

**On the modified Turkish and vapour bath, and its value in certain diseases of the skin / by J.L. Milton.**

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ON THE MODIFIED TURKISH

AND

VAPOUR BATH,

AND

ITS VALUE

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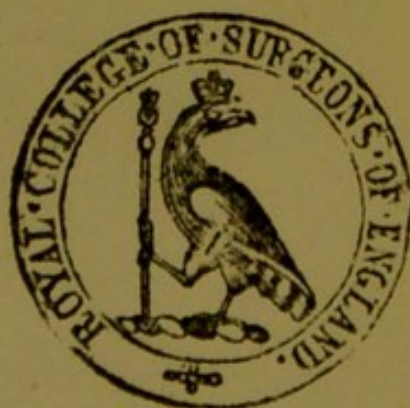
*Certain Diseases of the Skin.*

BY

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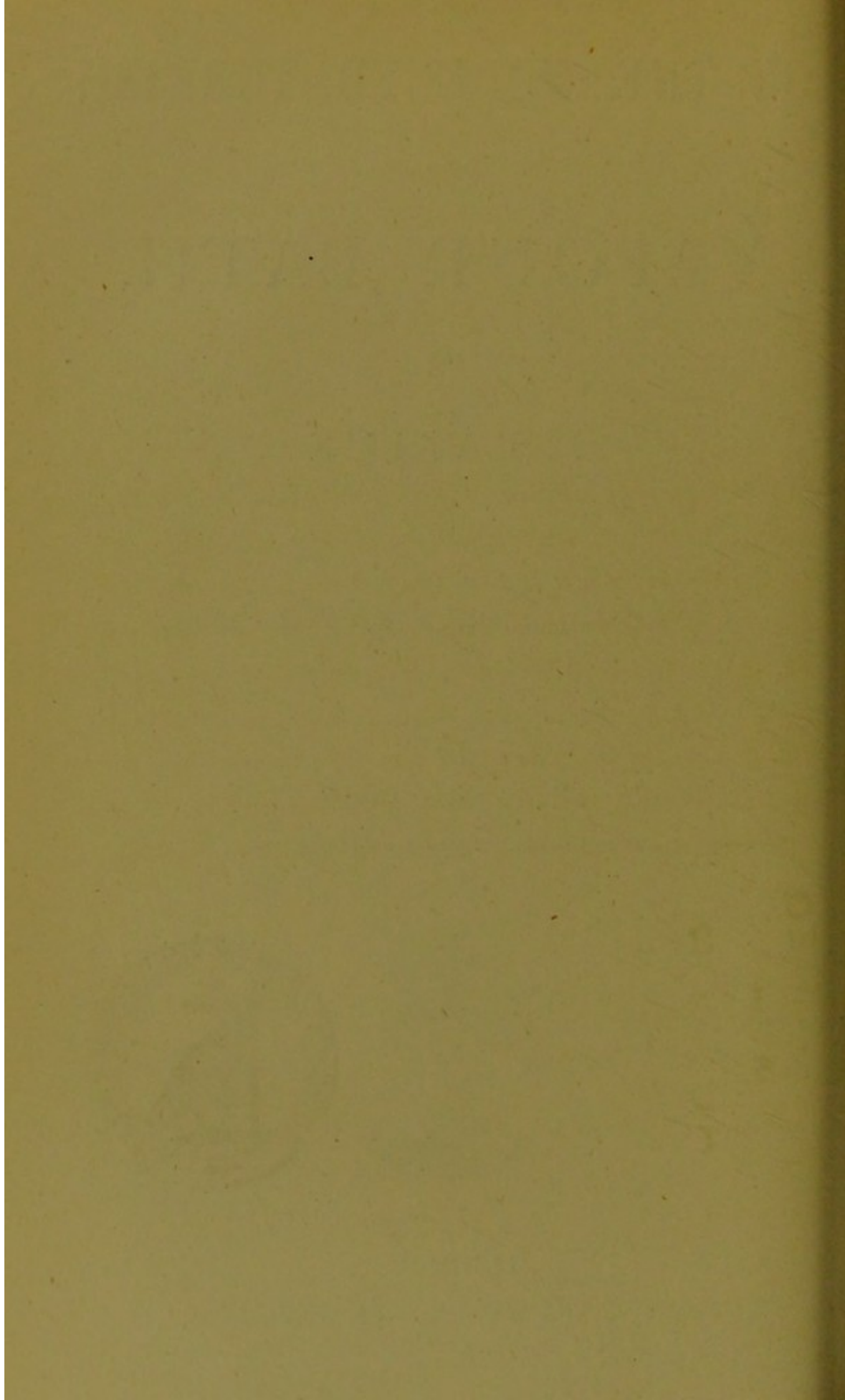
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AUTHOR.



— 1873 —

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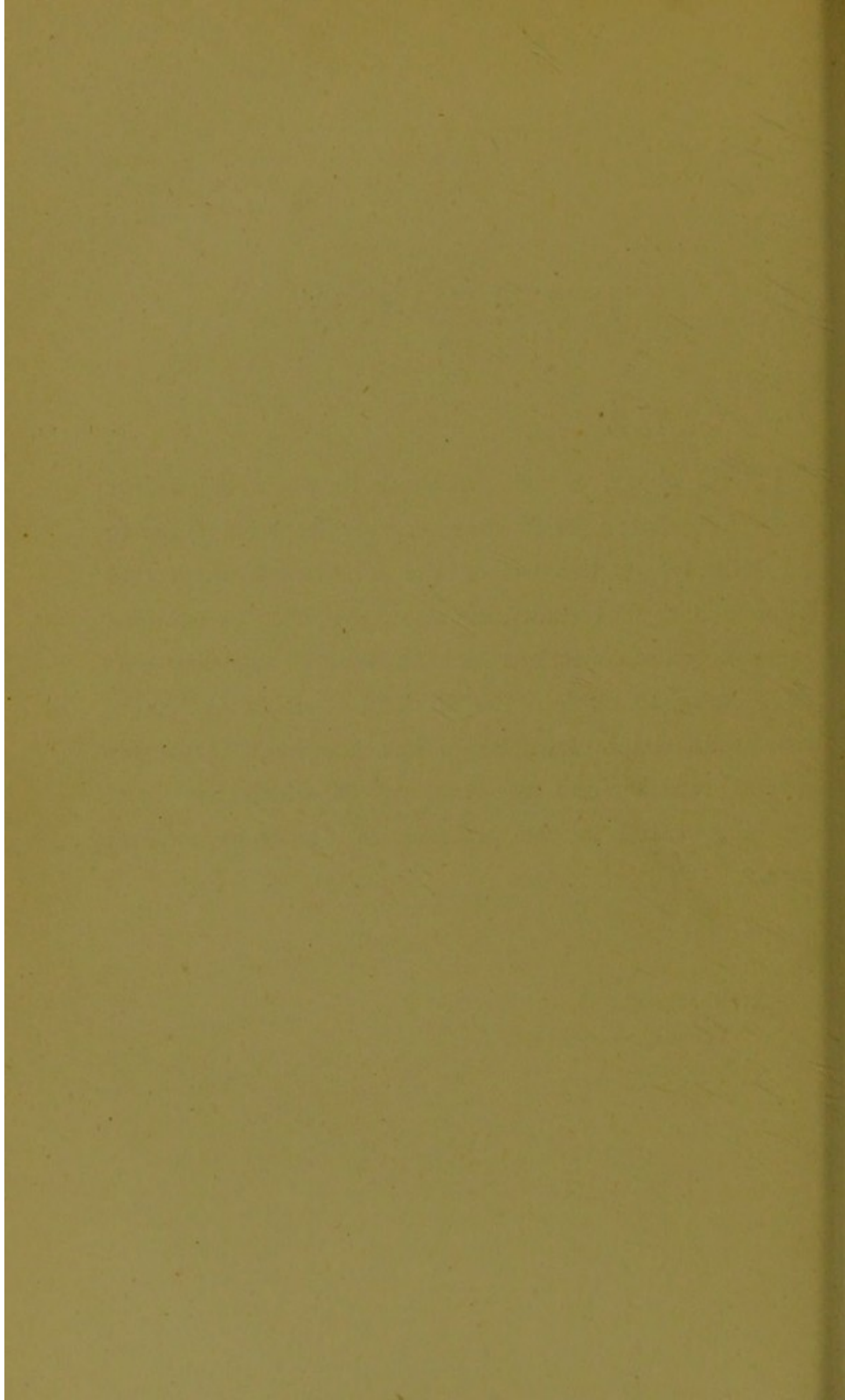
## P R E F A C E .

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THE object of this Work is to place before the Reader a brief summary of the advantages to be derived from the use of the modified Turkish and Vapour Bath in certain diseases of the skin ; to examine impartially the objections to such baths in ordinary use ; and, finally, to explain the mechanism of an extremely cheap and simple bath which has now been in use for several months, and the working of which has been crucially tested in the presence of numerous medical men.

SION HOUSE,  
KING'S ROAD, S.W.,  
*October, 1873.*





# VALUE OF BATHS.

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## CHAPTER I.

Advantages to be derived from the Use of the Bath in certain Diseases of the Skin—Lepra, Eczema, Prurigo, Ichthyosis, Sclerema, Acne, &c.; and certain allied Disorders—Gout, Rheumatism, Neuralgia.

WHATEVER discrepancy of opinion may prevail with respect to the value of vapour and turkish baths in other affections, I believe, that as regards their action in some diseases of the skin, experience will be almost unanimous among those who give them an impartial trial. At one time I dreaded the effects of baths in some of the very affections for which I now strongly recommend them, and felt very sceptical about their effects in others; but that was before the objections to the baths at present in use had been overcome. The same objection still holds good with respect to hot baths, and therefore I must ask the reader to understand from the very beginning, that I shall confine all recommendation of baths to those given in the form of vapour.

And first of all as concerns their efficacy in lepra. Perhaps in no disease of the skin are the advantages of baths more marked than in this formidable complaint. I suppose most persons have had an opportunity of witnessing the obstinacy with which it occasionally resists the best-directed treatment, and even long and carefully pursued courses of that most potent mineral, arsenic—returning again and again, just as it seemed on the point of yielding, till the hapless patient gave up all prospect of being able to cope with the relentless malady. Yet the power of the bath to quell this affection in its most severe



forms, and even when it has lasted almost a lifetime, is as well ascertained—I do not of course say as well known—as any fact in medicine. Of course no claim is laid here to a capability of curing the disease so radically that there shall be no chance of its returning, of entirely mastering the constitutional disposition to it. I look upon such a feat as equivalent to altering the stature and complexion of the patient ; but the visible evidences of the disease can be removed ; the skin can be rendered smooth, soft, and perspiring, and relapses can be guarded against for a long time ; how long I do not know, for the treatment has not been many years in force, but certainly for some considerable period.

Now I can safely appeal to any patient if this be not a boon of no slight moment. Life, to a person suffering from lepra, is a weary affair. The eternal secretion of scales, the itching and stiffness, the constant dread that strangers will discover what is the matter, make it, even if far more tolerable than many other skin diseases, still a most justly dreaded complaint. To all this, at any rate, the bath puts an end.

One of the first patients for whom I ever prescribed the bath was a lady of nearly thirty years of age, who told me that, as far back as her memory went, she never recollected being free from this disease. In some places the patches extended nearly round the limb on which they were seated, and when sharply tapped with some hard instrument, rang almost like horn or thin metal laid on the flesh. Yet this lady has, ever since the first thorough course of baths, enjoyed almost perfect immunity from her former sufferings and annoyances. She has repeatedly told me that, when she took the bath regularly, she could not know, from her own perception, that there was anything the matter with her, though she is quite aware of what a strong constitutional tendency there is in her to the disease. Her skin, which formerly never perspired, now does so freely enough. Instead of being so dry and hard that it seemed as if it must crack under any active movement, it is as soft and supple as she could wish it to be. Now and then, when she neglects the remedy for a short time, she is warned of her imprudence by the reappearance of a few scattered spots. These are quite small, show little disposition to scale, and increase very slowly ; still they are unmistakably leprous. So convinced is



the patient of the mastery which the treatment exerts over her symptoms, that she has had a vapour bath fitted up in her own house.

The next case which I would like to place before the reader is that of a lady who had, with one brief interval, suffered for upwards of seventeen years, under inveterate lepra. During several years of this period she had been under the care of one of the best practitioners I ever knew, the late Mr. Startin, a man who seemed to have quite an instinct for getting at the best mode of cure for his cases. Here, however, he entirely failed, and the disease went on from bad to worse every year. It would be difficult to imagine any person more afflicted than this unfortunate lady was. Much worse no one could be, for she was almost entirely covered from head to foot; her statements on this point being quite confirmed by the bath-attendant. The colour of the affected parts was almost like mahogany; the skin was deeply fissured, and the scales were unusually large and hard. She described her misery as intense, and spoke of her case as quite hopeless. Notwithstanding all this, she made an excellent recovery, the improvement went on without a check, and I possess a letter from her in which she says that she is perfectly free from the slightest spot, and that her skin is as clear as it is possible to be.

These are only two of many cases, and I ask if such results do not merit immediate attention on the part of all those whose task is to treat lepra? Is not freedom from the itching, stiffness, and unsightly look of lepra, well worth the sacrifice of the little time and money required to effect this change from wretchedness to comfort? To obtain this result, the surgeon has simply to try the experiment, with a fair amount of *bona fides*, and unless very numerous observations have deceived me, he may quite rely on attaining the desired result. I say, deliberately, that lepra has been swept from the list of diseases not admitting of relief.

There is one very common result from the use of vapour baths which might easily lead the surgeon into error. I do not know that it is constant, for, to tell the truth, I was so little prepared for it, that I did not at first note the cases in which it occurred; and while pursuing those researches, unexpected results cropped up so quickly, that I occasionally lost sight of some of them.



The symptom in question is an intense irritation in the skin, often so severe, that the patient, with every possible desire to do so, cannot possibly refrain from scratching the affected part. It has, however, no significance beyond this, that it shows that the cure has fairly begun. At first I was puzzled by this change, and on one or two occasions I even suspended the treatment; in others I made some very fruitless efforts to relieve the pruritus; but I have now long ceased to do anything for it beyond assuring the patient that it will pass away of itself.

The next set of cases for which I strongly recommend the vapour bath is that comprising, without exception, every form of eczema, when it has been reduced to, or has declined into, the dry stage and eczema siccum. Here it is invaluable; and though it will, especially if used too freely, sometimes bring on temporary irritation, and even what might be called a relapse, yet I now never hesitate to persevere in the use of it, whatever symptoms may be set up thereby.

One great advantage offered by the baths in these cases is, that the treatment can be extended, especially in the form to be subsequently recommended, with the greatest benefit to a set of sufferers about whom every person must feel anxious and interested—I mean children, with a strong predisposition to eczema. Every medical man, familiar with this disease, must have seen cases where, after the worst symptoms had passed off of their own accord, or had been removed by medicine, the skin remained dry and rough, becoming every now and then red, tender, and cracked. Such patients are usually pale and pasty; they are often thin, not well grown, and frequently the skin at the corners of the mouth is superficially eroded. They are often brought to the surgeon to be treated for a patch of eczema of old standing, on the thigh, ham, or somewhere near, which has obstinately resisted treatment at the hands of successive practitioners, and which is rabidly scratched every night by the luckless patient. I feel sure that this portrait of the disease will be easily recognized by those who have seen much of eczema.

Now, although cod-liver oil, steel, arsenic, &c., will do a great deal in these cases, I consider myself justified in saying that they will do a vast deal more when properly aided by baths; and he who neglects to employ the latter, voluntarily deprives himself of



the most powerful of all the known adjuncts to treatment. The first time I ever employed the bath for one of these young patients was with the almost hopeless intention of relieving a little girl, whose parents had taken her from one medical man to another, and to more than one hospital. After trying every remedy that I knew, I hit upon the idea of using vapour baths, and with such success that this child, who had never before, since she was a few months old, been free for a day from the redness and tenderness just described, shook off the incubus of the disease thoroughly, and nearly two years elapsed before any return of it took place. The reader will very likely object that this could not be in any way called a cure, nor do I for one moment put it forward as such; on the contrary, I distinctly tell the patients, both here and in lepra, that while there is every reason to believe the bath will remove every symptom, it will yet require to be used throughout life; that I look upon it as a necessity of existence, if there is to be any proper enjoyment of existence itself, but as one which may be relied on to keep the disease at arm's length.

In eczematous persons I have often noticed that, although the skin scarcely perspires at all, yet so soon as active exercise is taken, or the thermometer rises to anything like summer heat, the sweating becomes excessive, a state often accompanied or followed by great exhaustion. But this kind of thing is followed by no relief, or, at the utmost, by a temporary abatement of the tiresome complaint; and I have over and over again seen it pursue its wearying course when the patient was daily drenched with sweat. Coupling this with the fact that in men who are in training, the amount of such exercise, as produces this free evacuation on the eczematous patient, would only bring on slight moisture; that the skin in men in the high state of health requisite for a great trial of physical strength and endurance becomes shining and oily; I am disposed to think that, in eczema, the defect lies not so much in the want of watery exudation as in the absence of sebaceous secretion of a proper quality. Now this defect is in a high degree remedied by a prolonged use of the bath. The patients themselves are often the first to observe that, while in dry, cold weather the skin is more moist and soft than it was, it is still, in summer, less disposed than before to throw off such a quantity of aqueous secretion.



Patients who have long suffered from the dry irritable skin which accompanies a disposition to eczema, and still more those who labour under lepra, often say that they feel as if they should at once be relieved if they could break out spontaneously into a profuse sweat. In the close, thundery state of the weather which often prevailed last summer, and which, I suppose, was due to the absence of thunder-storms, as there was a remarkable freedom from them in London during nearly the whole season, complaints of this distressing sensation were constant. The patients describe it as a stuffed, stifling, oppressive feeling; they feel burdened and hide-bound—as if they must get rid of the incubus or be ill—as though they must throw off the burden at any cost. Now the bath makes such very short work with all this discomfort, that we may confidently tell the patient it is quite superfluous to endure it. Any person may get free from it who likes to do so; relief is a mere question of perseverance.

It will scarcely be required that I should dilate on the value of the bath in that harassing complaint, prurigo, as its merits, in the turkish form, have already been amply attested, and I have nothing to add to the statements of those who have already given their experience to the world. That experience has, so far as my reading goes, always been favourable, and I heartily endorse the recommendations already given.

Before I had extended the employment of the bath to the dry stage of eczema, I had employed it with the greatest benefit in ichthyosis, not at all frequently it is true—for severe and wide-spread ichthyosis is, according to my experience, by no means common even among skin diseases—and during the times of these trials with the baths I have only had two cases under my care. One of these was so promptly relieved by treatment, that I could not induce the parents to put the child, a girl of eight, through a course of vapour baths; and I could scarcely blame them for evading my recommendation to do so, seeing that their circumstances were slender, that they lived at a considerable distance from any place where they could get vapour baths, and that I had told them it would require at least two or three dozen baths to produce any effect at all.

In the other case, however, the system had a fair trial. In this instance the patient was most anxious to do everything that



promised to free him from his complaint. The disease was almost coeval with his birth, and covered nearly all the lower part of the frame. The skin was almost like that of a lizard, so highly developed and discoloured were the papillæ. Here the same means of treatment which had been so successful in several other cases were bringing about improvement, only very slowly, and a trial of the baths seemed a legitimate experiment in every way. The result quite justified the attempt; the improvement already set up by the medicines was soon visibly accelerated, the skin of the affected parts began to exhibit quite a natural appearance compared with its former look, and that of other parts began to perspire, a state of which the patient had no previous experience. I put the question to him as distinctly as I could, and he replied that he never perspired before. His own opinion too as to the improvement effected in his disease by the baths was equally emphatic. He felt satisfied that they had done him a great deal of good, and that he had never improved so fast till he began with them.

The reader is, however, distinctly to understand that I do not in any way wish to convey the impression that the value of the bath in this singular disease is established by the case I have just cited. In lepra and the dry stage of eczema the experiment has now been so repeatedly tried, and always with the same result—the benefit has been so unequivocal, and has been so often voluntarily announced by the patients themselves, that I feel justified in expecting it to follow in every case to a greater or less extent. If a patient suffering under either of these two diseases will only take the bath frequently and regularly enough, we may assure him of relief, if not cure. Here, however, with only one case to guide me, it would be most rash to prophesy anything of the kind.

As to the value of vapour baths in sclerema I must speak more guardedly, as I do not consider my observations warrant me in referring to experience on the subject. I have indeed only been able to try the baths in one case of this complaint, and then not to such an extent as to afford an opportunity of drawing any very positive conclusions. At the first look of the thing, one would be disposed to say that, judging from its action in diseases characterized by great dryness of the skin, sclerema is just the sort of affection in which it would be useful; but such hopes have been



only too often falsified by very unexpected results to make prophesying in medicine a safe step. The reader will accordingly understand that, in recommending the remedy here, I do so on doubtful grounds.

The only remaining disease of the skin in which I have tried vapour baths to any great extent is acne, and in this also it is extremely beneficial, but not to the same extent as in the others. In lepra and eczema, in the stage spoken of, I am almost disposed to think that with plenty of baths, medicines are, as regards their specific action on the disease, rather superfluous. Such patients, it is true, often require to pay great attention to their health. Constipation is a very common symptom, and demands relief; any simple aperient, however, that will effect the purpose is as good as the most elaborate prescription. A good deal of weakness, too, and loss of appetite, are not unfrequent, calling for steel, quinine, cod liver oil, red wine, and so on. Arsenic is also often beneficial in relapses of lepra, and in the decline of eczema, but it is never, I believe, requisite in the same large doses as when vapour baths are not used, and in many cases need only be prescribed when the patient is dissatisfied with the slowness of his recovery. In the dry stage of eczema I hold it to be quite superfluous when the baths are freely used. But I am not at all sure that such rules apply to acne: there is, however, an obstacle here to forming trustworthy conclusions which does not beset our path in the other diseases. They are much more serious; the patient has only too often had ample experience of their inveterate nature, and will make any possible sacrifice to recover health and shake off the misery caused by the harassing complaint. Acne is by no means so grave an affair, except in the case of young ladies. It may last for years without being attended by any serious discomfort or impairment of the health. Many persons, especially among the working classes, who cannot afford the money and time to go through the long treatment required for a cure, leave it to its fate; whereas very few of those who have the opportunity endure eczema or lepra for long without some effort to get rid of them.

In the form of acne known as rosacea, which is really after all a variety of erythema, accompanied by scattered foci of congestion, the vapour bath is useful; but whenever I can induce the



patient to go through the necessary discipline, I invariably prefer the turkish bath, especially in all cases accompanied by any form of indigestion, sluggishness of the liver, and congestion of any of the abdominal or thoracic viscera. Here I have seen the best effects from the latter, even in patients who were paying all possible attention to diet, and going sedulously through a well-devised course of treatment. Generally speaking rosacea is such a very manageable disease that it does not absolutely require the bath, but most assuredly the use of this powerful adjunct hastens recovery.

Among the complications which we encounter in patients suffering from skin diseases are gout, rheumatism and neuralgia. I have met with them more frequently among eczematous patients, but very likely this is because eczema is such a much more common complaint; and I at once admit that any observations as to the relative frequency of the affections alluded to are of the most vague nature. Suffice it, however, to say, that these complications do occur sufficiently often and in a severe enough form to make the cure of them an object of great interest to the medical practitioner. Of their obstinacy, under even a very judicious system of medical treatment, I need hardly speak; it has been too often descanted upon to require any elucidation at my hands.

Now I may safely say that, as regards gout and subacute rheumatism, the use of the turkish or vapour bath is one of the most powerful means of treatment that we possess; I have certainly seen nothing act so rapidly and effectually. I could easily quote many cases in support of this statement, but I restrict myself to one. It was that of a gentleman who had for years suffered under some one or other of these affections along with an obstinate tendency to eczema. I could always cure the latter when it broke out, but nothing that I prescribed seemed to do the least good in the way of warding off the outbreaks. He was most temperate in his habits, took a great deal of active exercise in the open air, and his professional duties did not demand any excessive toil either of mind or body; yet the eczema was continually returning. As to the other complaints he was always suffering from one of them. To use his own words, when he got rid of an attack of this nature, it was only to have something else in its stead—he merely exchanged one form of misery for another.



When he began the baths he had been suffering from rheumatism uninterruptedly for eighteen months. After a short course of turkish baths, both the disposition in the eczema to return and the rheumatism had quite ceased, and he has ever since been free, with one exception, from his tormentors. The exception occurred in this way. During the cure he went to the seaside. The place had always agreed with him, and his health and appetite sensibly improved. The weather was lovely during the whole of his visit, and he made the best use of his time by being out from morning to night. He ventured here to give up his bath, but did not attempt sea bathing, as it always brought on a relapse in the eczema, confining himself to sponging with cold water. Yet, under these favourable circumstances, his skin gradually got into bad order, becoming dry and harsh generally, and showing in some places a clear tendency to a return of the eczema. He came up to town, and began his baths, with the effect of an immediate change for the better. He "came out of the first bath another man," he said.

How this case may go on I, of course, cannot say, but the effect of the treatment was, at any rate, an immense gain to the patient. He, like many others who have tried the bath, is quite satisfied as to its value ; and so far from requiring to be persuaded to take it, looks upon it as one of the greatest comforts of his life. Complete, even if only temporary, relief, after ten years of almost unbroken suffering, is an argument which, with him, no evidence to the contrary could shake.

This patient completely lost his neuralgia in the first part of his course ; he "left it behind" him "in the bath," he said. He was not, however, really suffering from it when he began ; but during the time he was under this treatment, an east wind set in, and he told me that he never knew what it was to be entirely free from *tic douloureux* when the wind was in that quarter. This time, however, he enjoyed an entire immunity, and two other patients have given very similar testimony ; but these might be mere coincidences, and I should not like to build up any deductions on so narrow a foundation. Practically speaking, it does not much matter what view may be adopted ; the patient takes the baths for his skin disease ; if he get rid of the neuralgia at the same time, all the better for him ; if not, he can scarcely be worse off than he



was as respects the latter. It is impossible to conceive how a remedy of this nature can aggravate such a disease.

There is one affection which nearly always makes eczema worse, and that is "a cold." I suppose few maladies have more effectually tried the resources both of art and common sense than catarrh. The very number of the remedies advised for it, and the totally opposite nature of many of them, more than suggest a suspicion as to the value of any. Now I do not put forward the vapour or turkish bath as any specific, but this I do say, that, to the best of my judgment, the latter is infinitely the most potent remedy for a cold ever yet devised.

The reader will inquire which form of bath it is that I recommend in these diseases, and if both forms of it may be indiscriminately employed in all the different complaints spoken of. I will state my experience, and then he can decide for himself. In lepra I have tried the vapour bath extensively, and have no reason to believe that anything more is called for. I have now and then treated a case with the turkish bath, but could not make out any superiority in its action; and as the former does not make such heavy demands on the patient's time, I decidedly recommend it here. In the dry stage of eczema I have found the vapour bath very useful—the turkish bath still more so. In eczema siccum I like the vapour for the same reason that I prefer it in lepra. For prurigo I prefer the turkish. In acne and rosacea the benefits seem nearly, but not quite, equal; the turkish mode of employing it carrying off the palm by a little, and in rosacea perhaps, more than in the other: Still, the vapour bath is very useful; if, however, it brings on exhaustion, the turkish bath must be substituted. The sensations of the patient are the best, and indeed the only, guide. In ichthyosis and sclerema I have, as stated, only tried the vapour path. In gout, rheumatism, and neuralgia I have principally tried the turkish bath, and am disposed to consider it as the best; but I do not state this with authority.

I now proceed to examine the objections raised by many patients so soon as ever the medical attendant recommends baths of this kind.



# OBJECTIONS TO ORDINARY BATHS.



## CHAPTER II.

Insufficient Supply of Turkish Baths—Loss of Time involved—Expense of putting up Turkish Baths—Difficulty of getting a Vapour Bath—Cost and Difficulty of fitting up this kind of Bath.

THE difficulties connected with the use, in a general sense, of the turkish and vapour bath are all but insuperable. I feel pretty well assured that I am only giving utterance to the experience of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of medical men, when I say that recommending a course of such baths is, except with those patients who are both well off and masters of their time, inoperative in nine cases out of ten, possibly more often. To avoid all confusion and charge of exaggeration I will first of all take the case of the turkish bath, and examine it carefully; for loose, unsupported statements, however sound they may be at bottom, are so easily shaken by a few specious and plausible arguments on the other side, that they may very easily damage the best cause.

And before going farther, I beg to state that I expressly disclaim making an attack on the present mode of giving the turkish bath at any well-conducted establishment. In its way nothing can be better managed than the one I am accustomed to recommend, the Hammam in Jermyn Street, or that at Priesnitz House, &c. I cannot very well conceive how anything can be more carefully devised and carried out. A bath there is not merely a comfort, it is a luxury, which those who have once tried will ever appreciate; and if such a bath were always accessible to every person who required it, there would be no need for me to say what I am now saying. There are I have no doubt, from



what I have heard and read, many other excellent and most respectable establishments, which deservedly enjoy the confidence of that section of the public to which they appeal.

But I need scarcely say that were such baths multiplied tenfold, they would not suffice; that the supply would still be utterly inadequate. This then alone constitutes for most of those living in many of the suburbs of London, especially the more distant ones, the inhabitants of small towns, and of the country generally, one serious impediment to the use of the turkish bath. In addition to this, we have the heavy loss of time involved. A visit to the bath, except for those living in the immediate vicinity, means, if it is to be taken effectually and in decent comfort, a sacrifice of quite two hours and a half, usually of the most valuable part of the day; in other words, an interruption to work which few men can bear, except very occasionally. The question, too, of expense, becomes a very serious item for most persons. True, an excellent turkish bath can be had for a sum so reasonable, that, considering the high prices paid for coals and attendance, it is a wonder how the proprietors can afford to charge so little; but there is another factor in the question, and that is the cost of getting to and from the establishment. As a rule each bath, except for those very fortunately situated in this respect, may be assumed to cost, from first to last, quite five or six shillings. Now, although a man may not require many turkish baths to keep him in health, yet in some forms of skin disease, it is useless to hope for any benefit, except from a long course. For instance, I should never expect to see inveterate lepra materially relieved by less than two or three baths a week, continued for at least three months. A rich man, of course, does not feel such an outlay; but to the vast majority of patients it is prohibitory.

No sooner has the question of expense and loss of time been got over, than another starts up in its place. Many men, even though quite free from any bodily defect or disease, object to the publicity of large baths. I have been so often met with this remark that I think I am quite justified in looking upon it as very widely spread, and by no means easy to overcome. The obstacle, however, assumes very different proportions when we have to recommend the bath for diseases of the skin. Some varieties, such as acne, sclerema, the dry stage of eczema, prurigo,



&c., might, when in a mild form, attract little, if any, notice; and now and then an apathetic individual might not hesitate to show himself even when badly marked. But with the majority of patients suffering more severely, *e.g.*, from extensive lepra, there is a strong and very natural antipathy to such exposure; and if there were no objection on their part, the repugnance of other persons to such exhibitions would soon show itself most unequivocally. However averse they might feel to such a step, the directors of public baths would be compelled to interdict the entry of such persons.

As to having the ordinary turkish bath at home, it would prove pretty nearly as costly as keeping a race-horse or a white elephant. All estimates to the contrary, I do not believe it would be possible, with the present prices of labour, tiles, iron-work, &c., to put up an efficient bath, on a very small scale, and on the ground floor, for less than £400 or £500, probably much more. The furnace and pipes of even a small bath, cost, if of good quality and well fixed, quite £250. It is to be borne in mind, that if such a bath is to be in good working order, and not constantly wanting some repair, the materials and workmanship must be of the highest class, and for this corresponding prices must be paid. I know that cheap estimates are sent in, but cheapness here means inefficiency and constant danger of serious damage to the house. Indeed, a conscientious builder would hardly venture on a very strict estimate, for however carefully such calculations are framed, even under the supervision of experienced bath-masters, there will, before the bath is completed, be an increase on the sum first named. The most honest and able builders are often at fault, and obstacles are sometimes met with which necessitate either a large additional outlay or the abandonment of the project. I confidently appeal to those who have tried the experiment whether I am over-colouring this statement.

In my opinion, the turkish bath in its present form will never be nationalized at home in England. Here and there a valetudinarian or rich man may erect one at his country seat; but for dwellings of any other kind they are impracticable. In town houses space is far too costly, too much in demand. Practically, therefore, the bath will, I suspect, be restricted to a few establishments, avail-



able, perhaps, for about one man in five hundred. I am afraid to say how limited the accommodation is for women, except in London and a few large towns, or first-class watering-places ; but I think that, with the exceptions just mentioned, it may through great part of England be put down as nil.

A portable turkish bath has been patented by Messrs. Wyatt and Jones, of Islington. It seems a most valuable invention, and does not occupy more space than a large sofa, the furnace being dispensed with, and the heat supplied by means of gas or spirit. For a person who could afford to give up one room in the house to this purpose, or for small hospitals, dispensaries, &c., I should think it was calculated to be a valuable acquisition ; but the cost, £35, will operate as a complete bar to most persons.

As regards the treatment of skin disease, the question of being able to procure a vapour bath at home is infinitely more important. The reader may feel disposed to question this statement ; but if he will follow me carefully, he will, I think, come to the same conclusion as myself. Briefly stated, the reasons for saying so, are that any person of moderate intelligence can convert a vapour bath into a turkish bath, and that in the treatment of skin disease the vapour in its simple form is the one thing needful. The turkish bath may be more suited for the purpose of keeping a man in health clean and healthy ; but for one bath really demanded for such a purpose ten are wanted for the purpose of restoring health and warding off sickness, and in these ten the vapour bath plays the most important part. By dint of perseverance we can get on, though not nearly so well, without the turkish bath ; the other is indispensable. I accordingly propose to consider this part of the subject rather more at length.

I have no means of learning how many places there are in London where a vapour bath can be procured. Judging from the results of my inquiries, I should say very few indeed. Those whom I have asked are wholly at a loss on this point. When attending regularly at St. John's Hospital I often prescribe for quite a hundred and thirty or forty patients every week, and I have every week to order vapour baths for a number of these persons, yet, to the best of my recollection, I have not yet come in contact with one who knew where to get such a thing ; and when I have



traced out an establishment of this kind, it was only too often so far off, and of so costly a character, that at last I had a bath fitted up expressly for my own patients. Even to this, the same objection in a more restricted form applies—people from the country cannot make any great use of it, and I was therefore driven to find out some method more generally applicable.

The expense of fitting up a vapour bath in a private house, though infinitely less than that of the turkish bath, is still so great as to deter the majority of persons from attempting it. The bath itself, in the cheapest form likely to stand work at all, will cost £13, and if so constructed as to avoid shrinking, and provided, as it ought to be, with a copper boiler, £4 or £5 more will be required. A grate strong enough to bear the boiler must also be procured; it must be wider and deeper in proportion to its height than ordinary grates, and it must be strongly set by a skilful workman, or it will yield under the weight. One which I had fixed, as I thought, very securely, began to settle down in a few months, and I was compelled to have the work done over again; so that, taking all things into consideration, a man who secures a good vapour bath for an outlay of £25 has, on the whole, made a very fair bargain. A very ingenious friend of mine, who is thoroughly at home in such matters, and who quite understands how to buy in the cheapest market, plumes himself on his economy in putting one up for this sum.

On four or five occasions I tried to convey the hot vapour from the kitchen boiler by means of a pipe carried under a chair, on which the patient sat, covered with mackintosh in the shape almost of a very small tent; but the attempt resulted in utter failure. Although I employed the most skilful man I could hear of, the blast of steam even in the kitchen itself was far too feeble; great difficulty was experienced in preventing the entrance of water into the pipe, and the expense of carrying this to a more convenient apartment, which, of course, varies according to the size and construction of the rooms it has to traverse, was found to be considerable even in a small house. I then had a boiler made to fit over the kitchen fire, and for those who can manage to take a bath regularly in the kitchen, this is the most economical of the modes yet mentioned, as by substituting a light cane frame covered with mackintosh for the ordinary wooden box, a very



useful apparatus may be fitted up for £6 or £8. Yet even this outlay is too great for most persons, and the poorer class of patients cannot in any way afford it.

I do not propose taking into consideration the various methods of applying vapour in the case of patients confined to bed. For persons suffering under serious internal disease, and in the wards of a hospital, where the services of an experienced attendant can be secured, such modes of effecting the object aimed at are often invaluable; but as they are quite unsuited to out-patients, it will not be necessary to dwell further on this part of the subject.

One or two of my patients, who had gas baths already standing in their rooms, tried to adapt the heating apparatus to the vapour bath. The hot baths, which I had so far seen arranged in this way, were one and all miserable delusions, and I warn my readers against trying them. They are often recommended on the ground that enough hot water for a bath can be procured in twenty-five minutes; and certainly, by a wasteful and expensive consumption of gas, filling the air with "blacks," and making a great deal of dirt, enough warm water to wash an infant in can be procured in considerably more than the time mentioned; but to get a really hot bath for an adult demands nearly if not quite two hours, and the whole affair is costly, dirty, and dangerous to the safety of the house. Still, I thought the heating power might be applied in this way, but with one exception it failed, and in that one case success was only secured by a considerable outlay.

In the course of my inquiries I came upon accounts of various kinds of portable baths, some invented by amateurs, others by professed mechanics. The former had usually a history of disastrous failure attached to them. One gentleman had scalded his legs so badly with the steam, that he did not throw off the effects for some weeks. Another had ignited the chair on which he sat, and soon found himself enveloped in fire and smoke; while making frantic efforts to escape from the covering under which he had ensconced himself, he fell, sitting on the seat which gave way under him, and he sank down amid the burning ruins, from which he only emerged in a very dilapidated condition. One after another they seem to have been given up by their authors themselves, and a somewhat similar fate appears to have awaited the other class, as I believe



no discovery in this direction has really recommended itself thoroughly to public confidence, by showing that it possessed the essentials of success.

I next essayed with one or two portable vapour baths, but found they threw out too little heat to be of service. The patients did not get even warm whilst using them. I hope I do no one an injustice in saying this. It has been stated to me that there are baths of this kind which answer their purpose very well; the information, however, was of too vague a nature to admit of my acting on it, and I therefore restrict myself to an expression of opinion on those which I have tried. Consequently, after numerous trials, I finally adopted the bath about to be described, which I think quite effects the desired purpose.



# BATH RECOMMENDED.

## CHAPTER III.

Form of Portable Vapour and Turkish Bath Recommended—Trials with other Forms of Bath—Directions for using the Bath—Objections to the Bath examined.

THE object aimed at was, with a small bath, to expose the greatest possible amount of surface to the heat employed, and this I think is pretty well secured by the plan now in use. I need scarcely say that in the ordinary modes of heating water, only a small portion of the whole bulk of the fluid is in contact with the heat applied. Thus in the following diagram (fig. 1.) let A A A represent the lower line and sides of the vessel containing the fluid to be warmed, then B B B may be fairly assumed to show the line of the heat.

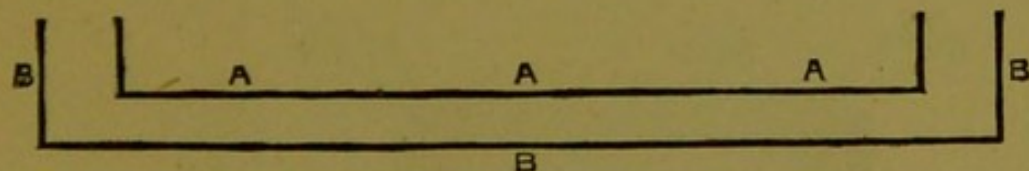


Fig. 1.

For ordinary purposes this answers very well. Unless such great economy of fuel, as will quite cover the cost of mechanism and

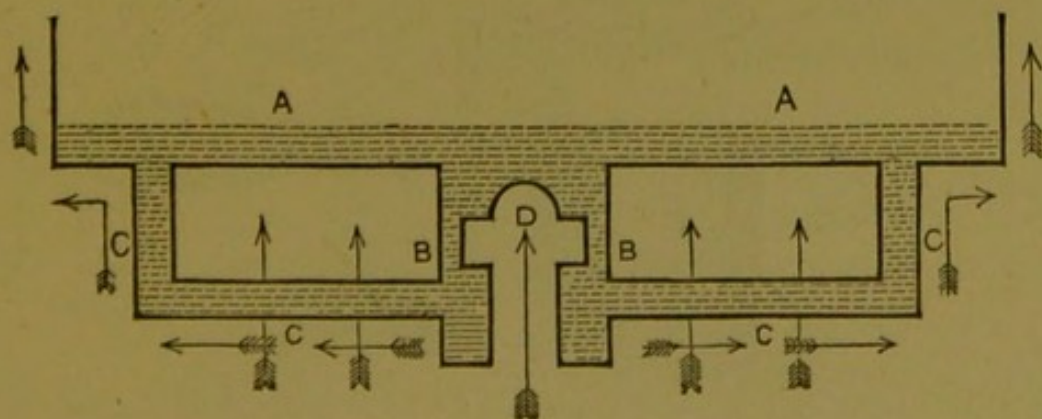


Fig. 2.

increased expense of cleaning a multiplied instead of a plain



surface, be absolutely called for, it is not worth while to alter the arrangement. Here, however, such a change is demanded, and, in the bath recommended, the heat is applied as described in the following paragraph, and shown in the diagram (fig. 2), and drawing of section of the bath (fig. 3).

In the annexed diagram and sectional drawing (fig. 2 and fig. 3) A A indicate the reservoir for the water, having in the centre a well, B B, which again communicates with the outer edge and lower surface of the reservoir by means of eight radiating tubes, C C. In the centre of the well is a chamber, D, for receiving and confining the heat. It is in the form of a four-armed cross, open below to the flame of the lamp, over which the bath is placed. The water is poured into the reservoir, and fills the shaded part (fig. 2). The arrows (fig. 2) show the direction of the flame, which acts almost simultaneously on the inside of the chamber, D, on the tubes, C C, on the bottom of the reservoir, A A.

It will, I hope, be seen from this description that the heat is so distributed into the middle of the water, so diffused, as it were, through the whole mass, that a very slight amount of caloric thus

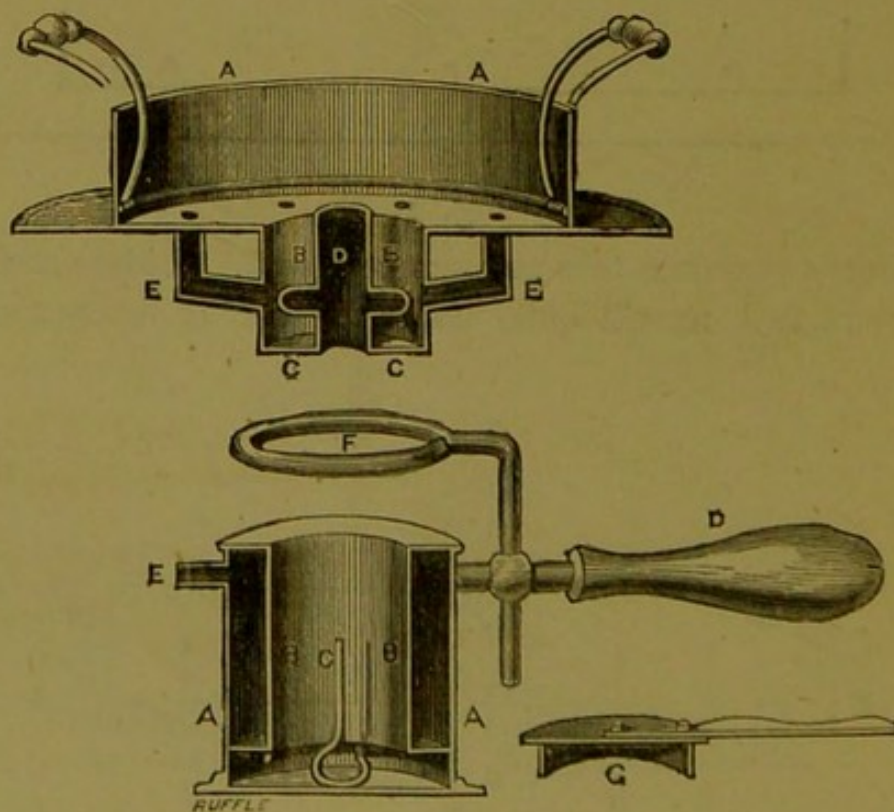


Fig. 4.

imprisoned, so to speak, in the very body of the fluid, acts with great rapidity, quickly passing along the tubes, and from the



chamber into the upper stratum, which is itself heated at the same time. A much larger surface is thus exposed to heat than could be done with a bath of the same size on the principle laid down in the first diagram.

The heat is procured by means of a russian lamp (fig. 4); but a considerable alteration, and I hope I may say improvement, has been effected in it. The bearing ring is made much stronger than that in ordinary use, to secure it against bending, and is securely pinned to prevent the weight of the bath causing it to slip. The blast, too, is rendered much stronger by using a relatively much greater quantity of spirit in the outer chamber. It consists of a brass cylinder, A A, (fig. 4,)  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter, closed at the bottom, containing a second cylinder, B B,  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. less in diameter, which divides it into two chambers. The outer one communicates with the inner by means of a fine tube of metal, C, which rises from the floor of the latter. On one side of the outer chamber is the handle, D, of the lamp; and on the opposite side an aperture, E, closed with a cork, through which the spirit is poured into the outer chamber. The horizontal

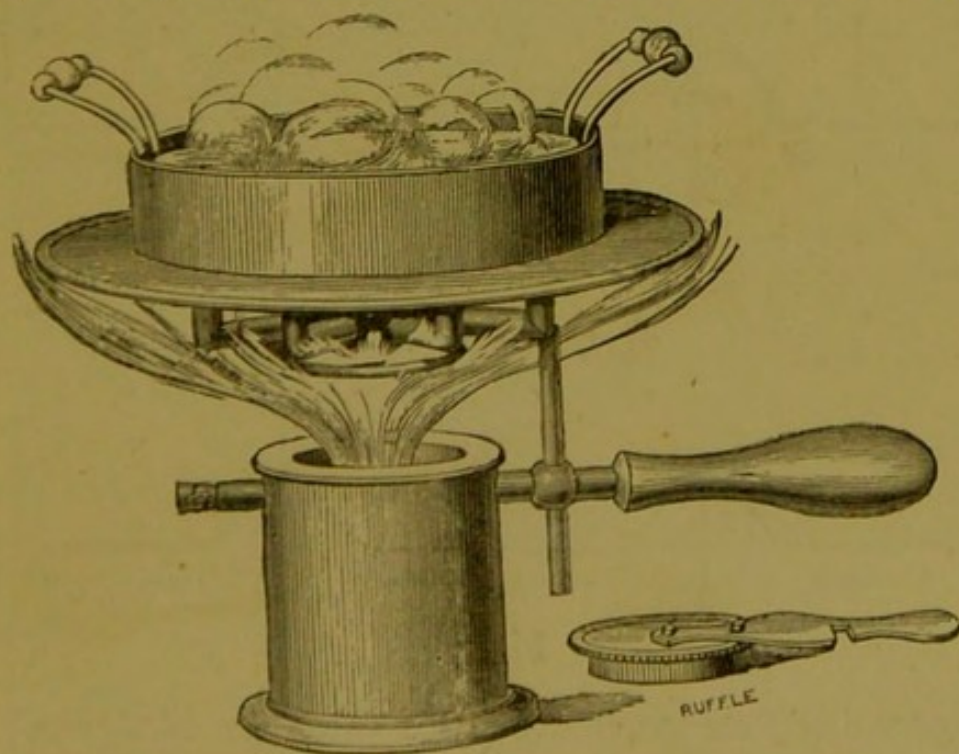


Fig. 5.

bearing-ring, F, fixed to a vertical bar, slides up and down in the handles, and may be adjusted by the thumbscrew to carry the bath at any required height above the lamp. The inner chamber is provided with a brass cover, G.



So great is the heat thus generated, and so effectively is it disseminated through the water, that the latter boils with a rapidity which rarely fails to excite surprise in those who see it. Ordinary hot water,  $140^{\circ}$  to  $150^{\circ}$ , passes into violent ebullition in about two minutes, and in some of the baths cold water boils in three minutes. To secure this result, however, the flame must first of all be suffered to rise under the pressure of the vapour from the outer chamber, and indeed this precaution is really necessary in all cases, to prevent the bath, when placed in the bearing-ring, putting out the flame.

As some of my readers might be disposed to try farther experiments with a view to improving the bath, I will take the liberty of adding a few words as to the failures made, and the obstacles I encountered before completing the apparatus now recommended. It may save waste of time and money to do so.

It was thought that a flat surface, with hollow cones rising from the base, would offer the required conditions, and two basins

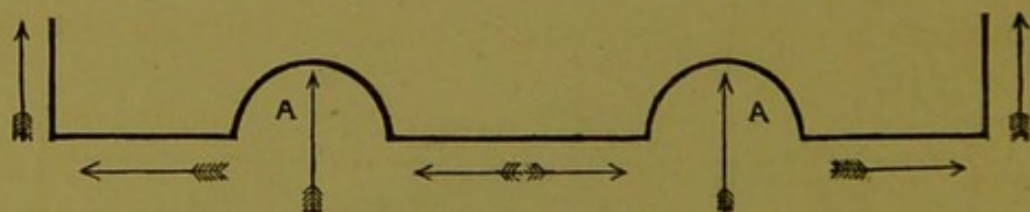


Fig. 6.

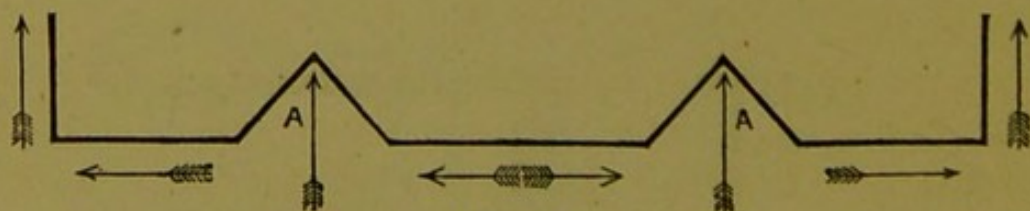


Fig. 7.

were accordingly constructed on this principle, as shown by the following diagrams (figs. 6 and 7), in which A, A indicate the cones, and the arrows the supposed direction of the flame. Trial, however, did not fulfil the hopes entertained; especially it was found that, the larger the cones, the more rapidly was the evaporating surface diminished when a thin layer of water was



used ; and when a deeper stratum was employed, too long a time was required to heat it. Besides, with a flat bottom the bath very easily slipped off the bearing-ring, and on two or three occasions was upset. I tried to obviate this by means of a circular lip, and then, as it was found that the latter put out the flame by cutting off the access of air, prongs were substituted, but they got entangled and bent ; besides, they made the bath very difficult to pack. Lastly an attempt was made to convey the heat by means of small upright pipes sinking through the bottom and rising a little way up in the fluid, as seen at fig. 8, where the dotted line shows the level of the water, just above the mouths of the pipes (fig. 8) ; but the experiment was not successful ; neither did the substitution of solid pegs prove more fortunate ; and on the whole, I may safely say that in my hands no mode of applying heat answered so well as that now in use.

With respect to the material employed, I experimented chiefly on copper, glass, and tin. Copper did not answer well at first, but Mr. Walters seems to have quite overcome the difficulty, and is now making baths of this metal. Thin glass, such as is used for well-made mixing jars, certainly enables us to boil water very

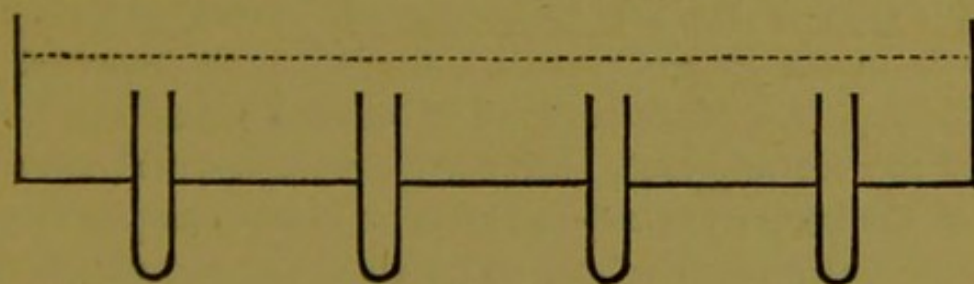


Fig. 8.

quickly, but it is unsuited for packing, it is excessively apt to slide off the bearing-ring, and is apt, even when turned out by very good makers, to explode. One jar on which I was experimenting, and which I was assured might be safely exposed to heat, flew into a score of fragments. I have not tried iron ; so that perhaps I ought not to speak on the subject, but unless coated with some substance capable of resisting oxidation, such as silver, it would be liable to rust ; if thin it would bend very easily, and if too thick would require much longer to heat. I have not, however, made sufficient trials to warrant me in giving a very decided opinion, and therefore when I say that I look upon tin



as the most suitable material yet employed, I wish the statement to be considered as quite unsupported by proof.

Tin properly coated with nickel answers admirably, and if the reader do not mind going to the cost of having the work done efficiently, it can be safely recommended as superior to anything else for the body of the bath, being light, strong, and easily kept clean. The expense is no doubt an objection, but I would warn every one against any economy in this particular. Tin, when unprotected, will not do for a continuance. However carefully dried, it speedily rusts, especially at the junction of the pipes with the lower edge of the basin, and directly the process of oxidation is set up, it becomes simply a question of time how soon the bath will leak. The tubes, Mr. Walters has, so far, been obliged to construct of brass.

It was necessary to determine the amount of spirit required to keep the water in the bath boiling for a certain time. For this purpose a long series of experiments was demanded. At first sight it would seem a very simple affair, but the problem proved so complicated that upwards of forty observations were requisite to get at anything like certainty. The first question to be decided was, what quantity of spirit in the outer chamber would produce a blast of sufficient duration to go out at the very same time with the flame in the inner chamber. On this head I could find no information. In Griffin's excellent "*Chemical Handicraft*" we are directed to pour into each chamber as much spirit as will fill the cover of the lamp; but although this no doubt answers very well for the ordinary requirements of chemistry, it turned out to be quite inadequate for the bath; and it was only after many failures that I was enabled to determine that, with good methylated spirit, the proportion in the outer chamber must be two and a half to one in the inner. Scarcely had these observations been brought to a satisfactory conclusion, before it was discovered that the blast thus obtained was too strong for any lamp, and that it would be absolutely necessary to reduce the quantity of spirit in the outer chamber to eight drachms. The next point to get at was the amount of water. Too large a volume, of course, meant an unnecessary waste of heat; on the other hand, too small a quantity exposed the bath to injury from the heat; so that a separate series of trials had to be made in order to clear up this difficulty. Finally



the height at which the bearing-ring had to be fixed, so as to get the maximum of heat without the risk of putting out the flame in the inner chamber, had to be ascertained. So far as I have been able to determine, a height of seven-eighths of an inch of its lower surface from the top of the lamp, combines all possible advantages in this direction.

The bath is used as follows :—The bather undresses to his shirt and slippers, so as to be ready. The lid, G (fig. 4), covering the inner chamber of the lamp is to be removed. The cork, *c*, of the tube leading to the outer chamber is to be withdrawn. Eight drachms of *good* methylated spirit should be poured, by means of a very small funnel or a measure-glass, into this chamber, holding the lamp on one side, so as to avoid waste of spirit. The cork is then replaced. Four drachms of spirit are poured into the inner chamber. The lamp is now lighted by applying a burning match to the spirit in the inner chamber. The object of doing this at such an early stage is to secure thorough ignition of the spirit, and prevent the flame being put out when the bath is placed over it. Sometimes this process must be repeated, as the best spirit will go out now and then. Lighted paper should never be used in preference to the match. The lamp is now placed on a table, or any place where it will stand firm.

The body of the bath, A A (fig. 3), is to be about half filled with hot water, which is immediately after thrown away. This is done to heat the bath. Seven ounces of hot water are again poured into the same part, thus filling it quite up to the wire ring, and the bath is carefully placed over the lamp. It is not absolutely necessary to use hot water, the heat generated by the lamp is sufficient to boil it, even when cold ; but it is a great economy of time and fuel to do so, and I need scarcely say that so small a quantity can generally be procured. Unless the patient wishes, for some particular reason, to prolong the employment of the vapour, seven ounces of water will be quite sufficient. All that is requisite for ordinary purposes will be gained by converting this quantity into steam. The bath is accordingly marked inside with a wire ring, to show how high this amount will reach to. Until the patient has become quite habituated to the use of the bath, I do not advise that he should expose himself to the heat



for more than ten minutes, and the amount both of the spirit and water is calculated on the basis of affording this and no more, but of affording it most effectually. Should he, however, desire to continue the use of the vapour, his object is easily carried out by adding more water, say four, five or six tablespoonfuls, and increasing the spirit in the *inner* chamber by two or three drachms. This, however, is one of the points which are perpetually being modified by experience. Some persons can never bear the vapour for more than a few minutes; others are so little influenced by its action that it would almost seem as if they could support its action for an indefinite time.

The bearing-ring of the lamp being adjusted, as before directed, to a height of seven-eighths of an inch or an inch between its lower surface and the top of the lamp, the bather should wait a few moments till the flame begins to rise well up. Taking the bath by the handles, he should place it on the ring, the lowest part of it slipping through the latter (see fig. 5). Should the flame die out, he has not waited long enough, and must relight it, and replace the bath. Having satisfied himself that the lamp burns freely, he should grasp the latter firmly by the handle, and place the whole on the floor, under a chair. If the floor be covered with carpet, it is scarcely requisite to insert anything between it and the lamp, but a tile is essential for this purpose if we have to deal with such substances as floor-cloth, linoleum, &c.

The next step is to fold two thick turkish towels, and place them over the seat of a strong cane-bottomed chair in such a way as to cover all the openings. The fringe should be turned inwards, so that it may not catch when the bather is sitting down, or be exposed to the flame when he is placing the bath on the floor. After a very little practice he will easily be able to regulate this so as to allow just sufficient heat, and no more, to pass through the seat. Possibly he may in process of time be able to dispense with this part of the arrangements; at the outset I am sure he cannot. Having done this, he should put on the flannel-lined crinoline, tying it round the neck (or, if he prefer it, the flannel and crinoline separately), then grasp it at the back, lift it carefully up, and, sitting down in the chair, let it slip over the back and then down in front, setting the feet at the same time on a stool, as shown in the sketch (fig. 9). And here I may observe



that it is, in my opinion, a great mistake to substitute a blanket for the crinoline and flannel. The heavy mackintosh covering which I have seen used with the calomel bath is, to my thinking, equally a mistake, being cold, stiff, and comfortless in the highest degree.\* The flannel and crinoline is both more comfortable and

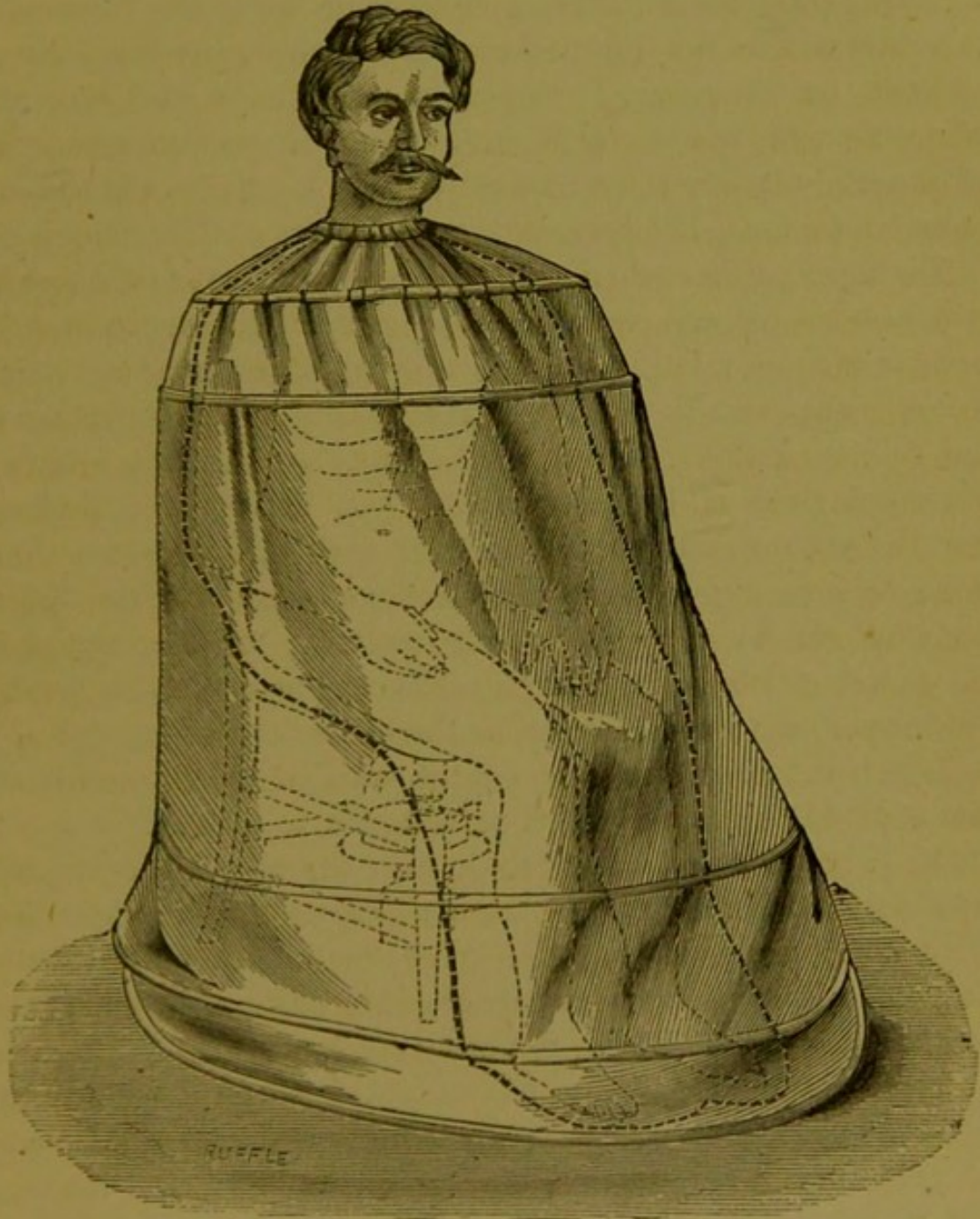


Fig. 9.

more efficacious ; being light, warm, and effectually waterproof ; requisites which cost Mr. Walters and myself a great deal of

\* The whole apparatus can be had of F. Walters and Co., surgical instrument makers, 16, Moorgate-street, Bank, E.C. ; 7, Southwark-street, London Bridge, Borough ; and 12, Palace-road, St. Thomas's Hospital, S.E.



trouble to secure, all the materials at first tried being too heavy and thick. In the present form the bath is a luxury, instead of being a source of wretchedness.

For ordinary purposes, and if used only for a short time, any strong chair will do; but should a long series of baths be required, I would strongly recommend a stout chair made with tenons, as in course of time the heat and moisture might loosen the joinings, by acting on the glue. I would also recommend weakly persons who suffer much from cold feet, to use a wooden stool, first thoroughly warming it, and always to take the bath in winter in a room with a fire. Mr. Walters supplies chairs of the kind named.

The water in the bath, if not actually boiling by the time that the patient takes his seat, soon begins to give audible notice that this process is being set up, and in a few minutes he begins to perspire freely. That this is not solely due to the vapour collecting on the skin is, I think, shown by the fact that the face, which is protected from it by the crinoline and flannel, also becomes covered with moisture. So soon as ever this symptom shows itself, or even before, the patient should knead and rub himself all over, so as to promote the sweating to the utmost of his power. Should he feel at all thirsty, he may safely drink a tumbler of cold water. When he thinks he has had enough of it, or begins to feel in the least degree faint, he should rise up and throw off the crinoline. If it be requisite to take only a vapour bath, he has nothing further to do than dry himself; but if it be considered desirable to convert the process into a turkish bath, the patient will have to go through steps to be described farther on. The lamp is easily extinguished by placing the cover over the flame, or it may be left to burn itself out.

The mention of anything like faintness is calculated to alarm some nervous persons. I may, however, observe that I have not as yet known it happen from the use of the bath; and hence, so far as my experience goes, there is not the least ground for uneasiness. That a faint, giddy feeling, or even complete syncope, will occasionally happen in the first stage of the turkish bath, as ordinarily taken, is well known. I have seen a very strongly-built man led out of the sweating-room of a public bath in a half-swooning state, although he had been but a short time exposed to a heat which thousands of men bear for a long while with impunity.



Many persons, whom I should have set down as little likely to be affected by such agencies, have told me that they suffered so severely in this way, that nothing would induce them to try a second turkish bath. A powerful gentleman from the Highlands said that he had to keep his bed for a week after taking a single bath; and perturbed and weak action of the heart seems undoubtedly to have followed in several instances.

But granting that such incidents frequently occur with the turkish bath, they certainly do not apply to the bath now recommended; and even if they did, they would not constitute any valid reason for withholding its use. Were such arguments to be admitted, baths of every kind must be abandoned, and we should have to revert to the filthy and unwholesome habits of our forefathers, from which we have so recently emerged. Something in the tendency to faintness occasionally felt in taking the ordinary turkish bath, may be due to the fact that the patient has to breathe as well as feel the heated air. Such an explanation has been suggested, but I am not disposed to attribute much importance to it, seeing that the vapour bath used at St. John's Hospital—where a powerful blast of hot steam is driven against the body only, the head and face being quite free—speedily prostrates some persons, an occurrence, however, which has not as yet induced me in a single instance to recommend the discontinuance of the treatment. In a very short time the most timid and delicate people begin to bear the operation of the vapour better and better, till they come to laugh at the sensations they felt at first. I am disposed to believe that the exhaustion induced by the turkish bath is simply owing to the prolonged exposure to the hot, dry air, that this is a mistake as regards persons in a weakly state and suffering from a dry skin, and that the more gentle action of the bath, which forms the subject of this pamphlet, is due to the free admixture of moisture.

It is therefore just possible, though by no means probable, that a person, especially one liable to faintness from other causes, might be assailed by this disagreeable symptom; and I look upon it as a childish proceeding to keep silence about a contingency of this nature, simply out of fear that timid people might be deterred by the mention of it from using the bath at all, particularly as both the prevention and cure are simple and easy in the highest degree.



The symptom comes on gradually enough, and gives ample and unmistakeable warning of its approach. All that the patient has to do is to throw off the crinoline and flannel ; the shock of the cooler air on the frame, and still more if the window be open, with a good drink of cold water, will revive him directly. I may mention here that it refreshes the patient very much, when he is getting hot, to drink half a tumbler or so of cold water while in the bath, especially during the summer.

Great dread is felt by some persons about deficient action of the heart disqualifying them for going through such an ordeal as the turkish, or even the vapour bath. I leave it to those who are more conversant with general medicine than I am, to say how far such a cause prevails, and whether it acts prohibitively with respect to the ordinary turkish bath. As regards diseases of the skin, and the modified bath, I can safely aver that I have very rarely met with such a state of health as to warrant me in thinking that mischief might arise.

A very different sensation is induced in some cases,—namely that of hunger. This happens with myself. After an ordinary bath in the morning, I generally read or write nearly or quite an hour before touching food ; but, after the process just described, I want to breakfast almost before I am out of the bath-room. I therefore think it quite sound practice, and in strict accordance with common sense, to recommend for those who feel thus, a cup of warm milk, with or without a little old rum, a cup of beef tea, or of restorative soup made with cold water, or anything of the kind that may strike the fancy. Provided a light and bland form of stimulant is selected, the choice is a matter of little moment.

This refers to the bath taken in the morning, and supposes that the patient does not breakfast immediately after, as some interval must be allowed for dressing. If the evening be preferred, and in a great number of cases it is preferable, this is not requisite. I advise patients in such cases to dine early, to take the bath about eight or nine o'clock, to take a glass of wine directly after, and to wind up by a light warm supper, after which they will sleep a sleep which kings might envy. If they object to supper, the bath may be taken before a late tea, but in every case the stomach should be empty.

To take a turkish bath the rules are as follows :—As regards



the soap to be used, I have no hesitation in saying, that unless there is any affection of the skin inducing an unpleasant smell, the preference may safely be given to that used at St. John's Hospital, made by Messrs. Pears and Co. When, however, an offensive odour is given out by the skin, carbolated soap, such as that prepared by the same makers, which contains one part of carbolic acid to eighty-four of soap, is often of great service. If the patient can manage it, a very good plan is first of all to make up a basin of soap-sud, and smear this quickly over the whole frame as far as he can reach. The best method that I know of to raise a good lather, is to put one of the the "soap balls" made by Messrs. Pears\* into a basin, or what is perhaps better, a jar, to pour on this a little hot water, and then with one of the fibre whisks, made by Messrs. Newton and Cook, of Princes Street, to beat it up into a thick latherlike cream. This is easily effected, and the lather lasts quite good up to the time it is required. Then, by means of horse-hair gloves, and a belt of horse-hair, or what is still better, the drab flax gloves and belts, manufactured by Messrs. Ewen and Co., of Jermyn Street, he can thoroughly scrub his skin while still besmeared with the lather. After this he sluices off the suds by means of a plentiful drenching with hot water, and then takes a cold bath, either with a full-length bath, if he have one, or with a tub of cold water. He then dries himself quickly with *soft* turkish towels, and the process is complete. When his avocations only permit the occasional use of the bath, and where the skin is progressing towards a healthy state, I cannot too strongly recommend this addition to the process.

It will very likely be objected, that with all possible care, a bath thus taken is far inferior in efficacy to the turkish bath as given at a well-conducted establishment, that the patient is not kneaded and scrubbed as he would be by skilled attendants, that he does not have his joints stretched, that he is not exposed to a great and yet carefully graduated dry heat, and that he does not wind up the proceedings by having a powerful cold douche from the hydrant, or a plunge into the swimming bath, followed by the refreshing rest on a couch. In short, it will be said that the bath

\* These can be procured from Messrs. Walters and Co., as can the whisk, gloves, and belt.



is not the turkish bath at all, and ought not to be called by any such name.

Every objection of this kind will diappear on reflection, or be dispelled by a brief trial. Such matters do not affect the essential points ; the vapour is the great thing in the diseases for which the bath is required and this is amply secured. The patient gets into a drenching sweat, which can be pushed to the verge of exhaustion ; and beyond this, common sense will tell every unprejudiced person that it is unnecessary to go. The heat can be carried to any endurable pitch by using a larger lamp, and even by using a larger quantity of spirit in the outer chamber ; and if dry heat be preferred, a flat circular firebrick can be substituted for the bath, but to the best of my judgment this would, as regards the treatment of skin diseases, particularly in the dry stage of eczema, be a step in the wrong direction. I have used the modified bath with the best results for in-patients who had more than once suffered bad relapses from the excitement set up in the skin, particularly of the scalp, by the dry heat of the turkish bath. One of my patients, who revelled in a bath at the Hammam, told me that whenever he omitted to bathe his head and face well, while in the sweating-room, he was sure to have an attack of eczema in that part. I totally fail to find any evidence, founded on observation, showing that dry heat is superior to that produced by hot air and vapour. For quite three years, I have constantly questioned patients who have taken both, and have observed nothing, in what they reported, at all calculated to make me think the old form better than the new, but much which makes me sceptical on this point. As to theoretical reasons, I do not value them one straw, but if I did, what they would prove rather points the other way. Moist heat effects its purpose quite as certainly as the other, and much more gently. If the same effect can be produced by a mild action, reason forbids a more violent one.

While admitting that I see nothing particular to object to in the stretching, I have not been able to satisfy myself that the process exerts any particular influence, in most cases ; and in diseases of the skin I believe it to be quite superfluous. Great benefit is ascribed to it, and, it may be, correctly enough ; but I am not aware that any evidence fit to be received as positive demonstration is extant, and the proceeding may some day turn out to be



a mere matter of tradition. I am disposed to think that, beyond what is necessary to hasten the sweating, which the patient can do very well for himself, kneading is not called for. As regards the sluicing with cold water, I freely admit that it may not be so invigorating as a plunge into the cold bath; but it is most refreshing, and any shortcomings in this way are amply compensated for by the fact that the patient can have a bath in the modified form as often as he likes. Finally, as to the lying down on a couch after the process is over—I look upon it as superfluous, except for invalids, and when the bath brings on great exhaustion, a state that will not be induced when it is taken with the precautions I have recommended. In other conditions it is simply a luxury, in which a patient can indulge or not, as seems agreeable. The objection that it is not a turkish bath at all, is soon disposed of. Let the reader call it by any name he likes, and I shall be as satisfied with it as he is.

The necessity for waiting any length of time before going out after taking a modified, or, indeed, any turkish bath, seems to be founded on prejudice. Such a step is not called for, even after a vapour bath, one far more calculated to predispose to taking cold than the other. A few minutes rest may do good, and that the patient can have under the new system; more he really does not want. The fear of taking cold is equally a prejudice. The vapour bath at St. John's Hospital is a very powerful one. It has been in constant use for three years, and is often going during great part of the afternoon and evening; yet though the patients continually come downstairs shortly afterwards, with their faces so flushed as to give evident signs of having been exposed to great heat, and go out at once into the open air in all kinds of weather, I have heard but very few complaints of catching cold, and then only at the outset, and in a mild form. Not a single instance of anything like chest affection, resulting from this sudden exposure, has been reported to me; and when my readers recollect how very prone patients are to ascribe every new symptom to the remedies ordered, they may be pretty sure that if such accidents were liable to occur I should have heard of them. But, on the contrary, what I have heard of is the very reverse—namely, that they find themselves far less liable to take cold when using the bath.

I will conclude by adding a few words as to the extreme



economy of the baths recommended, and its value in certain emergencies not connected with diseases of the skin. No fixing of any kind is necessary, nor is any extra called for beyond the spirit required to feed the lamp, and the materials for raising a lather. I do not see how even the most extravagant person could well spend money on the matter. Methylated spirit answers perfectly well; as it can be procured of excellent quality for a shilling a pint, and as this suffices for quite thirteen baths, a simple sum in division will show that each bath costs a fraction less than a penny. No dirt is caused, nor is any unpleasant smell engendered. The bath is perfectly safe; it does not seem in the least degree liable to wear, and beyond the occasional washing of the flannel lining, I know of nothing in the way of repair that can be objected to. The whole apparatus can be easily carried in the hand, or packed in a moderate-sized carpet bag, and makes scarcely a perceptible addition to the furniture of a bath-room.

The value of the bath in some cases of sudden illness will be easily estimated. The importance of being able to procure hot water in the night, while a fire is being lighted, in such affections as colic, painful diarrhoea, &c. is well known to medical men, and to mothers of families. Now, cold water can be heated in the bath in three minutes from the time the blast rises. Similarly, any restorative wanted for faintness, &c. could be warmed with great quickness. The lamp made by Mr. Walters for me (for the purpose of procuring dry heat if wanted), with a curved instead of a straight tube, sends up such a powerful blast that it will heat or cook anything more quickly even than that usually employed. Again, it is well known that filling the room with steam is a most efficient aid to treatment in croup and bronchitis. Now, however valuable the bronchitis kettle may be—and I should be one of the last persons to contest its utility,—the bath is much superior; for an emergency it can be heated in vastly less time, it throws out a much larger body of vapour, and it can be placed on a table close to the bed. By increasing the quantity of spirit in the inner chamber, and filling the bath nearly to the top, we can procure a larger quantity of hot steam, and in a much shorter time, than by any method I know.