blood, and it will stop *without the help of the lancet*, when it proceeds from a

small one. In the former case, bleeding does no good; and in the latter, by an unnecessary waste of the patient's strength, it will *do harm*. But if the opening of a vein be intended to stop a hæmorrhage, by deprivation or revulsion, may it not be questioned whether this doctrine be so clearly established, as to remove all fears of hurting a person who has already lost too much blood, by a practice attended with the certain loss of more?" "In the case of effusion of blood in an external part," asks Dr. Dickson, "from a bruise, for instance, could any repetition of venesection make the effused blood re-enter the vessel from which it had escaped? No more could it do so in the brain, or in any other part. Why, then, resort to it in this case? If it be said to stop the bleeding, I answer, that it has no such power." And who can doubt that he is in the right? In another place he says: "to bleed, in the case of a ruptured vessel, is positive madness." In Dr. Cowan's translation of Louis, there occurs the following passage: "As we have already remarked, in speaking of pneumonia, the invasion of pleurisy coincides, in a large proportion of our patients, with the period of extreme weakness and emaciation." How wise to starve and bleed such patients! How common an occurrence is inflammation of a leech bite, and how often has the inflammation of a vein, after the employment of the lancet, terminated fatally! Dr. Dickson, in his "Fallacies of the Faculty," a work that ought to be read by every body, writes: "To what daring innovator the practice of physic owes the *curse* of the lancet, the annals of the art leave us in ignorance; but this we know, that its introduction could only have been during the infancy of medicine, when remedial means were yet few, and the mode of action of remedies totally unknown. It was the invention of an unenlightened,—possibly, a sanguinary age; and its continued use says but little for the after discoveries of ages, or for the boasted progress of medical science." After what I have said elsewhere, it is not necessary to say much on the subject of fever; I shall only, on the authority of Dr. Dickson, quote a short passage on the subject of *yellow fever*. Captain Owen, in detailing the

mortality which took place among his people on the coast of Africa, says; "We had not one instance of perfect recovery after a liberal application of the lancet;" and in the subsequent report of the select committee on the western coast of Africa, there occurs the following passage: "The bleeding system has fortunately gone out of fashion, and the frightful mortality that attended its practice is now no longer known on board our ships." I must quote another passage from Dr. Dickson: "Will the men who now so lavishly pour out the blood, dispute its importance in the animal economy? Will they deny, that it forms the basis of the solids? that when the body has been wasted by long disease, it is by the blood only it can recover its healthy volume and appearance? Has not nature done everything to preserve to animals of every kind,—

‘The electric blood which through their arteries run.’

She has provided it with strong resilient vessels—vessels which slip from the touch, and never permit their contents to escape, except where their coats have been injured by accident or disease. Misguided by theory, man—presumptuous man—has dared to divide what God, as a part of creation, united; to open what the Eternal, in the wisdom of his omniscience, made entire! See, then, what an *extreme* measure this is! It is, on the very face of it, a most unnatural proceeding. Yet, what proceeding so common, or what so readily submitted to, under the influence of authority and custom? If, in the language of the chemist Liebig, the blood be indeed ‘the *sum* of *all the organs* that are being formed,’ how can you withdraw it from one organ without depriving every other of the material of its *healthy* state? Yet, enter the crowded hospitals of England—of Europe, and see how mercilessly the lancet, the leech, and the cupping-glass, are employed in the diseases of the poor. Look at the pale and ghastly faces of the inmates. What a contrast to the eager pupils and attendants thronging around their beds—those attendants with bandage and basin, ready, at a moment’s notice, to take from the poor creatures whatever quantity of *life-blood*

solemn pedantry may prescribe as the infallible means of relieving their sufferings! Do that, I say, and refrain, if you can, from exclaiming with Bulwer, 'When poverty is sick, the doctors mangle it!' What are the causes of the disorders of this class of people? In the majority of cases, *defective food* and *impure air*. By these has their blood been deteriorated; and for what does the (so termed) man of science abstract it? To make room for better? No! goaded on by the twin goblins, 'congestion' and 'inflammation,' to deteriorate it still further by starvation and confinement." One passage more from Dickson, and I shall have done. "Among the numerous diseases which it (bleeding) can produce, Darwin says, 'a paroxysm of *gout* is liable to recur on bleeding.' John Hunter mentions 'lockjaw and dropsy' among its injurious effects; Travers, 'blindness' and 'palsy;' Marshall Hall, 'mania;' Blundell, 'dysentery;' Broussais, '*fever* and convulsions!' 'When an animal loses a considerable quantity of blood,' says John Hunter, 'the heart increases in its frequency of strokes, as also in its *violence*.' Yet these are the indications for which professors tell you to bleed! You must bleed in every inflammation, they tell you. Yet, is not inflammation a *daily effect* of loss of blood? Majendie mentions '*pneumonia*,' as having been produced by it; completely confirming the evidence of Dr. Hume upon that point. He further tells us, that he has witnessed among its effects, 'the entire train of what people are pleased to call *inflammatory* phenomena; and mark,' he says, 'the extraordinary fact, that this inflammation will have been produced by the very agent which is daily used to combat it!' What a long dream of false security have mankind been dreaming! they have laid themselves down on the laps of their medical mentors, they have slept a long sleep; while these, like the fabled vampire of the poets, taking advantage of a dark night of barbarism and ignorance, have thought it no sin to rob them of their life's blood during the profoundness of their slumber!"

I have already suffered this letter to run to a greater length than I had intended, but Dr. Dickson's observations

are so much to the point, that I could not refrain from quoting freely from him; I must, therefore, be very brief in my remarks on the employment of alcoholic stimulants. In Dr. Cheyne's letter on wine and spirits, he says: "The benefits which have been supposed to flow from their liberal *use in medicine*, and especially in those diseases which were once universally, and are still vulgarly supposed to depend upon mere weakness, *have invested these agents with attributes to which they have no claim*; and hence, as we physicians no longer employ them, as we were wont to do, we ought not to rest satisfied with a mere acknowledgment of error, but we ought also to make every retribution in our power for having so long upheld one of *the most fatal delusions* * which ever took possession of the human mind!" Liebig maintains, that "there can be no doubt that the elements of alcohol combine with oxygen in the body;" and he adds, that "the oxygen which has accomplished this change must be taken from the arterial blood;" and that, consequently, "the arterial blood becomes venous." Thus that equilibrium between the causes of waste and supply, which is so essential to health, is disturbed; and the immediate effect is, in degree, similar to that which takes place in suffocation from drowning, or any other cause; in the former case, the blood is *partially* de-

* I have met with many proofs of the perfect safety, nay, marked benefit with which patients, who had long depended on alcoholic stimulants, have abandoned their use at once and entirely. One, a recent instance, especially deserves notice: in this case the patient, who suffered from gout in its worst form—the hands, feet, knees, and other joints being frightfully distorted and laden with chalky deposits—had been confined to bed, a helpless sufferer, for seven years. During the last three or four years his weekly allowance of gin was half a pint, and he took four ounces of laudanum weekly. He also took large doses of colchicum and other drugs. He gave up at once and entirely all his drugs, his laudanum, and his gin, and, though the effort cost him much, he manfully persevered, and in three months was able to sit to table at dinner with his family on Christmas day last—an effort of which he had not been capable for seven years. For some time water acted as an emetic, and he threw up quantities of green coloured slime and liquid; now water lies on his stomach, all his functions are regular, and there is a most extraordinary improvement in his health.

prived of oxygen, and disease, to a greater or lesser degree, either temporary or chronic, is the consequence; in the latter case, the blood is *entirely* deprived of oxygen, and death ensues. Those who have seen a drunken man reeling about, need not be told, that one of the effects of alcoholic stimulants is "a diminution of the conducting power of the nerves of voluntary motion;" or, as Dr. Lees terms it, "partial paralysis." These views are borne out by the experiments of other distinguished authorities. In an article in the "Lancet," on the subject of Dr. Prout's experiments, there occurs the following passage: "Alcohol, and all liquors containing it which he tried, he found to have the remarkable property of diminishing the quantity of carbonic acid in the expired air *much more than anything else* which he made the subject of experiment. When *porter* was taken at dinner, the quantity was always much reduced below the natural standard, *while the reverse was the case when water was taken*. This induced him to extend his experiments; the result of which was, that *alcohol in every state and in every quantity, uniformly lessens*, in a greater or lesser degree, *the quantity of carbonic acid elicited*, according to the quantity and circumstances in which it is taken. When taken *on an empty stomach, its effects were most remarkable*, the depression being almost instantaneous; after a short time, the powers of the constitution appear to rally, and the quantity rapidly increases; then it sinks again, and afterwards rises slowly to the standard. On a full stomach, as after dinner, the effects of vinous liquors are very *slow, but no less sure* and remarkable. *Dr. Prout has even thought them* MORE PERMANENT. As long as the effects of alcohol are perceptible, so long is the quantity of carbonic acid gas emitted below the healthy standard." Liebig states, that there is "in the organism *only one source of mechanical power*, and this is the *conversion of living parts into lifeless, amorphous compounds*," and that "by the use of alcohol, a limit must rapidly be put to the change of matter in certain parts of the body." Dr. Pereira says; "If I had to point out the *injurious qualities* of alcohol, I think I could soon prove, that

though it evolves heat in burning, it is an *obnoxious* and most expensive fuel. Consider its volatility, the facility with which it permeates membranes and tissues, and *its injurious operation*—before it is burnt in the lungs—*on the stomach, the brain, and the liver.*” Dr. Cragie gives similar testimony. Dr. A. Combe, after quoting from Dr. Beaumont, the remarkable case of St. Martin, remarks: “Here we have incontestible proof, that disease of the stomach was induced, and going on from bad to worse, in consequence of indulgence in ardent spirits, *although no prominent symptom made its appearance*, and St. Martin was, in his general habits, a healthy and sober man. And if such be the results of a few days of intemperance in a person of a sound constitution, it is impossible to deny that continued indulgence must be followed by more serious evils, whether these show themselves from the first by marked external signs or not.” Dr. Lees, in that excellent work, “The Illustrated History of Alcohol,” says: “Undiluted alcohol is a *poison*. But alcohol mixed with water does not operate *differently* from pure alcohol. The dilution may modify its *degree* of action, but it does not alter its *kind* of action.” And again: “I maintain, that, according to the principles of Liebig, it (alcohol) *ACTS AS A POISON*, by *hindering the nourishment* and *impairing the strength* of the body. Life consists in the perpetual *building up* and *pulling down* of the organs of life; the bodily estate being, as it were, perpetually subject to *conservative* and *destructive* influences. One process is plainly as necessary as the other. If the chemical powers did not *pull down*, the vital powers would not *build up*; if no life were expended in *action*, no *waste* would occur, no *supply* would be needed.” In short, “as far as alcohol operates *at all*, in any form, it operates as a *poison*.”

Yours faithfully,

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER XLIX.

To R. T. Ridge, Esq., etc.

“This most valuable discovery in the Esculapian art.”—Dr. JOHN KING.

Græfenberg, April 12, 1846.

MY DEAR RIDGE,—As I shall leave this to-morrow, I sit down to fulfil my promise to select for condensation, into a concluding letter, some *few* of those occurrences of the past year, which, at a cursory glance over my notes, may seem most deserving of notice.

Mr. ——— had been for two years subject to frequent and severe attacks of cholic; these attacks used to last for from twelve to twenty-four hours each, and used to be followed by extreme weakness and soreness for a week or two. Mr. ——— was obliged to be extremely cautious in his diet, and consulted several physicians of eminence, but to no purpose; so he “at length resolved upon quitting medicine for cold water, and accordingly left England for Græfenberg.” He took the cure for five months, during which time he “never evaded a bath or missed a walk;” and, at the end of that time, he considered himself perfectly cured.*

Mr. ——— caught cold at the fire at Hamburg; rheumatic gout ensued, at first in knees and feet, then in neck and arm; afterwards, in hip and both breasts.

* I had a letter from him recently, and he says, “It is now sixteen months since I gave up the treatment, and twenty-one since my last attack of cholic; before I went to Græfenberg I was in daily dread of it, however abstemiously I lived; since I left, I have restricted myself in nothing pertaining to diet, and have not had the least symptoms of a return of the complaint. I consider myself cured by cold water of a disease which baffled the skill of some of the first practitioners of the day, and on this account shall ever remember Priessnitz with gratitude, and consider him as the pro-longer of my life.”

The bones became much swollen. During 1842, he suffered pain in bad weather, but had no pain in fine weather; he took purgative medicines, but without advice. From April, 1843, to April, 1844, he was confined to bed, and was attended by two physicians; he took large quantities of medicine, and one hundred and seventy steam, and eighty brimstone baths, into which he was obliged to be carried. Subsequently, he took mud and brimstone baths for two months, at Eilsen. The pains were somewhat moderated by this treatment, and for one month patient was able to walk a little. After this he was again confined to bed, with even greater pain than formerly—the pain always increased in bad weather, and the vapour baths failed to give even temporary relief—on the contrary, while using them the pains continually increased. At last, his medical advisers told him that they could do no more for him; on which he set out for Græfenberg, where he commenced the cure, May 1, 1844. At this time he could not walk without support and without suffering great pain; the body was swollen, the elbow joint and wrist, and left hip and knee would not bend, so that he was obliged to be dressed by his bath-servants. He continually suffered pain. His digestion also was impaired. I condense this from a lengthened statement furnished by himself, and omit all the details of the varied treatment pursued at Græfenberg. It is sufficient to state, that he had many boil crises and one fever for nine days, and that he was perfectly restored to health in about eleven months. It is now a year since he returned home, and he continues in the enjoyment of perfect health. He stated to me, that two female members of his family had also derived great benefit from the cure.

Count ——— suffered severely for two years from hereditary gout in the feet and hands; he was cured in five or six months. It is about a year since he gave up the cure, and he has had no return of his disorder.

Two gentlemen were thrown from their horses, and were senseless when taken up. They were restored to

consciousness by the usual water-cure applications; in three or four days were out, and, finally, entirely recovered.*

Dr. ——— suffered from indigestion and constipation, and was subject to congestion to head. He states, that Priessnitz took at once the most accurate view of his case. He had also varicose veins in one leg. A short time before coming to Græfenberg, he had been bled for congestion to the head. One day he felt great pain in the region of the heart, and congestion to the head. Having a gouty tendency, he became alarmed, and sent for Priessnitz, who, on his arrival, applied a wet bandage over the back, shoulders, and chest, and caused him to put his feet nearly up to the knees in cold water for half an hour. He states that, but for his confidence, the result of having witnessed Priessnitz's success, his preconceived ideas of danger would have deterred him from following this treatment, which had the desired effect. He was cured of his different ailments in about eight months. I had this case from my friend, Captain Claridge.

Lieut. ——— had gout in hands, dropsical swelling of the abdomen, and three fistulous sores in the chest, which his medical advisers had pronounced incurable. He was restored to perfect health in seven months.

A gentleman, after typhus fever, got an ulcer on the leg, which was healed under medical treatment; but boils subsequently breaking out on several parts of his body, four physicians, after consulting on his case, advised his coming to Græfenberg, where, after about six months' treatment, during which he had both eruptive and fever crises, he was restored to perfect health.

A lady, who arrived at Græfenberg in such a state of debility that she was carried from her carriage to her bed, to which she was confined for two months, was ultimately perfectly restored to health. I allude to this

* Is it not to be regretted that a distinguished philanthropist, whose recent loss from a similar accident the world will long deplore, had not been subjected to similar treatment?

case because, whatever she may have owed to good air, it is clear that she owed nothing to exercise, until her health had been considerably renovated.

Captain ———* had fever and ague for many years ; in three months, he was perfectly cured. Two other similar cases terminated in cures—the one in eight, the other in three months.

A boy, a year and a half old, was placed under the cure for water on the brain. There was a large protuberance on the forehead ; at the end of a year the protuberance had quite gone down, leaving a ridge like a chicken's breast-bone. The child was allowed to drink but very sparingly of water. He has been perfectly restored to health.

A farmer had his finger crushed by a large stone ; it was a case of severe compound fracture, and the finger was nearly severed from the hand. It seemed a case for the knife ; but, by proper treatment, the finger has been preserved, and is again serviceable, although stiff.

The next case I shall give you in the words of the lady's husband :—

"From 1837 to 1844, inclusive, Mrs. ———, though, to all appearance very healthy, had a miscarriage every year, and several times twice in the year. After the second accident of this nature, she took medical advice. On one occasion, she was several times let blood ; on another occasion she was advised to pass her time entirely in a recumbent position. She had excellent medical advice. These mishaps ended by giving her many distressing and alarming symptoms. Fully convinced that her constitution could not long resist the undermining influence of such anomalous functionary action ; convinced, too, that her physicians mistook the nature of her disease, or were, at least, powerless in regard to it, we went to a water-cure establishment, in England, three weeks after her last miscarriage. She repaired her strength very rapidly, and in a few weeks

* I saw this gentleman lately—it is fourteen months since he left Græfenberg, and he has had no return of his disorder.

was able to set out for Florence. We went to Paris, thence to Munich, thence to Florence. Careful to bathe herself every day, and to refresh herself with the rubbing wet sheet, she escaped even the usual inconveniences of a long journey. We arrived at Florence in October, 1843. From that time, until the spring following, Mrs. ——— practised a gentle water treatment, with uniform success and ever-growing strength. In April, we came hither, where she commenced the full treatment, under Priessnitz's care. After six weeks' cure, she began to feel unwell, and continued to suffer much during several weeks. She, however, persevered, and continued the full cure, until April, 1845, when she was delivered of a male child, weighing twelve pounds six ounces, English weight. She had full treatment. She douched even all through the winter. Her crises were a rash and a few boils; the former, very painful, and of two months' duration; the latter, very small. She was ordered to walk, and use her arms and legs as much as possible, and until as late a period as possible. During labour, the wet bandages were changed every ten minutes. After birth of infant, she was twice washed by attendants, with towels wetted in water of 15° Reaumur. The babe was put into its first bath immediately after birth. Three months are now elapsed since he was born, and he is well, strong, and healthy. His mother is now free from all those symptoms hitherto so obstinate, so mysterious, and so fatal. I leave Græfenberg with the liveliest sense of gratitude toward that wonderful man, whose intuitive genius has proved a blessing to thousands, but with no little anxiety lest that we may hereafter find ourselves so situated as to be induced to call in a physician. My present intention is to treat myself and family, whether I shall be able to do so remains to be seen. You will perhaps think it strange when I say, that I regard the water cure as a thousand-fold more valuable as a *science of life* than as a *remedial means*. I so regard it. Knowing no more of its hidden principles than we know why the grass grows, I have seen enough to convince me, that he who lives

according to its precepts must, barring accidents and pestilence, live to a good old age. Nor is it merely a physical regime. It is at the same time a moral discipline. Instead of permitting the mass of men to indulge in all manner of excess, while *a few* are expected to be patterns of virtue and self-denial; it will end by teaching *all* to make their passions harmonize with their organization, and then it will be not a medicine only, but a religion."

Need I give you further extracts? Did I think you desired it, I could extract cases of cure sufficient to fill a dozen letters as long as this. I am half tempted to transcribe two cases of inflammation of the lungs, from the page which is now open before me—but, to what purpose? He who would not be convinced by the facts which I have already laid before the society, would not be convinced though one rose from the dead. Yet, before I close this correspondence, I should like, as I have hitherto abstained from doing so, to say a few words on the subject of my own personal experience of the effects of the water cure. For several years before coming to Græfenberg, I was subject to very frequent attacks, more or less serious, involving derangement of the digestive organs, and was obliged to have such repeated recourse to the aid of medicine, that at length, what at first had been only an occasional indulgence, became by degrees a confirmed habit. I also suffered at times from very severe muscular pains in the chest. I took for some months the water cure as directed by Priessnitz, and now for two years I have never felt the want of my weekly pill, never suffered the slightest derangement of the digestive organs, and never had any return of the pains in the chest. On one occasion I was relieved from an acute attack of rheumatism by a copious perspiration in the blanket, followed by repeated frictions with the dripping-sheet,

In my letter of March 29th, 1845, I brought down my statement of facts to the 1st of January in the same year; from the latter date to the 1st of January in this year, there were here under treatment 1,004 patients,

amongst whom there were four deaths. From the 1st of January in this year to the present date there have been here 382 patients, amongst whom there has not been a single death. With respect to the first of the four deaths referred to, I shall make a short extract from the post mortem :—"The lower lobe of the right lung was quite hepatized, the middle one partially so, and also the lower lobe of the left lung. The pericardium was considerably distended, the heart being enlarged to half its size again; the ligaments of the valves were partly ossified." In this, as in other cases where the patient had been given up by Priessnitz, he allowed the friends to call in a medical man, who at first entertained hopes of saving the patient's life. It may not be out of place to remark, that, although I have known several instances in which patients have been restored by Priessnitz when they had been given over by medical men, I have never known an instance in which the patient had been restored under medical treatment when given over by Priessnitz. With respect to the second death, I neglected at the time making any inquiries, and therefore am unacquainted with the particulars. In the case of the third death there was no post mortem, the friends of the deceased not wishing it. And with respect to the fourth and last death, it, perhaps, may be attended with benefit as a wholesome warning to some who may read these letters, to tell them, that in this case death was caused by the patient, who was a medical gentleman, who was highly esteemed and whose loss was deeply deplored, having experimented on himself and suffered the douche, on several successive days, to fall upon his chest; he being under the erroneous impression that this not only was calculated to produce beneficial results in his case, but that it might be adopted with advantage as a general practice, although it is never in any case permitted by Priessnitz. It is not impossible that, in this case, the patient's life might have been preserved, but that he declined to submit to the prescribed treatment.

The following is a table of the deaths which occurred at Græfenberg, from the 1st of January, 1843, to this date, April the 12th, 1846, inclusive.

Number of patients at Græfenberg in 1843, including 246 from previous year	1050	Deaths	4
Number of patients at Græfenberg in 1844, including 259 from previous year	1080		5
Number of patients at Græfenberg in 1845, including 240 from previous year	1004		4
Number of patients at Græfenberg in 1846, (up to April the 12th), including 281 from previous year *	382		0
Total	3516		13

Making an average for three years and three months of less than one death in 271 patients. With respect to the thirteen deaths thus enumerated, it is right to remind the reader, that in some cases there was from the first no hope of any other result, and in one case the patient was never submitted to any treatment.

There has been, for many years, within two or three English miles of Græfenberg, an establishment, where a very different mode of treatment to the water cure has been practised. It is called the hunger cure, but, as it has but slight claims to public patronage, and has been already so fully noticed by other writers, I have hitherto forbore offering any remarks on the subject. The hunger cure consists in a mere routine treatment in every case, and, as the name implies, the most prominent feature is severe and long continued abstinence from food and likewise from drink. That starvation has occasionally been attended with a cure of old inveterate diseases is a fact well established, but I believe that it needs no proof, that in the majority of cases it could only hasten the final catastrophe. There is a striking contrast be-

* A letter which I have just received informs me that the total number of patients at Græfenberg in the year 1846 was 1022; but it does not state whether or not that number was diminished by death.

tween the average number of deaths under this mode of treatment, and the number at Græfenberg, as will appear from the following table, also compiled, like the foregoing one, from the published police reports.

Number of patients at Lindiewiese in 1843, including 12 from previous year	85	Deaths	2
Number of patients at Lindiewiese in 1844, including 14 from previous year	70		1
Number of patients at Lindiewiese in 1845, including 7 from previous year	58		3
Number of patients at Lindiewiese in 1846, (up to April the 12th), including 2 from previous year	14		0
Total	227		6

Making an average for three years and three months of one death in thirty-eight patients.

Having received from time to time several letters, making inquiries as to the best route from England to Græfenberg and the accommodation and expenses there, I shall take this opportunity to answer those inquiries. The best route with which I am acquainted is first from Hull, or London, to Hamburg; from Hamburg by steam boat to Magdeburg; from Magdeburgh to Dresden by railroad; from Dresden, through the most magnificent scenery, up the Elbe, to within twenty miles of Prag, doing these twenty miles by omnibus; from Prag to Hohenstadt by railroad, and from Hohenstadt to Freiwaldau, or Græfenberg, by private conveyance, doing the journey over the mountain, in summer, when the roads are good, in about seven hours, and in winter, in about eleven hours. The whole expenses of the journey can now be defrayed for about £11. or £12., or, as no one likes to be stinted to a penny, say for £15. At Græfenberg there is an outlay at first of about £3. for sheets, blankets, bandages, bathing vessels, &c. During a lengthened stay the weekly expenses may be estimated at about 30s. weekly, viz.—

	<i>fl. kr.</i>
Lodgings, varying according to the accommodation, say	2 30
Firing in winter, say	0 40
Board, &c.	4 36
Bath servant	1 0
Attendant at dinner	0 10
Douche (if taken)	0 20
Candles, say	0 10
Washing, say	0 50
Priessnitz (fee)	2 0
Bedding, &c. say	1 0
Total	13 16

13 fl. 16 kr. make in English money, at par, a fraction more than £1. 6s. 8d.; but allowing for exchange, &c., it will be still more. Allowing about 3s. a week for occasional expenses, as postage, &c., you have a total of about 30s. a week. In Freiwaldau one can live rather more economically; but, except in the case of a family, the advantages of residing in the establishment, in my opinion, more than counterbalance the difference. Should it, however, be desirable from any circumstance to give the preference to Freiwaldau, an exceedingly neat and pretty little town, where excellent lodgings can generally be had, the present landlord of the "Hotel de Græfenberg," who speaks English, can be recommended as a very civil and honest man.

As patients, on commencing treatment, continually ask for information on points which one is apt to overlook when prescribing, it may be advisable to give such persons a few plain directions in this place.

1. To avoid, as much as possible, the causes of disease, whether they be the vigils of the student, the anxieties of business, the dissipations of fashionable life, or the undue indulgences of appetite.

2. To commence the treatment with a determination to give it a fair trial, to repose due confidence in the medical director, and to do neither more nor less than he shall prescribe.

3. Not to eat to excess under the erroneous impression that, under the water cure, it matters not how severely the digestive organs may be taxed.

4. Not to drink more water than the stomach can readily absorb.

5. Not to exercise to the point of fatigue.

6. To observe a proper mean in clothing, to beware of too sudden transitions from cold to heat, to avoid the fire, and, if cold and not able to exercise, to prefer warmer clothing.

7. To eschew late hours.

8. If not sufficiently warm for an operation rather to omit than take it.

9. To take proper exercise after every bath unless specially directed to the contrary.

10. If attacked with shivering, or if over fatigued, not to take any bath except the wet sheet friction.

11. Not to douche on the head, chest, or abdomen, or for a longer time than ordered.

12. To wet the head and chest preparatory to the coldbath.

13. To keep in motion while in the coldbath, and not to stay in for the second chill: to assist the bath-servant in the frictions in the halfbath and in the wet sheet; and to employ friction in the sitzbath.

14. Not to lie too long in the wet sheet packing.

15. Not to suffer a slovenly bath-servant to rub *with* the rubbing wetsheet, but *over* it.

16. To change the bandages before they become dry; it will generally be necessary to do so six or seven times daily, and sometimes still oftener; to have every bandage put on so as to exclude the air, but not so as to impede the circulation or the respiration.

17. Not to take enemata without special directions.

18. Not to take any operation for *at least* one hour after any meal.

19. Not to open any crisis.

20. If headache should attend the sitzbath, or the wet sheet packing, to wear a cooling compress to the head during the operation.

21. To report instantly any new or unusual symptom to the medical director of the establishment.

It is possible that many other directions might be

added with advantage to the foregoing, but I give all which occur to me at the moment.

Before closing this correspondence it may not be out of place to take a retrospective glance at the history of the partial employment of water, as a curative agent, from very early times, until Priessnitz practically demonstrated its almost universal efficacy, and the needlessness of additional remedies save those of the simplest kind; and in doing so, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact, that Priessnitz has received that persecution, modified, no doubt, by the milder genius of our age, but still that persecution which has ever been given by the medical profession, as a body, to every reformer of the healing art: neither, on the other hand, can we avoid being struck by all those absurdities which from time to time have been cherished by that profession, such as* alchemy; astrology; a faith in colours; a reliance on planetary influences; cabalistic characters; the ceremonies used in the culling of simples; a trust in heathen deities or christian saints; charms; amulets; talismans; transplantations; holy wells; weapon salves; royal touchings; lustres in moonshine; bleedings; blisterings; the actual cautery; druggings with poisons; vaccinations and inoculations;—a goodly host, of which the last-mentioned six are the only survivors.

On perusing the sacred writings, we find it recorded, that more than two thousand years ago, the great Creator of all things, who doth not disdain to work his will through the operation of laws which he has himself ordained, commanded a leper to undergo a regular course of bathing for his leprosy; and on referring to profane literature, we find that Pithagoras, Hippocrates, Galen, Celsus, Cælius and others, and, in modern times, Vander Heyden, Hancock, Smith, King, Floyer, Baynard, Brown, Short, the Hahns, Currie, and many others, natives of different countries, have employed, in various ways, water as a curative agent; but still it was ever employed, even by the most enthusiastic of its advocates,

* See Pettigrew's *Superstitions connected with Medicine and Surgery*, and Millingen's *Curiosities of Medical Experience*,

merely as an adjunct to drug medication. Sir John Floyer employed water in perhaps a greater variety of cases than any physician of past times, whether ancient or modern, and still he seems to have had scarcely an idea of any mode of applying it beyond the usual cold or warm bath, and as a drink; it is true he mentions the popular custom which obtained in some places of sleeping in wet shirts and sheets, but he seems to have adopted into his own practice neither any improvement on this rude custom nor the custom itself. He also almost invariably commenced the treatment of a patient by bleeding and purging. I shall venture to quote one case in point, as it is narrated by Sir John himself. He says, "I began with her (the patient) by letting her blood and purging her once, for her strength could not bear any more; and this I did by way of preparation for the baths afterwards." After the bath, he gave her "warm ale and spirits of hartshorn;" and after some considerable amelioration in the patient's health, he prescribed her some "steel and antiscorbuticks, and ointment." In this case, Sir John commenced the treatment by bleeding and purging the patient as much as her strength could bear, or, in other words, by reducing the strength of the patient to the utmost that he dared, and then, when by the aid of the cold bath she rallied, and regained some degree of health and strength—when, in fact, to quote his own words, "her pains and swellings went quite away, and she began to use her arms and feet, which she had not done for three-quarters of a year before, when she ate her meat better, grew in flesh, and her dry cough abated," he then calls in the aid of drugs, clearly showing how little he understood of the real properties of water; and yet this is the system from which Priessnitz is accused of having stolen his! Priessnitz!—who has been the first to combine all the known applications of water previously in use, with others hitherto unknown, into "a system which already ranks among the number of the sciences." This system is the result of the accumulated knowledge derived from the experience of many years. From small beginnings Priessnitz has gradually

proceeded to a grand result :*—" While still a boy, having sprained his wrist, and having had it pumped upon, he thought of putting a wet bandage round it; this produced a rash which he did not know whether to consider good or bad; however, he persevered until the wrist was well. He subsequently adopted the same plan in other sprains and bruises, including the case of the broken ribs, and the results induced him to recommend it to his neighbours. He next tried his wet bandages in the treatment of swollen and painful joints in a variety of cases. When he found that the wet bandage did not warm on the part to which it was applied, he thought of putting a dry one over it to check evaporation. The constant appearance of a rash under the bandage previous to a cure, led him to suppose that there was some peccant or foreign matter in such cases in the system—that this matter had to be drawn out, and that water forwarded its elimination. This led him to think and reason further on the subject—his inventive powers were kept in constant activity to devise new modes of applying water. In treating different cases of cuts on the hand, he remarked that in one case the cut healed rapidly, and that in another case it became inflamed, from which he drew the inference that in one case the patient had healthy, and in the other unhealthy blood. Following up this reasoning still further, and bethinking him of the power which local applications of wet bandages had to bring out an eruption to the part to which they were applied, he resorted to elbow baths and to bandaging the arm, and thus reduced the inflammation by derivation. From this he was led to the employment of the large wet bandage round the body; and from that another step led him to the adoption of the envelopment in the wet sheet, which has been found so beneficial in fevers and other disorders, both acute and chronic. In like manner he was led step by step to the adoption of the sweating process followed by the cold bath, and also from pumping on a sprained

* The remainder of this paragraph, except the concluding sentence, is an abridgment of an unpublished manuscript, drawn up, and kindly placed at my disposal, by Capt. Claridge.

ankle to the employment of the douche* in chronic cases. The rubbing with the wet sheet is a later addition to the system, being an improvement on the spunging the body, and a means of administering a bath to persons too delicate to endure immersion." Thus bit by bit has been built up this system, which has been adopted by hundreds of medical gentlemen, is now practised in every civilized land, and which, there is every reason to believe, will finally become the orthodox practice.

It only remains to me now to express once more my sense of the obligations which I am under to the editors of the Wexford papers for the favours they have conferred upon me, and to beg of you, my dear Ridge, to accept my thanks for the kindness you have manifested in causing copies of these letters to be prepared for the press.

I leave this place with mingled emotions. Before me I have the prospect of soon shaking hands with old friends and looking once more on once familiar faces:—but, again, on the other hand, I am about to part from those who also have become to me old friends, and, in a few hours, I shall look, perhaps for the last time, on many a now familiar face. Thus are joy and sorrow ever intertwined.

Ever yours very faithfully,

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER L.

From Mr. Priessnitz to the Author.

Gräfenberg, Am 17/6, 1846.

GEEHRTER HERR GIBBS—Für Ihrer mir im Schreiben vom v^{ten} Empfang 15 Juni gemächte Mittheilung nehmen Sie meinen Danck, und zugleich die Versich-

* It is not to be inferred that Capt. Claridge means to intimate that Priessnitz was the inventor of the douche, which has long been employed in medical practice, but only that it came recommended to him by his own previous experience.

erung dass ich bis heute Niemanden noch den Auftrag gegeben habe ein Buch über die Wasser Kur zu schreiben, am allerwenigstens aber Jemanden bevollmächtigt habe ein solcher unter meinem Namen herauszugeben. Diese in der Times gemachte Ankündigung bedarf daher der Berichtigung um welche ich Sie mit diesen Zeilen ersuche.

Herr Niemann ist am 25 May von Genoa nach Malaga abgereist, hat aber von da noch nicht geschrieben. Sein Aufenthalt in Genoa wurde ihm sehr angenehm gemacht und sein Ansehen merhte sich da Er daselbst einige schöne Kuren machte. Ein gleicher wünsche auch ich von Ihnen bald zu hören ob in England oder America wäre mir gleich. Nur trachten Sie das es bald geschieht. Viele Grüsse von uns Allen und ich bin,

Ihr Stets Bereitwilliger,

VINZENZ PRIESSNITZ.

(Translation.)

For your letter of the 5th inst., received on the 15th, and for the communication contained therein, accept my thanks, and also the assurance that I never authorized any one to write or advertise a book on the water cure in my name. Therefore the advertisement in the "Times" requires a contradiction, which I request of you to give.

Herr Niemann left Genoa on the 25th of May for Malaga, but has not yet written from thence. His stay in Genoa was rendered very agreeable to him, and he found an opportunity to make some excellent cures. I wish to hear soon as much likewise from you, either from England or America, only endeavour that it soon takes place. With many greetings from us all, yours, &c.

LETTER LI.

To the Editor of the Wexford Independent.

[Republished from the *Wexford Independent*.]

Camberwell, July 28th, 1846.

DEAR SIR—I perceive in your paper of the 22d inst., a reprint of an investigation which appeared in the “Times,” and which was copied from that or some other paper without acknowledgment by your correspondent. I should not deem it necessary to offer a single word on the subject of that investigation, or to reply to the comments of one, who, in his hurry to draw deductions, scorns the vulgar trammels of reason, and who, in his indecent haste to condemn, closes his ears and heart to the pleadings of justice, if, either from an acquired wilfulness of malice or from a natural feebleness of intellect, he had not unwarrantably sought to couple my name with an event, for which, whatever opinion may be formed of it, I, with both hands, disclaim any responsibility. It would be a great hardship on me if I were to be held responsible for events of which I could have no cognizance, and over which I could have no control; and it would be a gross presumption as well as absurdity on my part, if I were to volunteer myself as the champion of every hydropathic practitioner whose practice might be assailed. I was under the impression that in those letters from Græfenberg which you and your contemporary had the kindness to lay before the public, I had left no room for misconception; and I never deemed that I should be called upon to enforce on the mind of malice or stupidity, that the only system of treatment which I have advocated is that practised at Græfenberg, and that the only practitioner in whom I have expressed confidence is Vincent Priessnitz. I have had nearly three years experience of the efficacy of the system, and of the skill and ability of its inventor, and I firmly hold by all my recorded opinions, I defy any

one to disprove a single fact which I have stated, and, admitting my facts, I defy any one to disprove a single deduction which I have drawn from them. Should a patient perish from improper treatment in the hands of Priessnitz, it might be fairly made a count in an indictment against him, and it might, with a show of reason and justice, be pleaded against his system, although it could not disprove the numerous facts, which are attested by a host of witnesses, and which testify to his skill and the efficacy of his treatment; but every principle of justice forbids that he should be held responsible for the acts of another, or that his system should be loaded with odium whenever a real or assumed case of "killing" may attend the application of baths or water-dressings by other hands. I dwell on this, because I wish it to be from henceforth for ever remembered by all those who may do me the honour to peruse my letters on this subject that I do not, and shall not at any future time deem it necessary, or within my province, to defend *the* water cure—that is Priessnitz's system—from any charges which may be brought against *a* water cure practised by any one else than Priessnitz, nor, excepting him, shall I endeavour to vindicate any practitioner but myself from any imputed errors. Whenever a death occurs in other hands I shall neither feel called upon to vindicate nor to condemn. In my opinion it would be just as wise and honourable to hold the President of the College of Surgeons, and the science of surgery, responsible for the ignorance displayed, and the fatal and unhappy consequences of that ignorance, in the case of the unfortunate Mr. Seton, the particulars of which are fresh in the public recollection, as to hold Priessnitz, or his system, responsible for a real or imputed misapplication of water by any other practitioner. In making these observations I wish to be understood as being influenced by motives which I conceive ought to influence the conduct of every one, and that I do not mean to cast any reflection on the skill or pretensions of gentlemen of whose practice I have no personal knowledge.

As to Dr. Ellis, he finds his best defence in his full and honourable acquittal by an intelligent and honest

jury of his countrymen, and in the presence of an upright and able judge, whose charge was highly favourable to the accused, facts with which your correspondent had sufficient time to make himself acquainted. That judge,—Chief Justice Tindal, is since dead—he died as suddenly as Mr. Dresser, although he had the benefit of *medical treatment*, and yet we find no one imputing his death to *that* cause, and charging his medical attendants with the crime of murder. On an examination of the evidence adduced on Dr. Ellis's trial, we find one or two points deserving of some attention. In the first place it appears, that Dr. Ellis in his treatment of the deceased did not trust solely to the remedial powers of water, but that he also administered castor oil to his patient, and yet we find no one building on that fact an argument against the utility of drug medication. Secondly, it is made to appear that deceased died of one of a class of diseases the symptoms of which are proverbially treacherous, and in the diagnosis of which it is confessed that the most eminent practitioners may be deceived. Thirdly, there was not a full, but only a very slight and slovenly post mortem examination into the cause of death. Fourthly, that examination was held after the body had been removed for many miles from Dr. Ellis's establishment, and without that gentleman having had any intimation that such an examination was about to be held. Fifthly, the deceased, who died in May, had been attended in the previous March for "jaundice and stomach derangement," there being no "disease of the liver," (!) by one of the medical gentlemen who chose to hold this under-hand examination. Sixthly, and lastly, those two medical gentlemen, who are so forward to condemn another for an error in diagnosis, differ among themselves as to what one would at first be led to suppose there could not possibly be a difference of opinion about, namely, as to whether the liver was congested or not—one of them swearing that "the liver was congested," and the other as positively swearing that "the liver was not congested, although his partner thought so." From the foregoing facts, Sir, I leave it to your readers to draw their own conclusions.

Not understanding your correspondent's allusion to mesmerism, or what connection there is between it and the water cure generally, or between it and the case under discussion in particular, I pass it by, and with many thanks for all your favours,

I am, dear sir, yours faithfully,

JOHN GIBBS.

LETTER LII.

*R. T. Ridge, Esq., to Sir Francis le Hunte,
President of the Enniscorthy Hydropathic Society.*

"The lancet—that minute instrument of mighty mischief!"—
DR. REID.

"Hydropathy must expect the same fate as all other useful systems; that is, to be assailed in the commencement by some, whose prejudices against it are honest—by others, who oppose it merely for opposition sake,—by the majority, because its practice would clash with their interests."—DR. FELDMANN on Hydropathy.

Camberwell, Jan. 25, 1847.

MY DEAR SIR FRANCIS—It is only to the too prevalent propensity, which has been manifested in all ages, to substitute persecution where argument fails to stay the advance of useful innovation, that we can attribute some recent attempts to put down hydropathy by victimising its practitioners.

Not long ago one gentleman was subjected to the inconvenience and the loss necessarily attendant on defending himself before a legal tribunal, against the frivolous and vexatious charge of having been accessory to the death of a patient whom he had treated on the hydropathic system, a charge of which he was honourably acquitted, notwithstanding the adverse testimony of two

legally qualified surgeons, who *agreed* in swearing that death had resulted from the treatment, while they *differed* as to the appearances presented on dissection.

A similar attempt to harass and injure another hydropathic practitioner, and to bring hydropathy into disrepute, is apparent in the late proceedings at Enfield, when a coroner's jury returned a verdict of manslaughter against Dr. Lovell, the medical attendant, and against Mrs. Betts, the aunt of the deceased.

It appears from a case of "Endocarditis in progress of cure," at Whitworth Hospital, as reported in the "Lancet" of the second ultimo, that medical men who prescribe drugs *fearlessly* acknowledge that a patient has been killed by the treatment adopted. The patient "was treated with stimulants together with mercury and opium. He was relieved as soon as he became mercurialized. On the 24th of January the heart symptoms were *completely* relieved, &c.; but the gums became ulcerated from the effects of the mercury, the teeth fell out, mercurial erithism affected the system, and the patient *died from the effects of the mercury*, in nine days. Post mortem: the pericardium and external surface of the heart and its tissues were sound, the state of the valves was very *interesting!*"* Was the medical gentleman who prescribed the treatment cited before a legal tribunal to answer to a charge of manslaughter? Were the relatives of the deceased indicted as accessories?

Let us contrast with the foregoing statement of admitted facts the medical speculative testimony on which it is sought to convict Dr. Lovell and Mrs. Betts. In entering upon this subject I am influenced solely by a desire to place the matter in its proper light, without being allured by the trivial task of breaking "a butterfly upon the wheel."

In Mr. Asbury's Report, which is more remarkable for a profusion of professional technicalities than for the soundness of its physiological deductions, we find it

* Hundreds of similar cases might be quoted.

stated that there was "a perfectly anemial or bloodless condition of body," and that the immediate cause of death was "recent inflammation of the pericardium and the arachnoid membranes and pia mater, with congestion of the brain, brought on by the transfer of a chronic constitutional disease of the skin to internal organs; the transfer facilitated by the continued application of cold water." It is worthy of remark, that inflammation of important organs may exist in a perfectly anemial condition of body, and, strange as it may appear, this gentleman states that blood should have been taken to subdue this inflammation! Such treatment most assuredly would have cured the inflamed brain by killing the patient, as the mercury cured the heart disease at Whitworth Hospital.

As Mr. Asbury has admitted that, under the drug treatment, the transfer of erysipelas to vital organs is no unusual occurrence, it is unnecessary to dwell on that point; I shall, therefore, at once proceed to inquire to what degree of estimation Mr. Asbury's speculations are entitled.

We are assured by almost all medical writers, from Hippocrates to those of the present day, that "the treatment of erysipelas," as Dr. Gregory says, "has proved a fertile theme of controversy." But, amongst the conflicting authorities on this subject, we find such writers as Doctors Brown, Stock, Darwin, Rutty, and Mr. Rigby, all coinciding in opinion with Dr. R. Thomas, who, in his *Practice of Physic*, says, "I have myself frequently recommended linen cloths, wetted with a cooling lotion, in erysipelatous inflammations, with much benefit and relief to the feelings of the patient." A writer in the "*Medical and Physical Journal*" also states that he "has tried cold applications freely and repeatedly where the inflammation of erysipelas has run extremely high, both locally and constitutionally, and never found that phrenitis, angina, or any other complaint, was the result." Mr. Erasmus Wilson, in his *Treatise on the Skin*, gives it as his opinion, that "the reduction of inflammation may be effected entirely or much facilitated by diluent diet, by moist covering of the part, and by local or ge-

neral bathing, according to the nature of the case.”* It is evident, therefore, that eminent medical men have sanctioned the application of cold and tepid water in erysipelatous diseases, and that the practice is no novelty.

If the advocates of bleeding and warm applications in erysipelatous inflammation could appeal to the success of their mode of treatment, it might be unnecessary for them to learn the principles and practice of hydropathy; but when the old method of treating disease has so repeatedly failed to save life, it is vain to boast of a medical knowledge which has not furnished a capability of understanding a system, which holds out to medical men, what they so long have stood in need of—a rational mode of curing cutaneous diseases, “the treatment of which,” to again quote from Dr. Gregory, “has long been the opprobrium and disgrace of physic.”

I am, my dear Sir Francis,

Ever yours very faithfully,

R. T. RIDGE.

P.S.—As this letter was written several days before the charges preferred against Dr. Lovell and Mrs. Betts were sent to a petty jury, it becomes necessary to add a few words. Owing to an error in the newspaper report of the proceedings at the coroner’s inquest, it did not appear at the time that Mr. Asbury admitted, that, inasmuch as the “transfer of disease from one structure to another not unfrequently took place under the most judicious treatment, therefore it was impossible to arrive at the conclusion that cold applications were a remote cause of death in this case.”

The Recorder, in his opening charge to the grand jury, said, that “all that was proved against the accused persons was, that they had placed the deceased in a tepid bath, and that some wet bandages had been placed upon her person; and from these facts it would seem that the

* Dr. Weeding, in his work on the water cure, gives a case of erysipelas which he treated successfully, solely with the appliances of the water treatment, without any other medicinal applications, either externally or internally.

coroner's jury had inferred that the disease, which was one of a cutaneous character, had been driven into the system and so caused her death. The medical testimony, however, completely negatived such an inference ; but in the teeth of that evidence the jury returned a verdict of manslaughter. The grand jury would have to say, whether, under such circumstances, they could come to a conclusion that there was any pretence for such a charge, or whether there was the least proof of any criminal negligence, or indeed any negligence whatever ; and he must say that it did appear to him very alarming that an aunt, who appeared in this case to have acted with the greatest kindness towards her niece, and to have assisted the medical man who had been called in at her request to attend upon the deceased, by doing all in her power to relieve her, should have been subjected to a charge of manslaughter for merely placing her niece in a bath, which was the extent of the evidence against her ; and he could not help observing, that if coroners' juries generally were to pursue such a course of proceeding, all their interests would be in peril. Their duty, therefore, if they should find the evidence to go no further than he had stated, would clearly be to shield persons from the ignominy of a trial for felony, when there did not appear to be any foundation for the charge made against them.' In accordance with the foregoing charge, the bills against Dr. Lovell and Mrs. Betts were thrown out by the grand jury ; the case was nevertheless sent to a petty jury, by whom, however, as was to be expected, the accused were honourably acquitted. In charging the petty jury, Mr. Justice Cresswell said, that "it was the law that no man could be found guilty of a crime unless he was proved to have committed it. In this case, a scientific man, who was the only witness that could be called, told them that he could not prove it, and therefore it was their duty to acquit the accused parties."

APPENDIX.

FIRST REPORT OF THE ENNISCORTHY HYDROPATHIC SOCIETY.

President.

SIR F. LE HUNTE.

Vice Presidents.

RICHARD F. HUSON. | JAMES F. TIGHE.

Committee.

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J. MORRISON.		W. PAGE.		J. BOBIER.
SAMUEL DAVIS.		JACOB MARTIN.		

Treasurer.

F. DAVIS, Jun.

Secretary.

ROBERT THOMAS RIDGE.

Your committee, in presenting this their first report, beg to advert to the objects for which your society was founded. At a public meeting held in this town, July 27th, 1843, Captain Claridge delivered a lecture on Hydropathy, when he made statements relative to the remedial powers of water in the treatment of disease, which excited so much interest, that your society was formed on the 28th of July, for the following purposes, viz. :—

1. To make inquiries and collect information as to the truth of what has been written by different authors on hydropathy, and advanced by Captain Claridge on the same subject.

2. To publish authentic information.

3. If hydropathy be found to be true, to promote its adoption as a matter of humanity.

Your committee have to express their regret that those laudable and philanthropic objects have not awakened a more earnest spirit of inquiry among those who are deemed to be the conservators of the public health; and that men, whose education and experience might teach them how uncertain, unsatisfactory, and anomalous, is the treatment of disease under the drug system, should not only be the *last* fairly and calmly to investigate the merits, but should be the *foremost* to oppose the adoption, of a new system which claims to be not only less dangerous, but more efficacious than the old. Since the formation of your society, your committee have had to mourn over many deaths from typhus fever among their friends and neighbours; and they have observed the existence of a professional silence relative to the efficacy of the means employed in the treatment of those fatal cases. "A bad and hopeless case," has often been the opinion pronounced by the physician in attendance; and even cases which had been reported to have been progressing favourably, are known to have speedily assumed alarming symptoms, and to have terminated fatally in a few hours. "A hopeless case," must mean a case over which the ordinary treatment has no control; and, although in such a case, death is rarely, if ever, attributed by professional men to the inutility of the means employed, but almost always to the violence of the disorder, it cannot be denied that there is need of some other system of treating fevers than that composed of the "usual remedies." In making this assertion, your committee do so with a full sense of the kindness and zeal at all times exhibited by the medical gentlemen of this town, in doing the utmost in their power to alleviate suffering and stay the hand of death by the employment of all those appliances with the knowledge of which their professional education has furnished them; but your committee also emphatically assert, that when medical men find that many classes of disease, and even many stages of the same disease, are "beyond the reach of their art," they are in all duty bound, both to themselves as a learned body,

and to the public, of whose health they are the guardians, to investigate freely and dispassionately the claims which the hydropathic system advances to be preferred to the drug practice in the treatment of disease of every kind, but especially of fever. Deaths have likewise occurred, and must again occur, under the water cure, and the question presents itself, are those deaths to be attributed to the remedies employed, or in each case to the nature and violence of the disorder? To attempt the solution of a physiological question would be out of place in such a report as this, but surely, when a death occasionally occurs under the water cure, and when the fatal event is attributed to that system, it may likewise be deemed a legitimate inference that the drug system is the cause of the many deaths which take place under it. Until the science of hydropathy be proved not to be based on sound physiology, and until the opinions of eminent medical men in favour of hydropathy are clearly refuted, it should be urged that that system which cures the most, and loses the fewest by death, out of a given number of cases in any disease (say fever), is *the* system which at all times ought to be had recourse to to treat that disease. This question, then, is not to be decided by theories, nor by any person or profession, but by facts which are within the reach of all who will take the trouble to investigate them. The statistics of fever hospitals in large metropolitan districts, show that in the cases treated the average number of deaths is about twelve in every hundred. Having premised thus much, your committee now proceed to report the information which they have been able to collect respecting the statements made in favour of the water cure; and, if it shall appear that out of several thousands of cases treated by the water cure appliances, fewer deaths have taken place than out of a like number treated by drugs, surely it behoves all those who have the welfare of their fellow-creatures at heart to encourage and adopt that system which, in its results, presents the stronger claims to support.

In August, 1843, your townsman, John Gibbs, Esq., arrived at Græfenberg, and, in the December following,

he commenced a correspondence, in the course of which, during the remainder of his residence of two years and eight months, he favoured the honorary secretary of your society with the particulars of over one hundred cases in a series of twenty-eight letters, twenty-three of which were published in your county papers. For the important information thus communicated to your society, your committee feel bound to put on record their marked thanks to Mr. Gibbs; and the kindness and liberality with which the editors of the Wexford papers have opened their columns to the admission of those letters, and of various other communications, and generally to the free discussion of the merits of hydropathy, entitle those gentlemen likewise to the best thanks of your committee.

According to Mr. Gibbs's letters, and to the Austrian police reports, it appears that in little more than three years, counting from the 1st of January, 1843, to the 12th of April, 1846, inclusive, there were at Græfenberg and Freiwaldau 3,516 patients under the treatment of Priessnitz; among that number, and in that time, there were thirteen deaths, making an average of less than one death in every 271 patients. When it is borne in mind that the great majority of these had vainly tried the drug practice under the best medical advisers, and that very many of them had dragged on a weary existence for years before arriving at Græfenberg, so small an amount of mortality must strike the minds of the unprejudiced with conviction in favour of the results of hydropathy, when compared with those of drugs, as witnessed every day and on every side. Numerous cases of fever, scarletina, measles, small pox, inflammation of the lungs and bowels, dysentery and common cholera, were treated, and amongst them there was but a *single* death!

Mr. Gibbs's statements have been fully corroborated by communications which were published in the London "Times," "New York Tribune," "Galignani's Messenger," and other papers, with upwards of two hundred signatures, embracing amongst them the names of noblemen, military and naval officers, members of learned societies, clergymen, medical men, and gentlemen of dis-

tion from different parts of Europe and America.

A most important document addressed to the Archduke Franz Carl, heir presumptive to the throne of Austria, on his arrival at Gräfenberg, while expressing the thanks of numerous titled personages, and other individuals from various countries, for the protection which the Austrian Government has extended to hydropathy, at the same time records the admiration of the subscribers for the hydropathic system and its celebrated originator.

In this neighbourhood, your committee have learned, that within the last three years your secretary has practised the water cure with success in the treatment of acute and chronic diseases, having cured, amongst other cases, one of lock-jaw, and, in a very worn out and attenuated patient, a man of about sixty years of age, a diabetes of very long standing. These two cases are particularized, because the one disease is deemed almost incurable, and the other is very unmanageable under the drug treatment.

The information obtained from other parts of the kingdom may also be regarded as important. Sir Arthur Clarke, M.D., in a letter with which he favoured your secretary, speaks of the success with which he has practised the water cure in Dublin. The following is an extract from a letter which Dr. Barter, of Blarney, kindly addressed to your secretary;—"I am delighted to be able to inform you that hydropathy, in this neighbourhood, holds a very high position: with few exceptions all the rich and intelligent of Cork are converts to hydropathy. I have not time to attend to outdoor patients, My establishment is always full, and usually several are obliged to wait for months to get admission; it is now open more than three years, during which time I have treated above six hundred persons; no patients left the establishment worse than when they came, the great majority left cured, and there has been no death."

The report of the Limerick Hydropathic Society states:—"From all that has come under our notice in respect to this important subject, we feel convinced that the introduction of the water treatment will be of the

greatest benefit, and, as applied to many diseases, invaluable; while in many others it will afford relief where medicine cannot, we would more especially allude to cases of fever, a scourge with which our city is so frequently afflicted." The report of the Dublin Hydropathic Society states, that "the water cure has certainly produced most extraordinary results, which have been a blessing to thousands who have been long afflicted, and could not be relieved by any other known means; and if evils have flowed from its adoption by those understanding its application, the committee have yet to be made acquainted with them." The report of the Glasgow Hydropathic Society states, that "certain facts have passed under the review of the committee, which it would be difficult for them to deny, and which, if admitted, it would be equally difficult for them to believe, and not endeavour to make more extensively known among the community at large. These facts relate to the cure of thousands who laboured under diseases of various names—are attested by witnesses whose intelligence and integrity would gain them credit at any tribunal, and the facts, themselves, remain unrefuted to this hour." And the committee add, that "If they are compelled to reject the whole evidence which has been accumulated in favour of hydropathy, they fear that they will be compelled to abandon all confidence in every method of cure at present in existence." The report of the London Hydropathic Society states, that the council "feel justified in asserting, from the information they have now received from various authentic sources, that in many chronic cases the water treatment will effect cures which medicine has failed to accomplish; and that in acute cases where its powers are the most striking, it combines greater certainty in its results, with greater safety in its application, than the ordinary medical means; and that with reference to the diseases of children, its introduction to this country is a boon alike to the cottage and the palace; a most valuable aid to nursery practice, which will, if properly carried out, lend a powerful hand to check the appalling and increasing spread of constitutional hereditary disease."

Such is an epitome of the information your committee have collected in reference to hydropathy, irrespective of that large mass of information contained in the numerous English works, about sixty in number,* which have been published on the subject, and many of which have been written by eminent medical men, several of whom have visited Græfenberg and various other establishments. It is unnecessary to do more than allude to those works, as they have been long before the public, and are now well known and appreciated; but before closing this report, your committee would call particular attention to an article, which, having appeared but recently, and in a journal which is seldom read except by medical men, is not yet so generally known and esteemed as it deserves to be. The article alluded to is to be found in the number of the "British and Foreign Medical Review" for last October, and is from the pen of the editor, Dr. John Forbes. He says, "If it shall appear, as we believe it will, on further examination, that the external application of cold water is capable of being beneficially applied in the cure of diseases, in modes of greater efficacy, and to a much greater extent, than has been hitherto practised by medical men, there remains only one course for the members of the profession to pursue, viz. *to adopt the improvements*—if such they are—regardless of their

* Viz.: Captain Claridge's two works—Hydropathy, and Facts and Evidences; Dr. James Wilson's four works—A Practical Treatise, Drug Complaints, the Practice of the Water Cure, and the Dangers of the Water Cure; Dr. Edward Johnson's four works—Hydropathy, Results of Hydropathy, Lecture, and Letter; Mr. Abdy's Cases of Cure, Sir C. Scudamore's Medical Visit, Dr. Smethurst's Hydrotherapæia, Dr. Weiss's Handbook, Dr. T. J. Graham's Water Treatment, Dr. Gully's Water Cure, Dr. R. H. Graham's True Report, Mr. Wright's Six Months at Græfenberg, Dr. Balbirnie's Philosophy; Dr. Shew's three works—Hydropathy, Handbook, and Facts; Mrs. Shew's Hydropathy for Ladies, Mr. Beamish's Water Cure, Sir A. Clarke's Observations, Dr. Courtney's Hydropathy, Dr. King's Observations, Dr. Martin's Principles, Dr. Weeding's Wet Sheet, Dr. Heathcote's Observations, Dr. Feldmann's Theory, Dr. Freeman's Reflections, Dr. Weatherhead on Gout, Mr. Wilmot's Tribute, Sir E. L. Bulwer's Confessions, Dr. Mayo's Use and Misuse, Dr. Preshaw's Wet Sheet, Mr. Lane's Life at the Water Cure, Mr. Horsell's Hydropathy. Mr. Græter's Manual, Dr. Bushnan's Observations, Mr. Schlemer's Lectures, Mr. Greave's Testimony, &c., &c.

origin, or their past or present relations." In another place, speaking of Priessnitz, he says, "He now possesses an enormous establishment, capable of containing several hundreds of patients, which is almost constantly crowded with ladies and gentlemen of every degree, and from every nation; while his disciples and followers, as is well known, have spread themselves throughout the world, and maintain in every country numerous and flourishing establishments, formed on the original model of Gräfenberg." On the subject of Priessnitz's mode of treatment, the doctor says, "It is scarcely too much to say that he has modified the application of water, and some very few other means, in a manner so ingenious as to render them no imperfect *nominal* substitute, at least, for most of the drugs of the pharmacopæia. He has his stimulant, his sedative, his tonic, his reducing agent, his purgative, his astringent, his diuretic, his styptic, his febrifuge, his diaphoretic, his alterative, his counter-irritant. Combined with these are peculiar regulations as to diet, dress and regimen." Doctor Forbes then says, that Priessnitz's "mode of ascertaining the power of the constitution is quite original, and cannot be said to be unscientific;" and the doctor next enters into a description of the various appliances of hydropathy, respecting which he gives it as his opinion that they are most efficacious and in accordance with sound physiological principles, and, when directed by experienced practitioners, unattended with the dangers vulgarly attributed to them.

In conclusion, your committee beg to say, that, from all that they have heard, and from what some of them have witnessed in their own families, they are satisfied that those persons who endeavour to place hydropathy before the public, in a manner in which its merits can be fairly tested, and the public mind disabused of the erroneous and prejudiced opinions concerning it, are labouring to confer upon mankind a blessing, the tendency of which is to alleviate the ills of humanity more than any other lauded discovery of the age of innovation in which we live. (Signed) F. LE HUNTE, PRESIDENT.

R. T. RIDGE, HON. SEC.

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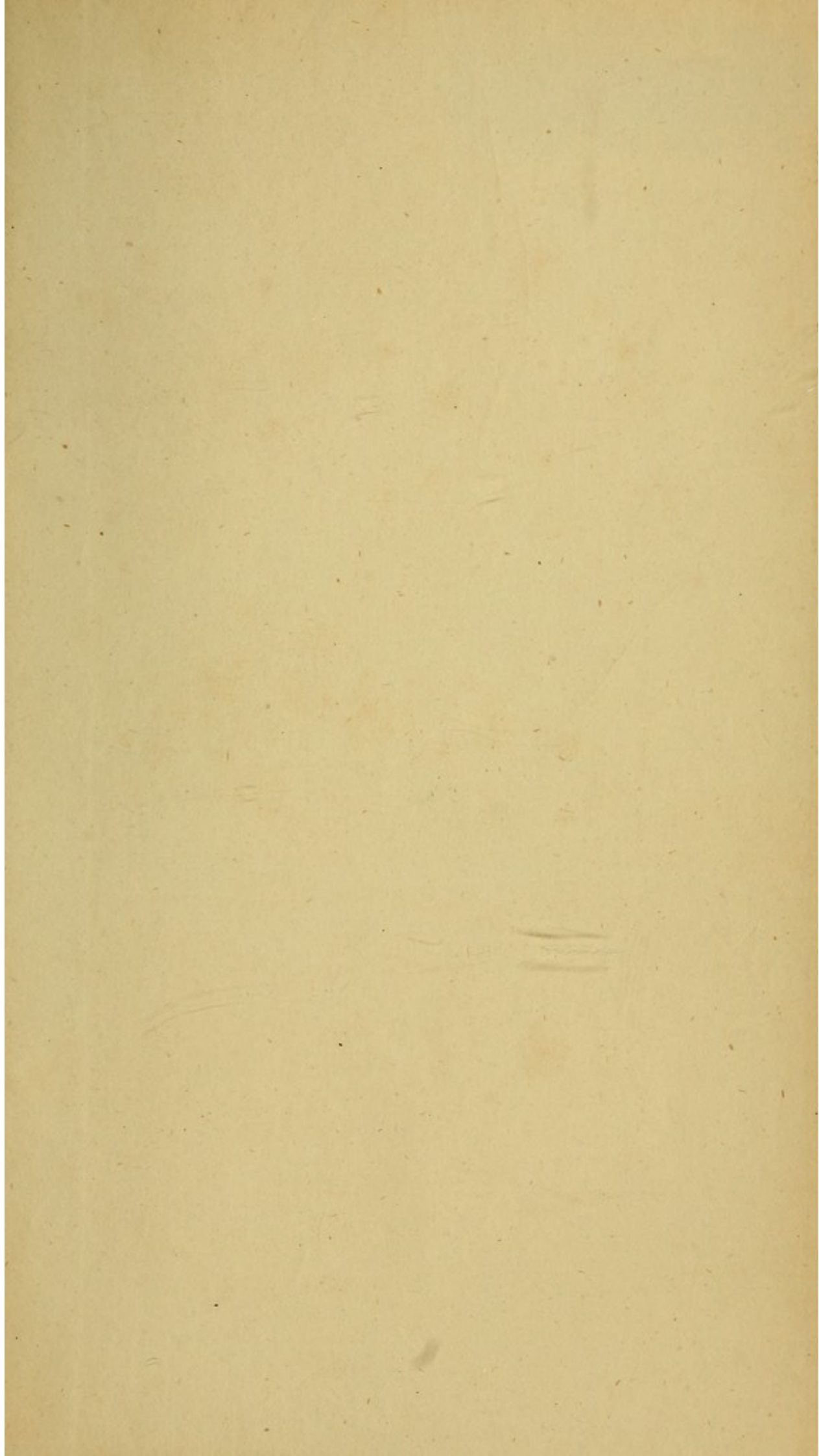
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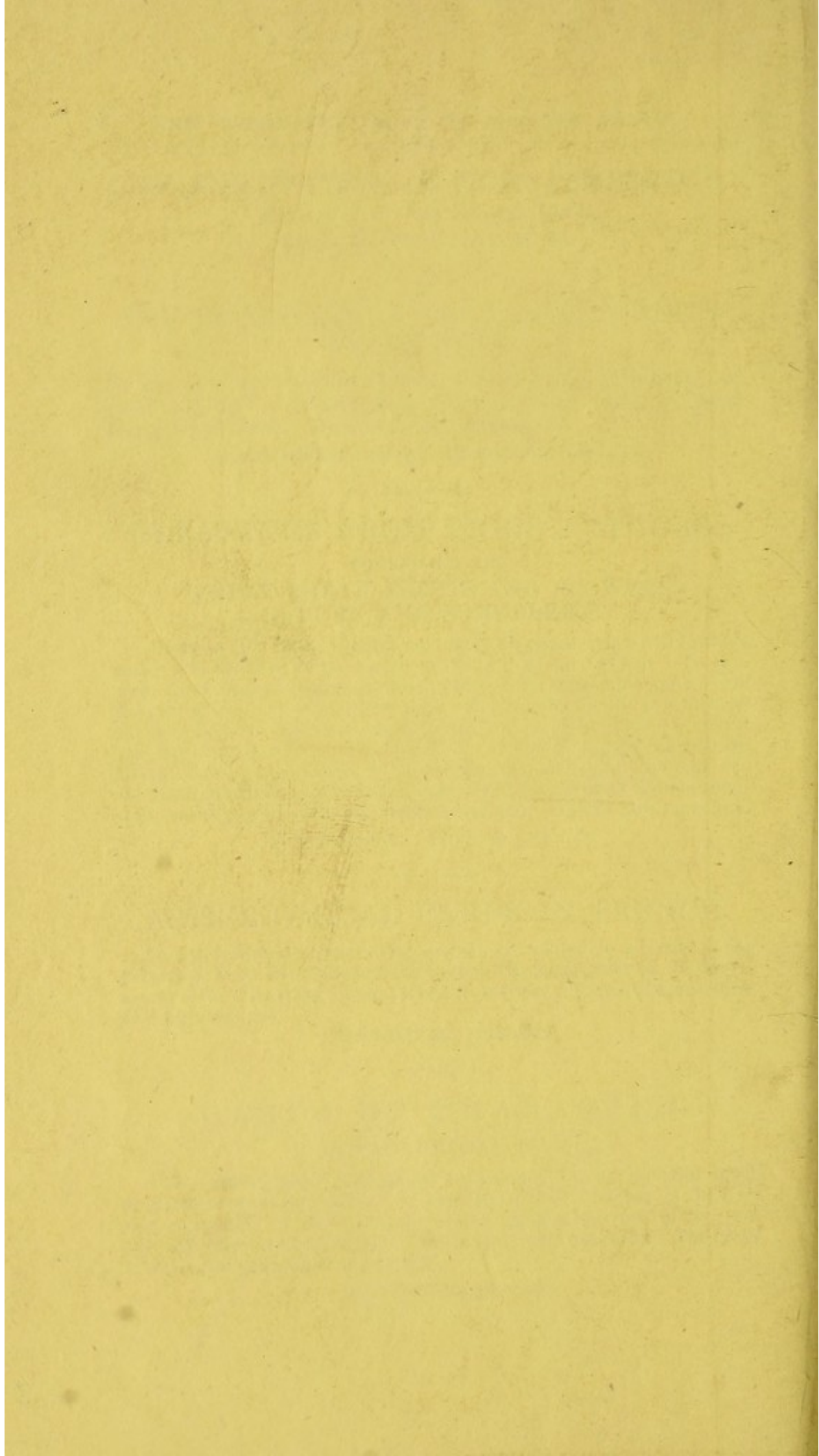
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