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GUIDE

FOR

SELF PRESERVATION,

AND

PARENTAL AFFECTION

OR

Plain Directions

FOR ENABLING PEOPLE TO KEEP

THEMSELVES and their CHILDREN

Free from several Common Disorders.

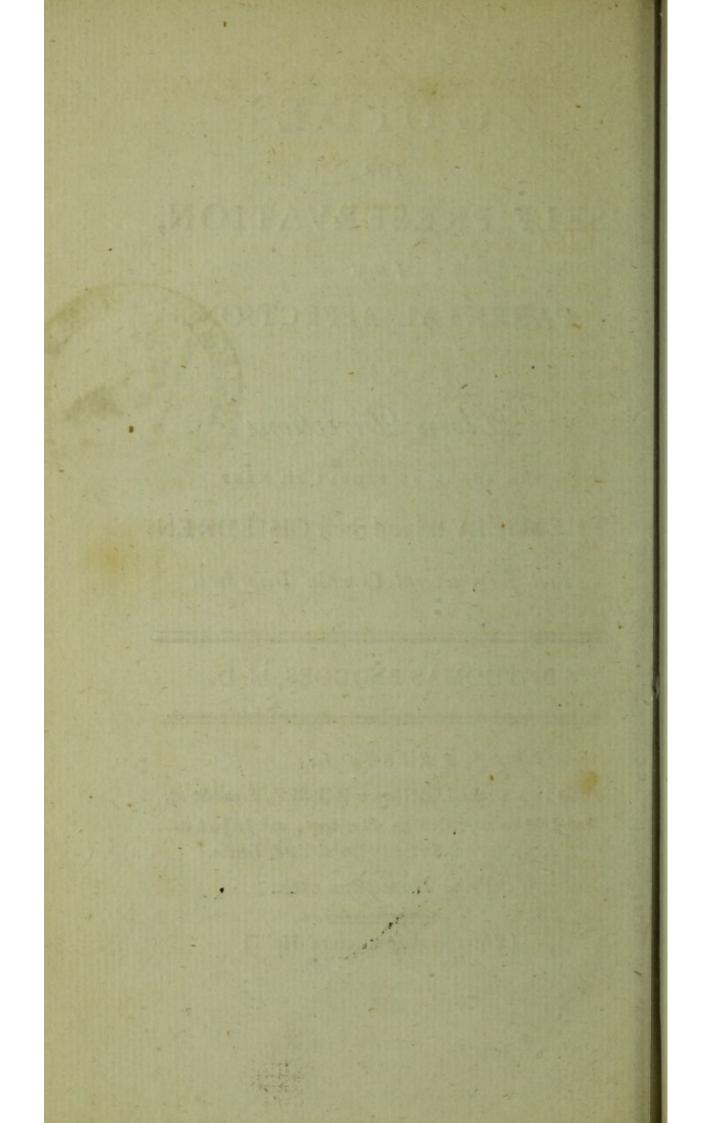
By THOMAS BEDDOES, M.D.

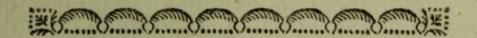
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PREFACE.

OUR power over Nature, according to the fine observation of Bacon, increases with our physical knowledge. The remark may be extended to moral knowledge; for as moral causes come to be more fully understood, we shall not only be better enabled to regulate our own minds, and the minds of those placed within the sphere of our influence; but the desire to exert it will, as in other instances, accompany the possession of the power.

Upon this principle, Natural History, which has so many recommendations besides, appears to be the study, best adapted to children. The habit it confers of observing animals would obviate the propensity, now so common, to torment them: Thus would the early association of pleasure with cruelty be prevented; and hardness of heart, which consists in a disposition to be agreeably affected by the sufferings of sensitive beings, or, at best, in indifference to them,

probably become a very rare quality.

But the knowledge of the Natural History of our own species, would, I believe, be productive of far more beneficial consequences than that of any other branch of this extensive science. Parental affection, especially that of mothers, seldom requires to be strengthened, but it requires, in too many cases, to be directed. Now to give it a better direction is obviously, with regard to its objects, the same thing as strengthening it. Besides, there is nothing more amusing than to make observations, when we have any principles with which we can compare them. Hence, I conceive, Children must become, if not more interesting, at least more rationally interesting, did parents but understand the operation of those powers, which, though we are, all of us, every

moment exposed to them, affect children with tenfold violence, in proportion to the tenderness of their frame.

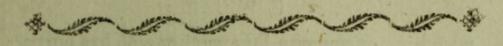
These reflections on Parental Affection, apply equally to Self Preservation. Both principles are ever active and alert. But both require a Guide; for as long as they are actuated by blind feeling alone, the chance whether they shall do harm or good, is pretty

nearly equal.

But two considerable difficulties stand in the way of every attempt to disseminate information on this important subject. In the first place, the opinions of different practitioners of medicine on the influence of heat and cold are in some respects as diametrically opposite as they were during the contest concerning the treatment of the small pox. Now, as it would be a want of good faith, to lay down, for certain and approved, any disputed observances, it becomes necessary to make ordinary readers umpires in a controversy between professional men: and this can only be done by relating, with strict adherence to truth, the principal facts with which we are acquainted on the subject. These facts seem to me to form a body of evidence, such as no unprejudiced mind can resist. And, if so, it is not, in the present case, necessary, that any thing should take place like the occurrence in the fable. where the patient expires while the Doctors are squab-: Whing.

In order to obviate the second difficulty, I have endeavoured to write in a style so familiar as to be intelligible to all readers and all hearers. My purpose is to give the poor, in particular, some ideas on the art of rearing children, and to teach those who are grown up how they may escape several serious disorders as well as some of those lighter ailments, which, in this fickle climate, often render the half of life uncomfortable. I have confined myself to a few topics, because I really doubt whether I shall be able to treat such a subject in a manner at once popular and instructive. If it should be thought that I have succeeded, it will be easy enough to go forward along the

same track.



A

GUIDE

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AND

PARENTAL AFFECTION.

I OU can hardly imagine, my friends, what havock Death makes among the younger part of poor families almost all the world over, and in Britain, as well as elfewhere. Inoculation, it is true, has of late years faved thousands of lives; for the natural fmall-pox, whether it feizes on the old or the young, is a most unmerciful disorder. In spite of inoculation, however, it is lamentable to think what multitudes still die in the rearing. Infants are most liable to be cut off by accident or lost by milmanagement; and children the next; grown persons are the most hardy, till old age or second childhood comes on; when we are as tender as just after we are born .- But I must mention a few instances in order to give you a better notion of the great mortality, of which I am speaking. You will then be fatisfied what a ferious matter this is for our confideration; and you will hearken more heedfully to the directions, which I shall afterwards give you for the prefervation of your own health and that of your children.

You must know that in the Highlands of Scotland where the weather is exceedingly cold in winter and where the people live very hardly, it

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is nothing uncommon for a mother who has borne TWENTY CHILDREN, not to have Two alive. You may imagine then that if a poor woman in that country should have a large family and rear but half her children, she has extraordinary good luck indeed.—But you may think that as the Highlands of Scotland are a long way off, and as the living in that country is different from what it is with us, you need not trouble your head about what happens there. So I shall give you an instance nearer home. Now I can affure you that with the children of the poor in London the case is nearly as bad. In London half the children, taking all conditions together, die before they are five years old. But as the children of the rich seldom or never fuffer for want of food or cleanliness, or of attendance when they are fick, the lofs falls heaviest on the families of hard-working people; and it is most likely that not less than one half of their children perish before they are three years old.

Take one instance more and then I will come to the point. Last October I was determined to find out what the loss in children might be in a situation different both from the Highlands and from London. So I made the enquiry at a little open well-aired town in Shropshire, where the poor have the better chance of doing well as firing is plentiful and cheap. All the inhabitants of this town, who had no way of livelihood but the labour of their hands, were asked how many children they had had in all, and how many out

of them were dead.

What is exceedingly remarkable, as well as exceedingly melancholy to think upon, is this; it appeared from my inquiry, that the largest families had lost most children in proportion. There were, I found, in this small town thirty poor families, that had had six children, or upwards of six children, each. The whole number of children in these

thefe thirty families was 246 Out of which there were already dead, 90 that is, above one child in three. I fay, already dead, because it is to be expected that many more will yet be cut off, before they attain the age of manhood. There were also in this town twentyfive poor families, that had had five children or under, each; the whole number of children in these twenty-five families was 102 Of these there were dead,

that is, not one child in eight.

These last children, it is very likely, were upon an average younger than the children of the larger families, and therefore they had had fewer years to die in: Yet, even making all reasonable allowance for this difference, the disproportion of deaths between the large and small families will still remain very great and lamentable, as it is an evident proof of the extreme mifery large families must endure.

You may ask how this matter stangs in Bristol. and elsewhere. I cannot inform you. I have not heard that any strict enquiry has been made. So, you fee, the old faying still holds good—one half of the world knows not how the other half lives. I wish it were otherwise, I confess; for the proper remedy can never be applied, till the evil is

thoroughly understood.

Now which, think you, is the most likely, that there should be something wrong in our management? or that three parts in four of our fellow creatures should be doomed unavoidably to perish, before they come to their full growth, without anfwering any other purpose than to give trouble and endure pain? If this last be the case, then of all the things in this wide world, whether living or dead, the human frame is the worst contrived and executed.

executed. And I leave you to judge whether fuch a supposition stands to reason.—If then, our management of ourselves and our children be wrong in any material points, a stop may be put to this excessive mortality, for we should only have to find out what these points are, and to shape

our conduct accordingly.

Being fully perfuaded that by attending to certain easy practices, at present neglected, the health of children and grown people may be preserved and their lives prolonged; I design to give you some directions about these practices. It would be easiest to give simple directions. But I wish to make you comprehend the reasons, upon which they are sounded. This, I am aware, will be dissicult; but, it is well worth while to try, because people seldom do any thing well, except perhaps sums in arithmetic, unless their understanding be convinced. Then they go to work chearfully and execute properly what they set about.

Do not expect however, that I am to teach you how to doctor vourselves or others. It is impossible that you should understand the nature or the cure of disorders, unless you had first learned a number of things, each of which requires much study and time. Indeed, whenever a person, who does not understand these things, undertakes to meddle with physick, he stands a chance of poisoning himself or somebody else; and though (as is commonly said by the ignorant by way of excuse for their interference) their physic be such as if it does no good*, can do no harm, still by keeping away for a while a person of greater skill, death may be

^{*} These seemingly simple things are sometimes as dangerous to play with as edge-tools. The Hotwell water and assessmilk are two simple as well as useful things. Yet persons who come here with a strong pulse, an hard tearing cough and spitting of blood withal, often find to their cost how mischevious they are, when unadvisedly used.

the consequence; for afterwards it may be too late

for the most skilful to save the patient.

It is, in truth, usual enough for a pratting Doctor when the eldest son is ill, to pretend to make my Lady understand to a tittle what is the matter with him, and how his draughts are to drive the disorder out of his body. But this is merely in the way of trade. His only design is to give her an high notion of his skilfulness, in order that she may tell among her acquaintance, what a fine man Dr. Sleeklips is! As to herself, she is never a whit the wifer, after he has finished, than before he began, his harangue. Now as you cannot understand any more of the matter than my Lady, I shall confine myself to what it lies in your power to observe and avoid.

1.-You will be at no loss to comprehend how much a family must suffer which has neither a sufficient quantity of wholesome food, nor cloathing enough to keep out the cold in winter. The children especially become weak and contract lingering disorders, which wear them away by degrees; or else they are mowed down at once by the measles, sorethroat, fever, or any violent disorder, that may happen to be going about. To keep the children strong, and in good plight to stand fuch complaints, there is but one way. The father. must be sober and industrious; and the mother learn to manage well. Much may be done by forecast; a crown laid out with care will go as far to supply the wants of a family as a pound laid out thoughtlessly. So it behoves a mother to consider well which is the best way to lay out her money before she parts with it. As to the father, I shall fay nothing now of the shocking consequences of his drinking hard, as I have already fet them forth at large in the History of Isaac Jenkins. Observe only, I befeech you, how much worse the family must needs fare, when the father is a sot, the larger A 5

it is. For as more mouths are to be fed out of the pittance of his wages that is left for housekeeping, the less will go to each mouth. For this reason, it is usual to find more children dead, the more any poor couple has had. Thus where there have been as many as eight children in one family, you shall find commonly enough two or three or four dead; but take four families of two children each, and all the eight children shall often be alive and

hearty, as I have already observed.

2.—But, in the second place, poor people are apt, from over-fondness, to gorge their children at particular times, till they make them quite ill. Enough, but beware of too much is the true maxim of diet for all ages and all conditions. Enough is faid to be as good as a feast; but it is better than a feast, if the feast is to end in a surfeit. I have often had persons (indeed they were generally rich perfons) complaining to me of being hot and reftless all night and having a foul taste in their mouths every morning. And when I came to examine, what was the reason of all this, I pray you? Why, they were feldom fatisfied without eating more than their stomach could away with; so there lay almost constantly within them a fermenting mass of undigested aliment; and no wonder this should keep the body all night on the fret, fo as to prevent the person from getting his natural rest. No complaint, as every body knows, is now-a-days more common than wind in the stomach and bowels: All the food beyond what the stomach can digest runs into fermentation and produces wind, fome kinds of food more, some less. Hence I have generally found that, when I could prevail upon people to be moderate in the use of a proper diet, this complaint was greatly relieved or went off altogether. Children bear to be crammed still worse than men and women; and where this practice is followed, they are very foon killed by mistaken kindnels. And

And if ever you have observed how soon children are inflamed and made drunk with spirituous liquors, you may judge that if these liquors are only a slow poison to us, they are a very quick poison to them: Unless I could shew them to you, it would be impossible for me to make you conceive what pale, stupid, miserable objects those children are, whose parents give them gin or brandy; which is no uncommon practice in some parts of this kingdom. Stout, healthy children need no fermented liquor of any sort; as to sickly children, wine in small quantities, or beer where the parents cannot afford wine, may be good for them; but they only waste the life and strength of others.

3.—"I once knew," fays Dr. Franklin, "an instance of four young men, who having worked at harvest in the heat of the day, with a view of refreshing themselves, plunged into a spring of cold water. Two died upon the spot, a third the next morning, and the fourth recovered with great difficulty." A summer scarce ever passes over our heads without our hearing of some persons dying suddenly in consequence of a large draught of cold water, when they are hot.

I believe the sudden shock of the cold water occasions a cramp of the muscles and of the heart itself, so that it stops beating and will no longer drive on the blood. It is what is called the conducting power of water for heat that occasions the cramp, to which swimmers are liable. You may understand what I mean by the conducting power from the following comparison. Every black-smith, nay every person who has been in a black-smith's shop, knows that if a piece of red-hot iron be plunged in water, it will be sooner quenched and cooled than if it be held in the air. This is because the water carries away or conducts the heat faster from the iron than the air does. Now as our body is also a good deal hotter than rivers

and common springs, the water cools it faster than

air does; and fo occasions cramps*.

Towards the close of the measles I have known cramps and contractions of the hands and feet come on, when weakly, delicate people have happened to be suddenly cooled: and I am acquainted with a person, who, on moving a foot into a cold part of the bed is often seized with a pain in the bowels which I take to be the cramp.

This only proves that people should be cautious how they suddenly chill themselves. And as you may have often heard before of the danger of such acts of imprudence, and may be very willing to believe it, I have been the shorter upon

this head.

4.-But I suspect you will be surprised to hear and flow to believe what I shall tell you next, which is, that coughs and croups and rheumatisms, and I know not how many inflammatory diforders befides, that attack children and perfons in the flower of life, arise from suddenly passing out of cold into heat. This, I am aware, will feem a bold and an hard faying, because it is contrary to what is commonly apprehended. But as it is, in my opinion, a point which can fully be proved, and as the life and health of thousands and tens of thousands depend upon conforming to it in practice, I must take some pains to make myself understood, and you must take some pains to understand me; so, perhaps, by each moving half way, we shall meet in the middle.

You must observe, in the first place, that when we give the whole body or any part of it a holy-

^{*} It requires great knowledge of medical science to discover why cold produces cramp in these instances. So the following conjecture is designed for the consideration of professional people only. Does not the cold, by increasing the irritability of the muscles, occasion them to become spasmodically or permanently contracted from the same stimuli, which before produced only moderate contraction, alternating with relaxation?

day, it will be the fresher afterwards; I need not tell you how much brifker and fitter for bufiness a person in health rises after a good night's rest. But there are some particular cases, very curious, and fuch as you may never have heard of. Thus a friend of mine has observed that if you draw your hat over your eyes, close them for a minute or two, hum a tune in the mean time, and then open your eyes, the day-light will, for a short time, appear brighter*: that is, the eye fees better for resting for a couple of minutes. The same thing holds of the stomach. Persons who have been thut up in a coal work from the falling in of the fides of the pit, and have had nothing to eat for three or four days, will be as much intoxicated by a balon of broth as an ordinary person by three or four quarts of strong beer. Beer or wine before dinner affects the head more than after. And a quantity of liquor that will make a personafter eating only merry, shall make him mad if he has been fasting long. Accordingly in former days, when the Jesuits wanted any desperate act of wickedness to be done, they used to proceed in this manner. After pitching upon their man, they shut him up in a large chamber lighted with a fingle candle, no bigger than a farthing candle, and hung with black cloth, on which were painted hell flames, and devils, and all manner of terrible shapes. This was called the chamber of meditations: and here the person was kept meditating and fasting for twenty-four hours; he was then worked up to the pitch, at which his employers wanted him, by an intoxicating draught; and, shocking as it is to tell, it is nevertheless true, that the errand on which he was sometimes sent after this preparation was Murder.

^{*} Physiologists may suspect this to depend on the dilatation of the pupil, not on the accumulated excitability of the retina. But the light continues more vivid after the iris has contracted. In making this experiment, it is necessary not to think of visible objects, and the less a person thinks the better.

If ever you have met with the Narrative of the Mutiny on board the Bounty, you must have observed over and over again what a prodigious effect spirituous liquors have upon men who are cold and hungry. Captain Bligh was fent to carry a tree, called the Bread Fruit Tree, [because it bears a fruit about as big as a child's head, which, when it is baked, somewhat resembles white bread]from the South Seas to the West Indies. When the ship was off Otaheite, part of the crew mutinied, and put the captain and almost all the. officers on board the ship's boat with a very short allowance of provisions, and especially of liquors; for they had only fix quarts of rum and fix bottles of wine for nineteen men, who were driven by storms about the South Sea, wet and cold all. the time, for near a month. Each man was allowed only a tea-spoonful of rum a day. But this tea-spoonful refreshed these poor men, benumbed as they were with cold and faint with hunger, as much as twenty times the quantity would those who are warm and well-fed. Had it not been for the spirit having such power to act upon. men in their condition, they never could have outlived the hardships they experienced.

Now nearly the same effect as shutting and shading the eyes has upon the fight, or long fasting upon the stomach, nearly the same has cold air or cold water upon any part it touches: that is to fay, the part being first more or less deadened by the cold, is afterwards more fensible to heat. Try an easy experiment and you will be convinced. Keep one of your hands in cold water for two minutes; then put both hands into warm water; and the hand which has been in the cold waterfirst will feel much the warmer of the two. Or elfe, handle some snow with one hand, while you keep the other in your bosom, that it may be no colder than the rest of your body; now bring both within an equal distance of the fire, and you will feel how much

much more the heat affects the cold than the warm hand. This would be a dangerous experiment, were the hand kept too long in the snow, or if the fire be too strong. For in some countries where the cold is much greater than it ever is in England, it is common for people to have their toes and singers and ears so frost-bitten as to lose all their feeling; and should that person warm them at a fire, or put them into warm water, a violent inflammation is sure to come on, and the part mortifies. So they are obliged to set cautiously about bringing the part back to its natural feeling; and how do you think they manage? they rub it hard with snow, by which means they recover it in the gentlest and most gradual.

manner possible.

Now it is agreed on all hands that a common cold, attended with a running at the nose and a cough, fuch as young and healthy people are particularly subject to, is an inflammation. It is an inflammation of the smooth, moist skin which lines the nostrils and goes down the wind-pipe into the lungs. When a person travels in cold weather, the air, every time he draws his breath, brushes his nostrils, wind-pipe, and lungs; and just as is the case with the outward skin, it makes these parts more liable to be inflamed by heat. If you attend to what happens to you in coming out of the cold air into a warm room, you will first of all perceive a glow within your noftrils and breaft, as well as all over the furface of your body. Soon afterwards, more especially if you drink warm or spirituous liquors, a disagreeable dryness, or huskiness will be felt in the nostrils and breast; by and by, a short, dry, tickling cough will come on; you will perhaps shiver a little; this will make you draw nearer the fire and drink some more rum and water: But it will be all to no purpose. The more you try to heat yourfelf, the more chilly and uncomfortable

will you become. For you are now in for a fevere cold, which will be accompanied with a fmart fever. I wish you with all my heart well rid of it, and fafe from the complaints which severe colds. are apt to leave behind them. Had you avoided? the fire fide and the heating liquors; and walked about in the cool, gone quietly to bed. or taken any means whatever to warm yourfelf gradually, all had been well; and you been perfeetly able to go about your bufiness the next day-After riding in the rain, till I have been thoroughly foaked, I have had a glow as if my skin had been on fire, merely from putting on dry clothes and from the exercise attending the change of drefs. At the same time I have felt within my nostrils the dryness and heat that is perceived at the beginning of a cold, which however I have always escaped by keeping cool and quiet for a time. I have known this exactly to be the cafe with others; and I have made the observation so often that I am certain it is right.

Elderly or weakly people may fay that upon going out of a warm room into a cold air they begin to cough immediately. I have feen it often. But this cough is of quite an opposite nature to a common cold and the cough that accompanies it. You may understand this the better from another well-known fact. Let a strong healthy person plunge over-head in cold water; on coming out, he will feel an agreeable glow, which is in truth a slight inflammation. Now let a weakly person do the same; and he will feel no glow whatever; but be chilly and have a dull head-ach all day afterwards*. Hence it appears that the young

^{*} If weakly persons, as pale, chlorotic girls, are ever to be plunged in cold water, a dose of bark with aromatics should be given them first, in order to produce the glow. This practice would probably be useful where children, disposed to be rickety, are dipped in cold water. This hint as for the practitioners of medicine.

and stout are disposed to strong inflammations, but the old and feeble to disorders of an opposite kind.

But it does not always happen that a cold, or a pleurify (which may be confidered as a cold of the most violent kind) is brought on by having the body sirst cooled or wet, and then heated by a fire or strong liquors. An inflammatory fore throat, an inflammation of the bowels, the croup in children, or the rheumatism may be the consequence, according as this or that part may happen

at the time to be disposed to inflammation.

I have known a labouring man in a hard frost come home perishing with cold. He has immediately slown to the fire, kept close by it till he went to bed, and in the mean time drank a quantity of hot ale. By morning he has had a rheumatic fever, which, being ill treated, has left him a cripple for life. And if being too suddenly heated can inflame a frozen limb till it mortifies, why may not heat, incautiously applied, produce that less violent inflammation, which takes place in rheumatic fever?

That pains of the limbs accompanied with fever, are actually produced when a person goes out of cold into heat, is a matter ascertained by very careful experiment. One RICHARD EDWARDS of Liverpool, an healthy man, twenty-eight years of age, with black hair and a ruddy complexion, went into some fresh water, which was about the temperature of mild weather in winter, viz. at 400 by the thermometer. He continued in this water thirty-four minutes," and then went into a warm bath at 90 degrees, that is, rather below blood heat-Here for the first moments he felt warm, but his hands and feet were pained, and in two minutes, being still in the warm water, he fell into a very violent shiver. The water was now heated 6 degrees, that is, it was made as warm as blood, but Edwards still felt cold; he remained in the warm water about half an hour and the heat was increased

increased 10 degrees above blood heat. He became very sick and languid, a cold sweat covered his face, and his pulse grew very quick and feeble. He was, in consequence removed into bed, but passed a feverish night, and, next day, had wandering pains over his body, with great weakness,

resembling the beginning stage of a fever.

Now it can make no difference whether a perion pass out of cold air or cold water into warm air or warm water; and I have seen persons, who had long been riding in the cold or wet, experience severish shiverings after coming into a warm room, sitting near the fire, and drinking wine or strong liquors. These shiverings were the forerunners of a very severe cold or rheumatism.

It is not only warmth, fuddenly applied, that will throw any part of the body after it has been starved or benumbed, into violent action and bring on inflammation. Strong liquors will do the fame; and fo will a vigorous habit of body; just as in the case already mentioned, a stout healthy person will feel a glow in coming out of the cold bath, which a feeble person will not, in any degree, feel. But this is a nice question, and persons of the faculty would be very apt to differ in their opinions upon it. The rule, however, is plain and indifputable; when the whole body or any part is chilled, bring it to its natural feeling and warmth by degrees. Heating it too fuddenly will bring on a cold, (which diforder ought to be called a catarrh) or an inflammation of the chilled part, or fome inflammatory difease. Chilblains, as every old woman knows, are occasioned by unwarily heating a cold hand or foot. Any breaking out, subject to itch, will itch much more violently, if the part where it is, be first chilled and then The reason appears very plain from what has been already faid.

6.—When a cold, attended with a cough, is faftening upon a person, what is proper to be done?

This

This ought generally to be known, as the poor cannot afford, and others at first seldom will take the pains, to feek advice. It is not right, then, in the beginning of a cold, to make the room where you fit warmer than usual, to increase the quantity of bed clothes, to wrap yourself in flannel, or to drink large draughts of piping hot barley water, boiled up with raifins, figs, liquorice root and the This is the right way to make the disorder worfe, as confining inoculated persons in warm rooms tended to make the small-pox more violent. Perhaps there would be hardly fuch a thing as a bad cold, if people, when they find it coming on, were to keep cool, to avoid wine and strong drink, and to confine themselves for a short time to a fimple diet, as potatoes or other vegetables with toast and water. I have known instances of heat in the nostrils, difficulty of breathing, with a short, tickling cough, and other symtoms threatning a violent cold, go off entirely in confequence of this plan being purfued. I have found the pulse beat from 12 to 20 strokes in a minute less, after a person at the onset of a cold had continued quiet three quarters of an hour in a cool room. In October last (1792) I knew a gentleman, who was violently attacked by the influenza, a diforder much refembling a common inflammatory cold. He determined to try whether heat or cold best agreed with his complaint. So, after going to bed, he would keep the bed-clothes upon him for half an hour, and then for half an hour throw off all but the fheet. When the bed-clothes were upon him, he was feverish; when they were off, he became cool, comfortable, and fleepy. He tried the effect of heat and cold repeatedly; but at last while he was covered only with the sheet, he was overtaken by fleep, and in the morning awaked well, a little weakness excepted. He had no more fever or difagreeable feelings. While

While it was yet a matter of dispute whether persons in the small-pox should be kept hot or cool, the following among many other inflances of a like nature happened. A child, highly feverish and delirious, was taken out of bed and held at an open North window in November, when the weather was very cold for the time of the year, and the ground covered over with fnow. The child had been before carried about the room, which feemed to relieve its diffrefs fomewhat, but not entirely. It was kept at the window for an hour, within which time the rambling of the head or delirium went off, and the skin became cool. It was then put to bed and covered only with the sheet; in consequence it had the disease in a very mild manner, and instead of being blinded while it had the diforder, and pitted and feamed all its life after, it had only twenty or

thirty pultules or pocks. 7.- It is unnecessary to fay any thing in praise of clearliness, and fresh air. Both are allowed on all hands to be equally wholesome and pleasant. To fhew how indispensable fresh air is to children, I shall lay before you one example which fets the fact in the very clearest light. In the Lying-in Hospital at Dublin, two thousand nine hundred and forty four infants out of feven thousand fix hundred and fifty, died in the year 1782, within the first fortnight after their birth, that is, nearly every fixth child. They almost all died in convulfions, of what the nurses called nine-day fits. because they came on within nine days after their These children, many of them, foamed at the mouth, their thumbs were drawn into the palms of their hands; the jaws were locked, the face was fwelled and looked blue, as though they were choaked. This last circumstance led-the physicians to conclude that the rooms in the hofpital were too close; and hence that the infants had not a sufficient quantity of good air to breathe.

This

This made them fall upon contrivances to change the air in the rooms, where the children were, frequently. Air pipes, 6 inches wide, were placed in the ceiling of each room. Three holes, an inch wide, were bored through each window frame; and a number of holes were made in the doors. Thus the rooms were kept fweet and fresh; and the consequence has been that not one child dies now, where three used to die. It appears from the register that in the hospital

In 1758 out of 462, there died 54; In 1759 420, 95; In 1760 560, 116; In 1777 847, 147; In 1778 936, 127; In 1779 1026, 146;

But after the alteration of the rooms, as to airiness, the following were the numbers in three years: In 1786 out of 1372, there died 51 in the hospital; In 1787

In 1787 1375, 59; In 1788 1496, 55;

So that above twice as many died out of 560 before the alteration as out of 1496 afterwards.

All creatures, that are deprived of air fit to breathe, die in convulfions. Bad air is not, I know, the only cause why children are so often affected by convulsions; but it is probably a frequent cause. Fewer children, as far as I can find, die convulsed at present than formerly. This is because the rich learn either from books or conversation with physicians, surgeons, or apothecaries, how necessary fresh air is to life and health. Hence they keep their houses well aired; but the poor and fervants are not made to comprehend this matter properly; fo they themfelves and those about them, from neglecting to open their windows, are drawing in a foul, tainted air great part of their time, by which means some diforders are brought on and others rendered worse than they would naturally be. 8.The

8.—The rule that ought to be followed in cloathing is very simple. Keep children cool, but do not starve them. Too great heat is of itself bad for children, but when they have been starved beforehand, it is death, as I have already abundantly explained. By directing children to be kept cool, I mean that they should be cloathed so as not to complain of being cold. Warmth beyond this makes them feeble and tender. The main difficulty in a poor family will be to find cloathing and bedding enough to keep out the cold by day and by night.

9.—Weakly people, whether just grown up or advanced in life, are commonly advised to wear stannel. The advice is right and proper. Flannel hinders the natural warmth of the body from slying off too quickly; or in other words it prevents the body from being too suddenly chilled. It also drinks up the moisture of the skin and

prevents chills in this way too.

But the misfortune is that the wearers of flannel often wear it, even in fummer, next the fkin, instead of over the shirt. By this they weaken themselves still more, and often keep themselves in a constant fever. They also become so tender that the least breath of air brings on a disagreeable chill. I have known feveral persons made ill by wearing flannel next the skin in warm weather, and cured by shifting it above the shirt-When those who wear flannel next the skin are too lazy to take it off at night, as is frequently the case, it weakens them in still a greater degree.—Though it is plain enough why flannel next the skin wears away the strength, I am not sure that every reader will understand me. But the fact is, that woollen frets the skin and thus exhausts or drains the animal power. You may fay perhaps that for a few days indeed, flannel feels uncomfortable, but the skin is soon reconciled to it; how then can it fret the skin afterwards?-You are to understand

understand that a part may be fretted or irritated, and the whole frame thrown thereby into disorder without our feeling any thing painful or disagreeable at the part. A thousand instances of this may be seen every day. But one will serve for all. The heart in a fever shall be so fretted as to beat twice as often as usual; and yet no pain is felt at the heart. The kidneys work sometimes ten times as hard as at others, yet nothing is felt in our loins; only so much the more urine is passed. In like manner the skin is fretted and pricked by the points or piles of the woollen, and made to throw out more moisture than the body can spare, at the same time that the very working of the vessels to throw it out, imperceptibly wears

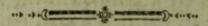
away the strength.

I should conclude, for the present, with this caution against wearing flannel next the skin in Summer, if I did not still suspect that you would be startled at the idea of colds or catarrhs being occasioned by heat after a person has been flarved. I shall therefore give you the opinion of a much older physician than myself. This is Dr. WITHERING of Birmingham, who, in a letter I have received from him fince Messrs. Bulgin and Rosfer began to print these directions, and which the Dr. allows me to publish, writes as follows: " A sudden "change from cold external air to that in an "heated room is certainly a much more frequent " cause of inflammatory affections of the lungs, &c. "than has hitherto been generally supposed: it " is, I believe, the most general cause of taking "cold." So far the Dr. agrees with me: he differs from me a little as to the confequences of going from an hot into a cold room, as you may have an opportunity of feeing, when I print the whole of his letter, which I shall do soon .--I can quote, besides, the authority of another Physician of great eminence, who had better opportunities of judging of the effect of cold and

who attended the army, as physician, during one of our German wars. He was of opinion that rheumatisms and catarrhs (colds) are not produced by cold or moisture, because he often saw numbers of men, nay, whole regiments, soaked to the skin, without rheumatism or catarrh being in a single instance produced. Thus Sir John sound abundant reason for believing that these disorders are not produced by cold alone, as is commonly supposed. But he went no further. He did not see that the mischief arises from heat or other stimulants applied too quickly afterwards.

Now, my good Readers, you may have taken notice, that there are three things which almost every person gives himself credit for understanding, whether he has taken any pains to make himself master of them or not. These are 1. The art of mending a dull fire: 2. Politics: and 3. Phyfic. Since, therefore, you will needs have your notions, right or wrong, concerning health and difease. I considered it as a commendable action to offer you fuch as I believe to be juster than those you commonly entertain. I have often had occasion to remark that those very notions which medical people have long fince cast off as being erroneous, are at this moment current among others-to the no fmall detriment of themselves and their friends, as well as to the vexation and hindrance of those who are called in to cure them, when they are ill.

END.



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