

**The cold-water system: an essay : exhibiting the real merits, and most safe and effectual employment, of this excellent system in indigestion, costiveness, asthma, cough, consumption, rheumatism, gout, &c; with cautionary remarks, addressed to people of extreme opinions, and some new cases / by Thos. J. Graham.**

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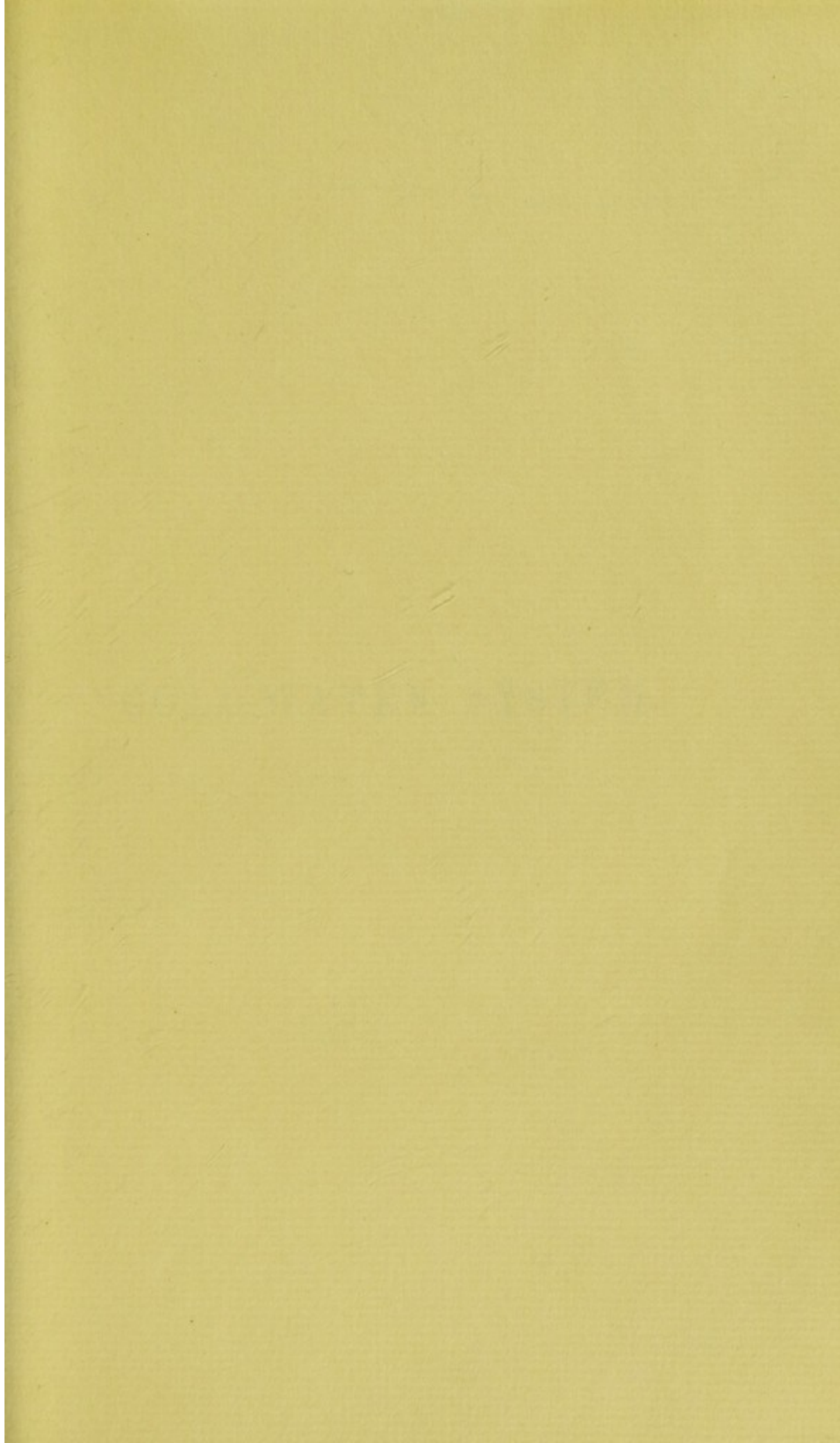




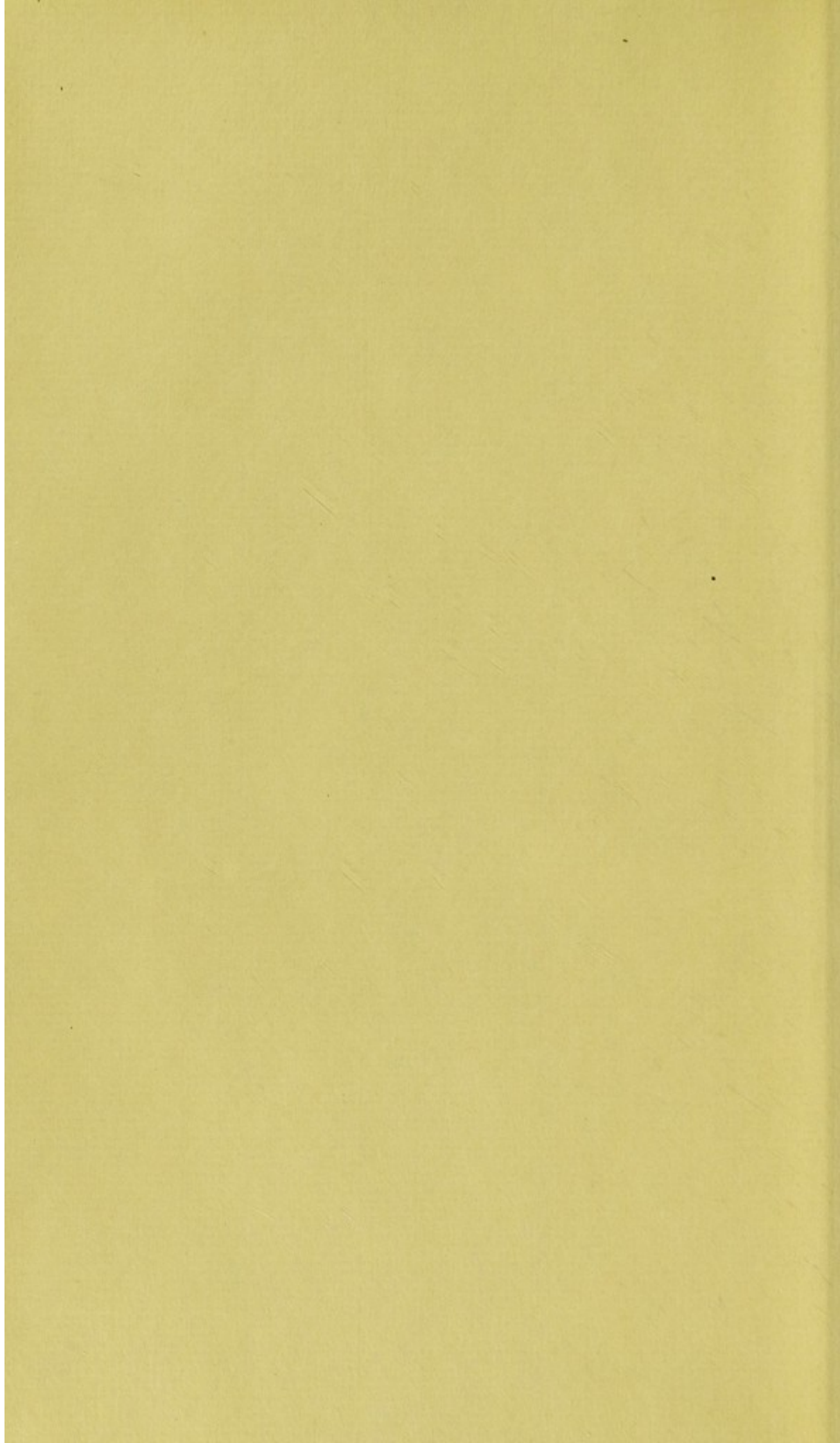
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*D. B. B. B.*

COLD-WATER SYSTEM.

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*For the Editor* THE *of the*

**COLD-WATER SYSTEM:**

*Metropolitan Magazine.*  
**AN ESSAY,**

EXHIBITING THE REAL MERITS, AND MOST SAFE AND  
EFFECTUAL EMPLOYMENT, OF THIS EXCELLENT SYSTEM  
IN INDIGESTION, COSTIVENESS, ASTHMA, COUGH,  
CONSUMPTION, RHEUMATISM, GOUT, &c.;

WITH

CAUTIONARY REMARKS,

ADDRESSED TO PEOPLE OF EXTREME OPINIONS,  
AND SOME NEW CASES.

---

**BY THOS. J. GRAHAM, M.D.**

GRADUATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW;  
MEMBER OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF LONDON;  
&c.

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“ He wanted no other recommendation for any one article of science, than the recommendation of evidence;—and, with this recommendation, he opened to it the chambers of his mind, though authority scowled upon it, and taste was disgusted by it, and fashion was ashamed of it.”—*Dr. Chalmers, on the Merits of Newton's Philosophy.*

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Queen Street, King Street, Long Acre



TO

WILLIAM HAYDON, ESQ.

OF MILL MEAD HOUSE, GUILDFORD.

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MY DEAR FRIEND,

You have experienced in your own person some of the benefits to be derived from the Cold-water System, and have thus become convinced of its safety and efficacy. I rejoice at this, not only on account of the relief experienced by yourself, but likewise from knowing that your expansive benevolence, not permitting you to be an indifferent spectator of the sufferings of others, will render you anxious to extend the advantages to be obtained from a proper employment of this mode of treatment, to all within your reach to whom it is applicable.

Permit me to inscribe this volume to you, as a small token of my high regard and esteem, and of the great value which I set on your unwearied efforts for the benefit and happiness of your fellow-men;

And believe me,

My dear Friend,

Ever your's very affectionately,

T. J. GRAHAM.

*Epsom,*

*10th February, 1843.*



## P R E F A C E .

---

A perfect cure for all diseases, (which some say they have found,) is a magnet of irresistible attraction. Although mankind are convinced no such thing exists, or can exist in the present state of things; and although they frequently half suspect the honesty, or doubt the knowledge, of the party coming forward with such high pretensions, yet they are invariably caught by this net. So infatuated are men in contemplating a power which they fain would believe, if possible, to exist, or, which they earnestly desire might be found on earth, that whoever raises such a standard is *sure* of having very many to flock around it.

The writers on *Hydrophy* have endeavoured to carry us away into the regions of infallibility and perfection. They boldly speak of seeing

“scrophula, rheumatism, gout, dyspepsia, and many other severe complaints, cured by the dozens,” by means of the cold-water process; and would have us believe, that it is almost, if not quite, *infallible*. But assertions are not proofs; nor are *cases* always *facts*. Undoubtedly there is a land of perfection; but it is not to be found on this side of the river of death. We must all pass through that river, before we can arrive at that blissful land which we all covet to attain, and where we have every reason to believe a *perfect cure* will be found for all the diseases both of body and mind.

On the other hand, professional men, who are incessantly occupied in the administration of medicines, and in pursuing the ordinary course sanctioned by long-established practice, and founded, as they think, on enlightened principles; not only deny that *cold water* can work such wonders as its advocates declare, but even almost regard with contempt the virtues and efficacy of so simple a medicament.

These opposite and contending parties are



both in error; and my object, in the publication of this book, is to endeavour to prove the correctness of this assertion, and to secure to *cold water* its proper place in the list of remedies. **IT IS A REMEDY OF VAST POWER.** But to assert, that it is the only good thing used in the art of healing is a wild delusion, utterly repugnant to the experience of ages, and at variance with right reason, and common observation. On the other hand, to declare that the *hydriatic treatment* is a mere novelty,—a passing whim of the day,—is an assertion sufficiently disproved, both by the reasonableness which distinguishes the practice of employing cold water freely to the human body, and by the very numerous well-attested cases of cure, which are on record. Here, as in most other things in this feverish life of extremes, the truth is to be found only in the *golden mean*.

This system has been unnecessarily and unwisely arrayed against all the means ordinarily in use amongst medical men; and a strenuous endeavour has been exerted to make the public believe

it is capable of superseding all other measures employed for the recovery of health. This is a position both forced and false; and one which it cannot maintain. It has been broadly and confidently asserted, that it is entirely incompatible with the use of medicine;—this I positively deny. Let those tell us so who are qualified to give an opinion,—who have watched for years the effects of medicines in different disorders and constitutions,—and who are capable of judging what the human frame *will* bear, and what it *will not*,—and then we may believe it. Priessnitz never employed medicine because he has never been allowed to do so. The Austrian Government would not permit so uneducated a man to practise medicine;—so that in using water, ~~therefore~~ he has employed the only element which was left to him. And he has often succeeded with it, from its being, in truth, a valuable remedial agent. If it be so dangerous to employ it when we administer a little medicine,—yea, we will even say a little mercurial medicine,—why is it that it is fearlessly prac-



tised by Priessnitz and others, when the constitutions of some patients are *saturated* with mercury? We know it is useful in such cases; although mercury, antimony, and other medicines are not merely taken at the time in small quantities, but actually resident in the frame, yet the cold-water system is ordered, and operates often with great advantage to the sufferer. We do not say to the patient,—Go, and first get rid of your dangerous mercurials; then come, and you shall undergo the treatment:—we put him at once upon it, even where the disease has been induced by mercury, and frequently a cure is the result. If, therefore, it be dangerous to meddle at the same time with water and physic, it cannot be because they are essentially incompatible. It may suit the humour of those to say so who are ignorant of the use of anything but water in the treatment of disease; but we are advocates for an enlightened view of things.

At the present moment, *Hydrophy* wears too much the appearance of *quackery*. This is to be



regretted; and I shall be glad if I can rescue it from so disgraceful a position, for it is one which it ought not to occupy, but one into which the majority of writers on the subject have certainly driven it, or rather that in which they have placed it. It is true, that *quackery* is not confined to the cold-water system, or to any of the departments of the healing art:—the spirit and practice of it pervade too extensively society at large. Wherever found, its cry,—its universal cry is,—“THIS, OR NOTHING;”—“OUR REMEDY IS ALL, AND ALL ELSE IS NOTHING:” but common sense and actual experience confute the arguments, and scorn the pretensions, of this shameless spirit. It is best avoided, and, wherever encountered, it is right to oppose it. Therefore, every writer on a novel remedy has a three-fold duty to perform; viz. *first*, to disabuse the minds of the over-credulous; *secondly*, to enlighten the ignorant, and conquer the prejudices of opposers; and, *thirdly*, honestly and fearlessly to state the truth with respect to the subject in question. To these three points I, consequently, design to

direct my efforts in these pages. “ *Quid verum atque decens curo et rogo, et omnis in hoc sum.*”

“ What right, what true, what fit we justly call,  
Let this be all my care—for this is all.”

These pages have unavoidably been written very much *currente calamo*; and, therefore, I have to crave the indulgence of the reader with regard to any errors which he may here meet with. Still, I hope the publication will be found useful; and that this mite contributed to the general stock of medical knowledge, will aid its professors more effectually to contend against even the ravages of disease, and more speedily and satisfactorily to relieve pain, and correct disorder; while, at the same time, it will afford hints of no mean service to the invalid himself.

So extremely valuable is this treatment, that the public are, in my opinion, much indebted to Captain Claridge, for the trouble he has taken in introducing it to our notice. He is evidently



unacquainted with the nature of disease, and also with the value and efficacy of medicine;— he has never studied the one or the other;— and has therefore fallen, as might be expected, into many and egregious mistakes. I cannot, therefore, at all agree with him, (any more than with the other writers on *Hydrophy*,) in many of his statements or opinions; and much less can I approve of his marked want of respect for the medical profession; still, as this new and valuable system was comparatively unknown in England before the appearance of his book on the subject, we are under obligations to him for having given us so much information respecting it.

T. J. G.

*Woodcote Lodge, Epsom, Surrey,  
and 29, Sackville Street, Piccadilly.*

The author's regular day of attendance in *Sackville Street* is Tuesday, between the hours of eleven and three. He is frequently there also on Friday.

# CONTENTS.

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	PAGE.
Cautionary Remarks .....	1
Cough and Consumption, with Cases .....	8
Bronchitis .....	14
Cold Water acts by augmenting the Nervous Energy ...	24
Spitting of Blood .....	36
Asthma .....	39
Invaluable treatment .....	40
Case of Asthma .....	43
Indigestion.....	46
Tumours and Ulcerations .....	51
Cancer .....	53
Cases of.....	56
Case of Ulceration .....	57
Scrophula .....	69
General Debility .....	70
Value of Salt .....	74
Sir Charles Clarke's Hydriatic Practice, with Cases ...	76
Constipation .....	80
Striking Cases.....	82—84
Head-ache .....	87
Liver Complaint .....	89
A Case of .....	92



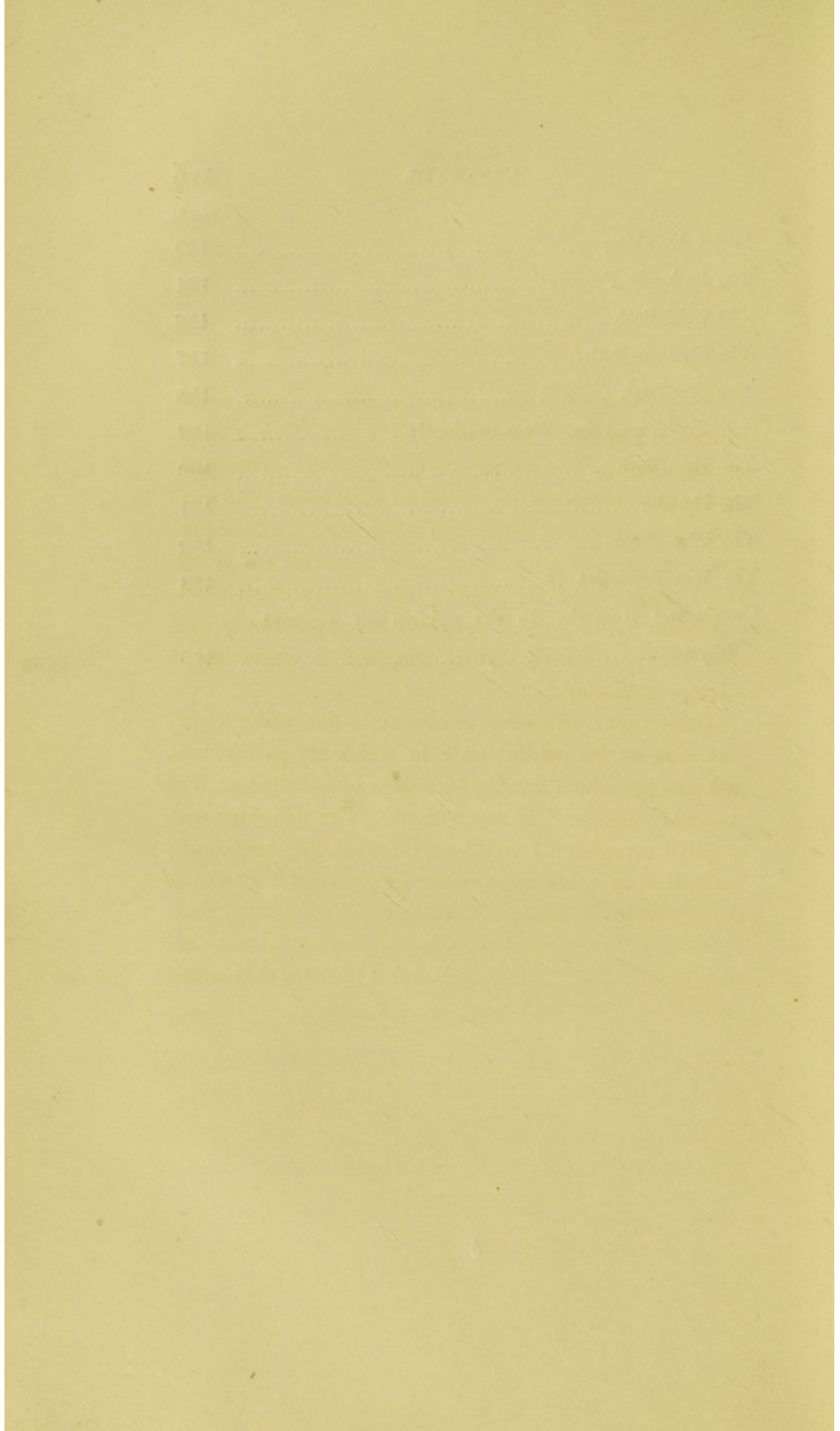
	PAGE.
Gout .....	94
Some say medicine is of no service here—but the shoemaker should not go beyond his last .....	99
Severe Case of .....	100
Rheumatism .....	109
Cases of.....	111—113, 115, 116
Necessity of discrimination, and its grand results, 116—118	
Spinal Complaints .....	120
Bed-ridden Patients .....	121
Nervous Disorders .....	125
Priessnitz's want of discernment in prescribing for a very severe case .....	124
Tic Douloureux.....	128
English Patients seem to think they are to be cured even of Tic Douloureux in a few days or weeks..	128
Nervous Disorders of the Heart .....	129
Striking case .....	130 131
Fever.....	133
Dr. Bateman and Mr. Erasmus Wilson's opinions.....	134
The Crisis.....	136
Priessnitz's want of skill .....	136
Case of a Clergyman—very valuable .....	138
Hydriatic measures ought not to be pushed too far—the reason of this shewn .....	140
Liebig's opinions on the action of Water.....	142
His view of the efficacy of Salt .....	143
Cholera—not to be treated Hydriatically .....	143

CONTENTS.

xvii

	PAGE.
Water Drinking .....	145
The Sudorific Process .....	151
The Cold-Bath .....	156
The Shallow-Bath .....	157
The Sitz-Bath .....	158
To be used sometimes cautiously .....	132
The Foot-Bath .....	160
The Douche .....	161
The Wet-Sheet .....	162
The Wet-Bandages .....	164
Concluding Remarks in the opinion of eminent Physicians .....	165





Since writing the account of the case of Consumption related at page 8, I have received a note from a friend of the family, who, after having been for some time absent from home, says,—“ I found the Misses —— wonderfully improved in health and appearance. The change in the house is most agreeable; for where all was gloom, and I might almost say *despair*, there is now cheerfulness and hope. The second daughter is comparatively well. The one who has the spinal complaint is beginning to attempt sitting up.”

This extract will serve to convey to the reader a very just idea of the painful state in which my patient was, and also her whole family, by reason of her illness. The “ *second daughter* ” is my patient. The daughter with a spinal complaint I could not do much for; principally because such cases must have the personal attention of the prescriber. Some directions were, however, given respecting her treatment, and they were useful, but only in a trifling degree compared with what they would have been if she had come up to Epsom.



In order to obviate the necessity of answering many letters of enquiry, the Author takes this opportunity of stating, that he now confines his attention to his patients at Epsom, where he has provided every thing requisite for the efficient employment of the Cold-water System. He has bathing servants there and baths. There are good lodgings and furnished houses for the patients; and the fine air of Epsom, with that of its neighbouring downs, and the downs of Banstead and Mickleham, is so proverbially salubrious, as very much to contribute to the efficacy of the treatment adopted. It is a locality precisely of the nature to be recommended under this new system—the downs affording space for excellent walking exercise; and the air, in point of pure and bracing qualities, is scarcely to be surpassed in the kingdom.

#### CORRECTIONS.

At page 2, line 8, after pathology, insert a comma only.

8, line 14, *for* the spring of the present year, *read* of last year.

78, last line, *for* resurrection, *read* resuscitation.

81, line 2, place the semi-colon after practicable, and a comma after medicine.

124, line 12, *for* indiscrimately, *read* indiscriminately.

124, line 24, after ploughman, insert a comma instead of a full stop.

136, line 5, *for* carbuncle, *read* carbuncular.

## HINTS, &c.

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NOTHING is more conspicuously evident in the history of human conduct than that man is ever prone to extremes; and I regret to perceive already, such opinions broached by persons favorable to the *Cold-water System*, and such an objectionable and dangerous course pursued by them, as render it an imperative duty in me to offer here some explanatory and cautionary remarks. Several sturdy, but not very judicious, advocates of this system openly declare their opinion, that it is capable of superseding the practice of medicine; while others are adopting measures for the speedy commencement of establishments for the treatment of patients by practitioners taken from any, and the lowest orders of society;—from amongst tinkers, or tailors, or tee-total messengers, or any others who have nothing else to do;—acting, as if they believed, that a few weeks of blundering instruction, (and in some instances a few days,) is abundantly sufficient to convert an old soldier, or a tee-total secretary, or an active porter, into a very respectable and efficient practitioner of *Hydrophy!* These people are not ashamed to assert, that any close and continued study of the various diseases which man is heir to,—of the great difference in temperaments and consti-



tutions,—of the variety of causes (moral and physical) which originate disease,—of the important distinction between maladies which are only functional, and those which are deep-seated and organic,—and of the changes, often so extraordinary, which take place in the same habits at different periods,—that all this, and in fact every thing else relating to the science of anatomy, physiology, pathology; and the patient examination of disease at the bed-side, or fire-side of the sufferer, are quite unnecessary, and may well be dispensed with! We have heard of “*philosophy in sport made science in earnest,*” but here we witness such a sporting with philosophy, science, right reason, and common sense, as is not to be exceeded in the annals of our country; and it is a duty I owe to myself, to the medical profession, and the public, again distinctly to state, that I regard the *Cold-water System* only as a valuable auxiliary to medicine, to be adopted singly in those cases where medicine has wholly failed, or to which the system is peculiarly adapted; or to be pursued partially, in conjunction with medicine, in cases of a different nature. Having been one of the first medical men in this country to sanction the *hydriatic* treatment, I would have it clearly understood, that I repudiate all such absurd sentiments, and am anxious to warn the public against such dangerous courses. I will not lend my sanction to any opinions or practices of this sort; but perseveringly oppose them, as at once manifesting a great contempt of common sense, and involving extreme danger to the suffering public.

Besides, such a course is the most certain way to bring a valuable remedial agent into discredit. The hydriatic system, when skilfully adopted, is founded in right



reason,—has been proved by experience of great efficacy,—and it needs not any fictitious help to force it into public estimation; while the wild delusions of the ignorant and extravagant cannot do otherwise than widely to prejudice its cause.

A public establishment for the poor is talked of as about to be commenced in the heart of the metropolis,—where nothing but foul water and impure air, are to be procured!—to be superintended by nobody knows whom! While a philanthropic gentleman has actually begun a small one in his own neighbourhood, and has placed over it a director who, in these matters, knows not his right hand from his left, being perfectly ignorant of the nature of disease, and of the right use of the means employed in the *Cold-water System!* Some of these people even go to the length of asserting, that for medical men to be at the head of such establishments is a great disadvantage, inasmuch as they cannot divest themselves of their prejudices in favor of medicine, and urging, as a further reason, its being unnecessary because Preissnitz,—a mere peasant,—treats diseases with so much success.

Such drivelling absurdity would not be worth the labour of exposure, were not the practice of physic, and the whole art of healing, that branch of knowledge of which the public have ever shown the most lamentable ignorance, and consequently that in which they are ever liable to the most cruel impositions. They are not aware, that there are many diseases of which Preissnitz is grossly ignorant, as respects both their nature, and the best means for their relief and cure; and, without taking into consideration the probability of his being a man gifted with a natural talent for the investigation and cure



of diseases in his own way,—such as is not to be found in one man in forty thousand;—they forget that he has been twenty years arriving at his present knowledge and success. But these things are lost upon such wise and zealous people,—they can form a clever hydropath, in a few days or weeks, out of any one who needs a good employment!—and with them *hydropathy* is equally applicable to all disorders.

Some of these good people are, I believe, well-intentioned, but their zeal is without knowledge, and therefore dangerous. They are lamentably deficient in prudence and discretion, and their conduct, if persisted in, will produce a terrible re-action, the nature and consequences of which they will not foresee, and cannot prevent. When we discover an utter contempt of principle and common sense, in any benevolent scheme,—it matters not how great an amount of good is designed thereby, or how eagerly the folly may be embraced at the moment,—invariably the public are sure to visit us with contempt and neglect in its turn.

Every day's experience furnishes sufficient matter of proof, that people are too ready to offer advice on subjects on which they are not, in any degree, qualified to form a correct judgment; and in nothing is this more conspicuous than with respect to the use of cold water in the cure of human maladies.

After paying considerable attention to this branch of the healing art, I do not hesitate to say, that there are several maladies to which it is not applicable; and others in which its employment is limited, and of no great service. Undoubtedly, in many severe cases, this Cold-water System will work wonders, and secure effects



which cannot be gained by medicine, or any other means; but it is my duty to state, that there are not a few diseases in which the skilful physician will be far more successful by the use of medicine, and his other ordinary means, than the most perfect hydropath. Every honest and enlightened man will speak the truth. The unprofessional writers on hydropathy may, perhaps, be excused for seeing no excellence in anything but that system; but no man in his right mind will adopt such views, or follow such guides. Their books are full of errors, and, if too closely followed, will do a great deal of mischief. One of the greatest hydropaths in this country, after his return from Gräfenburg, was compelled to ask my advice for the cure of a very annoying complaint, from which his favorite "*Cold-water Cure*" could not deliver him. He was troubled with an eruption and ulceration about the corners of his mouth, together with a huskiness and uneasiness every morning in his throat and bronchia,—causing him a sensation as if he had taken cold. His acquaintance rallied him on the extraordinary powers of his "*cold-water cure*," and cried out—*Hydropath, cure thyself*;—but this he could not do, notwithstanding the very liberal use of his favorite fluid, and caustic to boot. He was unwillingly driven into the arms of the physician; but not unavailingly. He was told, that it was probable the same means would deliver him both from the disorder of the skin, and that of the bronchia. I prescribed for him a vegetable alterative, and was favored thereby to cure him perfectly within six weeks.

Truth fears nothing so much as concealment, and desires nothing so much as clearly to be laid open to the view of all. Let us not, therefore, withhold anything on



this subject which we know to be true; but let us not, on the other hand, prejudice a good cause, by a foolish extravagance; as if we thought that, although our all-wise Creator has permitted mankind to be visited by so many painful maladies, yet He has limited the means of counteracting them to the use of one fluid.\* TRUTH IS GREAT, AND WILL PREVAIL. It is not, so to speak, attracted solely around one or two remedial substances, any more than it is engrossed by one set of men;—it is common property: as it is every man's right, and every man's most necessary possession, so it is, likewise, when we speak here of power and efficacy, to be exhibited in connexion with a variety of means. And although some of the medical profession may do what they can to trample this system in the dust, or the *hydropath* may say what he is able in order to decry every other mea-

\* We have always been convinced, that He has scattered around us substances, at least as numerous as the diseases they are sent to cure, and, therefore, it is, that instinct leads even animals to find out these salutary agents. The testimonies of travellers are clear and convincing, that the rudest savage nations are in possession of curative substances unknown to civilized man, and their people sometimes perform cures where learning and experience have proved of no avail. In one of the most malignant and fatal fevers which raged epidemically some years since in Surinam, a slave named *Quassi* employed the infusion of a tree, which was evidently a gift from on high, for few of those who took it failed to recover, while those who neglected it died almost to a man. So great a blessing was this tree to the people, that they desired to render its discoverer immortal, and named the tree *Quassia*. This is the substance so well known in medicine, as possessing those peculiar properties likely to render it so eminently serviceable in malignant fevers, viz. those of invigorating, without augmenting the excitement.



sure, Truth will successfully assert its own supremacy,—bear ultimately its proper sway on this subject;—and demonstrate, to the satisfaction of all persons of discernment, and free from prejudice, that the system now considered is of great efficacy, but that it is not the only one worthy of our confidence.

I am truly a great friend to the *hydriatic* treatment, and have given the best possible proof of it;—the benefit resulting, in numerous instances, from the free use of cold spring water, the wet bandages, sitz-bath, douche, &c., together with the regulated diet, early rising, and exercise, of this admirable system, are greater, and more speedy, than many will credit;—but I cannot make one among those who write *ad captandum*, and from purely selfish views, and who endeavour to force a valuable remedial means beyond its legitimate limits;—nor give any sanction to the ill-grounded and absurd opinion, that *cold water* is every thing, and every thing else nothing. Here, as in most other things in life, the truth lies between the extremes.

The medical profession is the only legitimate channel of conveying the fullest stream of this blessing to mankind. A thorough knowledge of the human system, with the great varieties existing in constitutions, and to be witnessed in disease, such as medical education and experience are capable of imparting, must give to the practitioner in *hydriatics* an advantage which he cannot otherwise possess; an advantage, indeed, which will be fully felt and acknowledged in the course of time.

Having introduced these cautionary remarks, I am now desirous of appending a few additional observations on the hydriatic treatment of certain maladies.



## COUGH AND CONSUMPTION.

For many years I have been impressed with a conviction, that the treatment of consumption, and other chronic disorders, is far too frequently of so lowering and debilitating a kind as to be both unsound in principle, and very injurious, if not actually disastrous, in practice. I have availed myself of all convenient opportunities of stating this opinion to professional men, as well as in private society, and in my medical publications; but the subject is one of such vast importance, that it appears to me advisable to commit some of my thoughts on it to writing, with the principal facts I have been able to collect; hoping thereby to be of greater service in drawing to it the attention of the profession, and of those who suffer from this disorder.

In the spring of the present year I was called to visit a young lady in the neighbourhood of Bath, who had long been confined to her room by severe indisposition:— what I witnessed on that occasion has decided me now to call the attention of all concerned, to that which I am persuaded will be found a very improved mode of treatment in all cases of weakness, and likewise in some of actual disease, in the chest. The symptoms of this lady were:— great debility, much uneasiness and irritation in the chest, with cough; frequent pain in the right side;— sometimes these symptoms were transferred to the chest, —accompanied with swelling, tenderness on pressure,



and flushings of the face; she suffered from restless nights; small appetite, and weak digestion. For the two or three months immediately preceding my visit she had been wholly confined to her bed-room, and almost to her bed. Her weakness, and susceptibility to cold, were so great, that she feared to move even about the room, which, it was said, was kept in a regulated temperature. Her complexion was blanched; her pulse feeble, but her natural spirits good.

The physician in regular attendance was highly and justly praised for his uniform kindness. He gave me the history of the treatment of the last six months, observing that, in order to reduce the pain and inflammatory action in the right side, he had had frequent recourse to bleeding with leeches, and blisters,—not unfrequently also to the use of the tartar emetic ointment, and larger or smaller doses of calomel or blue pill; that when these symptoms disclosed themselves in the chest, nearly the same measures were unavoidably employed, with still greater care in excluding cold, and the addition of expectorants, and sedatives. He had prescribed, at different times, mercurials of every kind, and in every variety of combination,—calomel, blue pill, Plummer's pill, *hydrargyrus cum cretâ*, or small doses of corrosive sublimate; — he had changed these for vegetable or other alteratives, and she had taken sarsaparilla, and dandelion, besides digitalis, soda, and henbane; almost every tonic which could be thought of had been tried, quinine, gentian, chamomile, chirayta, cascarilla, infusion of bark, &c. &c.—steel, zinc, oxyde of bismuth, sulphate of copper, the mineral acids. She had tried the nitro-muriatic acid bath, and taken hydriodate



of potash, iodine, and several other things which my memory cannot recal. Notwithstanding all this attention, she was no better, but rather growing weaker, more sensitive to every cold wind that blew, less and less capable of exertion.

After hearing this long history, I had two reasons for not recommending more medicine;—one was, the conviction that she had already taken sufficient; the other, that physic would not restore her. I, therefore, remarked, that I certainly should not think of prescribing medicine for her, after so much had already been so skilfully administered, and with so little good result. *An entire change of plan* was advised; the basis of the whole being a belief, that the patient required little else than to be invigorated locally and generally, and that if we could secure this, we should see her, by degrees, attain to her former feelings of health, and return to her previous engagements. She was ordered directly to rise from bed, in a very few days to quit the bed-room for a sitting-room, then to go down stairs, and at the end of twelve or fourteen days to go out for an airing. With a view to strengthen the chest and whole body, she was to be washed over every morning with cold water, and to repeat it every night;—to take, instead of the enervating cup of tea she was accustomed to, a glass of cold water with a dash of milk in it, on awaking, and again in the evening;—to go into the breakfast-parlour to breakfast,—and to be well rubbed all over daily with the roughest towel, or a flesh-brush. In addition to this, we prescribed a nourishing diet, and exercise in the house, by walking about, playing at battle-door, using the dumb-bells, &c.; and walking abroad, as soon as she was equal to it.



Her friends were, at first, in no trifling degree *amazed* at this advice;—to think that so young and tender a creature, who had not left her bed for eight weeks, and who had incessantly suffered from pain and inflammatory attacks, either in the liver or chest, and who had not been out of the house for six or seven months, should be able at once to commence so thorough a change, and in a few days to go down stairs, seemed to them incredible. They could not understand how she could safely bear so much cold water, and such energetic rubbings; nor how the inflammatory attacks were to be warded off, or how removed, if they did recur. This last point is, indeed, a stumbling block to all who do not understand the subject, and is that which frightens multitudes from having recourse to the only means which will save them. They recognise not the existence which obtains between cause and effect—they continually invert the order of things,—and obstinately look on that as a necessary means of cure, which is, in reality, the grand source of repeated pain, and prolonged disorder.

The real fact is, that in disorders of the chest, uneasiness, heat, pain, irritation, are *secondary* effects. In nineteen cases out of twenty they supervene general weakness,—at least some impairment of strength,—and derangement of the digestive functions; the sufferer having gradually altered in complexion and countenance; perhaps become a little thinner; and not been quite so cheerful, or so active. Then follows uneasiness in the chest, or slight pain, and cough, which symptoms increase more or less rapidly according to the constitutional tendency of the patient, the care taken, or the means employed.



I believe the hepatic region was, in this case, ordered to be rubbed daily with liniment, or cold water, and the whole of the chest to be carefully attended to in the use of the same means; and I felt convinced the patient would *not* suffer from a recurrence of inflammatory attacks, or, if she did, they would be so slight, and of so short a continuance, as to be readily controlled by small doses of *antimonium tartarizatum* in water, which was ordered accordingly, to be used in case of necessity. This necessity, however, never appeared; and, notwithstanding all the fears of the mother, she improved daily. The new measures recommended were adopted; the patient gathered strength day by day; her appetite and power of digestion were increased; she soon began to sleep better; the cough speedily subsided, together with the sense of uneasiness in the regions of the liver and chest; and in about three weeks she was able to walk out. At the end of six weeks she was surprisingly recovered—I cannot hesitate to say, restored from a condition in which she was evidently fast hastening to the grave. All this took place under the great disadvantages of the prescriber being compelled directly to return home, to a considerable distance from the patient; and of only a partial employment of this invigorating system; for the friends required our personal superintendance to encourage them to add, to the means above noticed, others of the same kind, which demand still greater care and courage in their application, and which were to be subsequently employed.

If means so mild effected changes so great and satisfactory, in a pulmonary complaint assuming so serious an aspect, and which had entirely resisted all the ordinary



prescriptions of mercurials, alteratives, tonics, sedatives, expectorants, *cum multis aliis*; are we not justified in expecting the greatest benefits from a much more enlightened and vigorous pursuit of the same invigorating remedies, even in cases of a still more serious and alarming character? The symptoms of general excitement, and of local inflammatory action, are those which give rise to the greatest uneasiness in the minds of the professional attendants on such diseases; and they are, perhaps, of all others, the most difficult to subdue, because the means in ordinary use for removing them, are those which lessen the vital force, already too much depressed. Thus, in vanquishing one enemy we run upon the destructive weapons of another;—our course becomes a perilous experiment, which does not succeed, once in a thousand instances. It is, therefore, required of us to prescribe only those means in cough and consumption, which at once repress inordinate vascular action, and augment the strength,—which impart firmness to the pulse, and to the vascular and nervous systems, without running the risk of creating or increasing irritation.

Now I am persuaded, that this young lady's state is a true picture of that in which hundreds, if not thousands, are to be found in this kingdom. Their indisposition, in the commencement, is slight;—the means employed lower the vital energies, and the debility increases;—for a little while they may seem to be stationary, but soon they are observed to grow rather worse; they become more chilly and susceptible of cold, are consequently shut up in the house, the appetite fails, and the secretions become more and more depraved. Often inflammatory attacks, from time to time, follow on this, which aggravate



all the symptoms, more especially from the depleting and lowering measures resorted to; or, if there is little, or no inflammation, yet cough and great debility continue; the patient languishes, and appears like a tender plant, thirsting for a cautious watering, and needing the genial and reviving influence of a summer's sun, and a sea-side breeze. But to bring, without delay, means of this nature to bear upon the subject is never thought of; and ten to one but the patient grows worse and worse, till death puts an end to the sufferings.

A morbid condition of the mucous membranes of the bronchia and lungs, is, next to a similar state of the same membranes of the digestive tube, that, probably, which gives rise to the most frequent disorders incident to our climate. *Catarrhal* consumption is dependent on excessive irritation of the bronchia, complicated with organic changes; *dyspeptic* consumption arises from protracted and severe dyspepsia inducing, by degrees, disorganization of the lungs, or bronchi and lungs; and *tubercular* phthisis has its seat in the substance of the lungs, from the formation of tubercles.

An excited, irritable, inflamed condition of the *trachea*, *bronchia* and its terminations, produces cough, soreness, uneasiness or pain in the throat or chest; sometimes difficult or oppressed breathing, especially on lying down in bed; and is very frequently associated with debility, and a feebleness of all the functions of the system.

These complaints are so common, and so fatal, as to be of the first importance; and to demand particular regard in connexion with any new therapeutical agent which experience sanctions as suitable to their treatment. *Phthisis* is the most fatal scourge of our islands; from



50 to 60,000 persons being every year carried off by it. As I have stated elsewhere, it destroys more human lives than cholera, influenza, small-pox, measles, ague, typhus fever, apoplexy, hernia, colic, diseases of the liver, stone, rheumatism, ulcers and mortification,—all taken together; and there does not exist a more frequent or fatal complaint to children than *bronchitis*.

But it is not necessary for me, on the present occasion, to treat of these different disorders of the chest separately. I consider all of them to arise immediately, *in the first instance*, from determination of blood to the parts affected, and debility to be the main cause of this determination;—on which follow chronic inflammation, congestion, and other morbid alterations constituting the phenomena of the existing affection; and my first object is, to prove that the skilful use of cold water, with the regimen joined with it, is one of the most rational and effectual means known for the removal of the debility, and its consequent determinations, and morbid changes.

*Determination of blood* is a simply active or excited, but not otherwise diseased, state of both the arterial and capillary vessels, the veins being mostly unaffected, and readily returning the blood conveyed by the arteries. It may be occasioned by whatever rouses the natural action of the parts, and operates as a stimulus, and in the present complaints is most commonly induced by cold and damp, the inhalation of irritating substances, or straining of the organs. But if this is allowed to continue long, we see *congestion* or repletion of the veins, attended by depressed vital power, to follow; and then *chronic inflammation*, which is an actively morbid state of the vessels, and organic nerves of the part, tending to change of



structure. In the latter case, we have established *bronchitis*, or *laryngitis*, of more or less severity, and which subsides, or may almost disappear for a time, in fine weather and under favorable circumstances, but which returns again in winter, and severely harasses the patient during the prevalence of the east or north-easterly winds, —if he errs much in diet,—or the digestive apparatus should, from any cause whatever, become excessively deranged.

If the disposition to pulmonary consumption is strong, then we often have, sometimes even in the beginning, tubercles form in the lungs, and a true *phthisis pulmonalis* follows, instead of mere *bronchitis*. In certain cases, *congestion*, attended by a depression of the vital energy, discovers itself very early in the occurrence of *hæmoptysis*,—always an alarming, but not necessarily a fatal, symptom. But it is surprising for how many years some patients travel on; suffering greatly, more particularly in cold and unfavorable weather, from cough, soreness and tenderness of the chest, præcordia,—perhaps of the throat also,—with the other painful symptoms of *bronchitis*, and now and then extending to the mucous membranes of the stomach and intestines, requiring the frequent administration of mild mercurials, antimonials, sedatives, aperients, &c. And it is almost wonderful, how long such patients are now and then found to struggle against the combined force of a depressing disease, and enervating remedies, after that the medical attendant has imagined another or another attack would certainly be the last.

It is material to enquire in what states of the system do we ordinarily meet with these affections of the chest?



The answer must be, in those of natural constitutional delicacy, or which have been impaired by excess, rough usage, or unhealthy climates, or where there is a peculiar family or constitutional tendency to such disease. Without a single exception, we encounter *debility*, either local or general; commonly both; and must, if we view the subject without prejudice, regard this as the chief source, or root of all the evils which I have enumerated. I need not dwell on this point, but may consider it as agreed upon by the great majority both of medical writers and practitioners.

Would that the profession as commonly agreed on the best means of relief and cure! Here, however, we meet with marked diversity of sentiment, and great difference in practice. Would that they united in opinion even with regard to the just *principle* of treatment,—the *ground-work* or *basis* of all our therapeutical indications and efforts. If there is not so much difference of sentiment here, yet there exists far too much of unsteadiness in keeping the principle in view; and thus the benefit which might otherwise result from acknowledged principle is lost.

But we have not only debility to encounter in consumptive patients,—there is also fever, or feverish excitement, to guard against and subdue. These two states almost always co-exist in consumption; and as, commonly, the greater the existing fever, or the disposition to it, the more difficult is the disease to manage, the more rapid in its march, and the greater the danger of the patient, the more worthy of notice is the treatment which I now recommend; because it possesses the double virtue of lessening and removing fever, and augmenting the



strength; and not only so, but I have a settled conviction, that no treatment whatever has been found to possess these combined advantages in so eminent a degree where the feverish excitement is greatest, or where from the constitution of the patient it is likely to become very great,—in other words, in those cases in which the disease most quickly proceeds to disorganization, and a fatal termination.

*To promote an easy circulation of the blood,—to alter and improve the blood itself,—to cool the frame, and, at the same time, to invigorate it, are here the grand, if not the only, indications at the fulfilment of which the physician has to aim. The chief fault of the blood in all such disorders attended by excitement is, that it wants serum, without a due quantity of which there can be no easy circulation,—that being too much dried up by the preternatural motion and heat of the blood. And, so far as internal means are concerned, there is no method more effectual to promote the easy circulation of the blood, than drinking bland cooling liquids; for they dilute the blood, take off its harshness, moisten and cool it, lessen the rapidity of its motion, and assist in keeping its constituent principles together in due mixture. The blood thus diluted and cooled, circulates much more easily through the capillary vessels, and insures a better secretion from the skin.*

The common practice, hitherto, in diseases of the chest has been to order the patient to abstain from cold drink, and cold applications, and to indulge in warmth in all its various modes;—thus a mild climate, warm rooms, clothing, and liquids,—incarcerating the poor invalid, and in numerous instances wholly excluding the genial,



balmy, reviving air of heaven,—have been the ordinary prescriptions. To these are added, leeches and blisters; sometimes that very agreeable application tartar emetic ointment, to relieve pain in the chest, or severe cough,—warm pediluvia,—mercurials and sedatives, and plenty of demulcents and expectorant medicines. With what disastrous results we all know.

The profession have adopted too much the vulgar error, that hot fluids allay irritation existing in the mucous membranes of the chest. We say they increase it; always in some measure, and frequently in a high degree. It matters not whether it is simple bronchial irritation, or that which is more deeply seated, hot liquids, and all other heating substances, increase the evil, because they heat the blood, increase its harshness, and accelerate the pulse; hence arises, sooner or later, increase of cough, of soreness of the chest, and of general feverishness. So true is this, that no patients so suffering can ever take any warm fluid above 80 or 90 degrees without being the worse for it.

The basis,—if we can honour it with such a designation,—on which the ordinary practice rests in consumption, and consumptive tendency, is wholly unsound; it is that of retreating from the violence of an enemy, sheltering, as it were, under any old broken building, or hedge which may present itself, and treating symptoms as they arise. This does not, and cannot succeed; because the foe always travels faster than we do, attacks us from the commencement on vantage ground, and his force is ordinarily too great to be resisted by any defensive operations whatever. We must change the foundation, or principle of our operations if we would secure



better success; we must not, for a moment, entertain a thought of retreat, or of sheltering ourselves under any covering which may chance to present itself in our march,—to act on the defensive is almost certain destruction; for thus the sick fall, little by little; it is our duty to oppose a bold front to the adversary; to summon all our courage, resolution, and skill, and to become vigorous assailants in our turn. By thus cautiously and courageously attacking the enemy, we gain the advantages which skilful generals are wont to secure in the field, by the same means;—we thus check the advances of the disease, compel it to own our power, gain the upper-hand, oblige it to sue for quarter, and to accept of our own terms of peace.

Nothing is more common in these cases, and nothing can be more cruel, than to send our patients to a warm climate, or shut them up, and be content with attacking symptoms as they arise; because it is like an invaded population pleasing themselves with repairing breaches on the frontiers, and extreme portions of their land, while the enemy is suffered to remain entrenched in the very heart of the country. Who, in his senses, would not deprecate such a course as this? Who will not regard such a warfare as interminable, if not speedily destructive? Yet the practice too often pursued in cases of tender lungs, or actual consumption, is no wiser or better than this; and here, I cannot but believe, is to be found the chief cause of our so frequently failing in the attempts made to arrest the progress of this direful disease, and to cure the patient. All experienced persons readily acknowledge, that the method I deprecate could not succeed in the conquest of moral evils; neither can they in those which



are physical. We are called upon positively to attack our adversary, and not to discover the least signs of fear; and then we may animate ourselves with the hope and expectation of gaining better results.

The practice we recommend is totally the reverse,—it is to abstain from warm drinks, to avoid warm, enervating rooms and climates, to breathe frequently (yet advisedly) the reviving country air, and to use cold water both internally and externally, as the patient is able to bear it, or the peculiar circumstances of the party may demand. Of course, the external use of cold water by ablution and the wet bandages, &c. will call for the exercise of considerable professional skill in certain cases; but it should never be forgotten, that in the hydropathic method so much *friction* and exercise are combined with the employment of cold water, as materially tend at once to prevent consequences which are injurious, and the more certainly to secure those which are beneficial.

The operation of cold in cases of true *phthisis pulmonalis* can scarcely be more clearly and convincingly illustrated, than by exposing the patient, in fine weather, to cool sea-breezes. The distressing heat will be quickly allayed,—the attendant soreness and feelings of discomfort about the chest lessened, or removed,—the pulse and cough moderated, the spirits exhilarated, and the strength increased. So long as the patient is enjoying them, he feels refreshed and renovated, and so great is the benefit accruing from them, that we get impressed with the conviction that if they could be persevered in, the enemy would be foiled, and the sufferer escape. And so it has often happened,—a sea voyage having not unfre-



quently cured the disease, even in its advanced stages. Some persons consider much is to be attributed to the motion of the vessel, and the sickness; but I must differ from them,—the benefit is quite as great on board steamers where the motion is limited, and in cases where no sickness occurs. The *cold air* is there the grand remedy, and proves curative by fulfilling the indications we have laid down at page 18. Then how much greater reason have we to look for still better results,—or rather a more frequent restoration,—when this powerful agent—cold—is employed at pleasure, internally as well as externally, and directly to the diseased parts, as well as through the medium of the circumambient air?

Long continued *congestion* in the bronchial vessels, accompanied by some degree of chronic inflammation, sooner or later induces a more decided inflammatory state, in which the sufferings of the patient are augmented, and the danger to life proportionably increased. Then the patient encounters some new form in the complaint, and may have attacks, from time to time, similar to those of *asthma*; being, in all probability, increasingly, often very painfully, susceptible of every slight change in the weather,—the strength being much diminished.

It will be enquired—Is this treatment applicable under such circumstances? Is it safe? Is not the patient then too weak to try the effects of such “*energetic*” treatment? Ought not a milder climate to be first tried, in order to recruit the shattered frame, and put it in a position to brave recourse to the hydropathic system with safety and advantage? I answer, by no means. The increasingly enervated, irritable, inflamed state of the membranes presents us with an additional reason why it



should be employed; for since no treatment is, we think, so soothing and invigorating as this, none therefore can be found so suitable and efficacious. The patient is oppressed under an aggravation of symptoms, and dangerous ones too;—then the sooner relief is afforded the better. The ordinary measures are slow in their operation; change of climate occupies sometimes several weeks before its beneficial effects can reasonably be expected to appear; while this method improves the condition of the patient directly. In a week or two even, the symptoms of debility and irritation are not unfrequently felt and seen to undergo a great improvement; and that in invalids who were in the lowest condition of weakness and exhaustion.

How many there are who travel far to gain what lies near at hand, if they only knew where to find it! What multitudes weary themselves in a vain search, at long distances, after what may soon be found at home; if they would divest themselves of prejudice, and take as great pains to employ the remedy near at hand, as they do to run after it abroad!

The *hydriatic* system, when judiciously prescribed, is invariably adapted to the strength and circumstances of the patient; and therefore none need be alarmed at what they call “*so energetic*” a treatment. If the patient is feeble, the very mildest measures only are employed, these receiving, from time to time, additions, according as the patient is able to bear them. Nothing can be milder than the commencement of such management in the feebler subjects, and nothing, I believe, is half so soothing and strengthening to them. Hence arises the charm which this system carries along with it, and which



renders it *peculiarly adapted* to extreme cases. For all experienced medical men are sensible, that the great debility is the most serious evil, since it wholly precludes the use of all direct tonic medicines, and obstructs the right operation and effect of alteratives; while heat in every shape has a natural tendency to increase weakness and obstruction.

In such painful and extreme circumstances, the cold-water regimen advances to our aid, and offers us assistance which we in vain look for elsewhere.

Independently of the objection to be taken against the ordinary practice stated at page 18, from its actually injurious and destructive effects, I object to it on *principle*; because every part of it, unquestionably, depresses the vital powers;—all the manifestations essentially vital are enfeebled and deranged by it. Now as the vital energy is synonymous with the *vis medicatrix naturæ*, and the art of the physician chiefly consists in awakening and directing the action of that power, the enervating system in common use in bronchitis and consumption, is no less philosophically unsound, than it is practically mischievous.

The good effects of cold, cautiously and skilfully applied, in these diseases, (and indeed in some others also,) are, in the writer's opinion, to be primarily and mainly attributed to its operation in augmenting *the tone or vitality of the organic system of nerves*,—that all important system of the great sympathetics,—whose fibrilæ supply all the organs of digestion, assimilation, circulation, and secretion,—and upon whose action all the manifestations essentially vital depend. To say that the vital manifestations are dependant on the actions of these



nerves, is to assert that the phenomena of health will always be most conspicuous whenever those actions are invigorated and well-directed; but the routine system we deprecate here, instead of strengthening and directing those actions, directly depresses them, rendering their control impracticable; and therefore hurries on the evil which the abettors of it say they desire to avoid.

These nerves closely encircle the arteries of the thorax and abdomen; the arteries throughout the body, indeed all the other parts of the vascular system, receive nerves directly from no other source,—and they penetrate the coats of these vessels; the same system of nerves supplies all the involuntary muscles; they are distributed to the extreme ramifications of the arteries; even on the external surface of the body; and they penetrate the substance of the brain. We know no animal that does not possess these nerves as a most essential part of its organization; they preside over all the most important functions, and hence it is indisputable, that all the vital phenomena exhibited throughout the body are under the direct influence of this class of nerves.

It is admitted by physiologists, that not only are the vital properties the arteries possess imparted to them by the distribution of these nerves,—but that the changes in the blood to which it is subject while flowing in the vessels are also dependent on the same distribution. Hence it becomes evident, that in man the system of the sympathetic nerves has a very great share in occasioning many diseases;—that the impressions with which patients are affected, are to be referred to their numerous ganglions, while the brain is almost exclusively the seat of intellect and thought.



The branches of the sympathetic nerve are endowed with a more acute and delicate sensibility than any other nerves; the pain which instantly follows their injury is of a very peculiar kind, and leads directly to the extinction of the vital power; and it is to the epigastric region occupied by the great semi-lunar ganglion, in which the larger sympathetic nerves unite, and which may be looked upon as the centre of the system formed by their union, that we refer all our agreeable sensations;—there it is we feel, in sorrow, a constriction which is commonly referred to the heart;—and thence, in the sad emotions of the soul, seem to originate those painful irradiations which trouble and disorder the exercise of all the functions.

These nervous ganglions are the primary and chief source of the heart's action; they possess a commanding influence over the gastric, biliary, and pancreatic secretions,—over those of all mucous surfaces, and on the mass of blood circulating through the heart and blood-vessels. Hence it is inferred, that they are the principal source of irritability, and even control the changes induced in the blood during respiration.

These are facts well-ascertained, and generally admitted by professional men. But they are not sufficiently adverted to, or we should witness the pursuit of a more reasonable course in the treatment of diseases of the chest, and of all chronic affections. On these facts the author bases his opinion of the incalculable importance of *increasing the tone of these nerves*, by every means possible; while we carefully avoid,—and reject with persevering pertinacity,—every thing that is calculated to lessen it. *Heat*, in every form, ordinarily lowers the nervous or vital energy; *cold*, wisely applied, at proper



times, and in a due degree, heightens it. The former makes on this widely-extended surface of nervous fibrilæ, which ramify through all the organs of the stomach and chest, as well as extends over the whole of the skin, an *impression* which is unfavorable to the integrity and vigour of their actions; the latter, one which is immediately and permanently favorable to them. Therefore, whether the cough be what is termed a *stomach cough*, or whether it be purely an affection of the chest, or whether the mucous surfaces of the stomach and lungs are both implicated in the production of the disease, we recognise a reason for the beneficial effects of cold.

That the use of the cold water operates chiefly by the impression made on the nervous system is satisfactorily proved by many circumstances. For example, if when called to visit a patient suffering from low fever, accompanied with delirium, we order the whole body to be washed with the coldest water which can be procured; in the majority of instances, if the disease is not too far advanced towards a fatal termination, the delirium *instantly* ceases, and perhaps never returns. Very many instances of this sudden improvement have been witnessed; and they can be explained only by the salutary impression made by the water on the sentient extremities of nerves, which, like an expanded net-work, traverse the whole surface of the body.

I do not lose sight of the fact, that the arterial and other vessels of the system have, in their derangement, a great share in the production of disorder and disease;—that they are the immediate seat of inflammatory action;—and that inflammation, either acute, sub-acute, or wholly chronic, is the proximate cause, or characteristic



condition, of many of the most violent commotions in the frame, as well as of the slower, but more lasting changes which mark actual disorganization. But the salutary change above referred to, and similar improvement witnessed on many occasions, was too quick and sudden to be ascribed, *in the first instance*, to a change in the action of the vessels. The alteration in the nervous system can alone account for it; and, although the nerves are subjects of close study with the profession, yet I cannot but believe, that the influence which they exert in the production and perpetuation of disorder and disease is not sufficiently apprehended, or acted upon. Although the state of the blood-vessels is truly of great importance in our consideration of remedial measures, yet the cases are very numerous, in which we must first make a salutary impression on, and control, the actions of the nervous system, or we cannot succeed in arousing the powers of the constitution, or check its impetuous movements, and conduct the patient to health. In fact, if we have not often actually commenced at the wrong end, yet we have wanted, and that at the beginning, a stimulus such as cold-water, in order to give an impulse, and assist us in originating those new actions so essential to re-invigoration and recovery. The moment this impulse is given to the nerves, it is, indeed, communicated to the principal blood-vessels, and especially to the arteries;—the impulse being one of tone, it causes an invigorated action in these vessels, which ensures an improved secretion and excretion, whereby irritation and pain are always relieved, and the way paved for restoration. Here then we recognise, at once, the mode of action of this invaluable agent; and find a full and sufficient answer to



many of the objections advanced against the practice of hydriatics.

In ascending a lofty hill, the moment we reach the summit how refreshed and invigorated we feel; more particularly if the air be cold and bracing! We are instantly sensible of such an exhilaration of spirit, and increase of general vigour, as can be accounted for only by the sudden and powerful impression on the nervous system produced by the cold air. Again: Bed-ridden patients who have long been confined, suffering most severely from debility, languor, exhaustion, and pain, in being submitted *merely to the operation of sponging with cold water*, three or four times a day, drinking at the same time the small quantity of two or three glasses of cold water, in the twenty-four hours, have felt a refreshment from it greater than they could describe,—have been soon strengthened, and had their pains surprisingly relieved. This has occurred speedily, before any material change was perceptible in the vascular system; and can be explained only by the operation on the nerves, which we know receive impressions with the rapidity of thought, both from moral causes, and physical agents.

The fact is, as professional men we have laboured too exclusively to correct disordered secretions, and excretions by medicines, given internally; forgetting that although many medicines exert great power over the secreting and excretory vessels, yet that such states of these vessels are frequently to be encountered, as cannot be ameliorated by medicines thrown into the system; because neither these, nor any other kind of medicinal preparations, have the power of sufficiently influencing the nervous system. It is a principle in the science of



physic, that the nerves are much out of the reach of the operation of physic—they are not, in any like degree, influenced by it as the blood-vessels and absorbents are; and when we would give an impulse to them, we must look elsewhere for our instruments, or agents of operation. Therefore, if the disorder we have to treat is of such a character, (and a large number of this character there are,) as to require a salutary impression to be made first on the nervous system, in order to the obtaining of new secretions; then we can recommend the cold-water system with confidence, both to the profession and the public, because it can be recommended on the solid basis of science and experience.

All disorders are very much connected with the condition of the capillary action, or exhalent power, of the skin, and many are wholly dependent thereon. Cough, consumption, asthma, fever, and nervous complaints, in particular, are well-known to be quickly influenced by an improved state of the skin. But the freeness of the exhaling power of the cutaneous surface mainly depends on the integrity of the fibrilæ of the organic system of nerves; the operation of cold water, accompanied and followed by friction, being pre-eminently suited to stimulate, strengthen, and control the action of these nerves, a free and healthy secretion from the blood-vessels of the surface is thus obtained; and may be procured in this way when all other means fail.

In one of the German publications, called the *Water Friend*, a very instructive case of disease in the lungs is recorded, which serves, in a most satisfactory manner, to illustrate my views, with respect to the operation and efficacy of cold water in some cases of this disease,



and which I therefore extract, for the benefit of the reader:—

“R. R., of middling stature, slight build, a shoemaker’s apprentice of G——, nineteen years of age, and of healthy parents, had the cholera in September, in Vienna. He was taken to the general hospital. The violent symptoms, peculiar to this disease, were soon subdued, with the exception of a chronic diarrhœa. The various remedies employed against this had no effect. A cough attended with expectoration, at last came on, the strength of the patient was much reduced, appetite and sleep fled entirely, feverish shiverings during the day were of frequent occurrence, with a strong burning heat, alternating sweats, particularly towards morning; large boils on the back part of the body, some of them several inches in length and breadth, and others of the size of a florin, so that the sufferer was obliged to lie night and day upon the abdomen, in such a position as to rest on the right side of his face, and here the whole of his skin peeled off even to the bones of his face; all appearance of muscles had already vanished. Twelve weeks had thus passed, when the mother, anxious about her son, made inquiries of the attending physicians how he was, and received from Dr. H. the answer, that no hope remained of his recovery. So many remedies had been applied in vain, and the disease had become worse;—the invalid was in a confirmed consumption, according to his views of the case:—and the next day he would be no more.

“On receiving this information, the mother declared she would remove her son from the hospital, and take him home with her, that she might perform the last sad duties. Astonished at this resolution, the physicians represented to her that the invalid was unable, in such a state of debility, to travel ten miles at that time of the year—he would certainly die on the road—she could never bring him to her house alive, &c. These re-



monstrances were all fruitless: she took her son with her to G——, and requested the physician would prescribe what would be suitable to his situation. He ordered Dover's powder, and tea of Iceland moss. The journey was tedious but fortunate; the medicine prescribed was administered, and followed by sundry domestic nostrums of old women, peasants, &c., without any favourable result. In the middle of December, 1836, I was called in.

“ DESCRIPTION OF THE DISEASE.

“ The eyes feeble and sunk in the head, the hair fallen off, the face pale and emaciated, on the right cheek a large ulcer, going down to the very bone, the features disfigured, look of old age, tongue covered with white, appetite tolerably good, much thirst, dryness in the throat, frequent hoarseness, constant inclination to cough with much yellow fœtid expectoration, (more than a pound during twenty-four hours,) pricking pains in the breast, feeling of oppression, shortness of breath, the breast-bones prominent, pains about the stomach, the abdomen contracted, &c., skin withered and dirty, &c., muscles apparently gone in every part of the body, perspiration clammy, fœtid and debilitating, pulse small, hard and quick, prostration of strength, fits, swelling of the feet.

“ Under such unfavourable circumstances, I could only agree with the former physician, that, with the present experience, alleviation of the patient's sufferings was all that could now be expected; I gave him, therefore, Dover's powders, and Iceland moss as before.

“ On my next visit, I told the mother, in order to spare unnecessary expense, that I would come no more. She again asked, if there were still nothing that would save him. Again was I compelled to tell her, that in a case so serious, recovery was impossible: to alleviate was all that could be done—but one remedy remained; it had never been tried in cases of this

nature—would she allow it to be tried on her son? I would let her know what it was. She begged me to tell her what this miraculous remedy was; and as I explained it to be fresh cold water, she threw her arms up, and exclaimed—‘that will soon cure my poor boy, cold water will but hurry him to his grave!’ She reflected for some time, and then said:—‘If you think it will do him no harm, we will try this also—I know well what cold water has done for our neighbour P., I saw him when he was ill, and how he was cured by cold water.’

“Having obtained her consent, I told her she must give him every half hour, a glass of water to drink, fresh from the spring, dip the sore places (they had dressings of course upon them) in fresh cold water, and put linen bandages in several folds over them. This was done in my presence. The next day I visited the patient, and found no material change, except that the diarrhœa had somewhat abated. I ordered him to be washed, both then and in the evening, from head to foot with tepid water. The drinking as well as the bandages were continued.

“Second day. Cough less; appetite good; patient had slept a little, &c. He was now washed in water less tepid than before, bandages entirely cold about the swollen feet; a glass of fresh water to drink every quarter of an hour; bandages on the ulcers; evening washings repeated.

“Third day. The patient has slept well; perspiration diminished; the ulcers as before; much secretion from the kidneys. He was now washed twice a day with water quite cold, and the former treatment continued.

“Eighth day. Cough seldom, with expectoration less in quantity, and no longer fœtid; swelling of the feet reduced. The whole body washed twice a day.

“Twelfth day. The eyes less sunken; the ulcers beginning to heal; tongue clean; the dryness in the throat, as also the



hoarseness, gone entirely. The fresh water applied as before assiduously.

Sixteenth day. The respiration is more free; the skin clean; appetite and sleep excellent; perspiration no longer fœtid and clammy; the pulse stronger. The cold water continued with the same perseverance.

“Twentieth day. Very slight cough, with a little expectoration; the strength increased; the swelling in the feet entirely vanished. As before.

“Twenty-fourth day. The ulcers rapidly healing; no more perspiration; the patient strong enough already to leave his bed for hours together. These favourable symptoms went on in quick progression; and, in the course of six weeks, he was so completely restored to health, that he was able to work again at his old trade, as a shoemaker.”

But let it not be imagined, that I am an advocate for what is called the “*cold-water cure*” in *cough* and *consumption*, and for nothing else; that I advise wet-sheets, unlimited potations of cold-water, and walking up steep ascents. By no means. Long before *Hydropathy* was noised abroad in England, the system of *bracing*, of *invigoration*, in opposition to what is *relaxing*,—*depressing*, was that which I practised, and laboured to enforce. I very decidedly object to the deglutition of such large quantities of water; and am persuaded that, even in those disorders to which the *hydriatic* method is applicable, people take too much water, and that cold applications are often too freely employed. Preissnitz is acknowledged to be illiterate,—he, indeed, possesses valuable knowledge of the uses of cold water in certain cases; but is very ignorant of every other remedial agent, (if we except exercise); and is a person of unconquer-



able prejudices. His system of diet is a compound of the *very good* and the *very bad*, and he does not sufficiently distinguish between those who can bear a great deal of exercise, and exposure to cold, and those who cannot. The use of cold fluids in his dietary is excellent; but his permitting a frequent use of pork, pastry, sour krout, and similar indigestible substances, is strongly to be condemned, as well as his advising the people *to eat as much as they can*.

Indeed, the *cold-water system* is not what the public suppose it to be, for *tepid* water (slightly tepid) is frequently employed therein; and in cough and consumption I frequently advise the chill to be taken off the water, more especially in the commencement, and in very delicate subjects; but at whatever degree of temperature water is used in these diseases, the prime principle of action ought never, for an instant, to be departed from, viz. that of soothing an irritable, and strengthening a weakly system. Blood-letting, blistering, caustics, warm climates and rooms, do not effect these objects,—they sometimes seem to soothe; but very often it is only the semblance of the real thing, and they rarely fail really to enervate. In the large majority of instances they depress all the vital powers instantly and greatly.

Hundreds and thousands of persons are to be met with in England suffering severely from *bronchitis*, to whom the *hydriatic mode* of treatment would impart such a refreshment, such ease, and renovation as is scarcely credible. It is capable of laying the foundation of a new era in their existence. But then *they must attentively follow the rules of diet* I have laid down under  
ASTHMA.



The wet compresses on the chest, cold sponging, &c. have been of the most signal service in my practice, as well as in that of others. In some instances of bronchitis, attended with hoarseness, all the symptoms have been quickly removed.

A patient, severely afflicted with weakness of the chest, cough, and bronchial irritation to a most distressing degree, together with difficulty of breathing, more especially on mounting any ascent, has proved in a highly satisfactory manner the efficacy of the cold-water system, under our advice. She had suffered for above twenty years from some of these symptoms, accompanied lately with very violent cough on first rising in the morning, frequent pain in the left side, and a throbbing sensation in the region of the heart. The *Hydriatic* treatment has strengthened her chest, removed the pain in the side, and so much lessened the cough and irritation of the bronchial membrane, that she rises in the morning without being troubled with cough to any degree worthy of notice, and all who have had an opportunity of seeing her, testify to the reality of a surprising improvement. Before commencing this system, she could not read a single paragraph in any book with ease, and if she ever spoke one word after going to bed, it invariably excited so violent a fit of coughing as was very painful even to hear:—Now, she can read aloud eight or ten pages of an octavo volume with comfort, and can converse with ease after lying down in bed.

I must endeavour to do all the good I can in this publication, for it is very likely to be my last on a medical subject, and therefore would direct the attention of those who suffer from *hæmoptysis* first, to the use of



stewed prunes, as an article of diet; and secondly, to that of the *Iberis amara* as a medicine of great power and efficacy in checking the flow of blood from the lungs, or bronchia. A half pint mug full of stewed prunes may be taken every night, and if I mistake not, will be found to ease the cough, lessen the *hæmoptysis*, and give strength to the patient.

The most zealous cold-water doctor will not object to my recommending stewed prunes, as an auxiliary, for it is only a very agreeable article of diet, and these hydro-paths, with all their wet-sheets and cold drinks, love good eating as well as any people in the world. No doubt they will feel differently on the subject of the *Iberis amara*—it will be too *bitter* a substance for them. However, let us not forget, that in this cold world of sorrow and suffering the cases are very numerous, in which the wise man's remark is true—"To the hungry man every bitter thing is sweet." Even the *Iberis amara* will speedily lose all its bitterness to those whom it relieves, or cures, of so alarming and dangerous a symptom as *hæmoptysis*. The proper dose is about half a grain, or a grain, rubbed up with a little cream of tartar and water, and taken twice or thrice a day. It must not, however, be taken but under the direction of a medical man. It is a new remedy of great value, and but little known, which makes me the more desirous of drawing attention to it. It may be used at the same time with some parts of the hydriatic treatment. The chest and shoulders should be well washed twice a day with cold water, and a bandage worn over the chest for the greater part of the forenoon.



The shallow bath, containing a small quantity of tepid water at about 66° or 70°, is often of great service in cough and consumption. The patient is rubbed all over *well*, while in the bath, which proves both soothing and invigorating.

It has been remarked by several respectable writers, that drinking cold-water when threatened with a cold, is an effectual mode of checking its progress, and, at least, rendering it milder, if not actually cutting it short. This I have proved in my practice; so that my feeble testimony may be added to that of those who have preceded me, in their observations on this subject. The cold water cools the heated membranes, strengthens them, and thus assists their efforts to recover their wonted healthy action.

## ASTHMA.

The triumphs of Hydropathy in the cure of Asthma have been very conspicuous. It has cured the disease by invigorating the digestive organs, and whole frame, and not by virtue of any specific influence on the respiratory apparatus. Sometimes asthma is the consequence of organic mischief in the lungs, but by far the most numerous cases are those of functional derangement, in which the cold-water system is of eminent service. The constant exercise in pure air, combined with cold ablutions, sweating, the cold plunge bath, douche, &c. work so great an improvement in the digestive organs, and chest, as perfectly to rid the sufferer of this very troublesome complaint.

I am quite satisfied, that this malady is far more easily and certainly cured than the profession, or the public, have any idea of. It is too commonly regarded as almost a hopeless disease, when we speak of perfect cure. This results from the nature or source of asthma not being understood. It is not properly an affection of the lungs, but of the stomach and intestines. The digestive organs are the grand and primary seat of this kind of dyspnœa, of which many proofs might be readily afforded, and of which the chief and most convincing is,—that if we remove irritation from these organs, and restore them to a state of vigour and healthy action, we shall in the majority of cases *certainly* cure asthma. I



anticipate that the profession will think my statement an exaggeration, but they will be more inclined to listen thereto, when I assert, that *hydriatics* can here lay no just claim to the least superiority over regular medical treatment. The treatment I advise in asthma is, 1. A very strict diet of bread, biscuit, animal food, and cold water; 2. The free use of cold ablutions, sitz-bath, plunge bath, and perhaps the douche; 3. The daily administration of a pill composed of rhubarb, ipecacuanha, and extract of hemlock; 4. Regular exercise in the open air.

This treatment, wisely adapted to the circumstances of the patient, has perfectly succeeded in very many of the severest cases; indeed, in many in which hydropathy alone would have failed. I can refer to some living proofs of this—some very striking cases. Indeed, in this malady the experienced professional man possesses a great superiority, because he is more sensible than the hydropath of the *absolute necessity* of a very strict diet, in order to insure complete deliverance, and because he can call to his aid, if necessary, the beneficial operation of such medicines as I have previously named. The loose, free diet of the cold-water system will not answer here. The indulgence permitted in such establishments is a main cause of the failures witnessed there in the treatment of asthma.

Preissnitz himself often fails to cure asthma, where the skilful medical man may perfectly succeed. With all his success, he has no knowledge, or idea, whatever of the vast extent of influence exerted throughout the frame by the digestive functions. He is brim-ful of ideas respecting the effect of bad humours, but of sim-



ple irritation he knows nothing. Probably very few mere hydropaths can understand the cause of death in the following case:—A stout, strong man, by trade a bricklayer, very subject to asthma, one day after dinner mounted his ladder in the prosecution of his work; on arriving at the fourteenth round, he was suddenly seized with a fit of asthma, fell to the ground, and was killed on the spot. The body was opened at a proper time after his death, and no trace of disease could be found. The facts were these:—the man had just taken his dinner; had certainly eaten too freely; and perhaps of indigestible food; this had created great irritation in the stomach, which was propagated to the lungs, and so increased by his mounting the ladder, as suddenly to induce a paroxysm of asthma. So instantaneous and sharp was the attack, as to cause him to lose his footing, and he was killed by the fall. On the examination of the body no rupture was found in the brain or elsewhere, and the digestive and respiratory apparatus were quite healthy. Here then was a case of mere irritation in the stomach producing violent asthma, and what will not this kind of irritation produce in certain habits? Every enlightened medical man, of long practice, is fully aware, that no limit can be fixed to the painful and alarming consequences of stomachic and intestinal irritation,—they show themselves, at different times, in every part of the frame; simulate pure idiopathic disorders; are often extremely difficult of removal; and sometimes lead on to the worst results.

But with respect to the relief, or cure. If the patient have sufficient fortitude and endurance, he may most



certainly be vastly relieved, and most likely cured, by the plan laid down above. If his case of asthma be one of stomachic weakness and irritation only, uncomplicated with disease of the lungs, *he will be cured*; if so complicated, he will be greatly relieved. The plan must, however, be rigidly adhered to, and more especially with regard to diet,—the quantity of food is to be very small, and it should consist almost entirely of bread, biscuit, meat, and cold water. No one but those who are acquainted with the extraordinary changes wrought by diet, and the cold-water system, will be otherwise than slow to credit the efficacy of this plan. The patient must be content to grow thin at first, but afterwards he will recover his healthy state of flesh and strength. The late Dr. Blicke, of Walthamstow, cured very many cases of asthma in this way, and the method came from him to the writer.

Patients who have been so grievously oppressed by asthma, as to be confined almost to the house,—unable, at times, to move about the room,—regularly compelled, at night, to be pillowed *upright* in bed,—and thus brought into such a condition of debility, as to give rise to the most serious apprehensions, both in themselves, and their friends, have been quite cured by this treatment. In some instances of this description, it will be necessary to confine the patient to so small a quantity of food, that he will, at times, almost be disposed to devour his fingers' ends:—two ounces of meat, and one ounce, or even half an ounce, of bread, thrice a day, is all that ought to be allowed to some asthmatics.

The *hydriatic* mode is also very successful, acting by

its power of invigorating the chylopoetic viscera, lungs, and whole frame; but it is not so certain, or so perfect a remedy, as that which the professional man claims to be peculiarly his own.

An asthmatic, who had been for years little else than a trouble to himself, and all about him, has recently been cured of his complaint, by the proper use of cold water. It was so severe that he could never stir out of doors; was always covered with flannel from head to foot; wore two pair of stockings; very thick shoes; and never dared, as he thought, to let the wind blow upon him. He is quite cured. He has cast aside all flannel; wears now only one pair of thin cotton stockings; attends to his business like another man, and no weather affects him at all.

Many write and talk as if there was something very dangerous, in combining the *hydriatic* method of treatment, with the skilful prescription of medicine. They are persons who know nothing, either respecting the value of medicine, or its correct employment, and therefore are not qualified to form a judgment on the subject. Would any man of sense, and in his right mind, ask the opinion of a house-builder as to the best means of propping up a falling constitution, or repairing the breaches in an injured one? And yet the conduct of those can scarcely be deemed more rational, who seek and follow the advice of ignorant writers on "*the cold-water cure*," with regard to the efficacy, and use, or disuse, of medicine. The practised Hydropath may be a very clever man in his way,—in his department,—but let him not presume to judge of that of which he is wholly ignorant.



We admit he is able to cure some diseases by water; we may even acknowledge, that he is very skilful in the application of water; but he is ignorant of the use of anything else in the treatment of disease; and is, consequently, no more worthy of notice or credit when he speaks of chemicals and drugs, than the clown who ploughs our fields. Some medical men are, indeed, far too fond of depending on, and prescribing physic; I even fear it is a very common evil in the profession, and have always expressed myself decidedly against it; thus such men as Preissnitz have gathered reasons and support for their horror of drugs. Still it may be easily seen, that if there is too much of confidence in the one case, there is far too little in the other: and that the hydropath exclaims against physic, not so much because he has witnessed its injurious, or defective operation, as from being wholly unacquainted with the subject.

Now, asthma is one of those complaints in which a union of the science of the physician, with the art of the hydrophilist, will most certainly accomplish the grandest results. In saying this, let it be remembered, that I am not, and never was, a friend to the use of much physic;—a little will produce much more satisfactory effects, than is generally believed. But if the cold-water system will cure the patient, well;—I am as fully satisfied as the sufferer;—if not, I have the gratification of pointing out to him one which probably will.

In conclusion, let me entreat the asthmatic never to allow himself to be bled, and never to take strong mercurials or purgatives; nor to be confined in a hot, close atmosphere. It is an atmosphere of death.

In some cases of asthma, the patient grows worse, and is in danger of destruction, from an elevated situation; in others, no other locality suits him so well. The reason of this is mainly to be ascribed to the cause of the complaint.\* If organic lesion lies at the root of it, we must be very cautious in trying a high and bracing air; in mere functional derangement, it gives new life and spirits to the sufferer.

\* The celebrated Heberden remarked, many years since, (*Commentaries, page 67,*) on the absence of organic affection in many cases of asthma; but still he was in the dark as to the cause of the complaint, and knew nothing of the value of the treatment I recommend.



## INDIGESTION.

In very many cases of this disorder, the present system will be found of eminent utility; but by no means will it be equally successful in all. The following case presents us with results which, probably, no medical man would have expected. A dissenting minister, who had been for a few years in the West Indies, had suffered, since his return, from severe and increasing dyspepsia; his appetite was variable; the bowels tender and irregular, rather disposed to diarrhœa; his general strength inconsiderable; his constitution and appearance delicate. I prescribed stomachics, &c. for him several times, from which he derived some advantage, but he was still weakly, often disordered, and compelled to be extremely particular in his diet, and even then he could find nothing which agreed with him. He was at length induced to try the cold-water system partially. He began with drinking four glasses of water a day, and ended with ten, twelve, or fourteen. He made trial of no other part of the plan, and yet his relief was almost perfect. He took less tea and coffee, but did not wholly lay them aside. If he felt any inconvenience after his breakfast on coffee, his remedy was a glass or two of cold water. This patient, by merely drinking the above quantity of cold water, recovered a regular action of the bowels, cheerfulness of mind, and so strong a digestion, that I have seen him partake even of any rich, indigestible food, of

an ordinary description, such as pastry, duck, ham, pork, peas, without suffering the slightest inconvenience. He became fully equal to all necessary exertions, and was observed by all his acquaintance to be much improved in his complexion and appearance.

Of course such cases as this are rare; but this proves the efficacy of cold-water drinking, in some disordered states of the stomach. So much good resulted from it in this instance as no medical man would have expected. We should not have believed, that the free use of cold water internally, and that alone, would have cured a decided dyspeptic, and converted him into a healthy man, equal to his labours, and capable of digesting any ordinary food; but such is the fact. I write now of a case in my own practice, and not of the reports of others. Generally we must add thereto, the cold or tepid sitz-bath, the wet-bandage, cold plunge bath, and cold ablutions; if not likewise the wet-sheet, and an occasional sudorific blanket.

The most severe cases of indigestion, and those which professional men experience the greatest difficulty in subduing, belong to the class of *irritative dyspepsia*;—a very painful state, in which there exists a complication of morbid sensibility with chronic inflammation of the coats of the stomach and intestines. The chief symptoms are, pain or great uneasiness in the stomach; frequent head-ache; costive bowels, accompanied with a weakness there, and flatulence; great debility; eructations, frequent and most annoying; oppression after eating, especially if the meal is large; furred tongue, which is often red at the tips, and sore; depression of spirits, and dreadful irritability of temper. Life, in fact,



often seems a burden in this malady. This disorder is a real *chronic gastritis*,—the *gastro-enterete* of the French,—there is inflammation of the organs. The medical mode of treating this complaint by purgatives,—or mercurials,—or tonics, is certain to do a great deal of injury. Mercurials fearfully augment irritability and weakness, and tonics always produce head-ache. Hundreds of invalids have been irrecoverably injured by them, and some sent quickly to that land “from whose bourne no traveller returns.” Here, also, such men as Preissnitz will ever be at a loss, because they are wholly ignorant of the condition of the internal organs, and discern not how much of real weakness and inflammation is generally associated with this form of the disorder. It is, therefore, usual for the mere hydropath to order more water to be drunk than the patient can bear,—to employ the sudorific process too frequently,—and not to be sufficiently restrictive in the diet.

Notwithstanding, such patients need not be discouraged, for, if well managed, the cold-water system will do them essential service, and that very quickly. To them the colder the water is, the more efficacious,—it cannot be too cold; but, when drunk, it must, in point of quantity, be regulated according to the power of the stomach to bear it. The sitz-bath also, cold ablutions, and rubbing with the cold wet-sheet, will be found most agreeable and beneficial. The half, or shallow bath, in which the patient sits, is rubbed all over, and has water poured over him, is also excellent. One of their greatest enemies is an internal heat, which must be subdued by the power of the coldest water.

Cases of indigestion arising from simple functional



derangement of the stomach or intestines, or from depression of the nervous influence, will soon be cured by the cold-water system; but those which originate in a morbid state of the follicular glands, or in inflammatory irritation, and other organic changes in the organs, will not be cured, or even permanently much relieved, by the efforts of the hydriatic practitioner, unless he is likewise an enlightened medical man. From the hydrophilist knowing nothing of these sources of the disorder, he is sure to make great mistakes; he will, as already observed, prescribe, for example, the drinking of too much water, and that at unsuitable times; he will order more walking exercise than the patient can bear; and he is not sensible of the vast importance of a good dietary to the well-being of his patient:—the perspiring process, also, is frequently too much insisted on.

Nevertheless, I have great confidence in this system, as an auxiliary, even in the worst cases of dyspepsia, and would with much earnestness recommend it to those who thus suffer, and likewise to the profession.

The most effectual remedies in this complaint are,—the cold ablutions night and morning; the sitz-bath, once or twice a day; the douche, three or four times a week, or oftener; and the wet-bandage at night. An occasional wet-sheet, and perspiring process, with a plunge into the cold bath, will be very serviceable in particular cases of irritative dyspepsia, and in all instances of ordinary functional indigestion, if the invalid has sufficient power of re-action. The patient must be very attentive to his diet, and not be imposed upon by the representations, or bad example, of many met at the table of an establishment. Some such people indulge



immoderately in eating; and this is one of the chief sources of their failing to derive so much advantage there, as they otherwise might.

A popular writer on hydropathy asserts, that "all diseases of the abdomen, by whatever name they may be called, are cured at Gräfenberg." This is good news for the tortured dyspeptic, and those who suffer from liver complaints, jaundice, or diseased pancreas; joyful news for those who are frequently racked with colic, or gall-stones, for certainly all these are diseases of the abdomen. At least, it would be joyful news *if* it were true. Alas! how frequently that little particle *if* lays our hopes in the dust, and spoils us of all our high-flown expectations. *If* it were true, it would, indeed, be delightful; but it is not. Here, again, the author quoted is in a mistake. Unquestionably, he knows where the abdomen lies, but he knows not what lies within it, and much less how much disease centres there. We can tell him, it would puzzle a man a hundred times wiser even than the oracle of Gräfenberg, to point out anything approaching to a *cure* for very many of the diseases of the abdomen. However, great relief may thus be obtained; and in dyspepsia, which is certainly a complaint of, or within the abdomen, I can confidently recommend the cold-water system.

## TUMOURS AND ULCERATIONS.

Tumours, indurations, and glandular swellings which are hard and indolent, give way with great difficulty to the efforts of the hydropath;—he is sometimes able to reduce them, but then it invariably requires a long perseverance, and, on the whole, he possesses here no advantage over the ordinary powers of medicine and surgery. But if these swellings are in an active state,—partly ulcerated, or otherwise manifesting an organic activity, and associated with impaired health,—then the powers of the *hydriatic* process are frequently displayed to the great relief and satisfaction of the sufferer: the use of this method supplies a new stimulus, and all its tendencies being to the invigoration of the vessels and nerves, and to the renewal of the general strength, it affords a stimulus in a right direction, and the consequent benefit is generally great, and not unfrequently quite surprising.

This I consider to result from the tonic power of the remedy, influencing not only the local malady, but the system at large, and the reason why this method produces grander results than the tonic treatment in more common use, is, because the agent employed never disagrees with even the tenderest constitution, but is invariably comforting and invigorating:—we are thus enabled to push the invigorating influence to any reasonable, yea, to any necessary extent; which cannot be said in respect to the employment of tonic medicines. Frequently tonic



medicines will not agree at all ; and even when suitable, their long continued use debilitates the stomach, and irritates the whole frame, so that we are compelled to desist in their administration, and often just at the time that valuable results show themselves, and a continued or even augmented impulse to a languid circulation, and debilitated body, is above all things desirable. In such circumstances, the "*cold-water cure*" will be found by the profession to assert successfully its vast superiority, for it supplies us with a stimulus of the most grateful nature, and which may be lessened or increased at pleasure, or rather according to the exigencies of the case, and carried on for an unlimited period.

This is rendered the more easy by an occasional recourse to the *sudorific* process ; which, at least in such cases, acts as a *safety valve*, drawing off through the pores of the chief emunctory effete and noxious matter, allaying general and local irritability, and preserving the system in a state capable of bearing the continued application of cold water. For so fixed is the tendency in the human body to feverish excitement under the protracted employment of any stimulus, how grateful soever, that even cold water demands this aid under these circumstances, in order to a full developement of its curative powers. This invigorating element may, indeed, be prescribed for a much longer period than any other tonic, without any such inconvenience ; but as the hydropathic method involves an unusually energetic employment of it, we shall always find, that we cannot long persevere therein without affording the system relief either through the pores of the skin, or the secreting vessels of the intestinal canal. Therefore, had not Priessnitz stumbled on

the blanket, or wet-sheet, (for a mere accidental finding it seems to have been,) so far from effecting the cures reported, he could not have preserved himself from being the cause of much mischief, unless he had called to his immediate assistance the efficient power of aperient, or purgative medicine.

A writer on hydropathy remarks,—“ I shall doubtless astonish my readers when I assert, that cold water is the most certain cure for Cancer: this is nevertheless true.” If it were true, it would indeed be astonishing; but there is no truth whatever in it. No doubt, he thinks it to be true; but before advancing such an assertion, the writer should have first enquired, “ What is cancer ”? Doubtless it never occurred to him, in his zeal for the benefit of mankind, that he knew so little of his subject, as not to be able to distinguish between a common ugly-looking abscess, and severe cancer!—that he knew as little respecting cancer, as his cook about spherical trigonometry, or conic sections; and that his opinion in the one case, is about of equal value with that of the cook in the other. Without doubt the cook could make a very good soup, and the author can manufacture a very attractive book, but both require to be taken “ *cum grano salis*.”

Cancer is a disease *sui generis*. There are many very unsightly tumours and ulcerations which, nevertheless, are not cancerous, or malignant; and now and then we meet with a tumour which has only an ordinary appearance,—threatens not,—and yet it proves to be truly cancerous. It is only a very discerning eye which can distinguish, at an early period, the true nature of such diseases.



Cancer is a disease that attacks only *the excretory glands*, or *skin*; which has the power of contaminating the neighbouring parts, both by direct communication, and through the medium of the absorbents; and which, for the most part, commences in the form of a hard tumour, or indurated pimple.

The external conglomerate, or excretory glands, and the skin, are almost the only two structures liable to be affected *primarily* by cancerous disease; but, perhaps, every part or structure in the body may be invaded by it *secondarily*, that is, by the power of contamination resident in, and spreading from, the original seat of the malady. Nevertheless, this power, possessed by cancer, of communicating the same disease to the adjacent parts, differs greatly in strength and activity in different instances; and I believe that it may, in some cases, remain dormant for a considerable time, and even be unattended with any troublesome or serious consequences, so long as every source of local and constitutional irritation is avoided, and the treatment pursued is correct and suitable. In certain examples, the dormant state of this power will continue for the whole term of life, under the conditions just stated; but there is no case in which it may not be aroused, by the use of injudicious means, to an activity attended with extreme suffering, and necessarily destructive of life.

It is this power of contaminating the neighbouring parts which chiefly distinguishes cancer from those diseases which resemble it, not one of which possesses this power, except fungus hæmatodes; a fact that has not been sufficiently attended to in the investigation and treatment of this peculiar affection. How soon it ac-



quires this power is uncertain, but there is every reason to believe that cases vary in this respect, as well as in those points noticed in the preceding paragraph. It should also be observed, that tumours not originally cancerous, and therefore not then possessing this power of contamination, may afterwards become so. This opinion was at one time generally doubted, but is now, I conceive, commonly received as correct, among the best informed of the profession; and, if it be true, it proves that suspicious tumours, in the excretory glands, or skin, of a very unyielding nature, may exist for a long time, and be free from any power of communicating the same diseased condition to parts in their vicinity.

*Fungus hæmatodes*, indeed, possesses the contaminating influence now referred to, in a certain degree, but this influence extends here mostly by direct communication, through every kind of structure near the original swelling, and has far less power over the absorbent system: while cancer extends as much by the latter mode as by the former, and often in a more striking manner. Besides, *fungus hæmatodes* occurs in every kind of structure primarily, attacks chiefly young persons, and is otherwise clearly distinguished from cancerous affection.

For such maladies as these, neither hydropathy, nor anything else, holds out to us any hope of cure, and too often but small hope of great relief. The proper use of cold water will, however, allay irritation, and relieve inflammation and pain. But the external and internal use of steel, as long since advised by Mr. Carmichael, of Dublin, is by far the most efficacious treatment in cancerous affections ever yet discovered. I must not in this work say much about medicine; still, as it may fall



into the hands of some pitiable sufferers from cancerous disease—(and who would not help *them*, if they could? The man must have a heart as hard as stone, and colder than *ice*, who could object to my stating here, what I know is capable of affording them relief,)—I cannot allow the opportunity to pass without urging upon them a trial of the oxy-phosphate of iron in open cancer, with pills of the carbonate of iron internally. The oxy-phosphate may be procured of excellent quality from Garden, Chemist, Oxford Street, and will often charm away the dreadful pain, at least for a time. In cancer of the lip, or face, it is of such great service, as to approach, in some instances, very near to a curative power;—these malignant diseases of the skin being much more tractable than when seated in the glands.

I recollect meeting, some years since, with a severe case of cancer in the lip, in an officer in the navy, living at Great Yarmouth, in which I prescribed the oxy-phosphate of iron, with success. He had previously taken very good advice, and an operation had been performed, and yet no satisfactory advantage was gained. The oxy-phosphate of iron, together with iron administered internally, relieved him from pain, and healed the ulceration.

Recently I have proved the efficacy of iron, in curing a most troublesome, painful, and intractable sore, giving rise to most harassing attacks of *pruritus*, such as is difficult to bear, with any becoming degree of patience. The lady had been under the care of the first physicians and surgeon accoucheurs in London, and also in the country, for very many months;—had therefore tried all sorts of lotions and ointments, as well as internal medicines;—



had deluged herself with cold water, and had been *causticed* sorely indeed; but all to no purpose whatever. I prescribed iron internally;—it cured her perfectly in seven or eight weeks. In such cases, the *hydriatic* treatment cannot be at all compared to medicine:—it might have cured her, but would have taken, if it had, ten times the period, or more.

For cancerous tumours, I recommend a free use of cold water externally, with the carbonate of iron internally.

But in those ulcerations which seem to be cancerous, and yet are not, the cold-water method merits great confidence, on account of its power of relieving and subduing inflammation, and exciting a new action.

To show the great power of this system in curing the worst kinds of ulcerations, I would introduce the case of Count Schulenberg, of Berlin, which was cured under the directions of Mr. Weiss. It is extracted from a work written in German, by Dr. Henry Ehrenberg, Member of the Medical Society at Leipsic. It is introduced here without further comment, in proof of what this cold-water treatment is capable of accomplishing in some of the apparently most hopeless cases.

“The patient with thankful readiness left me the narrative of his illness, composed by himself, and did not oppose the idea of publishing it. My own opinion is, that the rational principles of this treatment are now fully established, and the means well directed,—that both receive a high degree of confirmation from the details of this sickness, for they show how even the efforts of the most eminent physicians and surgeons of Germany were, so to speak, shipwrecked on the malignity and obstinacy of such sufferings.



“The patient was Count Schulenberg, from Berlin, a well made young man under 30 years of age, who dates his sufferings from the appearance of a nervous fever, by which he was attacked some years ago. In the course of this illness tenderness and inflammation had developed themselves on the lower part of the spine, which he thinks had been neglected through improper treatment. The convalescence from this fever made only a slow progress, but the patient was afterwards capable of the usual exertions of the body with ease, till at the end of some time a general decline of strength occurred, betraying the first symptoms of a suffering in the lower portions of the bowels, &c., which was to be followed by such severe pains. He lost blood, and a good deal of matter was discharged. A celebrated Doctor declared this case to be slime hæmorrhoids, and he prescribed bitter water, but without procuring any change in those appearances. The increasing pains and fatigues hindered the patient from fulfilling his duties to such a degree, that he was obliged to inform the Doctor of his Regiment of it. (He had just entered the first year on military service.) The latter had the same opinion of the nature of the disease, but expected recovery rather from time than physic, or a particular diet. He was at this period growing worse, and the Count asked the President Dr. Rust for advice, who, puzzled by the enigmatical nature of the sufferings, delayed to give a decisive answer, but prescribed he should drink the water of Wildungen, in order to soften the sharpness of the humours. The use of this water, and a certain tea which had been recommended, as well as the fatigues of the military service, all made on the body such a great encroachment, and disturbed so much the regularity of his functions, that he, probably in consequence, suddenly discharged one day  $1\frac{1}{2}$  quart of blood from the bladder, and at the same time the discharge of matter had increased in such a degree as was fearful to behold. In lieu of the prescribed water and tea there were now administered pre-



scriptions of different compositions, but without any good result, till the President advised him to drink the water of *Adelheidsbrunnen* (which had just been discovered). The use of this was attended with the most surprising and most excellent effect. The patient felt himself strengthened in a way he had not been for a long time, and the sufferings abated so strikingly in their intensity, that the Count could attend to his military duties, without complaint, till he caught a severe cold, whilst on duty. This caused a general increase of the disease, and a great discharge of matter. Being reported sick, he, through the long standing of his pains, and to fulfil the wishes of his superiors (good lodging not being at hand,) determined to enter the hospital of the regiment, and to put himself under the medical treatment of the residing physician, who, with indefatigable activity, and in the most amiable manner, showed the great interest he took in the state of his patient. The fruitlessness of the means which had been previously adopted, led this physician to ascribe the sufferings to another cause, and to follow quite a different mode of treatment. He prescribed the free use of Zitterman's decoction, but without the least result, in alleviating the pains; and, in order to strengthen the general weakness of the body, he ordered that he should take tincture of iron and pyrmont water. After having left the hospital and changed his abode, another eminent Doctor advised him not to make any farther use of these remedies, as it hardened the matter, which could no more discharge itself. As a proof that this conjecture was correct, a perceptible hardness was observed below, which increased daily in size. The suppressed discharge of matter caused the most horrible spasm in the bladder, till the symptoms proved that the matter had found its way into the cellular texture. The deposit increased day by day to an immense extent, so that (to use the patient's own words) one side was forced out to the size of the egg of an ostrich, and the swelling could be felt up to the hips. The patient assured me,



the internal pains he suffered were not to be described, and that he felt at each pulsation as if he got a stroke with a red hot hammer on the spine,—that it seemed, by the least movement, as if the sides of the inner deposit would burst. Through the whole body he felt the most painful anxiety, and that it had produced such a degree of irritability on the whole system of his nerves, that he would cry like a child at every conversation which took place. Thus he lay down on his back in great despair, for many, many days, tormented with the most agonizing pains, till at last a deep incision succeeded in putting an end to these torments.

“His condition of strength, although it had but little improved, was yet an encouragement to the patient to hasten to Berlin to see Professor Dieffenbach, in order to have his advice, and he was happy to be received with the best hopes of a speedy and radical cure. The water of Obersalzbrunnen was prescribed, together with other measures, but all in vain. He grew so much worse, that Professor Dieffenbach was obliged to administer the most nourishing and strengthening food, in order to counterbalance the daily sinking of his bodily strength, and to encounter the early approach of a total dissolution. He did not hide from his parents the extreme state of suffering to which he was reduced. At this time a physician entered the house, who, through the attention and deep searching which he had for years devoted to the study of disorders in the bowels, —(who had also acquired fame in the practical, as well as in the literary world,) though he could not conceal from himself, nor from those who surrounded him, the near danger in which the patient was put; nevertheless, thought himself justified, through his long and extended practice, to express still hope of recovery. He undertook the cure in union with the late doctor, who now confined his attention solely to the surgical part, and who hoped to produce a favourable change through cauterizing, touching with *lapis infernalis*, and other appli-



tions; whilst to encounter the general indigestion, the patient was obliged to live on pap, oatmeal, groats, sago, rice; to which was now and then added a mild elixir for the digestion. Notwithstanding the continual care, most praiseworthy precaution, and discretion, which were taken during several months, this new medical exertion did not succeed in procuring any decided change,—it made a stand only by a little improvement in the digestion and state of strength.

“As matters stood, the patient was induced to direct his attention to the water cures at Gräfenberg, and thanks to the Baron de Falkenstein’s affectionate persuasion, to decide to undertake a journey, on which he had long been reflecting. After many fatigues and hardships, (the patient was obliged to lie down in the carriage) he reached the end of the journey in July of the past year (1839). As from this moment every medical account may be considered to be of less interest, the patient had better relate himself the further course of the progress of the disease:—

“Having arrived at Gräfenberg, and related to Priessnitz the course of my disease, and shewn him my wounds, he said, with his usual dryness, ‘*that it was a bad case, and that I was very badly off,*’ but that he could neither admit nor take me under his care, as with such patients he might get little honour,—that it was a wearisome undertaking, and that I should lose courage and depart. Also that it would take up too much of his time, which he had better devote to others, and that I should do well to set off again. When I remonstrated with great emotion, he answered, ‘*Do you see, the painful moment of departing must come once, and it is the same if it come soon or late.*’ To this I could no more reply, and left the room. Fortunately I heard that at Friewaldau was also a water-cure establishment, and that the director of it was Mr. Weiss, who had often effected happy cures which had been rejected by Mr. Priessnitz. I addressed myself to him, and found in him a man whose expe-



rience and knowledge promised a regular treatment. After he had with care examined my suffering parts, and observed me for some days, during which time I had recovered from the fatigues of my journey, he said to me, that he had great hope of my recovery, but that he could not state the length of time which it would require, as in such diseases very often, old standing evils did break out, which were a great hindrance to the cure of local sufferings.

“On the 15th of July I began thus my cure with the greatest enthusiasm, and found that my strength increased from the first to the last bath. Though I was obliged to perspire and douche every day, the principal part of my cure consisted in making use of the sitz baths, and I was advised to take three a day, two in the tub and one in the river, to which I chiefly ascribe my recovery, as without them, I would have reached the term to which I was tending, in a far slower way. From the first day my bowels were open, but not regular. In the same degree returned soon a more calm pulsation. I counted at Berlin 95—100 pulsations, and here seldom more than 80. Nothing remarkable or critical happened during summer and autumn.

“I after some time felt pains in the spine, and great sickness, and being in danger of fever, I was obliged to perspire several times between wet sheets, and observed that they, (but particularly the damp cloth, which was tied round the wounds) had become quite red, a proof that a bad matter had separated (dissolved from the body, which was quite inexplicable to me). After this had taken place, I felt myself exceedingly well and easy, and one of the fistulas began to heal, as I used the catheter as often as possible, but it opened again, healed up after some weeks, as well as a second one; then the one or other opened, till, from the month of March, four fistulas had quite healed up. Only one was obstinate,—still less water passed, and less matter was formed; at

the end of May, it healed up for the first time, after I had made use of sitz baths in the river during four weeks, but it opened again several times ; it was quite healed up on the 5th of July. It is very remarkable, that after the wounds had been quite healed up, the most critical case should befall me : I discharged one day such an immense quantity of matter as I had never before done. I had felt some days previously, a certain sickness and uneasiness ; the discharge of matter lasted for some days, and though it did a little inflame the suffering parts, the whole remained uninjured. At this moment, the discharge of matter is fast decreasing." A few days later the patient set off in a flourishing state of health.

The following case, which first appeared in the *Water Friend*, (it may be found also in *Abdy's Cases*,) and was treated by Dr. Emmel, at the Hydropathic Establishment near Vienna, still more strikingly sets forth the efficacy of this treatment in certain ulcerations, and diseases of bone :—

“ The patient of middle size, slight build, twenty-six years old, of healthy parentage, inoculated successfully in his second year, in his seventh suffered from fever, which became malignant and passed into a nervous fever ; at the termination of which, the disease fixed itself on the upper part of the thigh. By the external application of medicine, and by fomentations, an abscess formed on the inner-side of the limb, and discharged much matter from an opening that took place of itself. Being greatly reduced by long-continued sickness, and his parents being very poor, the patient could no longer bear up against it. The abscess discharged purulent matter during two long years ; from time to time fresh abscesses were formed on the diseased places, accompanied with agonizing pains : they were,



however, softened by fomentations, came to maturity, burst open and discharged a quantity of pus, without healing up, and constantly excreting matter—two or three openings appeared every year. Against this disease, all sorts of medicaments were applied internally, as well as externally, plasters, salves, poultices of herbs, fomentations, &c., by physicians and non-physicians ; but without any good effect whatever. Many of the openings healed, but broke out sooner or later, forming holes, through which, under violent pains, pieces of bone, that had been exfoliated, were discharged in a brittle state, and as if they had been worm-eaten.

“ During the seventeen years that he was ill, thirty-six openings of this kind, with abscesses, were formed, and brought him nearly to his end. As all remedies were now ineffectual, amputation was proposed ; but the patient would not consent to it. Soon after his attention was called to the cold-water treatment. His resolution was soon made up.

“ DESCRIPTION.

“ The hair nearly gone, the eyes deep in the socket and feeble, the face fallen in and earthlike. Patient had the appearance of an old man, the tongue white and unclean, no appetite, much thirst—the left leg drawn backwards in the lower part ; the knee joint on the left side swollen and immovable ; the knee pan nearly displaced, seven openings, discharging matter on the thigh, about the head, knee and breast ; in the morning much perspiration, which occasioned a sensation of debility—small, hard, quick pulse, with frequent cessation, sleepless nights, occasioned by the pain in the diseased part.

“ June 6th, 1839. As the patient was so extremely enfeebled, the first thing to be done, was to improve the digestive organs ; he was, therefore, to commence with drinking fresh water, the diet was at first somewhat spare and cool—this was continued



eight days, and the diseased limb was covered with bandages, dipped in cold water and well wrung out.

“June 14th. Patient somewhat stronger, complains, however, of violent pains in the part affected; the discharge from the sores is increased; the disposition irritable, inclined to tears; by day-light the whole body was washed in tepid water; and as he could take no exercise, he was placed in the bed to warm himself.

“June 18th. At an early hour tepid washing; the bandages closely put on, were continued. More nourishment given, as the digestion was better; frequent draughts of cold water ordered, particularly in the first part of the morning, when much expectoration took place; the night sweats less troublesome.

“June 24th. Cold water was now used, morning and evening, to wash the body with; the skin, which had been dirty and parched, is cleaner, and after the ablutions, looks reddish. About mid-day a cold bath for a quarter of an hour. This operates so strongly on the diseased part, that it feels as if it were cut through. Much matter discharged; the ulcers beneath frequently sprinkled with cold water.

“June 28th. Sweating early in the morning for an hour, tardy and very foetid; painful feeling of lassitude, at the time, in the limbs; several old cicatrised abscesses seem about to break out again.

“July 2nd. During the night more openings, discharging foetid matter; which, as it flows out frequently, requires the wet linen to be constantly renewed. The bath for half an hour: in the afternoon, the douche taken for three minutes, when violent pains in the diseased place came on but went away in half an hour, and left behind considerable alleviation. The appetite, as well as the digestion, perceptibly improved.

“July 6th. Violent palpitations of the heart on the perspiration breaking out, so that the patient must be taken out of



the blanket, to prevent the feeling of suffocation. He became exceedingly uneasy. After using the bath, the heart is as quiet as during perfect health: sleep good; patient drinks already thirty or forty glasses of cold water, daily.

“ July 12th. The new openings are healing, others are in course of formation, causing a feeling of pain about them: the leg is still twisted backwards, the knee joint immovable, and more swollen and painful than before.

“ July 18th. Cold bandages are placed on the breast on account of the palpitations; in the evening a sitting bath for half an hour; the cold ablutions three-quarters of an hour. The face is now fuller, the eyes less sunken and more lively; douche applied ten minutes every day.

“ July 26th. Patient complains of oppression in the head, want of appetite, much thirst, anxiety of mind, lassitude in the limbs, alternations of heat and shivering, dry burning skin, during the whole night. He was wrapt up in wet linen; towards the morning vomited some slimy bilious matter, and felt his head relieved.

“ July 27th. An eruption on the upper and lower limbs, as well as on the breast, and in greater profusion on the diseased limbs—much thirst with a sensation of hoarseness in the throat, and an inclination to cough.

“ July 28th. The eruption is coming to maturity; the little blisters contain a liquid, resembling milk. The sweating and bathing have been omitted some days; the patient drinks much water and takes little food.

“ July 29th. The blisters, that first came, have burst and peeled off in small pieces; the feverish symptoms and the hoarseness in the throat have vanished, but the tendency to cough remains. The treatment is continued with some addition to the food.

“ August 6th. The eruptions on the diseased limb have disappeared, and in their place, others have come and constantly



cover it ; pieces of bone are thrown out from several of the openings, and occasion a feeling of pain ; the cold ablutions are now used for an hour.

“ August 12th. An hour's sweating twice a-day ; from two openings, pieces of bone again thrown out, brittle and worm-eaten in appearance. The douche taken for fifteen minutes.

“ August 20th. Patient feels in the diseased limb, as if something was cracking, and about to come away ; he can now walk without crutches. He is much annoyed by the sweating ; which wearies him, and he frequently begs to be unpacked. The perspiration is no longer fœtid.

“ August 30th. When the sweating was renewed, the former symptoms having disappeared, and the douche was used for twenty minutes and cold ablutions for an hour and-a-half.

“ September 6th. In consequence of increased strength of body the patient can now walk some distance with a stick ; the cracking hollow sound in the diseased knee joint is more perceptible, and there is a sort of convulsion in the limb as well as in the knee pan : during the treatment the diseased limb was necessarily bound with wet bandages, to bring it into a state of perspiration with the rest of the body.

“ September 14th. For some days new openings have appeared, and the linen is considerably stained by the matter they excrete ; the ulcers which had commenced some weeks ago, are most of them healed ; the fore part of the limb can already bear stretching out.

“ September 22nd. For some days, pieces of bone have come out with much pain from the recent openings ; the diseased part, however, is in consequence stronger, fuller, and more pliant. The application of cold water is continued without any omission.

“ October 1st. The skin, which before was inert, lax, shrivelled, and foul, has quite a healthy appearance, and is easily excited to perspiration ; the palpitations, during the sweating,



have entirely ceased ; and the diseased limb perspires without the aid of wet bandages.

“ October 12th. The patient's health continues to improve visibly ; except the recent ulcers, nothing particular has occurred.

“ October 24th. The eruption on the sore limb has for some time increased. How acrid the exsudations and excretions from the sores are, is seen in the linen used. The stains upon it can in part only be removed by soap and warm water, after every washing, spots still remain. Once a day sweating.

“ November 6th. The hair, which had fallen off, has come on again during the treatment, the same in quantity, colour and in other qualities. Cough rare ; the knee pan admits of being moved to either side. The fore part of the limb can be stretched out still further, and the patient can walk a distance of six or eight hours.

“ November 16th. The cough is quite gone. The openings of the ulcers are healed, except two, from which but little watery stuff exsudes. The boil on the diseased knee joint is completely removed. Sweating continued.

“ November 26th. The two openings of the ulcers discharge and appear to be healing. From the thirty-six openings, up to this time, has been thrown out an ounce of various loose, worm-eaten pieces of bone.

“ December 6th. The whole body has recovered its strength ; the muscles have acquired their fulness again. The limb, which, while diseased, had completely fallen away, is as healthy as the sound one ; motion in every direction is free ; the patient can step out on the whole foot ; all the functions are regular ; he enjoys his new existence, and expresses his gratitude to the fresh, cold, pure, spring water. With tears of thankfulness and joy, the patient quitted the establishment on the 6th of December, 1839, to assist his parents by his industry in earning their scanty fare.”



Glandular swellings, and ulcerations of a scrophulous character, are treated with much success by the skilful use of the cold-water system. If we gain thereby swelling, and a discharge from the inferior extremities, we draw the humours from the superior parts, and the benefit the patient derives is immense. In this way, *hydriatics* frequently manifest a decided superiority over the exhibition of medicine. In order to secure such effects, the whole treatment must be perseveringly submitted to, for a sufficient length of time. It is of no use, in bad cases, for the patients to submit to the treatment for five or six weeks,—as many months is as short a period as we can expect will unfold such gratifying results as we desire, and as the methods pursued are capable of imparting. It is well known that all scrophulous symptoms disappear in the West Indies, and other warm climates; and the sudorific blanket, aided by the douche, &c., so acts on the skin as to produce effects, similar to what are obtained by removal to a warm climate.

The quantity of water to be drunk by scrophulous patients ought to be small in the beginning, and be cautiously increased. Such invalids can, however, sometimes bear a considerable quantity.



## GENERAL DEBILITY.

Debility is of two kinds: viz., first, that depending on some internal organic lesion; secondly, that which is merely functional, arising either from internal functional derangement, exhausting discharges, or chiefly from a want of tone or energy in the nervous system.

The *hydriatic* system carries with it a strong recommendation, on account of its adaptation to relieve the weakness even of organic disease, for that must be valuable which is capable of relieving a state which is too commonly only aggravated by tonic medicines; but its principal recommendation lies in its being applicable to the restoration of impaired or lost nervous energy. It is surprising how common these cases are,—cases in which the nerves have been primarily affected, either from moral or physical causes, or both; and inducing dyspepsia, liver derangement, fulness in the head, or some other ailment, which may have been regarded as the original disorder. I have lately had the particulars of an extreme case of this kind transmitted to me, in which it is said, “there was from early life an excessive sensitiveness of the nervous system,”—“the patient had several attacks of bronchitis, which induced her medical attendant to try the effect of rubbing into the chest some powerful ointment, which he had frequently tried on other patients with success:—this produced an eruption all over the body, with a feeling as if bands of red hot iron were



bound round her arms and legs, and her eyes were so much affected that she was obliged to have them bandaged. Indeed her whole frame was one of suffering. The doctor then gave her active aperients,"—(certainly, a not unfrequent, but very bad practice of the doctors,)—"which brought from the bowels an incredible quantity of an unnatural substance, something like the mother on vinegar, with excruciating torture!" Now let us note the consequences of this debilitating, irritating course of treatment:—"From this period her natural sleep has forsaken her, and all her senses appear sensitive to agony. She cannot bear the *light, smell, or the slightest* sound without *excessive* sufferings; and one wrong word excites her to a frightful degree of irritability." A painful state indeed! and one certainly very much induced by forcing medicines, and confinement. Matters have gone from bad to worse, and now the poor sufferer is confined to her bed, shut up in a dark room. This is a true picture of a despondent, trembling, nervous, tortured invalid. Her whole nervous system is unstrung, without tone, its vital energy grievously impaired. What is to be done? Not all the physic in Apothecaries' Hall will do her the least good. Not all the attentive nurses in the world will be able to bring her up again. Not all the kind speeches we can summon, will last longer in their influence than the moment. But thanks be to God! even for so desperate a state we have a remedy. The cold-water system, *cautiously, slowly* employed, will give tone to the nerves, and enable our patient to step out of bed, and, by degrees, quite cure her.

It is true, such a case must have our personal super-



intendence; for there is that in *the manner* of managing such invalids which begets confidence in their minds, and even gives them courage, making all the difference between complete success, or total failure. The patient should be washed over with cold water twice a day; drink, at least, from two to six glasses of water daily; be well rubbed twice a day with the flesh brush; and taken out of bed afterwards; the body should be washed and rubbed with the wet-sheet in the middle of the day; a walk up and down the room must be enforced, five or six times daily; the head must be frequently washed with cold water, or a wet towel applied to it. The sheet-bath and sitz-bath must be continued daily, for a long time. The diet should consist only of meat, bread, milk, eggs, biscuit, and a little boiled or baked fruit, and cold water, or barley water. As soon as possible, the open air must be resorted to. When the bodily energies are sufficiently restored, the douche should be tried, and afterwards the cure will, in the majority of cases, be complete in a few months.

Travelling is very properly ordered in these cases, but this and the cold-water treatment should go hand-in-hand, whereby the travelling will be rendered both more agreeable, and far more efficacious.

In general debility arising from impaired nervous power, or where there does not appear any great functional derangement in the system, it is of the greatest importance to endeavour *first*, and *directly*, to improve the tone of the organic nerves. The branches from the great sympathetic nerves penetrate the coats of all the blood-vessels, as previously stated; their vital properties are thus imparted to them, and the very changes



in the blood itself, while flowing in these vessels, are likewise dependent on this nervous distribution. Then how pre-eminently important must it be to augment the tone of these nerves, in mere debility, and in every chronic disease, for this is the same thing as increasing the vitality or tone of the principal vessels, which is ordinarily synonymous with improving their condition, and relieving or curing the existing malady. To begin with the latter class of vessels, as I have hinted under Consumption, and as is too often the case, in the administration of tonics, stimulants, or alteratives, &c., is not unfrequently beginning where we ought to end;—something may be requisite, preparatory to a direct attack on the vessels, in order to bring them into a state which will answer to the medicines employed; that is, such an impression should first be made on the whole nervous system as will impart to it a new impulse, and augment its tone, and ability for action.

This applies not only to consumption, as before stated, but to many other chronic disorders, and even to some acute diseases,—fever, for example; as I have proved, by the reference made to the extraordinary power of cold water in removing delirium. All the tonic medicines in the world would not have done this; but it was accomplished instantly by this simple element.

This is not an improper place for me to recommend the addition of salt to the water used, in many instances of debility. The German hydriatic practitioners do not employ it; but the addition of this invaluable substance will materially aid us in conquering particular states of debility and exhaustion. It acts by exciting the organic nerves, and increasing the vital cohesion of the tissues



to which it is applied; by its passage to a greater or less extent into the circulation, and operation on the blood itself, and, through its medium, on the structures generally.

The necessity of a due supply of common salt to the healthy actions of the human frame has been fully proved; but the great value of this article in promoting health, and removing disease, is but half apprehended. The following remarks may afford hints, of no mean importance, to some of my readers, with regard to the *internal* use of salt; but they are submitted to consideration, more especially with respect to its external application, dissolved in cold water. A mode of punishment formerly existed in Holland, which places the effects resulting from a total disuse of salt, more particularly in moist climates, in a very striking point of view. The ancient laws of the country enacted, that certain convicted men should be kept on bread alone, *unmixed with salt*, as the *severest* punishment that could be inflicted upon them in that climate: the effect was horrible: these wretched criminals are said to have been devoured by worms, engendered in their own stomachs.

The blood may perform its functions without the red colouring matter; but, in every part of the world where healthy blood has been analysed, it has invariably been found to contain a given proportion of certain salts, of which *muriate of soda*, or common salt, is the chief. They are *never* absent from the blood in health. Without them, the blood can no more perform its functions, and support life, than air, without oxygen, can purify the vital current in the pulmonary organs. They are one cause of the fluidity of the solid ingredients, and of its



stimulating quality; and they add also to the power which it possesses of preserving itself, even in a temperature of all others the most favourable to the putrefactive process. Therefore, we cannot be surprised, that when these salts are lost, or greatly diminished, as in the last stage of some fevers, in cholera, and even in some chronic maladies, diabetes for example, the blood becomes black, exactly in proportion to the diminution of its saline matter.\*

When such blood is exposed to the air, *it does not become red*; which it ought to do, from the influence of the oxygen of the air upon it. But when we add a small portion of salt, even to this black, and, as it seems to be in certain cases, *dead* fluid, the scarlet or arterial colour is immediately restored; and after this, it is not only fluid, but less offensive, than the same blood to which we have not added any saline ingredient. There is but one way by which the red colour of the blood can be restored, and that is neither by air, iron, nor oxygen, but by restoring to it the saline matter which it has lost. If we sprinkle, or rub a small quantity of common salt on a black clot of blood, not merely the red, but a colour that is highly arterial is immediately produced. When we take this scarlet clot, and immerse it in distilled water, it soon becomes black; but when we remove it from this, and immerse it in a solution of common salt, it again changes to a rich scarlet; and this we can repeat, even with the same clot of blood, as often as we please.

\* When this is diminished to a very great extent, the vital current becomes so rapid as to be totally incapable of stimulating the heart.



These facts explain the mode of action of this invaluable article, and prove the vast importance of its external use, dissolved in water, (as well as of its proper internal administration,) in certain cases of debility; more especially in those where a dark-yellowish, or pasty complexion, and a feeble circulation, indicate a probable diminution of saline matter in this pabulum of life. *If you take away the salt, throw the meat to the dogs*—is an old saying.

A physician in London, equally well known for his great professional skill, and his kindness and liberality,—I mean Sir Charles Clarke, Bart.,—has been in the habit of employing the hydriatic treatment for many years past, in some cases of debility, and even cough. This notice would have been appropriately introduced under COUGH AND CONSUMPTION:—having, however, omitted to mention it there, I am glad of the opportunity of introducing it in this place. About ten years ago, several of his cases were inserted in the *Medical Gazette*, where they may be perused with great advantage by all unprejudiced medical men. The following instance of this enlightened physician's love for cold water, occurred in my own neighbourhood. He had been attending, for some time, a young lady, about ten or eleven years of age, who suffered from general debility; from a spinal affection also, as it was thought; and, certainly, from a most tormenting cough, which harassed her, and all about her, both night and day. This cough was sometimes incessant, and so harsh as to produce great uneasiness, not only to the poor invalid, but likewise to her attendants. All the means prescribed had failed to remove it, or even materially to lessen it. At length Sir Charles,



with all that decision and wisdom for which he has ever been remarkable, determined on hydropathizing the little girl. He requested to meet the apothecary, on an appointed day, at a certain hour, to see this young lady: when they met in the bed-room, without saying anything to the attendants, otherwise than desiring them to clear the room, he cried out to the apothecary for the pails and water-jugs, and said, "Now we will begin. You, Mr. W——, mount up on the bed, and I will supply the water as wanted." The nurses stared with amazement: the mother enquired eagerly and anxiously what they were going to do. Having stripped off the bed-clothes, Mr. W—— held up the first jug of cold water, and poured it over the little girl:—the poor mother cried out, "Oh! you'll kill my child, you'll kill my child:"—Sir Charles cried, "Pour on, W——: pour on;" a second jug of water speedily followed the first, and again, the agitated mother screamed, "You'll kill my child, you'll kill my child:" again this resolute physician answered by, "Pour on, W——: pour on;" and so he did, until they had actually emptied over the little patient several large jugs of cold water, and the bed and room were swimming with it. They then took her out; she was rubbed well dry by the nurses, afterwards dressed. This was *sharp* practice,—sharper than necessary, certainly; but it was *sure* practice. The cough was perfectly cured. It never returned from that hour. I do not recommend measures so violent as these, in such instances. They are unnecessary. The free use of cold water, according to the hydriatic method, together with the wet-sheet, and sitz-bath, would have succeeded quite as well. But Sir Charles Clarke's practice, nevertheless, proves the effi-



cacy of cold water in the cure of cough. These are facts within my own knowledge ; and others of a similar kind, and equally striking, may be perused in the Medical Gazette before referred to.

A relation of this child's, an elderly lady, above 65, living near Epsom, has been so evidently relieved from a state of debility and constipation, by the cold-water system, as to be almost the wonder of the neighbourhood. Letters are frequently arriving, with enquiries from her relations and friends, for information respecting what she has done in order to gain so much benefit. In the cold months of December and January even, she courageously sits in her tub, and orders her maid to pour jugs of cold water over her, all fresh from the spring. She can walk further than she has been able to do for years ; and her sons call it quite a resurrection.

In his paper on this subject, Sir Charles Clarke alludes to the excellent effects of a "*sudden and lavish*" application of cold water to the face, and general frame. He describes the affections to consist in actual loss of power of certain muscles, or an unwillingness to exert such power if it existed ; and an irregularity in certain muscular actions. Sometimes the disorder appears in the form of spasmodic cough, which comes on several times in a minute during the whole day, except when the patient is eating or sleeping. Such disorders have generally occurred in females of a "pasty" complexion, fat, pale, and weak ; or in such as have evinced the common signs of debility.

The following is one of the cases recorded in the Transactions of the College :—A young lady, aged twenty-two, was affected with spasms of the diaphragm,

which impeded her breathing; and the power of swallowing was lost, so that it was necessary to feed her through a tube. Menstruation was interrupted; the bowels sluggish; the patient could not stand. After many remedies had been tried, recourse was had to plunging her into cold water. She had severe head-ache, requiring ammonia. Her breathing was immediately relieved, and the power of deglutition restored in a slight degree. She recovered.

In another case, the patient, a lady, about twenty-five years of age, was harassed with very violent spasms of the diaphragm. A great variety of remedies had been employed without avail. She was perfectly cured by similar treatment.

Debility of the nervous and muscular systems now and then induces deformities, which are supposed to originate in disease of the spine. This is a very important subject; both on account of the error fallen into, with regard to the nature of the complaint, and the excellent effects of cold water therein. Further remarks on these points will be found under *Spinal Complaints*.



## CONSTIPATION.

Who can adequately describe the horrors produced, and the injuries inflicted, by *Morrison's Pills*, *Parr's Life Pills*,—rather *Parr's Pills of Death*,—and other *quack* purgative pills, which have been so greedily swallowed by the hundreds and thousands of our countrymen and women? Aperients cause a temporary relief, by unloading the bowels, and inducing secretion from the internal mucous surfaces; whereby a deceitful calm is temporarily induced, sooner or later to be followed by a terrific storm. People will not believe it, but assuredly that storm is often fatal. Notwithstanding this relief, the costiveness is aggravated, and therefore the aperient must be again repeated.

Even in medical practice, the course ordinarily pursued in this very frequent complaint, is extremely injudicious, and, to say the very least, wholly ineffectual. Indeed, it increases and perpetuates the evil; for it consists in nothing but the occasional, or frequent, employment of aperient or purgative medicine. No thinking or practical man will do otherwise than acknowledge, that this is the very way to bind the chains faster round our patient, instead of loosening them. Every aperient and purgative is more or less an irritant to the mucous membrane of the bowels,—it is an unnatural stimulant,—it forces on an unwilling action,—and whatever does this, occasions debility, and is followed by languor and inaction, exactly corresponding to the force of the previous



stimulant. Therefore, the stronger the purgative, or the more frequently forcing medicine is used, the greater the amount of injury. And yet, what is a more certain fact than this, that whenever patients apply for advice for costiveness, the common prescription is an antibilious pill, to be used *pro re natá*? Yes; it is too well known, that even a strong pill or two is often ordered at night, with the nauseous black draught the following morning; and they also are to be repeated *pro re natá*:—if not at stated intervals of three or four days. These pills very commonly contain some portion of calomel, or blue pill,—not seldom, what I call, a large dose of the mercurial. Is this good practice? Is it rational practice? I will not enquire, Is it successful?—because every one knows, and the sufferer better than any one else, that it is anything but this. Certainly some professional men advise their patients, if possible, to regulate the bowels without medicine; by diet, &c.; and this is judicious, but it is not sufficient. As a lady, now under successful treatment for this complaint, remarked to me,—“the medical men in India used to advise my doing without medicine; if practicable but they did not direct me what to do, in order to effect this object.”

The dinner pill to be taken *horá ante prandium, quotidie*, and the antibilious pill, *omni, vel alterá quâque nocte*, have done far more mischief than a volume of this size could detail. People have thus teased and tormented their poor insides, till we may reasonably wonder they have any left;—till, in fact, many have been brought into such a dyspeptic, bilious, languid, nervous, irritable, miserable, wretched state, as no language can describe; and as renders life a condition to be deprecated rather



than desired. And a great part of the evil lies here,—people cannot be persuaded, that this habit of swallowing forcing medicines is the chief cause of all their sufferings, both in mind and body.

However, let us turn to a more agreeable part of our subject. The cold-water system merits great praise, for it is, in a very eminent manner, adapted to conquer a constipated habit; and I have known it perfectly succeed in many cases of twenty, thirty, and even forty years' standing. In my practice, as well as that of others, people who have had no natural evacuation from the bowels for upwards of thirty years, have been perfectly cured by it: and I believe it capable, by proper management, of curing every case of constipation not dependent on some mechanical obstruction.

A lady of rank, (an old patient of the author's,) now at the ESTABLISHMENT at STANSTEAD BURY HOUSE, near HERTFORD, went there, oppressed and tormented by such a degree of costiveness as, she supposed, could never be removed, or much relieved. She was one of the most bilious subjects to be met with; troubled with almost constant head-aches, weak digestion, irritable bowels; with unsatisfactory, teasing evacuations; and, at times, dreadful depression of spirits. For above thirty, or forty years, she had taken an aperient pill, sometimes two, every night, or nearly so,—I believe every night; excepting when I happened to be in attendance, and prevented it. She has now been three months at Stanstead Bury, during which time she has not taken medicine of any kind; and *for the last month the bowels have acted naturally every day.* The consequence is, that, both as it respects her spirits and bodily health, she has



not been so well for, perhaps, the last thirty years:— During the three months, she has had no head-ache, no bilious retchings; or even feelings, no depression of spirits; and the complexion is very much improved. The treatment in this case consisted, in the beginning, of one sitz-bath a day,—the wet bandage for two or three hours, once and twice a day,—and a glass of cold water, morning and evening. Afterwards, she was ordered a sitz-bath twice a day, a foot-bath once, and the wet-sheet twice a week. Latterly, she was wrapped up in the sweating blanket in the morning, once a week; and wore the wet bandage all night; drinking four glasses of water in the course of the day. She partook only of the regular diet of the Establishment.

I hope the reader will consider this as a very satisfactory case. Certainly, I know no other treatment which would produce such excellent effects; and likewise, that the patient herself always considered it quite impossible to work so great a deliverance for her. She was in the habit of saying, that she had often endeavoured to go on without aperients, but after making the trial for three or four days, head-ache, bilious feelings, and depression of spirits, compelled her to succumb to the enemy.

A second case I shall relate principally in the words of the patient. It is that of a highly respectable banker of Guildford,—a gentleman, I must add, of great worth and intelligence. He says:—

“I am thankful to tell you that I have found great benefit at Stanstead, by the various applications of cold water, internally and externally; and although that benefit has not yet extended to the improvement of my hearing, I anticipate that eventually



it will do so, under the Divine blessing ; because I attribute my deafness to the great length of time I was accustomed to the use of various means, to overcome a constipated state of the bowels and weak digestion ; and in both these particulars I have found cold water much more effectual than medicine,—so much so, that whereas I remember in the year 1828 taking the prescriptions of Mr. Scott, of Bromley, from March to October, for the strengthening these organs, I have derived by my fortnight's course at Stanstead more benefit than I did there in nearly seven months. I attribute this result to the disuse of tea and all warm liquids, and the adoption of cold milk, water, &c. I took two glasses of water in the hour, during which I walked before breakfast—three between breakfast and dinner, and one between dinner and supper. I was washed with cold water on rising, put on the wet bandage over the stomach after breakfast and dinner, and sat in the sitz-bath at twelve o'clock and nine in the evening, for twelve minutes, bathing the stomach during that time with my hand. I am so thoroughly impressed with the advantages of the system, and the great importance of the results, that I pray and hope that means may be devised for extending the knowledge and practice of it to the whole community, rich and poor ; and shall think it both a duty and pleasure to do anything I can to promote so desirable an object."

This gentleman was likewise wrapped in the perspiring blankets ; and further remarks, that he has not for years been so comfortable in the state of the stomach and bowels, as since his visit to Stanstead.

A lady recently came from Scotland, to be under my care at Epsom, for the cure, if possible, of this troublesome complaint. It will be seen from the following account, sent me by herself, that for the last seven weeks she has taken no medicine of any kind ; that she feels much better without it ; and that her bowels are beginning



to act of themselves, which they had not done for nearly fourteen years.

“ My health has been very indifferent for about fourteen years ; during that time I have taken aperient medicine every second night, often requiring considerable doses of calomel, as the liver was sluggish and the secretions wanting bile. Calomel always acted as an active aperient, and carried off large quantities of bile. For several years I have suffered from pains and weakness, in my back and lower parts of the body, and from pain and heat in my head. About two years ago in India, I had a severe illness, rheumatic fever, and followed by an affection of the head. For the first I was salivated—leeching and cold sponging was tried to relieve the head, but I did not find relief till very cold water was poured in a continued stream over the forehead, the head being held over a basin, and this was followed by most comfortable effects, and I continue to have this done every morning. After this illness, I have never required such large doses of calomel as I did previously, but constipation continued the same. My head has continued a very weak part ever since ; change of climate has had no effect whatever on the bowels. Aperient medicine has been necessary every second night, and occasionally calomel. I have continued to suffer much annoyance from my back, not much during the day, especially when sitting up ; but at times, when reclining, it made me uneasy, and always at nights preventing sleep and causing much restlessness, and only relieved by hard pressure. The positions of the uneasiness varies—sometimes in the middle of the back, sometimes very low down, and causing a general stiffness and pains from the shoulders downwards, especially round the loins. This made me feel walking very irksome, and I was seldom without a feeling of langour and weariness. The shower baths strengthened me a little during the summer, and drinking about seven or eight tumblers of cold water daily gave a tone to the stomach, and an appetite I had not previously. The



sitz bath I used for a fortnight once a day, gave some little relief to my back, and enabled me to walk with greater ease. When used quite cold it made me feel very cold and shivering of it; but I found no very visible relief from any means used till coming to Epsom. For seven weeks nearly I have taken no medicine, and feel better than I did when taking it. My bowels were at first only opened by the use of the enema, which formerly I could not use, as it produced pain and much irritation; but now it has no such effect. Within the last fortnight, the bowels are beginning every second day to act of themselves. I find I can walk with ease and comfort. The pain in my back continues to trouble me at night, or rather morning, for it awakes me about three in the morning, and makes me very restless. The wet bandages at night have in some measure relieved this; but, when discontinued, the pain is as bad as ever. I still find heat in my head at night, but it is decreasing."

Another patient writes to me as follows:—

"I derived *very considerable benefit* from your earlier advice, especially from that recommending the use of *the flesh brushes*, and much exercise; but I have not till very lately enjoyed PERFECT health. I have removed from Reading fifteen months: although I am within a few days of sixty-nine years of age I am much stronger than for ten years past. I attributed it in a great measure (under "God's blessing") to the country air, sponging my whole body, drinking two pints of cold water whilst dressing. When dry, I *brush myself thoroughly with two hard brushes*, which gives relief to the bowels. I then walk two or three miles, which enables me to enjoy my breakfast exceedingly, when I drink two cups of cold milk, and eat bread and butter or fat bacon. I drink no beer, wine, or any thing stronger than milk or water, nor have I any desire at all for any change. I avoid taking fruit or pastry, having found it to produce itching in my leg."



## HEAD-ACHE.

Head-ache arises, commonly, from derangement of the digestive organs, or some morbid condition of the heart; and when both these disorders are found in the same individual, head-ache is very frequent and oppressive. Dyspepsia is not unfrequently complicated with cardiac affection; even of an organic nature, and this complication is often overlooked in practice. Where this conjunction is recognized, the latter disorder is regarded as the effect of the former, and the treatment is too exclusively directed to the digestive apparatus; but the two maladies co-exist from the commencement, in many persons; and, in some, the dyspepsia, so far from being the cause of the heart's morbid state, is almost, if not wholly, a consequence thereof. This obtains more especially in *Dilatation of the Heart*,—a disease in which all the functions of the body being feebly performed, the stomach does not receive a due supply of healthy arterial blood, and thus all its actions languish.

In this state, let any patient use freely the cold ablution, every morning and night,—the sitz-bath every forenoon,—perhaps the wet bandage, also, around the abdomen; and drink three or four glasses, or more, of cold water daily,—at the same time paying attention to his diet, and exercises in the open air,—and I shall be much mistaken, if the benefit he derives is not very great. I have again and again relieved myself from head-ache, by using the cold sitz-bath for twenty minutes



Before I commenced it, I was in great discomfort and pain; languid,—wholly incapable of exertion; after it, I have felt not only free from head-ache, but lively, and equal to necessary duties. To what other means could we look for a relief so speedy and satisfactory?

During the actual attack of head-ache, the free application of cold water to the head, is seldom unattended with the most refreshing relief:—cloths, dipped in the coldest water, and frequently renewed, is the best mode of applying water to the head, in this complaint. If the disease is unusually obstinate, a wet night-cap may be worn through the night.

If the heart is in fault, cold ablutions to the chest should be added to the above means; and great care taken not to walk too fast, or too far at a time. Plenty of exercise is requisite; but it must be carefully regulated, or the patient will be injured by it. Horse exercise suits such patients very much better than walking.

But head-ache most frequently arises from disorder in the assimilating functions; and when this is the case, I can promise the sufferer vast advantage from the *hydriatic* treatment. In conjunction with the means already pointed out, the patient should have the shallow-bath, with cold water in summer, and tepid in winter, daily, at about twelve o'clock; being well rubbed after it. Dinneford's gloves should be employed for rubbing the body; the friction being continued for five minutes, and carried over the whole surface.

In all cases of frequent head-ache, strict attention to diet is absolutely necessary;—it must be spare, and the food easy of digestion.



## LIVER COMPLAINT.

This is a hackneyed term ; too frequently employed to cloak great ignorance, or culpable indolence. “ *You have a liver complaint,*” is an assertion too often made by some medical men, and too readily believed by most patients ; and is considered by both as a sufficient reason for the liberal employment of mercurials and purgatives, and for free salivation. Thus the poor patients are much injured ; and sometimes that very disease is thereby induced, fixed, and established, which the invalid fondly hoped was in the progress of cure !

*If* people have a liver complaint, or any disorder approaching to it, let them beware of mercury ;—it has caused far more diseased livers than it has cured. Let them use the cold ablution every morning, with friction ; wear the stimulating bandage every night, and also in the day ; take a sitz-bath in the morning ; drink a few glasses of water daily, and abstain from tea, coffee, and all hot liquids ; and they will derive from such measures more benefit than all the purgatives and mercurials in the world can impart. The sudorific blanket should be taken, perhaps, once or twice a week.

A gentleman has recently been surprisingly relieved by these means, who had suffered for more than two years from jaundice, uneasiness in the right side, costiveness, weakness, and low spirits. He is above sixty ; and



complained of great debility. Many prescriptions had been given, and followed by him; still he was languid, enervated, depressed; could not get on without aperient medicine, and was not able to take exercise because of his weakness. After having had recourse to the *hydriatic* treatment for six weeks, his bowels were moved naturally; the jaundiced hue disappeared; his spirits and strength returned; so that he now walks several miles a day, with great ease and advantage.

What are called "*liver complaints*," are commonly stomach complaints, accompanied with derangement of the intestines, and, very often, especially of the *duodenum* and *colon*. Affections of the colon are now frequent in England. I lately put a patient of this class on the cold-water system, (a gentleman about fifty,) with immediate and most evident advantage. He had been treated in town, for some months, for obstruction of the *colon*; and having become very much better, when left by his medical attendant, (who is an able practitioner,) he was told to take a pill every night of colocynth and blue pill, and to continue it for a year or more, if necessary, to overcome the obstruction. He, however, as he was still frequently indisposed, found it did not remove it; and I assured him it never would. I prescribed for him, on the principles now laid down, for five weeks, and saw him no more. It is true, I ordered him a little medicine, in conjunction with the *hydriatic treatment*; but it was small in quantity, and only for a short period.

Dr. Hancock relates his own case of jaundice and cough, as cured by cold water, in the following terms: (*Febrifugum Magnum*, p. 19.)—"About seven or eight and twenty years ago, I had a terrible fit of the jaundice,



and a great fever with it; and such a cough, that I was forced to sit up eight weeks together, or must have been broke to pieces; as it was, my lungs were broke, and I coughed up a deal of blood, and for the last fortnight, I got up phlegm, in considerable quantities, as black as my hat. All the physicians that saw me, gave me up, and some of them would visit me but once. But it pleased God, beyond the expectation of all, I got through it; though I was very ill and weak all that year.

“The next Spring, as near as I could remember, the *same week* in April, the jaundice came again, with a violent cough. Then I confess I was afraid, by reason of the breach in my lungs, I should not get through it. I met with a friend that advised me to take a little powder of *yellow amber*, in half a pint of *cold water*. I took it, and found my cough stopt immediately. The first thought I had was, it could hardly be the amber, but the *water* must do it so soon. Some hours after, when my cough grew troublesome, I took half a pint of *water*, without the amber, and found it had the same *effect*; when I went to bed, I drank a glass of water, and set another by me, to drink after my first sleep. I slept quietly that night, and in the morning found myself in a fine easy, gentle sweat, cooled myself a little, got up, and was much better. I continued to drink water several times that day, and the day after, and found myself both mornings after, in a gentle sweat, and was still better; and the fourth morning, was not in any sweat at all, and was well,—the *cough*, the *fever*, and *jaundice* gone.”

In several parts of this volume, I have adverted to the value of prescribing only small doses of medicine,



when physic is absolutely required. This has been proved in my practice, times without number; and I am thoroughly convinced, some professional men fail to cure certain of their patients, not because they do not give the medicine suitable to the cases, but because they do not administer it in the proper dose. To no complaints, whatever, is this remark more strictly applicable than to liver and bilious affections. In illustration of the correctness of these observations, the following case is introduced:—A few years ago, a gentleman, about the age of 46, called to solicit my advice for, (what some people denominated,) *a liver complaint*: he was daily annoyed, more or less, and frequently sorely annoyed, by pain in the stomach and front of the bowels, which would seize him unawares, and particularly after taking tea, either in the morning or evening,—or after taking some kinds of simple food, at any hour of the day. This symptom was accompanied by slight costiveness at times, and not unfrequently by great irritation in the bowels, and diarrhœa. He was thin, and looked pale and wan. Being a person of ample means, he had taken the advice of many men of eminence,—had followed many prescriptions,—and five or six years before I first saw him, had gone through a course of the Bath waters. All was in vain.—He was no better. Conceiving all his discomfort and pain to arise from a deranged action in the vessels of the internal surface of the bowels, I prescribed a pill to be taken every night, containing small portions of calomel, antimony, and extract of hemlock; the proportion of calomel was only one-eighth of a grain in each pill. This cured the patient perfectly in about ten weeks.

He, indeed, took a small quantity of other medicine; but to that nothing decisive could be attributed. My belief is, that had I ordered him a large dose, say two grains, (perhaps, even one grain,) of calomel every night, it would have irritated his digestive organs, instead of allaying and curing the irritation, and he would have gone from me, as he had from others before me, unrelieved.

Bilious subjects fall into egregious mistakes, in continually flying to the use of aperient and purgative medicines for their relief. I know it, as a certain matter of fact, that a recourse, even to a very moderate use of the hydriatic treatment, will afford them benefit, both more speedy, and more satisfactory, than any medicines of this class.



## GOUT.

This distemper most frequently comes on towards the latter end of January, or the beginning of February; and makes its attack commonly about two in the morning, with a pain in the great toe; but sometimes in the heel, the ancle, or the calf of the leg;—immediately, a chilliness, shivering, and slight fever succeed,—the pain increases gradually every hour, and the chilliness and shivering abate, in proportion as the pain grows more severe, which at length comes to its height towards night,—sometimes resembling a violent tension, sometimes the gnawing of a dog, and sometimes a weight and constriction of the parts affected; which become so exquisitely painful, that the patient cannot bear the weight of the clothes upon them, nor the shaking of the room from a person walking briskly therein. The pain does not abate till two or three the next morning; that is, in twenty-four hours from the beginning of the fit; when the patient, *being in a breathing sweat*, falls asleep, and at waking finds the pain much abated, and the part affected newly swelled. A slight pain is felt the next morning; and sometimes the two or three following days; which increases towards the evening, and remits towards the break of day. In a few days it seizes the other foot in the same manner; and after attacking both feet, the subsequent fits prove irregular, both with respect to the time of seizure, and their duration; and what we term a



fit of the gout, is made up of a number of these small fits ; and goes off sooner or later, according to the age of the patient. Thus, for instance, in strong constitutions, and such as seldom have the gout, the fit often goes off in a fortnight ; but in the aged, and those that have frequent returns of the disease, it lasts two months ; and in such as are more debilitated, either from age or the long continuance of the distemper, the fit may not go off till the summer advances, which drives it away.

During the first fortnight, the urine is high coloured, and lets fall a red gravelly sediment ; and the patient is usually costive. A loss of appetite, and a chilliness of the whole body towards evening, accompany the fit throughout ; and when it is going off, a violent itching seizes the affected foot between the toes, and afterwards the skin peels off by scales.

Gout is universally admitted to be a disease of the constitution. It, therefore, necessarily follows, that no means which are not calculated to alter and improve a deranged system, can be of great and permanent service ; and since this complaint, when appearing in a regular form, is a salutary re-action and evacuation of the system, whereby the equilibrium of the circulation, and a comparatively healthy state of the various functions are, for a time at least, restored ; it is equally clear, that, in this disorder, all efficacious remedies must aid in this salutary evacuation of the system. The profession, in this country, are evidently afraid of the *hydriatic* treatment of gout, (at least of *acute* gout,) from believing that this relief to the constitution is not therein sufficiently attended to ; and that the hydrophilist, by the use of cold water, runs the risk of driving the gout from the extre-



mities to the stomach, or some other vital part. This, however, is only one among the many mistakes which the profession fall into, with respect to hydro-therapæia. I assure them, the respectable hydrophilist does no such thing; he runs no such risks; he always looks before he leaps. The first and principal thing in his view is, to reduce the excitement, to lessen fever;—this he does by wrapping his patient up in a wet-sheet, which is renewed every half hour, or hour, until he accomplishes his object. After this, he washes his patient with tepid or cold water, and uses, at least, ought to use, a great deal of friction in rubbing him dry. Then he is put again to bed, for a longer or shorter period, and allowed only suitable nourishment, in small quantities. What can be more rational, or safer, treatment than this? Those who know what are the uniform effects of the wet-sheet, and the tepid ablutions,—in removing fever and pain,—will fully concur in opinion with the writer, that it is an admirable mode of proceeding.

No correct idea can be formed from the books hitherto published in England, of the proper *hydriatic* treatment of gout,—nor, indeed, of many other complaints. The public have imbibed from them a notion, that the regular practice is, to sweat such persons under a load of blankets, and feather beds, and then to plunge them into a cold bath. No such thing. This is sometimes done in *chronic* gout, if the patient is strong, and not old; but it is rarely the course pursued in *acute* gout; and even in chronic cases, it is not done, should the patient be old and infirm.

Unquestionably, the sudorific process is very frequently ordered in gout, and with excellent effects,—



when the degree of excitement will permit it,—because it unloads the vessels, and thereby aids the constitution in its efforts at a salutary evacuation, and re-action: it does speedily what the physician constantly aims at in this complaint. But in the use of the cold bath subsequently, great caution must be, and is observed.

In *chronic* gout, the sweating process, and wet-sheet, are generally employed alternately, unless the patient is so strong as to bear well a more frequent recourse to the perspiring blankets. This is done in order to draw the humours to the surface, and relieve the internal parts, by making an outlet of the skin. Generally, the patient gains, in a short time, the most sensible relief from pain by this mode of proceeding, and recovers his strength and spirits in one-third of the period required, if we trust to medicine alone. I do not say that proper medicine is not a good thing in gout;—I am sure it is; and that a little, given to unload the bowels, and free the secretions there, prior to having recourse to the wet-sheet, or blanket, will accelerate the healthy movements, and expedite the subsequent recovery of the patient. But on this I will not now dwell, for the *hydriatic* method often works well without it; simply observing further, that *colchicum* should never be taken, or any quack medicine whatever.

A recent writer on the hydropathic treatment of gout (Dr. Weatherhead) refers to “acidity, in some form or other, as the cause producing it,” and as that which determines the essential nature of gout. This is a palpable error. How often do we confound cause and effect, and refer to that as an essential and principal part of the disease, which is only a concomitant! A reviewer has



correctly remarked, that “for one case presenting gout in combination with acidity, there are 99—nay, 599, where such acidity prevails, without any gout at all.” The fact is, the acidity is only one in the series of morbid causes, producing this painful disease, the chief of which, unquestionably, is *an imperfect and depraved digestion*.

Sydenham, deservedly one of the highest authorities in practical medicine, remarks:—“The curative indication in gout, consists in strengthening the digestive powers, *having first carried off the foul humours*.” *Swan’s Sydenham*, p. 661, 1769. Sydenham suffered severely from this disease in his own person, and therefore was possessed of superior opportunities of testing the value of remedies in a gouty habit. The very first thing which we attempt in the *hydriatic* treatment is, to carry off the foul humours through the pores of the skin, which all experienced persons will acknowledge is the best emunctory. The wet-sheet and sudorific blanket accomplish this indication to admiration, and, at the same time, indirectly strengthen the digestive organs. For those who have either witnessed, or undergone this method of cure, know very well, that nothing more certainly relieves the stomach, gives it tone, and sharpens the appetite. It becomes as keen as that of a hound. So that hereby the two grand indications of the illustrious Sydenham are at once fulfilled.

When the patient is sufficiently recovered, he must be *douched* daily for a minute or two, if not of an advanced age. A good deal of water may be drunk by gouty people, *but nothing stronger*; and exercise, with friction, is of uncommon service. Priessnitz fails here, with regard both to diet and *friction*. The cold-water treat-



ment will be very much assisted by active and persevering friction, &c.:—a Rubber is an indispensable part of a large Hydropathic establishment. A very respectable physician of the last century,—Dr. Stukeley,—used to affirm, that he could detail five hundred cases of gout, which were relieved in a striking manner by *friction*. The same remarks apply to Rheumatism.

The diet ought to be spare,—the food easy of digestion. The “*cold-water cure*” will disappoint the high expectations of the gouty man, if he does not attend to his diet.

Some of the writers on cold water affirm, that medicine is of no use in this disease, or in rheumatism; but I must repeat, they know nothing of the value of medicine. They may find credit for this assertion, from those who know no better; but the practitioner of twenty years standing has proved its falsity a hundred times, twice told. *Ne sutor ultra crepidam*. Unquestionably, very many gouty and rheumatic subjects have tried medicine long and largely in vain:—who will deny to such a recourse to the cold-water system? I can assure my readers it is safe. In skilful hands, they need not fear any injurious consequences. It is an admirable mode of treatment, and will be found highly beneficial in removing pain and stiffness of the joints, in restoring the power of walking, and, likewise, in improving the state of the digestive functions.

In that state of gouty affection in which the patient has partially recovered, is able to go abroad, and, perhaps, to transact some business, but, nevertheless, still feels himself not well,—the disorder hangs about him,—no positive fit returns, yet he is not himself;—he tries



one thing after another, and still all seems to make but little difference;—in such a condition, the *hydriatic* treatment is invaluable. Those who have the means often travel to the Continent, and find an entire change the most effectual remedy; but so great a change is frequently very inconvenient, and, I must say, it is quite unnecessary, for the *cold-water system* will soon set all to rights. It is inestimable in such a state of the system.

The following is a case of gout, and severe disorder of the stomach, extracted from the *Water Friend*:—

“An unmarried lady, of a constitution, tolerably strong, though shaken by severe sufferings, of sanguine temperament, forty-nine years of age, had suffered, for twenty years, from spasms in the stomach, which, in the first ten years, in intervals of three or six months came on, without particular cause, generally however from errors of diet, with less important complaints in the digestive organs, as nausea, acidity, &c.; these went off and returned in attacks which lasted eight or ten days. The disorder gradually assumed a more violent character, and returned frequently with painful contractions and sense of burning in the stomach, spasm in the *æso*phagus, acid eructations and vomiting. The strictest diet had no effect in arresting its frequent return, and as besides acid, certain vegetables, fat meat, particularly pork, there was no pastry, mutton, or even a spoonful of soup, of whatever kind, that did not bring on these gastric affections in all their severity, there was but a small selection of the mildest dishes to which the patient was obliged to confine herself, while never tea and rarely coffee, could be borne; a light well fermented beer agreed well, and spirituous strengthening drugs, such as Hoffman’s *æther* drops, afforded temporary relief, so that the patient had gradually habituated herself to the use of this remedy, and of many liquors in small doses.



“The digestion was more or less disordered, and she was wholly deranged in her female health—every thing was out of order. The patient had become in consequence, more and more emaciated, and suffered frequently from morbid affections of the mind. Nine years before she had nearly died from spitting of blood from the stomach, had recovered, however, after seven weeks confinement to her bed, and, by strict diet, had for some time afterwards been less subject to the former spasms. Seven years before came on first a slight attack of gout, and in eight days finished, though imperfectly, its course. Soon after both feet swelled with much pain, the gouty affection now showed itself more particularly in the feet, and having lasted some weeks, ended with the skin’s peeling off. During this attack, the disorder ceased in the stomach, which irritable and liable to spasms as it had been, was now without pain and more light than usual. When the gout was over, the stomach-complaint began again. The attacks of the gout, irregular, both in intensity and duration, returned in various intervals of three and six months; and a singular reciprocity of exclusion was observable between them, and the internal disorder. Latterly, the moderate swelling of the feet was regular and less painful, while the spasms came on in the intervals, sometimes violent, sometimes mild—at times not at all for a week or two. All sorts of remedies, homœopathic and others, were used frequently and perseveringly, producing often, but not always, momentary alleviation, but by no means permanent relief from this tormenting complaint; and the patient felt less confidence and hope in proceeding to try the new method, as cordials alone had hitherto alleviated her sufferings. The little and transitory effect, however, of every thing tried before, the violence of the disease, and the pressing advice of her friends, determined her to make an attempt with cold water, and I had no hesitation in receiving her into the establishment, on consideration of her strong constitution, the



absence of all organic lesion in the stomach, the gouty origin of the disorder, the previous efforts of nature to bring the gout to a determination, and, where possible to expel it, by throwing it upon the surface, and the certainty that, with regard to the duration of the treatment, the patient was not restricted to time, would submit unconditionally to my directions, and possessed sufficient patience to go through any crisis however painful.

“ The objects to be obtained by this mode of treatment were :  
1. To strengthen the nervous system, to develop its capability of strong organic re-action by means of short, general cold baths, constant enjoyment of fresh air, appropriate exercise in a light dress, instead of sitting, as before, in an over-heated room. 2. To strengthen and regulate the digestion by simple nourishing diet, copious water drinking, short sitting baths, and wet bandages on the body. 3. To draw off from the stomach, the regular attacks of incipient gout, to promote critical excretions, and exudations of the morbid matter by methodical, and in proportion to the invalid's strength, the strongest possible, sweating; by cold foot-baths, and occasionally by a powerful douche.”

“ COURSE OF TREATMENT.

“ June 30, 1839. Washing 14° R. Heels of both feet swollen.

“ July 1st. Wrapping in a blanket; slight sweating for an hour; no perspiration in the feet; washing 13° R., sitting bath fifteen minutes, foot-bath twenty minutes.

“ July 4th. As before; sitting and foot bath twice a day; diet (cold milk morning and evening, with four glasses of water at table) very well borne; pain in stomach not great; spirituous liquors at once laid aside, and patient finds herself already, by copious drinking of spring water, much better.

“ July 5th. Wrapping up, with one hour's sweating twice

a day ; afterwards half bath, (10° R.) sitting and foot bath ; sixteen glasses of water.

“ July 6th. The œdematous swelling of the foot has disappeared.

“ July 8th. As yesterday ; half bath cold ; twenty glasses daily ; patient feels well ; no pain.

“ July 12th. Patient walks a great deal, has no kind of pain, eats and drinks with appetite, and is very cheerful ; sweating twice a day, with cold half baths, and irrigation afterwards ; two sitting baths and two foot baths ; bandage round the body.

“ July 27th. While in the blanket, pains in hands and feet, right hand somewhat swollen.

“ August 1st. Right foot swollen, occasionally without pain.

“ August 6th. Periodical swelling in the right foot, without pain ; swelling in the hand gone ; digestion and stomach good.

“ August 8th. Left foot much swollen, particularly first and second toes, and very painful.

“ August 11th. Swelling in foot little increased ; skin deep red ; tight ; painful on pressure ; douche discontinued.

“ August 16th. Heels of the feet still swollen, with skin red, cracked, and dry ; two small boils are forming there, with the base somewhat depressed, yellowish and dry, and the borders jagged and painful.

“ August 24th. Swelling continues ; small ulcers form afresh ; the former heal ; general health particularly good ; patient eats with appetite and without any inconvenience, soup, even meal cakes, and pork with vegetables, dishes that for ten years and more, caused, in the smallest quantity, the most violent spasms in the stomach ; four or five glasses of water during meals ; sweating twice a day, with cold half-bath afterwards ; sitting and foot bath.”



The reader is not to suppose, from there having been no immediate inconvenience in partaking of soup and pork, that such diet was proper, and unattended by injury. Sometimes invalids are not so sensible of inconvenience from taking gross indigestible food, as to regard it as injurious;—the uncomfortable sensations arise, perhaps, many hours afterwards, or the next day, when the food taken so long before is not thought of, and is exposed to no condemnation. If the patient indulged frequently, during the cure, in such kinds of food, it probably did its work in assisting to bring forward the fiery pimples, and burning carbuncle.

The author does not inform us here, how much water this patient continued to drink. It is a very valuable case, ably treated; but if the means employed had not been pushed so far,—if the treatment had been less rigorous,—I believe the patient would have recovered quite as well, and not suffered so much, by a great deal, in the progress of the cure. Some further remarks on this point will be found under CRISIS.

“August 26th. On the left leg, which is somewhat swollen, from the joint of the foot to the knee, appears an eruption, consisting of red pustules, with red isolated margin.

“September 1st. Small ulcers appear and heal on both feet; general health good.

“September 4th. On the right leg are several pimples, two lines in diameter and one line in height, surrounded with small red halos; on being punctured a liquid of a clear yellow colour, and not very thin, is discharged, which turns red with litmus; on the left a knotty eruption.

“September 11th. Small very painful pimples, resembling a malignant boil, make their appearance.



“September 15th. One of these is very troublesome and assumes a singular form; a small dark blue spot rises, in the middle of which a dark crust comes out, with a circle of a rose colour, broad and a little raised; at the end of three days, a small opening appears in the centre, and discharges some brown liquid; the pimple is about three lines in diameter, the halo two inches; the whole very painful to the touch; a deep opening in the middle.

“September 16th. The eruption has the same appearance; the middle of an ash grey; a small quantity of brown liquid ichor is discharged; the space around swollen and erysipelatous, of a blue colour and very painful: the whole leg is swollen; shivering and heat in the evening; pulse 110, rather hard; night sweat.

“September 17th. Towards morning washing with water 14° R; during the sweating, the bandages changed every hour; the foot is swollen with small drops of liquid on the skin; the carbuncle discharges a brown ichor, is throughout flat and on a level with the skin; pain; fever in the evening.

“September 18th. A similar but smaller carbuncle on the right knee, with dark centre and red halo, very painful; that on the left leg rises and discharges much brown liquid; around it appear suddenly large yellow blisters, some clear, others not; these, at the end of twenty-four to thirty-six hours, burst, discharge a liquid, which re-acts as an acid, and leaves a brown place, deprived of the epidermis; in the evening, fever; night, sweat; no sleep for several nights.

“September 19th. Same as yesterday; the carbuncle rises, the opening is large and filled with pus of a yellowish brown; evening, no fever; little pain; some hours sleep at night.

“September 20th. Eruption larger; halo smaller; pain less; instep swollen and covered with small blisters, exuding moisture; the epidermis lies upon it in thick large scales.

“September 21st. Same as yesterday; a fresh and smaller



eruption under the left knee ; the opening of the other is increased to this size. The skin of the instep moist and scales off.

“ September 22nd. A blister, yellow, opaque, of the same size with the above-described, appears on the left side of the breast ; sleep and appetite good ; excepting the local pain at the knee ; patient feels well ; no pain in the stomach ; functions in natural state every other day.

“ September 23rd. The eruption on the instep continues ; where it heals, the skin is of a blue colour, where it breaks out again of a dark red, epidermis comes off in thick scales.

“ September 26th. From this period to October 7th, various eruptions in different places are described, from their first coming out to their healing ; but as the details already given have probably tired the reader, I omit what follows, merely stating, that on the latter day, the heat of the body was so great that the wet bandages had become perfectly dry in an hour and a half.

“ October 12th. Frequent shivering ; violent nervous excitement ; sweating in wet sheets ; two sitting baths ; bandages.

“ October 20th. Suppuration from the eruptions, &c.

“ October 27th. Feverish from time to time in the evening ; ulcer on the right leg.

“ November 3rd. The left leg entirely covered with thick brown crust and scales, whence excretion of pus. On account of the great excitement produced by the water, dry bandages put on, and when removed after a few hours, covered with pus and scales. The ulcer more flat and wider.

“ November 11th. Wet and dry bandages alternately ; the spasms in the stomach not returned ; patient takes all sorts of food with impunity, and, except the pain in the leg, feels perfectly well.

“ December 7th. The critical eruptions continue ; the ulcers on both legs discharge a great deal of matter and are larger ; the surrounding eruption with its peculiar scaly deposit and copious secretion remains, though to a less extent ; the



gastric affection is removed ; general health good ; sweating ; washing ; foot baths ; bandages.

“ January 10, 1840. The ulcers on both legs in same state, level and suppurating ; the surrounding eruption considerably diminished.

“ August 20th. The stomach continues in a perfectly healthy state ; no pain ; no inconvenience ; appetite excellent ; digestion in its natural state ; the ulcers rather smaller ; the eruption the same. The former at times very painful on any excitement of the mind, such as fright, &c. ; patient feels a violent shooting pain in the sores of both legs at the same time ; sweating every other day ; washing ; sitting bath for twenty minutes ; wet bandages often changed.

“ December 4th. The critical eruptions little reduced ; general health good.

“ February 9th, 1841. While the ulcers, the one as large as a sixpence, the other of a half-crown, are constantly suppurating, the inner part is flatter and covered with healthy granulations ; the surrounding part free from inflammation, little reddened, with no eruption, yet very painful, as well as the ulcers ; general health uncommonly good ; the spasms in the stomach have never returned, in spite of the frequent use of such dishes, as for twenty years formerly could not have been eaten with impunity ; cakes of all sorts, butter, meat, vegetables, &c., agree now perfectly well with the patient ; sweating twice a week ; washing every day ; sitting bath ; bandages.

July 7th. General health perfectly good ; the swelling of the feet is for some days gone entirely ; the ulcers much smaller, and discharge little.

November 25th, 1841. Ulcers much smaller, yet not quite healed ; little discharge ; stomach entirely free from pain.

“ Some months ago, after a severe cold, patient was confined to her bed for eight days, during which time and subsequently,



some oppression was felt about the stomach, but no spasm or pain; the critical eruptions, it may be expected, will be over in a few months, and the ulcers, which are rapidly healing, will be closed up.

“The spasms in this case, an obstinate chronic complaint, treated in various ways without success, and at last declared incurable, have been thus, by carrying out the indications as they appeared at the commencement of this report, by the eliminations of their material causes as they existed in the organization, and by the discharge of matter, which, in its process, lasted two years and a-half, fully and permanently cured.”

Very painful cases of chronic gout, similar to this, are common, and I earnestly desire, that such sufferers will be persuaded to adopt this new mode of treatment. For their encouragement, I can with perfect truth declare, that its efficacy is very great; and my opinion is, the treatment need not be so severe as that recorded in the preceding extract. But even if it be so, it will fully reward the patient.

## RHEUMATISM.

In Gout and Rheumatism, the cold-water system is generally acknowledged to be very efficacious. This is certain; but I am not of opinion, that it is more efficacious in those complaints, than in improving *Consumptive habits*,—in *Indigestion*,—*Nervousness*,—*Asthma*.

Rheumatism is a painful disorder, in the production of which an obstructed, weakened, and deranged state of the skin is principally concerned. Now the free use of cold water, joined with friction, appears so rational a practice, that we cannot be surprised it should frequently be wonderfully successful. People tormented by rheumatism,—chilled on the whole surface of the body,—very susceptible of cold, are instantly led to heap clothes on their body, to keep it warm, and to shut out, and avoid the external air, in order to prevent taking cold; a course of proceeding which tends directly to enfeeble and derange the skin still more,—to augment and perpetuate the weakness of the digestive functions, and whole frame; and thus to conciliate these very agreeable pains, and constrain them still to tarry.

We have had many cases of severe rheumatism in England, perfectly cured by the *hydriatic* method. A man, named Wright, living at Epsom, was relieved in a fortnight, in a very surprising manner. He had been ill for five years with rheumatism, accompanied by uneasiness and pain in the superior part of the abdomen,



and depression of spirits; so that he could not properly follow his employment. The man looked very much depressed. He was ordered to have the wet-sheet one morning, the sudorific blanket on the following morning, and after each the cold ablution,—sometimes to be rubbed down with the cold wet sheet. He took a tepid sitz-bath at twelve o'clock, and again at four,—at six, he had a cold ablution. After ten days, he went to the douche at twelve, for two minutes, instead of taking his sitz-bath. He wore the *umschlag* after breakfast for two hours. This man was too gross when he commenced the treatment; it reduced his weight of flesh; increased his appetite, power of digestion, and strength; put new life and spirits into him; and he was cured in about three weeks.

In the following case, the lady shall speak for herself. All her friends consider her recovery marvellous. She had been ill for twenty years; almost afraid to let the wind blow on her; muffled up constantly, and a confirmed invalid. Now she is seen walking in her garden at seven or eight o'clock in the morning, as brisk as a bee,—all pain gone.

“ I will endeavour to state, at your request, the plan I have pursued with respect to the Hydropathic treatment for rheumatism and deafness;—the former I consider (through the blessing of God) to be removed, and the latter I hope in due time may be relieved. I first began to drink water on the 12th of July,—one half-pint tumbler only before breakfast; the following morning, with the same quantity of water internally, I began to wash the whole body, beginning at the head, with a wet towel, rubbing the water well into the skin,—this I do three times; then, after using a dry towel, I rub the whole body with a horse hair



glove, which I had been accustomed to use night and morning for rheumatism. On the third morning, after washing, I left off all flannel next the skin, (which I had worn for years, night and day,) without taking the least cold; and I hope never to begin wearing it again. After the first few days, I commenced washing the whole body at night as well as in the morning,—but that was for deafness;—and likewise I slept in a cold wet-bandage over both ears, and the back part of the head, and this prepared the head for the head-bath, which I shall, on Wednesday next, have used for seven weeks, forty minutes every morning,—a most disagreeable process; but certainly it has strengthened the head, and produced a little discharge from the nose, and occasional pain in both the head and ears: I shall discontinue the bath, but wash the head, with the rest of the body, night and morning, if I live through the winter. I never slept so well for many years as I do now; but I quite agree with Dr. Graham, that the quantity of water drank should not be extreme. I have taken as much as twelve half-pint tumblers per day, taking six before breakfast. This I found to reduce the system too much; I therefore lessened the quantity of water, and increased the quantity of milk. I now take a quart of cold milk, with the cream on it, in the course of the day,—a pint for breakfast, and the other divided at tea and supper time. My appetite is better than for many years, though I do not eat more than I did, but with a greater relish. I have never tasted any liquid but cold milk and cold water, since the 12th of July, and I hope not to be obliged to begin ale or wine again. I have meat at dinner, and at eleven o'clock in the morning a little cold jelly with a crust of bread,—the jelly made from a shin of beef. For the first few weeks the bowels were rather irregular, but I have never been obliged to have recourse to drugs, which I now dread more than ever; indeed, I feel quite persuaded that we have injured our constitutions most seriously by having recourse to them so frequently. The bowels



are now become more regular ; and I intend to reduce the quantity of water to about *five tumblers* per day, one before breakfast, another before dinner, (about an hour,) one at dinner, one at seven o'clock in the evening, and another at bed-time : two hours exercise, at least, is required in the course of the day. I feel quite assured that this Hydropathy will be a great blessing to thousands ; but it will, of course, be abused, as all the blessings of a kind Providence ever have been, through the frailty of man."

A man named Sells, living at Ware, who had suffered most severely, for years, from chronic Rheumatism, has been quite cured. It had drawn his head aside over one shoulder, and so pinioned his arms that he could not lift them above a certain inconsiderable height. His days were days of pain, but his nights were dreadful ; his appetite gone ; not eating anything scarcely for two or three days together ; and his look that of great anguish. He suffered also from severe pains across his stomach. This man had been under medical treatment at Ware for eighteen months, immediately preceding his admission to the Stanstead Establishment ; among other active measures then employed, was the rubbing into the parts most affected a considerable quantity of mercurial ointment.

The principal means employed in the treatment of this case were, the application of the wet-sheet the first thing in the morning ;—the next morning he perspired in the blankets ;—the third morning the wet-sheet was used again ; the fourth morning he perspired in the blankets, and so on alternately. After each of these applications he had a tepid ablution. He took a *sitz* bath (water just chilled) daily, at twelve o'clock ; had a



tepid ablution at six in the evening, and sometimes wore a wet bandage over the painful parts.

He can now throw his arms without restraint over his head,—work like other men;—he sleeps soundly;—his appetite is good;—his pains have taken leave; and his whole appearance is so improved, as to have gained many converts to a belief in the efficacy of the hydriatic treatment in the place he came from.

I cannot resist the inclination to introduce, briefly, the particulars of a case of severe rheumatism, now under treatment in this place, in proof that, in some instances at least, medicine works as great wonders in that complaint as hydropathy. A lad was brought to me from a neighbouring town, about ten days ago, labouring under swelling of the joints of the inferior extremities, great pain in them, and extreme difficulty of breathing, so that he could not lay down at night. They were compelled to pillow him up in his bed; he could scarcely walk across the room; the heart beat tumultuously and with great rapidity; he was deathly pale, and the very picture of misery. The poor mother, who came with him, was almost heart-broken, thinking the days of her child were numbered, and he must speedily pass into the grave. She told me, that all the alarming symptoms of the chest had come on after an attack of acute rheumatism, and that both she and her husband had been subject to that complaint. The patient lived at a distance from my house, and I could not order for him the *hydriatic* process; I therefore prescribed a medicine, which I have repeatedly found of the most signal service in rheumatism,—viz.: pills composed of calomel, antimony, guaiacum, and Dover's powder. He took one thrice a



day. In ten days he came to me with his difficulty of breathing wholly gone, together with the swelling and pain in the joints; the heart beat so quietly and regularly, one would not have recognized it as the same organ which was examined so lately. He now walks and sleeps with ease, and has quite a cheerful appearance;—the grateful mother astonished at the speedy change. So much, by the way, for the efficacy of medicine, despite all the scepticism and grumbling of the mere water-doctor. Certainly these are excellent effects, wrought with quite as much celerity as those obtained, in other cases of rheumatism, by the *hydriatic* process.

I hope the reader will pardon me for saying a few words more with respect to the efficacy of medicine in Rheumatism. My only object is to do good, and to place the present subject in its right light,—to bring all things, if possible, to their proper level. There are many cases which will be most speedily cured by the hydriatic process; there are many in which medicine will be most effectual, more especially if assisted by a *very mild course* of the cold-water system. I do not mean, of course, the free use of *cold* water in such instances; but the skilful addition of some of the milder parts of this system.\*

\* This is strictly true of many other very painful maladies. No man in his senses will order mercury in conjunction with the use of the wet-sheet, cold-bath, or cold sitz-bath; but what harm can possibly arise from prescribing, for example, bark internally, while the whole surface of the body is ordered to be washed daily with tepid water, or even with cold water, and a great deal of friction to follow it? Who can reasonably object to the drinking of some glasses of cold water every day, at the same time that the bark, or



In the halcyon days of my early practice, I recollect attending a dangerous rheumatic case with very gratifying results;—it was one of the most striking cases of speedy recovery, clearly obtained by the use of medicine, which I ever witnessed. I have not seen anything superior to it obtained from the cold-water treatment, in any instance; nor has any one else. The patient was a young man, about thirty years of age, who, when I first saw him, had been confined to his room by inflammatory rheumatism for about ten weeks. He had been largely bled and purged, and had sweated profusely, yet the symptoms, at the end of ten weeks, seemed to be almost as violent as ever, although he had occasional remissions of two, three, or four days' duration. The night I commenced my attendance he was in a great deal of pain, confined to his bed, sweating profusely, and

guaiacum, is taken?—Or what man, who understands the nature of disease, and the operation of the different articles of the *Materia Medica* on the body, can upon principle, or would from the results of his experience, be disposed to deny the perfect compatibility of following the use of the sudorific process, undergone for a week or two, with the mild alterative pill above noticed, or a quantity of sarsaparilla, for the following fortnight, if circumstances seemed to indicate the probable advantage of this plan. I am far from saying, that this is what I recommend ordinarily; but I am certain such associations, or sequences, will be found in some cases of superior utility. And not only so, but it is beyond a doubt, that when the present ferment on the subject of *Hydrophy* has subsided, such a mode of proceeding will be advocated and adopted, even by many who now object to it. Let me, however, not be misunderstood. In very many cases of rheumatism, and likewise of other complaints, we do not require the aid of medicine;—No;—the present system is quite equal of itself to cure the patient.



through every covering, with a pulse full, quick, and throbbing, but not hard; and his friends were much alarmed for his safety. His physician had seen him two or three hours before, and wished to have him bled again; but the family not liking that, he ordered a large dose of a sweating powder, which, however, was not given. On visiting him, I ordered the bark, in doses of fifteen grains of the powder every four hours, which was immediately commenced, and continued in the same quantities for near a fortnight. The next day he was sensibly much better, the pains were greatly relieved, the perspiration was removed, and never again returned, and by degrees his appetite and sleep became good; in short, he grew evidently better and better every day, and in less than a fortnight took a journey of nearly one hundred miles, without sustaining the least injury.

From the employment both of the powder of bark and quinine we gain complete success often in treating rheumatism, (Dr. Fothergill, and Dr. G. Fordyce, were wont to assert the bark would cure the severest cases); but every medical man knows, that neither of these substances is, in very many instances, of any more service than,—I was going to say,—a glass of cold water. We should have said so in olden times; but now we know better, and substitute—of any more service than whistling to the winds. All this proves the absolute necessity of discrimination.

We are told, that in Priessnitz's treatment of this complaint "the curative process is so remarkably quick, that the patients, the moment they arrive, *prépare* to throw away their crutches." This is, undoubtedly, a very sweet sound to the ear of the rheumatic man, whose days



are days of pain, and his nights those of dreadful suffering; but let him not be too eager to give credit to such glowing representations, for there is not a word of truth in them. "A fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind:"—having myself felt the terrific grasp of the rheumatic enemy, it is with peculiar emotion I sympathize with such sufferers, and with the most earnest desire that I look after a speedy and perfect remedy;—I know the pain is dreadful;—still let us be correct in our statements. If the benefit be so great and immediate, why is it so many of the invalids remain so long at Gräfenberg, as weeks, and months, and even years? It is likewise added, "Gout yields to his treatment easily." Indeed! this seems very good; but it is not half so good as—"the gout cured for a shilling!"—by a certain man's "*magic pills.*" I have proved the efficacy of hydrotherapæia in the treatment of very severe disease; but we must not imagine that the enemy will quit the field so readily as some suppose.

The system now under consideration does work surprising changes for the better, but not equally well, or with the same speed, in all kinds of either rheumatic affection, or gout. Great, indeed, is the variety we meet with in the constitutions of men,—in the causes of the same malady,—in its duration,—in its precise seat,—and in other particulars; and in these varieties we recognize the reason why medicine should, in certain instances, be more effectual than sweating, or any other part of the hydriatic treatment, and why also, that one medicine and plan of proceeding will perfectly succeed where others have wholly failed.

I must not omit to notice the remarkable power of



the *hydriodate of potash* in certain rheumatic affections, and disease of the *cartilages*. In ordinary scrophula it is of little or no service, but where the *cartilages* are the parts diseased, it may be depended upon with as much certainty of success as the sudorific process in rheumatic pains of a different character. This fact is not known to the profession generally, and, therefore, the public do not reap the benefit they otherwise might. The following case is a proof of the great efficacy of this substance in *cartilaginous* disease, even of an advanced and alarming character:—A respectable man, living at no great distance from Epsom, had been suffering for several months under severe cough, hoarseness, and affection of the larynx. At length matters grew so bad, that his apothecary and friends all thought him drawing near to death. His difficulty of breathing was extreme; the face pale and livid; he could not bear the recumbent position. A friend of mine being called to visit him, found him breathless, and in such a condition as apparently to warrant utter despair of recovery, on the part of uninformed by-standers;—but recognizing the *nature* of the case, he at once said, “You may take courage, that man will *not* die now: he has, it is true, severe disease of the cartilage at the top of the windpipe, but I can cure him.” And so he did. He instantly ordered the patient the hydriodate of potash and other suitable treatment; the man went out within a fortnight, and perfectly recovered.

In this case the cold-water treatment would have been useful; it might have cured the patient; but it would not have proved either so quick, or so perfect, a remedy as the means just adverted to.



The hydriodate of potash is also very efficacious in chronic rheumatic affections of the *tendinous structures and periosteum* ; and still more so in all those erratic painful affections of the *bones, periosteum, joints, tendons and fasciæ*, which were supposed by Abernethy, and others, to arise from the excessive use of mercury, disordered stomach or liver, and bad habit of body. Some of the cases in which it is remarkably useful are described by Sir Henry Hallford as *tic-douloureux*, from pressure on the nerve as it passes through its foramen ; by Sir Astley Cooper as a cachectic state of the system, curable by *sarsaparilla* and *patience*. By the generality of practitioners these cases are called rheumatic ; they are thought to be so by the sufferers themselves. The most effectual treatment in such disorders is, to sweat the patient between the blankets, (or by my peculiar process,) daily, or as often as he can bear it,—to follow it with the tepid ablution,—a tepid *sitz-bath*, or else the shallow bath, at twelve or one o'clock,—and the stimulating bandage to the joints in pain ;—and to enjoin a great deal of friction over the parts affected, and active exercise.

If these means do not perfectly succeed, then we should call to our aid the hydriodate of potash to complete the cure. By this mode of proceeding, such cases will be much more speedily and permanently cured, than if we trust to a lengthened course of the *hydriatic* method.



## SPINAL COMPLAINTS.

Very many of those who have suffered from complaints of the spine, have been the victims of cruel imposition, more especially young persons with lateral curvature, or weakness in the spinal column. They have been laid down on either the prone, or supine couch, for months, or even years, as a thing absolutely necessary to their cure, when it is no more necessary than to cure a man of the gout.

The only indications worthy of notice, in the skilful management of patients of this description, are,—to diminish the morbid sensibility and irritability of the frame, and to impart strength generally and locally. In lateral curvature, and the other cases which I refer to, there is no disease whatever in the vertebræ, and commonly nothing more than weakness to be found in any part of the system. Therefore, the invalid only requires daily ablutions of cold water; now and then the wet-sheet, and sudorific blanket; sometimes the half-bath, sheet-bath, and the douche:—the quantity of cold water to be drunk must depend on circumstances. Daily friction over the spine, together with gymnastic exercises, are of great consequence, as is likewise the period at which they are commenced, and the mode of their employment. I have seen more benefit obtained in this complaint from the use of cold water, than almost from



anything else. The time occupied by these means in recovering persons afflicted with such spinal complaints, is certainly not one-fourth of that which the long, tedious, and expensive modes in common use never fail to require. We could tell some strange tales of the very many months taken up, and the large sums of money spent by the sufferers, who might have been cured in a vastly more agreeable manner, in one-fifth part of the time.

There is a class of complaints to which I am very desirous of calling the attention of the profession and the public, from a persuasion they are at once entirely misunderstood, very grievous even to behold, and far more curable than is at all imagined. I mean those contractions of the muscles, attended with a total loss of the power of motion, which reduce the pitiable sufferer to a bed-ridden condition. It is very common for such maladies to be referred to disease of the spine; and some cases have been published as such, with a flaming account of the efficacy of spinal extension, and similar means. The state of the spine has nothing to do in the affair. It is wholly, from first to last, an affection of the nervous and muscular systems, and curable in a tenth part of the time required by the *spine-doctors*. In this disease, the muscles of the throat, neck, and lower limbs are chiefly implicated. Sometimes the power of swallowing is greatly impaired. When the nerves and muscles of the lower limbs are affected, the most common condition is, a total loss of power, so that the thigh cannot be drawn up towards the body; or if the limbs are bent by another person, the patient cannot straighten them again. In the worst cases, both the upper and lower extremities are much



deformed; the body drawn awry; the muscles wasted; the sufferer bed-ridden, and wholly deprived of hope of ever being able to rise from the bed again.

It is not an exaggerated praise to assert, that in such instances of weakness and deformity the *hydriatic* treatment will work marvellous changes for the better, and is worthy of every confidence that can be placed in it. Priessnitz has cured some cases of this kind, but without knowing anything whatever of the nature of the disorder, in the cure of which he gained so much credit. His success has, therefore, been like a fortunate aim in the dark. My explanation of the true origin and nature of the complaint will, I hope, serve to direct public attention more willingly to the subject, and thus be the means of more extensive good being effected.

This affection of the lower limbs bears no resemblance to *paraplegia*; there being no evidence of pressure on the brain, or spinal column, no particular numbness of the surface, nor tingling of the limbs. In such cases, the power of cold-water is astonishingly great. So little is this malady understood, that it is, indeed, quite common to consider it *paraplegia*, and, therefore, quietly to consign the sufferers over to patience, and a lingering death. I trust my remarks will arouse the attention of the profession to the subject, for they may be assured they are thus delivering over to augmented sufferings and death, those whose cases admit of speedy relief, and, ultimately, of perfect cure, by the new system of treatment. In certain instances, the nerves exercise a commanding influence over all the actions of the frame, (see page 24, et seq.); and they

are themselves always promptly and permanently influenced,—often effectually controlled,—by the use of cold water. Hence we can account at once for the frightful deformities now and then met with, arising primarily from a morbid influence of the nerves; and also for the wonderful curative power of cold water in these particular instances.

In cases of real *paraplegia*, or of *hemiplegia*, I do not say this system is of much service.

In *posterior* curvature of the spine, the power of the *hydriatic* treatment is of course limited. I would, however, strongly recommend cold water to be freely used in such instances to the spine, in conjunction with the other necessary means, having seen great benefit result from it.



## NERVOUS DISORDERS.

The writers on the cold water treatment of Priessnitz are often very contradictory. One tells us, that "no other treatment so surely and perfectly cures all abdominal diseases, and disorders of the digestive organs, as well as all gastric diseases, such as dysentery, cholera,"—By the bye, the author informs us, in this place, of something new; no medical man every before heard of dysentery being a *gastric* disease.—He, however, does not fail to apprise his readers, that Priessnitz is very shy of many gastric diseases, as well as of other complaints, which, perhaps, medical men would not deem so incurable; for he "does not receive all invalids indiscriminately into his establishment; it is therefore requisite, before going, to let him know the nature of the disease with which you are attacked, to prevent his sending you back." On the other hand, we have from another author a rather different account of Priessnitz's "*cures*" of "*all disorders of the digestive organs.*"

"Another (—so that there are *several* errors committed even at Gräfenberg—) fatal error was in the diet; for he stuffed enormously the most indigestible matters, in the hope of gaining strength. After a dinner of pork and 'sauer kraut,' salted cucumbers and pastry for a ploughman. I always, the next morning, *made a point* of conversing with him. I generally found him sitting on a bench by himself, looking on the ground, and



avoiding all intercourse. To the greeting of 'Well! how are you to-day?' I at first only got a grunt, and then followed, 'You are always asking me how I am; of what interest can it be to you? It is too bad: a man can find no rest in this place.' With a little coaxing, however, he generally came round, and then he would relate his sufferings. 'Oh, I have passed a horrible night! No sleep, and I was dreadfully sick; such sour, bitter stuff,' &c. If I had said a word about the pork, sauer kraut, and other indigestible combustibles, he would never have spoken to me again. Thus this unfortunate man went on from day to day, if not aggravating his ills, at all events keeping them stationary. With a rational system of diet, and a more appropriate treatment, I have no doubt he might have been much relieved, *though not cured, for the organs essential to well-being were too much injured, by the immense quantity of vegetable poison which had been applied to them.* I could relate a number of similar cases, ending more or less in the same way. I may here mention, that I made it a rule to inquire, the morning after one of the indigestible dinners, how the dyspeptics and hypochondriacs found themselves. They were invariably in a suffering state. By some I was at last detected, and they would give me no answer, but 'Ah! I suppose you think I ate too much yesterday. I won't tell you how I am.' In such cases I replied, 'I don't want you to tell me; I can see how you are by your moroseness, and the absence of your usual amiability. We will have a chat to-morrow, J. E., if you do not stuff again to-day.' I had committed myself on first going to Gräfenberg, by giving some friendly advice as to gourmandizing. On this



being repeated to Priessnitz, (for he is told every thing that is said and done,) he said, 'Eat as much as you like.' This was told me again, with much exultation, and a look, as much as to say that I knew nothing about it."

This statement is unquestionably a correct one; and although it is not to the prejudice of the *hydriatic* method, yet it is certainly very unfavorable to the proprietor of the Gräfenburg Establishment. The man who can in such circumstances say, "Eat as much as you like," may be able, in certain conditions of the human system, to effect striking cures;—I have not a doubt of that;—but he must be one so grossly ignorant of the sensibility and functions of the stomach and intestines, and so very inattentive to the operation and effects of what we most frequently put into them, as cannot but bring his faculty of discernment very much into question, and lessen our confidence in the correctness of his opinions on the subject of water drinking. The writer last quoted remarks in another part of his book—"In the most severe and dangerous diseases, the action of water is *certain*; that of all medical measures *uncertain*, and often hurtful." This sentence is perfectly unintelligible. What does he mean? The action of water,—what *kind* of action? Is it that the action of water is *certain* of doing harm? No—that is not his object to shew; and we do not believe such a thing. Is it that its action is *certain* of doing good? No; because he warns us against smatterers in the art of *hydro-therapæia*, who, amongst other misdeeds, frequently order the ingestion of too much water—so that its action is *not* always certain, at least, of working in the right direction. Indeed, that the action or opera-



tion of cold water is *not* certain of producing beneficial results, he proves by the narration of the preceding case of hypochondriasis; thereby shewing that Priessnitz's assertion, that cold water digests every thing, is *certainly* without foundation. If it can digest every thing, then it could have digested the *pork, sour krout, salted cucumbers,* and *bad pastry,* taken by the hypochondriac whose case has just been quoted; but instead of this, we hear the bitter exclamation—" *Oh! I have passed a horrible night! No sleep; and I was dreadfully sick; such sour, bitter stuff.*" So it appears the action of water is *not* certain; and that in this *uncertain* world the hydrophilist cannot claim, even for his beloved element, an exemption from the control of those laws which impress *uncertainty* upon every thing sublunary.

Notwithstanding the exaggerations just exposed, the reader may depend, that the effects developed by the free use of cold water in *nervous affections* have proved most clearly, that its efficacy is here very great, and that the profession have too long overlooked its value. The application of cold water to the head, neck, and shoulders, in this class of maladies, has been by no means so much attended to as it merits; I mean in that free, lavish, and continued use of it which they require, and which alone is attended with grand results. Nervousness is frequently the effect of a deranged and excited cerebral circulation, —the vessels of the brain may, from the influence of great heat, or pressure on the head, or other causes, have become dilated, enfeebled, and perhaps engorged; and hence ensues, in numerous cases, a morbid condition of thinking and feeling. This betrays itself in various ways in different persons, and is almost always accompanied by



impaired strength. Here we must have a thick bandage, three or four times doubled, dipped into the coldest water, wrung out, and bound round the head; it being renewed as soon as it becomes warm. This should be repeated for half an hour at each time of using it, which should be when the head is hottest, or the nervous symptoms most troublesome.

In some instances, undergoing the sudorific process once a week, or so, together with an occasional wet-sheet, will be of immense benefit to the highly nervous. The wet-sheet has a very soothing, calming effect, and is sometimes ordered at night for nervous people who cannot sleep. The sitz-bath is to be used once or twice a day,—the half-bath with cold water,—and the douche as soon as it can be borne.

We have witnessed, in England, some highly satisfactory amendments, from pursuing the *hydriatic* system in nervous complaints. It will be found of eminent utility, likewise, in mental maladies, accompanied with heat and pain in the head.

Tic Douloureux is a dreadful malady. We have had two cases at Stanstead Bury in which the treatment was extremely useful. One of the patients has returned home cured; the other did not remain half long enough for a cure to be wrought. In a third case, the patient did not observe a diet sufficiently restricted, and therefore the system is not in fault. This disease is most frequently a *neuralgic* complaint very intimately connected with the state of the general health, and often curable by persevering in this treatment for a sufficient length of time. But it is in vain to expect great improvement in a short time, if the case be severe and of



long-standing. Inveterate maladies demand corresponding perseverance.

Nervous affections of the heart are very common. They are sometimes severe; so much so as to deceive even men of considerable experience, who regard them as of an organic nature. The following is one of these cases, successfully treated by the cold-water system. The subject of it is a respectable person, for above thirty years employed at APOTHECARIES' HALL. He of course was favored, from time to time, with the best medical advice to be obtained in the metropolis, but it does not appear to have been availing. He shall tell his own tale. There is only one point in his statement on which I shall comment,—it is the shortness of the period in which he gained so much benefit. It will appear to all readers almost marvellous, that he should have derived so extraordinary advantage in eighteen days; but we can vouch for the truth of his assertion. He says:—

“ I am forty-eight years of age, and am engaged all day in a sedentary occupation. For the last twenty-five years I have been subject to spasm of the heart, attended with acute pain; which I have suspected might arise from a disordered state of the liver,—the spasm becoming much more frequent and severe, when I have been labouring under derangement of that organ. Any sudden or violent exercise would produce it;—lying on my left side in bed,—or carrying any weight in my left hand, even for a short distance, would generally bring on an attack. I have, likewise, always been subject to inflammatory affections of the chest and lungs, and have considered myself predisposed to consumption, for when-



ever I have caught cold it has invariably been attended with cough and sore throat, &c.

“ For many years past it has been my custom to take, at bed-time, five grains of blue pill, for several weeks in succession, and allowing only an occasional intermission for a few nights. I have also been in the habit of wearing a flannel waistcoat both night and day,—a hare skin underneath, and a Burgundy pitch plaster on my chest, which was constantly renewed every ten or twelve days.

“ Within the last two or three years my health has perceptibly declined, and my strength sensibly diminished, so that about a month ago I was so languid and feeble, that I could not walk a moderate distance without suffering from excessive fatigue.

“ In this condition, on the 10th of September last, I entered the Hydropathic Establishment at Stanstead Bury; and on the 27th of September I quitted the Establishment feeling perfectly well.

“ I can now walk *five* or *six* miles before breakfast with ease and comfort,—being entirely free from any feeling of languor or feebleness. I now can lie down in bed on either side indifferently, without pain. I can carry a moderate weight with my left hand, without producing any spasm,—and since I first commenced the cold water drinking and ablutions of the body,—now about three months,—I have wholly discarded *flannel waistcoat, hare skin, and plaster*, without either injury or inconvenience to myself.”

Whatever really relieves pain, and cures disease, must be considered of value in the estimation of all right-minded persons; I shall, therefore, not apologize for



bringing forward the following case of heart-affection cured by medicine. About ten years since, a lady of my acquaintance suffered extremely from strange sensations about the heart and across the chest, accompanied with violent pain at the top of the head. She felt constantly, more or less, a distressing sense of constriction across the chest, extending from one extreme point to the other; the pulse often intermitted twenty times in the course of a minute; she could not draw a deep inspiration; and when the affection of the heart was worse than usual, she was liable suddenly to fall down, even if only walking across the room. The pain at the top of the head was very trying,—it seemed as if a tense chord was tied across the front part of the head, and to be frequently in danger of snapping. She had consulted several able medical men, both in London and Berkshire, without gaining relief. Her professional attendants often told her the head-ache never would be cured, but that she might possibly obtain relief for the cardiac derangement. After this, my advice was asked with respect to the best mode of proceeding. I prescribed a very small dose of colchicum wine, twice a day, in water, together with an alterative pill every night, in which there was a considerable proportion of antimony. Her diet and exercises were at the same time regulated. Strange as it may appear to some who are unacquainted with the power of medicine, it is nevertheless true, that this prescription *cured the patient*, and was never altered,—at least, so little alteration was made in it afterwards as to render it tantamount to no change. This patient has never had a head-ache since.

She is of a very nervous, irritable constitution. The



state of her nervous system had doubtless much to do with her condition, but the nature of her affection was properly inflammatory. The means previously employed were not ordered with this state in view, and, therefore, failed to benefit her. Some of my readers will be disposed to enquire, what effect would the cold-water system have had in this case? My answer is,—a very excellent effect; but probably not one so speedy and perfect as the means I prescribed. Still, a frequent wet-sheet,—tepid sitz-bath,—wet bandages to the chest and head, &c.,—and a few glasses of cold-water drank every day, would have been of signal service.

The sitz-bath is very useful in nervous complaints, but in cold weather the patient must be cautious in the use of it, unless he employs tepid water. Very frequently, more especially if any weakness exists about the heart, the water in the bath should not be of a lower temperature than 68 or 70 degrees of Fahrenheit. When taken quite cold, I have known it produce very unpleasant symptoms in such instances:—72 or 74 degrees of temperature will not be too high in some cases.

## FEVER.

In the excitement of fever, of whatever kind, the wet-sheet, and cold or tepid ablutions, are of the first moment. They speedily carry off the morbid heat, relieve pain, and tranquillize the pulse, without in any degree adding to the debility of the various structures of the body, already sufficiently great. The drinking of cold water also in fever is clearly indicated, and very beneficial. This is *a fact* which cannot be justly controverted; still it is too much neglected in ordinary medical practice. The common effect of drinking cold water in the early stage of fever is to induce perspiration—a free and natural perspiration:—all professional men agree, that this is one of the most desirable events, and yet one most difficult to procure without forcing medicines, the influence of which in other ways is to be dreaded. Now and then, a medical man of eminence has risen up to bear strong testimony to the surpassing value of this simple element in fevers; notwithstanding, being naturally fond of what is complicated, and disliking that which is simple, we have gone on in our old course. But I trust the attention which is now aroused to this subject will be fruitful of great results, in the improved treatment of fevers of all kinds.

In *scarlet fever* cold water is of all others the most agreeable and most efficacious remedy, and little more is wanted, if we except two or three emetics when the



throat is deeply affected. Wherever the skin is *hot and dry*, the cold ablution should be freely employed. A tumbler of cold water should be given directly the disease is detected, and repeated whenever the patient is thirsty, or perspiration is not free.

Dr. Bateman was a physician of careful observation, large practice, and considerable discernment. His testimony in favor of the use of cold water in scarlet fever I extract from my book on *Domestic Medicine*, in which it first appeared several years since. It is as follows: —“ We are possessed of no physical agent, as far as my experience has taught me, (not excepting the use of blood-letting in acute inflammation,) by which the functions of the animal economy are controlled with so much certainty, safety, and promptitude, as by the application of cold water to the skin, under the augmented heat of scarlatina, and of some other fevers. This expedient combines in itself all the medicinal properties which are indicated in this state of disease, and which we should scarcely *a priori* expect it to possess; for it is not only the most effectual *febrifuge*, (the *febrifugum magnum*, as a reverend author, Dr. Hancock, long ago called it,) but it is, in fact, the only *sudorific* or *anodyne* which will not disappoint the expectations of the practitioner, under these circumstances. I have had the satisfaction, in numerous instances, of witnessing the immediate improvement of the symptoms, and the rapid change in the countenance of the patient, produced by washing the skin. Invariably, in the course of a few minutes, the pulse has been diminished in frequency, the thirst abated, the tongue has become moist, a general free perspiration has broken forth, the skin has become soft and cool, and the eyes



have brightened ; and these indications of relief have been speedily followed by a calm and refreshing sleep."

Very recently, Mr. Erasmus Wilson, the Surgeon of Middlesex Hospital, has recommended the employment of cold water in this disease, in the strongest terms. He says, (*Lancet*, *January 7*, 1843,)—"Cold affusion in Scarlatina is a remedy of the utmost importance and value, when used judiciously. It is correct in principle, and excellently adapted to meet the peculiar desiderata of the disease. But cold affusion, like other valuable remedies, may be abused, and then its therapeutic power may become mephitic. I must, therefore, strongly protest against your using cold affusion, until you can fully appreciate the conditions proper for its employment. Dr. Currie, to whom we are indebted for its suggestion, recommended that it should be used only when the skin is hot and dry. The manner of employing affusion is, to pour one or two pailfuls of cold water over the patient, to rub him quickly dry, and place him in bed, when, in a short time, he falls asleep, and breaks out into a moderate perspiration. If the feeling of cold should continue after the bath, a little warm wine and water is administered. The effect of cold affusion is to diminish the frequency of the pulse, to reduce the thirst, and heat of the skin, and to tranquillize the nervous system. If the heat and dryness of the skin return, cold affusion may be repeated a second and a third time."

Fever is a very extensive subject, and one calling for lengthened observations in reference to the use of cold water, and the wet-sheet, but I must defer them to a future edition of this publication.



## THE CRISIS.

This is an event, in the progress of the *water-cure*, which occasions a great deal of anxiety in the minds of some readers of books on hydropathy; and we cannot wonder at it. To have fiery boils breaking out in different parts of the body, and blue carbuncle-looking swellings, accompanied with fever, is no joke. Provided, however, the practitioner attends to the constitution of the patient, and guards against latent disease engrafted on a feeble frame, there is not the least danger from a sweating, fever, or abscess crisis,—or, indeed, any other kind of crisis. If the invalid is strong, or has a robust frame, he has nothing to fear,—on the contrary, he should hail such an occurrence as the harbinger of perfect recovery; if he is delicate, or there is something very “*rotten in the constitution of Denmark*,” then he is not altogether without grounds for fear, should a violent *crisis* come on. This has been proved by two fatal cases, which have lately occurred. One was that of a young English lady, under the directions of Priessnitz:—she was of a very delicate habit, and feeble circulation;—after having been under his treatment for some time, a violent fever arose, accompanied with boils from head to foot; the fever lasted nine days,—for this the ordinary remedy of the wet-sheet and cold-bath were employed; it was necessary to employ them very energetically, and they subdued the fever,—they, indeed, extracted seemingly all the heat



from the body;—the vascular action was now too low, and could not be raised by anything he did;—a violent hæmorrhage from the bowels supervened, and carried off the patient. Here the means were pushed too far in a feeble habit; and when the heat was abstracted from the body, the practitioner had nothing in his list of remedies to restore it. Priessnitz thus committed two errors, both of great magnitude. Probably the last was the greatest; because had he, in the cold, shivering stage, immediately called to his assistance the invaluable aid of some suitable cordial, such as mulled wine, with a small portion of brandy, the heart might have been set properly to work again,—the heat might have been restored, and the patient recovered. But no. He had *but one remedy*; and when that failed him, all was lost. *Ne quid nimis.*

I am ready to acknowledge, that some medical men, by bleeding too profusely, or by administering too much physic, and especially large doses of calomel, and other poisonous substances, &c. have, instead of saving life, destroyed it. Priessnitz, therefore, does not stand alone in these disastrous circumstances. He ought, nevertheless, to be more careful; and his method of proceeding is clearly capable of much improvement.

The second case was that of an estimable clergyman, living near London, who was treated at an establishment near Coblenz. He said, that nothing could be more pleasurable and exhilarating than the various kinds of baths employed, and that he seemed to derive much advantage from their use. The internal administration commenced by the patient taking two tumblers of water during the day; the dose was gradually increased, until it amounted to twenty-five tumblers in the same period.



Abscesses began at the end of the month to make their appearance on several parts of the body; these were exceedingly painful, so much so as to render his days wearisome, and his nights sleepless: he was told, in answer to the complaints which he made on this head, that the eruption constituted the crisis, and that the morbid elements having undergone the necessary coction, were about to be eliminated, and cast out of the system, through these artificial channels, and that, instead of sympathy, he deserved the congratulations of his friends at the fortunate termination of his disease, and consequent restoration to perfect health. He determined, however, after having suffered great pain, with feverishness and exhaustion, for nearly a fortnight, to return home. This he accomplished with some difficulty. He was visited, immediately on his arrival, by a physician of great ability, a friend of the present author. He first drew his attention to an abscess on the wrist; it was of a livid hue, about as large as a walnut, exquisitely tender to the touch, and a bloody sanies streamed from several distinct apertures on its surface.

Another, of a similar character, but as large as a hen's egg, was situated in the perinæum; a third, of almost equal size, occupied the pubic region: many others were to be seen on the body and extremities. They did not, in their mode of distribution, appear to submit to the law of symmetrical arrangement: not one was to be found on the left half of the body. Interposed between the larger specimens, were many of smaller size, and some so diminutive as scarcely to deserve the name even of abscesses, being merely deposits of pus under the cuticle. Every effort was made to restore the



debilitated constitution of the patient; but in vain. Abscesses continued to break out anew, about the hand and wrist; the absorbents became inflamed, along the internal face of the arm, as far as the axilla, and the patient, at length worn out with intense suffering, died.

It is true, this gentleman was very unwell prior to his departure for the continent;—there was, undoubtedly, something *rotten* in the constitution;—he had *diabetes*, but not in a state very readily detected. Still the system was pushed too far; five-and-twenty glasses of water a day was far too much for him; and is far too much, I am sure, for the majority of people. In the beginning, when the treatment was mild, he was much benefited; and had the practitioner properly pursued his advantages, and known when to stop, and how to have varied his prescriptions, the probability is, that instead of losing this patient, he would have returned to his native land, to be another amongst the many living testimonies to the value of the cold-water system. The science of healing is one founded on observation and experience, and, unquestionably, those who are the most patient in investigation, and the most exact in their observations, will alone avoid the dangers besetting their path, and reap the richest and most abundant fruit from their labours.

Some writers on this mode of treatment represent “the grand distinction of the *water-cure*” to be, that “all diseased states, however complicated, are *radically cured by it.*” If half of this boast were true, it would be a grand distinction indeed; but it is not,—as the disappointed, by tens and twenties, would instantly testify, on their return from Gräfenberg, if we had only the



opportunity to hear their remarks, and to witness their looks.

It is likewise asserted, that "the treatment must be changed from day to day, according to the state of the patient, the nature of his disease, &c." This is not correct. We may excuse a medical man for desiring to gather all the sick around his own dwelling, or to draw them within the sphere of his own attendance; but truth compels us to assure our suffering patients, that the necessary treatment is neither so harsh, nor so complicated. I admit that in some instances, more especially those of an acute character, such change from day to day is absolutely necessary, but these form exceptions to the rule, which is, to endeavour to discover the course most appropriate to the case presented for treatment, and then to persevere in it steadily for two or three weeks, or longer. A vast number of Priessnitz's patients live in cottages, at a greater or less distance from his dwelling house, and very many of them are never seen by him oftener than once a week.

One of the greatest errors committed in Hydropathic practice is, that of pushing the means employed to too great an extent,—urging them beyond the natural, or, at least, the present powers of the patient. From this cause I have known patients much injured, who would have been materially benefited by a milder course. This occurs most frequently in delicate constitutions, or where there exists considerable organic injury. It is very evident that this has been one of Priessnitz's most frequent errors, and this explains, at least in a measure, the origin of the "*crisis*," as it is termed, which so many of his patients suffer from, after they have been under



his care for a month or two. The fact is, that although well able to sustain, for a short period, the energetic rubbing and scrubbing, the sweating, douching, and drinking large quantities of water, and even being vastly benefited thereby, yet the constitution soon calls for a little respite; and if this is denied, excitement or fever naturally follows. A treatment of the same kind, but not so forcing,—not so severe,—patients bear for double or treble the period, without feeling any excitement. In the constitutions of mankind, and their powers of endurance, there is an endless variety, and if this point is not well studied many mistakes must be committed.

Popular writers, wholly ignorant of the nature of disease, tell us, that almost all the patients who go to Gräfenberg, suffer "*a crisis.*" There is truth in this; but I must say, it ought *not to be*, and is not so in England. If the treatment is skilfully directed, not one in ten or twenty will thus suffer; at least, beyond an inconsiderable eruption on the skin, or some equally slight excitement, not worthy the name of *crisis*.

But let me not be misunderstood. The superior value of the *hydriatic* treatment is often very conspicuous in the cure of severe and long-standing chronic diseases; and here "*a crisis,*" or even a second, or third, may be requisite, in order to the restoration of the patient. In such maladies, professional men are aware, that the grand point,—the point of honour to them, and of security to the patient,—is *to obtain a new action*. This is an extremely difficult thing to accomplish by medicine and topical irritants; indeed, they do not seem well adapted to the production of it; but in the energetic use of wet-sheets, sweating blankets, sitz-baths, plunge and



douche baths, &c., accompanied with friction, and water drinking, we easily recognize a method of treatment very likely to arouse the dormant powers of the constitution, and to put them on an offensive plan of operation, such as may issue in the dislodgment and conquest of the enemy. In such instances, excitement is produced,—a general commotion is felt throughout the system,—the fluids flow from the centre to the circumference,—and a general cutaneous eruption becomes visible, or boils break out, discharge offensive matter, and thus relieve the sick man from, perhaps, a very painful and inveterate malady. It is in this class of diseases, undoubtedly, that Priessnitz has manifested great courage and skill, and been rewarded with wonderful success; having been the man favored to conduct to long-lost health, many who had tried, in vain, the skill of the first physicians and surgeons of Europe.

It may easily be seen, that the chief difference between our ordinary practice in such old, chronic maladies, and that pursued by the sagacious peasant of Gräfenberg, lies in this,—we have tormented the pitiable sufferer by *local* caustics and irritants, of various kinds, with the view of exciting a new action; he applies his means chiefly to the *whole system*. We have thought a local re-action could be only secured by topical applications; he has proved to us, that it can be best and most certainly obtained by general means.

The eminent German physiologist, Liebig, has shown that drinking much water breaks down the *red globules* in the blood; and any one can, by experiment, easily satisfy himself of the correctness of this statement. An *excess* of this fluid, therefore, tends directly to reduce



the vitality of the blood, for that vitality is inseparable from the integrity of the red globules. No injury whatever results from drinking a proper quantity; on the contrary, I am quite certain, that it is then a remedy of vast power in many diseases; but the above fact proves, that it is not quite so certain as some suppose it to be, "that there is no danger of its ever again being neglected, or falling into disrepute." Great, yea, almost unaccountable and wonderful are the changes in human opinion; and, after it has established its reputation, nothing can preserve this valuable agent from encountering a sad reverse, but assigning to it its proper place in the long list of valuable remedies, with which a bountiful Providence has blessed a suffering world.

Liebig mentions another important fact, viz. that if *common salt* be added to the water, it prevents its having that dissolving and destructive influence on the red globules of the blood,—a fact which is perfectly in accordance with the remarks previously made in this volume, (under **DEBILITY**,) respecting the mode of action of salt, and confirmatory of our views with regard to the use of that invaluable substance.\* If salt had

\* One of the most common and dangerous symptoms of malignant **CHOLERA** is a black, broken appearance of the blood, in which it seems to have lost almost all its fluidity, and power of stimulating the heart,—hence, the deathly coldness, and dreadful cramps of this disease. Common salt has been found one of the most efficacious substances which can possibly be given in **CHOLERA**; and there can be no doubt it acts instantly on the blood, restores its fluidity and vitality, and thus enables the constitution to rally under the grasp of this terrific enemy.

We are a little staggered to find *Cholera* among the many complaints for which the cold-water system is declared to be a *specific*,



been administered to the clergyman whose case is related in this article, it is not improbable it might have exerted such excellent effects, as to have both astonished and delighted the by-standers, and to have prolonged the life of the patient. In such circumstances, quinine, and other similar tonics, have not a tenth part of the good effects of salt, because this immediately improves the condition of the blood, which they can do only mediately. Indeed, if a patient falls into such a state as that of the clergyman referred to, I much question the propriety, or safety, of giving stimulants and tonics. The proper treatment, then, can be known only by those who have paid attention to the *hydriatic* system, and the principles by which it is regulated.

When a severe "*crisis*" arises, all the energetic measures ought to be discontinued, excepting when the fever is so high as to demand the employment of the wet-sheet, and ablutions afterwards. The grand object of treatment should then be *to allay excitement*, by the use of the mildest means, such as tepid or cold ablutions, wet bandages, and drinking small quantities of water.

by those who do not so much as know one disease from another. But it is evident, from the remarks of these writers themselves, that the complaint in question was *not* cholera. The truth is, this mode of treatment is not at all applicable to cholera. Here we must have warmth, opium, and salt; and we require nothing else.

## WATER DRINKING.

Water affords a very beautiful illustration of that indestructibility with which the Creator invested matter for the preservation of the world. He formed it from elementary masses, and it appears to have existed unchangeable from the commencement of the universe. Its constituent parts are not broken into by any atmospheric revolution; they continue the same, whether in the solid ice, the fluid state of a liquid, or the gaseous form of a vapour. Its powers are undiminished, whether in the wave or the stream,—the most effective agent in the hands of man to procure that welfare and happiness which his own errors deprive him of, frequently bringing on those calamities that his perversity attributes to the will of the Omnipotent. Water is the same in the atmosphere as on the earth, and falls in the very same nature as it ascends; electricity has no other influence upon it than that of hastening its precipitation. Chemical agents, however powerful, can only decompose its elementary principles upon the most limited scale. The heterogeneous substances with which water may occasionally be alloyed, must be considered as purely accidental.

The homogeneous character of this fluid admits of no alteration; and, like atmospheric air, its elements are still obtained as pure, most probably as when they first emerged from chaotic matter. The same principles are found in the



clouds, the fogs, the dews, the rain, the hail, and the snow. For the preservation of the world it was indispensable that water should be endowed with the property of ever retaining its fluid form; and in this respect become subject to a law different from that of other bodies, which change from fluid to solid. This is a deviation from a general decree of nature. Were it not for this wise provision of the Creator, the world would shortly have been converted into a frozen chaos. All bodies contract their dimensions, and acquire a greater specific gravity by cooling; but water is excepted from this law, and becomes of less specific gravity, whether it be heated, or cooled below  $42^{\circ} 5'$ . Were it not for this exemption, it would have become specifically heavier by the loss of its caloric; and the water that floats on the surface of rivers would have sunk as it froze, until the beds of rivers would have been filled up with immense masses of ice.

There is sometimes, unquestionably, more advantage to be derived from drinking freely of simple water than either physicians or invalids have as yet apprehended; and we are much indebted to the recent writers on that subject for bringing this fact before us. By its diluent properties, it favours the normal fluidity of the blood, promotes the circulation, quickly allays irritation in various organs, facilitates all the secretions, and often checks the progress of disease. I cannot say, as some do, that it is the most powerful therapeutical agent we possess, or the most manageable in its employment; but am sure it is far more powerful than the profession generally are, at present, aware of. Whether taken internally, or employed externally, its effects as a *sedative*, *sudorific*, and



*tonic* are very great; of which, indeed, I have furnished abundant proofs in this volume.

The ordinary quantity of water ordered to be drunk at Gräfenberg, and the other hydriatic establishments in Germany, is from six to twenty-six glasses,—some write as if the more a sick man drank the better; but it never seems to have entered the mind of Priessnitz, and some other hydropaths, that if drinking water is capable of doing so much good to the human frame, the probability is great, that it may likewise do a great deal of harm, if not well managed. A trifling circumstance which has occurred in my practice, during the last year, proves, that even the moderate use of water internally and externally sets the humours afloat, and has decided effects on the constitution; it is this,—several of my patients, who *never* had chilblains before, have suffered a little from them since they went under the “*water-cure.*” The author never had, through his life, the slightest appearance of such an affection till he commenced the water-system; and his employment of it has been very mild indeed.

The proper quantity of water to be drunk varies very much in different individuals, and must be regulated with a due regard to the age, sex, strength, and complaint of the patient. The *stamina* of the patient, and the nature of his disease, if at all deeply affecting the organization, are the most material points;—a proof of which we have in the case of the clergyman referred to under CRISIS. In very weakly habits, four or six glasses of water a day is abundantly sufficient. Those who are strong, especially the robust, may drink ten, twelve, or fourteen glasses,—that is, of the com-



mon tumbler, holding something less than half a pint. Beyond this it is never advisable to advance, unless the patient's constitution is strong, and there exists a particular reason for it, as in an endeavour to induce a very decided *crisis*, in order to rid the system thereby of much morbidic humour. No doubt many hydropaths, at least, popular writers on *hydropathy*, will exclaim,—these quantities are too small; but I give this advice, after close and sufficient observation of the effects produced by various quantities, in different patients. My advice will stand the test of time; their's will not. There are now a few persons in this country, and soon there will be more, who think they know a great deal of the matter, and are qualified to give advice to all comers, because, forsooth, they have been at Gräfenberg,—where no information is ever imparted! This is almost as absurd as the conduct of the self-styled oculist in Mouse Alley, mentioned by Addison, who undertook to cure cataracts, in consequence of his having lost an eye in the Imperial service! I ought not to fail to warn the public to be on their guard against these smatterers in knowledge, the—*Imitatores, servum pecus*.

If much dryness be produced early in the throat and mouth, the quantity of water should be instantly lessened. Females cannot bear so much as men; neither can bear so much in winter, as in summer. The softer the water is, and the fresher from the spring, the better.

I have known the drinking of only one large glass of cold water every night and morning produce the most decided effects, of a beneficial description, on the state of the digestion and general health; and my whole experience leads me to believe, that many mere hydropaths



fall into a great mistake respecting the necessity of the ingestion of large quantities of water in order to great results, as many medical men and others do in supposing that neither one nor the other is of any service.

Dr. Hancock unquestionably carried his partiality for cold water too far. Still he was a man who spoke and wrote the truth. The facts he records are numerous and worthy of notice. The following is a quotation, to our present purpose, from his book, *Febrifugum Magnum*, page 21, showing the decided effects of taking a small quantity of his favorite fluid:—"I had a son of my own, that betimes in the night fell ill (as his brothers, who lay in the same chamber with him, told me after); he had such tremblings and shiverings, that the very bed shaked under him most part of the night. They (as children used to do) told me nothing of it. In the morning he got up and came down,—in half an hour's time he fell down in such a condition that we thought he would have died on the spot. We carried him up to bed as soon as he was come to himself. I made him drink a pint of cold water. He in a little time fell into a plentiful sweat. He sweated all day long in such a manner, as I have seldom ever seen any one do. At night his sweat went off: he had sweat, so as not to drench his shift and the sheets only, but the very bed under him. We shifted him carefully, and the next morning after he was so well, that he began to call for meat; we kept him up for two days. The next morning he was so well, that I thought he might come down. He did so; but the two doors of the entry happening to be open, and the wind very strong, it happened to blow very strong upon him, that I believe he took cold; for in an hour's time he fell as ill almost as before. I put him



to bed again, gave him cold water as before,—he sweat upon the *matter* as violently as before. At or some time before night the sweat went off. We took care of him; and the next morning, without sweating at all in the night, he was very well again. We kept him up four or five days, he eat his meat well, and went abroad without taking any physic, and without any inconvenience following it, which I think is a pretty good sign that this sort of sudorifick not only carries off a fever, but at the same time clears the stomach, too, sooner and better than any hot sudorific will do.

“I shall give another instance, I think more remarkable than this, of cold water taking off a fever, that in all probability would have been a most malignant one.

“There was a woman in our neighbourhood that fell ill, and died of a most malignant fever. The woman that came about her, sticed not to say, it was little better than the plague. Her husband then kept a coffee house. There was an acquaintance of mine, to whom I had told my experience (which I often did to several, tho’ few regarded it) that was then drinking a cup of coffee at his house. The man, while the clergyman was there, fell ill, with the most violent symptoms that used to happen in the beginning of malignant fevers. The man owned himself to be much worse than his wife was when she began to be ill, and said he should certainly die. The clergyman persuaded him to go to bed, and said he thought he could cure him. The man thought he bantered him, but was at last persuaded to go to bed. He brought him up a quart of water, and made him drink it off. He fell into a violent sweat in a little time,—sweat all day, and the next day was well.”



## THE SUDORIFIC PROCESS.

The principal remedial means employed in the *water-cure* are, the *Sudorific Process*; the *Cold Bath*; the *Shallow Bath*; the *Wet-Sheet*; the *Sitz-Bath*; the *Wet-Bandage*; the *Douche*; and the *Foot Bath*.

The importance of a correct performance of the functions of the skin, is far greater than we ordinarily suppose. The skin is the most extensive organ of the human body; and the natural discharge by *perspiration* is a salutary emanation, which frees the frame from acrid and impure humours,—a freedom which is essential to health. Obstructed perspiration is the cause of many of the most painful disorders of mankind.

A healthy person of middle stature perspires, within twenty-four hours, no less than from three to five pounds in weight;—thus expelling from the system, by the pores, noxious matter, which, if retained in the body by a constricted skin, cannot be otherwise than productive of serious consequences; for this *extensive* outside covering is a necessary outlet for the wastes of nature, and discharges, when in healthy action, more than the lungs, bladder, and bowels together. By microscopic inspection it is fully proved, that the surface of the skin resembles a very *scaly* fish;—these scales are so small, that the space occupied by a *grain* of sand will cover 250 of them. On examining one of these scales by a high magnifying power, it is clearly *seen*, that *one* scale covers



500 pores, or holes through which perspiration escapes:—consequently a space occupied by a grain of sand,—say the twentieth part of an inch,—includes and covers 125,000 pores! What then must the surface of the whole skin cover? This is beyond all calculation—*true and wonderful*. Hence it is proved to a demonstration, that the skin is constructed to answer *the most important purposes* of the animal economy.

To *restore obstructed* perspiration ought, therefore, to be the first aim of the professional man, whenever that has been the cause of the existing malady; and to increase it when it is only a concomitant, is very often the most reasonable and efficacious treatment which can be adopted. Its admirable effects in gout, rheumatism, fever, scrophula, cutaneous disorders, and many other complaints, are familiarly known to the profession. It is properly, therefore, one of the first and principal objects aimed at in the cold-water system.

Sweating is thus effected:—The patient is enveloped, naked, in a large coarse blanket, the legs extended, and the arms kept close to the body; the blanket is then wound round it, as tight as possible, turning it well under at the feet: over this is placed, and well tucked in, another blanket or two, and then a small feather bed; finally, a counterpane, and a sheet are spread over all. Perspiration appearing, the windows are opened, and the patient is allowed, if he wishes it, a wine-glassful of cold water, every half hour. If head-ache be induced, a damp cloth is applied. The duration of the sweating depends on the nature of the disease, and the constitution of the individual. Some people sweat every day, others alternate days, or only on the third day. It



is asserted by some, that this does not weaken the patients, or make them thin; but that, subjected to this treatment for twelve months, they have preserved their original weight and strength, and improved in appearance. This applies only to a few,—people in general soon feel the debilitating effects of this process. A sufficient perspiration having been obtained, the attendant takes off all but the blanket, in which the invalid proceeds to the bath, in straw shoes, having the face, and those parts of the legs and feet which are exposed to the air, damped with a cold cloth; having arrived there he washes his head, neck, and chest, and then plunges into the bath, where he remains from two or three minutes. We are right in guarding against cold when the body is heated by movement, or stimulated by sudorifics, for in this case death might be the consequence; but here the organs of circulation and respiration receive no impulse either from movement or remedial measures, but are in a perfect state of repose. The redness induced on the skin of the patient, after using the cold bath, is considered the touchstone to determine the strength the patient possesses to contend with the disease.

Patients are usually kept in the blankets from an hour and a half to two hours and a half, or three hours,—as perspiration is seldom induced sooner than in an hour, or an hour and a half:—this is, of course, a great exercise for patience, and, moreover, some individuals are made to perspire with much difficulty, and in others sweating cannot be produced at all by the blankets. This plan of Priessnitz is of uncommon service in numerous disorders, but, for the reasons just named, it is liable to objections, in certain instances, especially in those cases in which



a strong disposition exists to determination of blood to the head, when the blanket sometimes cannot be borne at all. I have, therefore, contrived to induce perspiration by a simpler process, which answers very well, and occupies but a third or fourth of the time required in the blankets. My experiments with this plan are not yet complete, and, therefore, I am not now prepared to say a great deal on the subject; but the trials hitherto made afford every reason to believe that it will uniformly succeed, and be in some instances a great improvement on the German mode of blankets and feather beds. I think it will induce perspiration even in those persons who cannot be made to perspire in the blankets.

By the employment of the blankets the skin is stimulated, and the heat concentrated in the body, without the patient's using any exertion; therefore, when perspiration breaks out, the body is in a state very different from that in which it is found when perspiration is induced by violent motion;—the internal parts are quiescent, and refreshed by the small quantity of cold water swallowed, and the skin alone is in a state of excitement. If a patient has a cold ablution, or plunges into the cold bath, in this condition, the sensations produced are very agreeable, and always salutary; and this method of inducing perspiration will, consequently, be found in many instances far superior to that obtained in any other way. The irritation set up on the skin secures a reaction, which is not experienced when medicine is employed, or, perhaps, any other means.

Still, in those cases in which we do not employ the cold ablution, or cold bath, subsequent to the sweating,—where they are not indicated, or admissible,—the other



artificial means of inducing perspiration to which I have referred, answers much better. It is more speedy in its effects; causes no rush of blood to the head; and may be had recourse to when there is so much fever present, as to preclude altogether the employment of the blankets and feather bed.

I have for some weeks lately had a patient under my care from Wiltshire, who has been afflicted for seven or eight years with severe disorder of the heart and liver, consequent on a single act of lying, for several hours, on the damp ground. This *checked* and *obstructed* the *natural perspiration*, threw the blood on important internal parts, and caused great and permanent derangement, if not disease. He is always chilly, frequently shakes with a moderate degree of cold, and sometimes certain parts of his body seem ice-bound. We have endeavoured to excite perspiration in this patient by submitting him to the ordinary sudorific process, rolled up in blankets, and laden with counterpane and feather beds; but all our efforts have been in vain, although he has patiently submitted to this mode for three hours at a time, until the heart beat tumultuously, and the head became very painful. He has just (while this sheet is passing through the press) had a trial made on him by the artificial mode for inducing perspiration, above noticed, and *within twenty-five minutes* I have had the pleasure of seeing the pores of the skin decidedly acted on, in a way in no degree disagreeable to the feelings, and a *very free perspiration* induced. He says the skin has not been so much relieved for the last seven years. It is a point of the utmost importance to procure a free action in the exhalent vessels



of the skin in such instances, and as a method of securing this in his case has now been discovered, I have reason to hope it will prove of signal service in the relief of his complaint.

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### THE COLD BATH.

The cold-bath is generally taken after sweating, by those patients who have sufficient vigour for re-action. Strange as it may appear to many, I consider the determination towards the skin induced by the perspiring blankets to be a great advantage, prior to the use of the cold-bath; because the internal organs are thereby relieved, and the shock has quite a different effect on them from what it would have if they were not first thus soothed and invigorated.

In certain instances, the chill is taken off the water of the bath in the commencement of the treatment, the patient using it quite cold only after the expiration of a few days. In other cases, the tepid or cold ablution are substituted for the cold bath after sweating.

The debilitating effects of the sudorific process mentioned at page 153, are lessened or prevented by the subsequent employment of the cold water, or cold bath.

## THE SHALLOW-BATH.

This is a bath long enough for a man to sit or lie down in, containing six or eight inches of water, or more. Either tepid or cold water is used, according to the circumstances of the patient. It is a bath of great service in numerous cases. The patient is rubbed well all over while in the bath. With cold water it is very serviceable in general debility, and with tepid water in local inflammations and fever.

Patients sometimes sit in this bath, and have cold water poured over them, which is very refreshing. In my opinion, this kind of bath is not so frequently employed in the German mode of practice as it ought to be. It is a most valuable remedy, and there are few cases of debility in which it is not indicated, and in which it will fail to prove invigorating, and either to relieve or cure chronic inflammatory action.



## THE SITZ-BATH.

This is a sitting bath, in fact, a hip-bath. We use them in this country made of tin, but at Gräfenberg, the sitz-bath is a small common flat tub, of about eighteen inches in diameter, containing about two gallons of water. The patient sits in this, with the feet resting on the ground, from eight to forty minutes, or more, according as the case indicates; generally every day, and sometimes twice a day:—in severe cases, perhaps, thrice a day. It is, unquestionably, a remedy of great power in all disorders of the abdomen, head, and chest. It draws the bad humours from the head and chest, strengthens the whole of the digestive organs, and improves their secretions. Only a small quantity of water is used, with the view of securing a re-action, as thus the water soon becomes warm.

It is strange that medical men have so much neglected this simple and yet powerful remedy, especially in diseases of the abdomen. The tepid or cold water being, by these means, brought into immediate contact with the parts affected, and kept applied to them for any period we please, the effects can be regulated at pleasure, and are very satisfactory and striking. In weak bowels, congestion in the liver, *Dysmenorrhœa*, *Chlorosis*, and other female complaints, it is of the first importance. I have found it invaluable in some female complaints.

The action of the sitz-bath, (and also of the foot-bath,) is derivative, if employed for a short time without changing the water;—that is, it draws the blood from the upper regions of the body, by the consecutive reaction of the system, which accelerates the circulation in the smaller vessels of the parts immersed. Thus heat in the head is lessened, congestions there are removed, and the pulse is softened and moderated.

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### THE FOOT-BATH.

The tub used for this bath is oblong and shallow. It is usually ordered to contain only about two inches of water,—sometimes only an inch; and to be used for six or ten minutes at each sitting, either the servant, or the patient, rubbing the feet the whole of the time.

This bath is, likewise, employed as a derivative from the superior parts of the body. Hence its employment in tooth-ache, head-ache, and diseases of the eyes. Some *hydraulic* practitioners make constant use of it, but it cannot justly be considered as among the most efficient means employed in the water-system; and when any affection of the heart is present it should seldom be had recourse to.



## THE DOUCHE.

This is, undoubtedly, one of the most powerful remedies used by the hydropath. It is a remedy of vast power; and, therefore, often requires great caution and judgment in its use. It is rarely admissible in cases where there is any excitement, or the least determination of blood to the head. Many serious accidents have occurred at Gräfenberg, and other establishments in Germany, from the patients not having attended to orders in the use of it, or from their having gone under the Douche when requested not to do so.

It is prescribed with a view to invigorate weak parts, to strengthen the whole muscular structure, and, when a crisis is thought necessary, to stir up all the humours, and bring the bad ones to the surface.

The douche is a fall of water from a considerable height, usually from 15 to 18 feet, of about the thickness of a man's wrist. The patient goes into the douche-room undressed, and then exposes one member and part of the body after another to this tremendous fall of water,—taking care of the chest and head. It is used for one, two, or more minutes. All patients who have tried it, soon become quite delighted with it, the sensations produced by it being very invigorating and delightful.

The douche at the Establishment at Stanstead Bury is a natural fall of water of about 18 feet,—the water runs from the springs at the back of the mansion down to the douche-house, and produces excellent effects.

## THE WET-SHEET.

This is one of the principal means employed in the *hydriatic* treatment. Very few patients submit themselves to it without being enveloped, at least occasionally, either in a whole, or half wet-sheet. The first impression of the sheet is certainly unpleasant, particularly to those who have not much animal heat; but it soon becomes warm, and then is far from disagreeable. Very often a very slight perspiration is induced by it, which is both salutary, and agreeable to the feelings. The mode of applying it is,—to spread a blanket on a hard mattress, and upon that a wet sheet, after it has been well rung out. This is wound tight round the body; over it is wound a thick blanket. Two or three blankets should then be thrown over the patient, and well tucked in, in order to promote insensible perspiration;—or a light feather bed is placed over the patient.

It is unquestionably of great service in fevers attended with high excitement; and its use in this country will introduce a much more efficacious mode of encountering fevers of the most dangerous character. It immediately abstracts morbid heat, lowers the pulse, relieves headache and thirst, and that without in any degree enfeebling any function of the frame. In dangerous fevers, it is renewed every half hour, until a decided impression is made on the disease. After the violence of the fever has been subdued, the patient is released, and either



washed over with tepid water, or placed in the shallow-bath, having water in it with the chill taken off, where he is well rubbed all over by a servant, sometimes by two servants.

In a hot summer's day, after a long, but not very fatiguing walk, few things can exceed the refreshing, calming influence of a wet-sheet. It is then far more pleasant and refreshing than a tepid bath. It instantly cools the surface, relieves the spirits, and induces sleep;—these effects render it of eminent service in nervous affections, and some states of disordered mind.

## WET BANDAGES.

The wet bandages are very useful applications in most local complaints, and in constipation. They are uniformly employed in gout, rheumatism, ulcerations, swellings, sprains, and weakness of the limbs, being worn for several hours in the day, and sometimes all night. The immediate effect of a wet bandage is to reduce inflammation, allay irritation, and impart tone to the nerves and vessels of the part to which it is applied. If active inflammation be present, the linen is dipped in the coldest water, wrung out, placed over the part inflamed, and renewed as often as it becomes warm. But in ordinary cases, and where no acute inflammatory action is to be encountered, the bandage, after being dipped in cold water, wrung out, and wound round the part, is to be covered with a dry bandage, which is to be drawn closely and tightly over that which is wet, so as to promote perspiration from the surface it covers.

There is no part to which a bandage is so frequently applied as round the body, over the stomach and bowels:—for this purpose, it should be at least three yards long; of which about one yard is to be dipped into cold water, wrung out, and then laid over the stomach and bowels, the remaining two yards being wound tightly over it.

Rheumatic and gouty joints must be covered with a wet bandage, having a dry one placed over it, with which the patient usually sleeps. The same thing is done in sprains and bruises; and continually with excellent effects.



## CONCLUDING REMARKS.

I shall conclude this volume with some extracts from the writings of EMINENT PHYSICIANS, in favor of the use of cold water.

The first commendation of common water that I shall mention, is that which is written concerning it by Dr. Manwaring, in his *Methods and Means of enjoying Health*; wherein he says, that water is a wholesome drink, or rather the most wholesome,—being appointed for man in his best state; which strongly argues that drink to be the most suitable for human nature,—answering all the intentions of common drinks, for it cools, moistens, and quenches thirst; it is clear, thin, and fit to convey the nourishment through the smallest vessels of the body,—and is a drink that is a rule to itself, and requires little caution in the use of it, since none will be tempted to drink of it more than he needs: and that in the primitive ages of the world, water-drinkers, he says, were the longest livers by some hundreds of years,—nor so often sick and complaining as we are.

Dr. Keill, when he treats concerning the stomach, in his *Abridgment of the Anatomy of Human Bodies*, says, that water seems the fittest to promote the digestion of the food which we eat; all spirituous liquors having a property by which they hurt rather than help digestion; the sad effects of which they are sensible of, he says,



who by a long use thereof have lost their appetite, hardly ever to be restored without drinking water, which seldom faileth of procuring a good appetite and a strong digestion. With which Dr. Baynard does agree, in that affirmation, "That water liquifies and concocts our food better than any fermented liquor whatever."—*History of Cold Bathing*, p. 440.

Dr. Pratt, in his *Treatise of Mineral Waters*, shews it to be his judgment, that if people would accustom themselves to drink water, they would be more free from many diseases; such as *Tremblings, Palsies, Apoplexies, Giddiness, Pains in the Head, Gout, Stone, Dropsy, Rheumatism, Piles*, and such like: which diseases are most common among them that drink strong drinks, and which water generally would prevent. Moreover, he also says, "That water plentifully drank strengthens the stomach, causeth an appetite, preserves the sight, maketh the senses lively, and cleanseth all the passages of the body, especially those of the kidneys and bladder." It is also said by Dr. Duncan, in his *Treatise on Hot Liquors*, That when men contented themselves with water, they had more health and strength; and that at this day, those who drink nothing but water, are more healthy, and live longer than those who drink strong liquors, which raises the heat of the stomach to excess, whereas water keeps it in a due temper. And he adds, in another part of the book, that by hot liquors the blood is inflamed; and such whose blood is inflamed, live not so long as those who are of a cooler temper: a hot blood being commonly the cause of *Fluxes, Rheums, Indigestion, Pains in the Limbs, Head-ache, Dimness of Sight*, and especially of *Hysteric Vapours*. He also imputes



the cause of ulcers to a hot blood, and declares that if men kept their blood cool and sweet, by a moderate and cooling diet, they would never be troubled with ulcers, or other breakings-out. Which coolness of the blood will be well performed by drinking a large draught of water in the morning, which will carry off the bilious and salt recrements by urine. And if water is drank also after dinner, it will cool a hot stomach, and prevent the rising of those fermentations which cause wind and belching after meat. So that if persons who are liable to these disorders, will leave off strong liquors and a hot diet, and drink water, they will procure better health to themselves than they had before.

Sir John Floyer also, in his *Treatise of Cold Baths*, affirms, (*page 109, 5th edit.*) that water drinkers are temperate in their actions, prudent, and ingenious; they live safe from those diseases which affect the head; such as *Apoplexies, Palsies, Pain, Blindness, Deafness, Gout, Convulsions, Trembling, Madness*: and the drinking of water cures the hiccough, foetor of the mouth, and of the whole body, it resists putrefaction, and cools burning heats, and thirsts, and after dinner it helps digestion. And if the virtues of cold water were seriously considered, all persons would value it as a great medicine, in preventing the *Stone, Gout, Asthma, and Hysteric Fits*; and to the use of this children ought to be bred up from their cradles. And in page 434, he says, that as water is in chief the universal drink of the world,—so it is the best, and most salubrious. And in page 437, that he has known where a regular drinking of spring-water has done considerable cures, by washing of the acrid scorbutic salts from the blood, and strengthening the



coats and fibres of the stomach and bowels, and has brought on a good appetite, and a strong digestion.

Having read over an old book, written by one Sir Thos. Elliot, entitled *The Castle of Health*, he there declared, from his own experience, that in the county of Cornwall, though it was a very cold quarter, the poorer sort, which in his time did never, or but very seldom, drink any other drink but water, were strong of body, and lived to a very great age; to which relation that of Sir Henry Blount is very agreeable, who affirmed in his book of *Travels into the Levant*, (where under the Turkish government the use of wine was forbid, and where the common drink is water,) that he then had a better stomach to his food, and digested it more kindly than he ever did before or since."

And in the *Treatise of the Vanity of Philosophy*, written by Dr. Gideon Harvey, it is affirmed by him, that it is not heat that causeth a good digestion, but a proper ferment, or liquor provided by nature, to dissolve the food into a substance like unto pap made with fine flour, which dissolvent, he says, is much depraved by hot spirituous liquors; and therefore he commends water above all other drinks to promote digestion.

Water-drinking is also said by Dr. Allen, to be good to prevent two deplorable distempers, the gout, and the hypochondriac melancholy; for, says he, the gout is generally caused by the too great drinking of fermented liquors, and is never said to have assaulted any drinker of water; and he says also, that melancholy and hypochondriasis are kept off longest by drinking water instead of strong drinking. To which let me add, says Mr. Strong, that "I once knew a gouty gentleman,



who, to avoid his drinking companions in London, retired to New Brentford, where I then lived; in which town by a very temperate diet of one meal a day, and drinking only water, he lived two whole years free from pain: but being visited by one who came that way, and invited him to drink but one bottle of claret between them, he fell the next day into a terrible fit of the gout, which held him above a month; of which being recovered, he by the same course continued well till I left the place, which was about a year and a half after."

THE END.

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