

What is man?

Contributors

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“What is Man?”

LISTEN, O MAN, and I will tell thee what thou art. I speak not
of thy Soul, but of thy *Body* only.

(A) Skeleton.



The *Skeleton* is a complete framework of bones (A); the *Skull* is nicely balanced, and rests upon the *Spine*, which is a bony column, forming the back, and giving to the figure strength and upright posture.

The *Ribs* are rooted in the spine, and act as bars to keep the wonderful machinery within from injury.

In the thighs, legs, arms, and hands, bones, for purposes of strength, are well jointed into one another; or, where easy movement is required, they are fitted into sockets.

Bands of flesh, called *Muscles* (B), over-wrap the skeleton. These are either laid together, or pass between each other, and (being covered by the *Skin*) make up the fleshy form of man. The muscles give him power to use his limbs and move from place to place, and do his daily toil.

From the *Brain* (a), which lies within the Skull, and from the *Marrow of the Spine* (b), fine, fibre-like communications, called the *Nerves* (C), pass to every portion of the body. They act upon the *Muscles* and the *Limbs*, to move them as the will directs; or upon the brain, to tell it what is passing in the world around; or they give the body pain or pleasure, as its doings may occasion.

The *Heart* and *Lungs* (D) are placed within the chest; and a little underneath them (E), are the *Liver* and its kindred organs; then the *Stomach*, with the *Bowels*, a lengthy, folded tube.

Food, when eaten, is changed within the *Stomach*, and, in its altered state, is passed into the *Bowels*. Here it is mixed with *Bile* or *Gall*, (which is extracted in the *Liver* from the *Blood*,) and then the refuse portion of the food is cast away. The remainder, which becomes the element of new-made *Blood*, is carried by the *Veins* (those bluish, branching vessels seen beneath the skin) directly to the *Heart*, and thence into the *Lungs*, and then through out the body.

The *Heart* (D), which is a kind of double bag, beats with clock-like regularity; and, into one of its divisions or compartments, the *Veins* empty the new-formed element

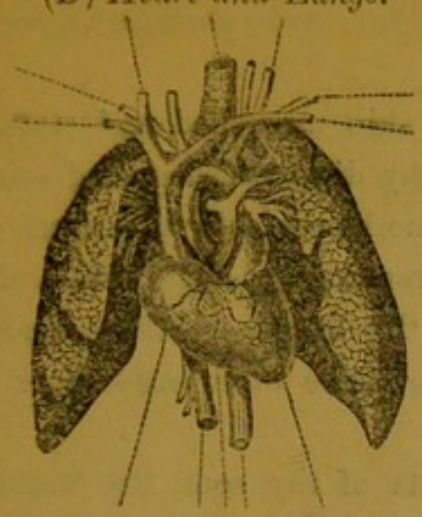


(B) *Muscles of the Thigh.*



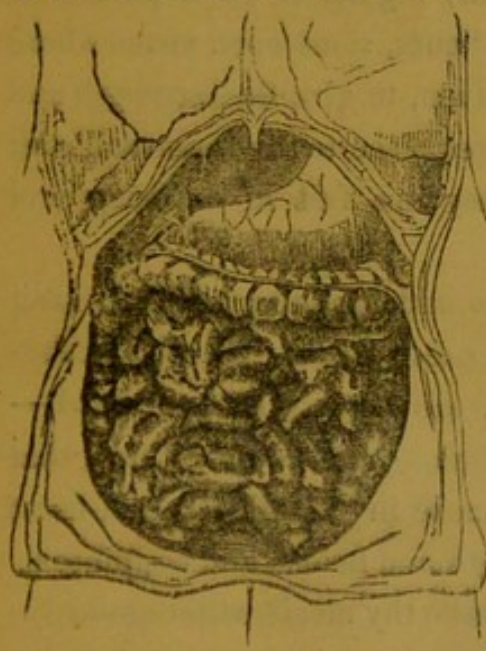
(C) *Brain and Spinal Cord.*

(D) Heart and Lungs.



of Blood just spoken of; carrying there- with such portion of the Blood as, having made a journey through the body, has lost its power to nourish. This fluid, the heart then throws into the *Lungs*; where, being acted on by *Air* (which is brought into the *Lungs at every breath*), and being purified, it obtains new vigour for its proper work. It passes now into the second division of the *Heart*; and thence, through tubes, called *Arteries*, to every portion of the body; giving nourishment and heat and health. This work performed, it flows again into the *Veins*, and thence into the *Heart*, to undergo anew the process just described.

(E) Liver, Stomach, & Bowels.



Here it must be noticed that the Blood itself is always in a state of change. Its progress through the body renders it impure; and if the impurities be not removed, the consequence is suffering, disease, and death. Hence the *Lungs breathe out* a gas injurious to the Blood; and the *Liver*, and the *Kidneys*, and the *Skin* (pierced with countless pores or holes), carry off the rest of its impurities.

Thy health of body, therefore, Man, is mainly in thy keeping.

If thou drink strong drink, and waste thy precious time within the beer-house, or the dram-shop, thy stomach must be injured, and its power to make the necessary change in food diminished; thy liver speedily becomes diseased; it cannot separate sufficient bile to form thee healthy blood; thy brain and all thy nerves become enfeebled; and soon thou art thyself a suffering, miserable, worthless being; disgraceful to humanity, useless to society, a source of wretchedness at home, a burden to thyself, and equally offensive in the sight of God and man.

If thou live in dirty courts or lanes, or near to places which thy sense of smell would tell thee to avoid, and, especially, in small and closed-up rooms with many other people, the air thou breathest cannot give thy blood new nourishment; hence the blood which passeth through thy

arteries and veins become a poison to thee, and thou must suffer languor, feebleness, and fever; and have the greatest liability to prevalent disease, to suffering, and death.

If thou live in filthy habits, with thy skin unwashed and clothes unclean, telling by their sickening smell thy dirty and degraded state, mark well the consequences. Thy skin's no longer able to perform its office; what it ought to throw away in perspiration, stays within thy body to produce disease; and, acting on thy lungs or other organs, shows itself in scrofula, consumption, or some other messenger of premature and wasting death.

Then be advised, O MAN! The interests of thy soul, thy worldly good and health of body, equally demand that thou shouldst regulate thy life with wisdom. Avoid unwholesome air, regard it as a pestilence that causeth death. Seek, in thy leisure hours, some open space where thou mayest breathe the purest air of heaven, to give thee strength and life. Refuse intoxicating drinks; they are poison to thy frame and ruin to thy soul; sweet as they may seem, they are full of suffering and brawls, of degradation, woe, and death.

Wash well thy skin; fail not to use the bath, or otherwise well wash thyself from head to foot, *once at least* in every week. See thy clothes are often changed, and, with thy house, are clean. Be persuaded,—make an experiment, if only for a little time,—and thou shalt find, that if thou keep'st thy skin and clothes and house in cleanliness, and usest proper exercise, thou shalt increase strength and health and happiness.

Let thy food be plain and wholesome; take thy meals with regularity; and let temperance and truth and virtue be thy guiding stars of life.

And if thou heedest this counsel, thou shalt find thy present, and, it may be, thy eternal, good therein. Thou shalt “flourish like a tree planted by the water side;” and if, with Christian faith, thou seek the help of God, thou shalt do thy duties as becomes a man; thou shalt feel a healthful pleasure into which the filthy and degraded cannot enter; and thou shalt so pass through this present world of trial, as will fit thee best for the eternal world of glory.

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