

THE

# WATER-CURE JOURNAL,

DEVOTED TO THE EXPLANATION OF THE PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE OF  
HYDROPATHY, OR THE WATER-CURE.

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*"Wash and be Healed."*

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A REMARKABLE CURE, ILLUSTRATING THE EFFECTS OF WATER TREATMENT, BUT MORE PARTICULARLY THE GREAT BENEFITS TO BE DERIVED FROM STRICT TEMPERANCE IN DIET.

BY THE PATIENT.

Feb'y 7th, 1846.

Dear Sir:—Having, for many years, been afflicted with indigestion, nervous excitability, and that most distressing of all diseases, melancholy, I was induced, as a last resource, to try the vegetable system, both with and without abstinence; together with exercise, bathing, abstinence from all alcoholic drinks, &c. And as I had frequently been told that it was most conducive to health, to abstain as much as possible from drinking any thing, I imprudently avoided even water, except when I was completely overpowered with thirst, which rarely occurred, as my diet was not stimulating. I continued this course for three years; but the absence of water, and the consequently increased appetite for food, though the plainest, had such an effect upon my system, that, to my great surprise, and still greater disappointment, instead of recovering, I gradually grew worse. I was more nervous than ever, though less melancholy, and could not eat the most simple food without discomfort. I could not endure the thought of applying to the faculty; for I

knew that, in reality, they would injure my constitution, though they might afford me temporary relief.

At length, hearing that you were a practising physician of some value, hope once more revived, and I determined to apply. I was then laboring, as you well remember, under the painful effects of severe indigestion, a deranged nervous system, palpitation of the heart, extreme debility, distressing heat in the head, and various other parts of the body, particularly about the region of the heart; inward exhaustion, inability to walk, to study, or even to read; shortness of breath, aching of the limbs, sleepless nights, &c., &c. You immediately advised me to wear the body-bandage, to bathe freely, to drink plentifully of cold water, to take as much exercise as possible without fatigue; and, as I had no appetite, to fast rigorously.—I was faithful to your injunctions, and soon perceived that my health was slowly improving. However, when my appetite returned, my ailments returned also, and a most painful conflict ensued. You then proposed that, in connexion with bathing, drinking, &c., I should frequently lose a meal; and you warned me to use judgment in all things, and to avoid extremes. With these instructions, we parted.

But I was so bent on restoring my health, that, whatever I did, I did it with all my might; consequently my zeal again

led me astray; and as I felt great heat and fulness in the head, palpitation of the heart, and various symptoms of indigestion, even when I fasted, I thought I certainly must be drinking too much water. I also reasoned with myself that, as my stomach was too weak to digest a small quantity of the plainest food, it was unreasonable that it should be able to absorb so much water heathfully. I therefore diminished the quantity to eight tumblers daily, which I drank with my meals; and, with abstinence, I soon found relief.—From this I never deviated, whether it distressed me or not, unless I was thirsty; and, even then, I carefully avoided distension, especially after a meal. Indeed, I could not drink so much as one tumbler without discomfort, even when I did not eat; but I found water so strengthening an agent, that I had sufficient encouragement to persevere, and, as this difficulty was gradually removed, as my health returned, I attributed it to disease, rather than to any deleterious effect of the water.

Finding that I was never so well as when I abstained from food, I resolved to lose my breakfast regularly; with this exception, however, that I substituted milk and water, (about one third milk,) for pure cold water, simply because it afforded me more satisfaction; and I rejoiced to find that, during the morning my ailments were considerably subdued, and that I was able to read a little. This encouraged me to hope that, by still greater abstinence, I might, in time, subdue disease entirely, and resume my studies without inconvenience; to do which was the height of my ambition. Therefore, as I always felt very uncomfortable after dinner, I gradually diminished the quantity of food at that meal also, until at length, for a few days, I reduced it to nothing but water. This was painful in the extreme; but, by attentive observation, I perceived that I could read and study the best, and that my ailments were the most subdued, when I was the most abstemious.

However, as I despaired of reconciling my mind to total abstinence during the day, I concluded, that for the sake of a little satisfaction, I would take, in connexion with two tumblers of water, a very

small quantity of the most innutritious food, or that which contains the least sustenance, and the most water; for I shuddered at the idea of eating solid farinaceous food more than once a day. I then thought that I might, with perfect safety, eat a hearty supper, though I never fully satisfied my appetite. But no; I was compelled to be very careful; and, by drinking three tumblers of water, and avoiding distension, I was comparatively comfortable through the evening. Indeed, it was absolutely requisite that the whole of my food during the day, should constitute but one moderate meal. I particularly dreaded distension, because it was always attended with palpitation of the heart, involuntary sighing, sleepiness, and other unpleasant symptoms; all of which were prevented by avoiding the cause.

As my health returned, I gradually increased my aliment, and as gradually I relapsed, until, at length, I was obliged to lay aside my books; and my ailments returned with such virulence, that I was driven, with an aching heart, and, as it were, with a rod of iron, to my former abstemious course. However, I was immediately relieved; and I returned to my studies with comfort and delight. This entirely removed from my mind the impression that study injured me, although it seemed unreasonable that one moderate meal a day should be sufficient to support nature healthfully. My appetite often led me to repeat the attempt; but it was always attended with the same unfavorable results. I learned at last that, however hungry, or however weak I might be, more than the above mentioned quantity was invariably hostile to my system. I finally attributed the hunger to disease, because the more I abstained the less craving I was, and the debility I ascribed to the heat of the weather; because the same amount of nutriment supported me well when it was cool.

I often felt very unpleasant sensations just before a meal; and, as eating sometimes afforded me relief, I naturally concluded that it must be beneficial when this was the case. However, after I had tried the experiment a great many times, and found that it never failed to cause a return of the same unpleasant sensations,

with increased vigor, I relinquished for ever the idea of having recourse to food as a remedial means. I was also strengthened in this idea by observing that, when I omitted a meal entirely, or when circumstances caused it to be delayed beyond the usual time, I frequently felt perfectly well, and continued so until I again disturbed my system by eating. However, I was determined to have one meal a day, whatever I might feel. Thus refuge failed me, and I had no hope from anything but starvation; and I thought that if it really is true, that when a person is starved to death, the system preys upon disease until it is entirely eradicated, before it touches vitality, or that which is essential to life, there was no danger that I should starve to death, while I was so encompassed with disease. In this manner, painful experience proved the truth of the assertion of Hippocrates—"The more you nourish a diseased body, the worse you make it."

Finding that all my bathing, exercise, plain diet, &c., were not perceptibly beneficial without the most rigorous abstinence, in a fit of desperation, I threw off the body-bandage, dispensed with all baths, except a daily shower bath, which I never omitted unless it was intensely cold; I took as much exercise as suited my convenience, and was less particular in my diet than I had been since I first turned my attention to physiology. I took milk and water for my breakfast, a very little innutritious vegetable, or fruit and water, for my dinner, and for my supper, I ate any thing that I fancied, if it agreed with my stomach; and being very fond of milk, I exchanged pure water for milk and water, which in the winter I preferred warm. I ate animal food occasionally, though I did not consider it best for me; however, it was requisite that it should be very tender. I dreaded the lean, if it was hard, more than the fat. I made use of butter, and other oleaginous substances, in moderation, with no apparent inconvenience. I ate no bread but that which was made of the best unbolted wheat meal, ground very fine. As I found it quite as beneficial as the coarser, I gave it the preference. Nothing could have induced me to eat bread made of superfine

flour; it is of so astringent a nature, that I considered it perfect poison. I carefully avoided all crude and hard substances. I dared not eat nuts, nor any fruit that was not perfectly ripe and soft. If I found any fruit too heavy for my stomach, rather than dispense with it entirely, I merely took the juice of it. I could not digest new bread, hot cakes, &c., comfortably; therefore, I rejected them. I found no difficulty from unripe fruit, if it was cooked, though I did not choose it. Nothing ever caused me so much distress as hard fruit; and, as nothing ever excited my nervous system so sensibly as indigestion, I studiously avoided every thing that had a tendency to cause it.

I pursued this course successfully for eighteen months; and I know several individuals who did the same with equal success. I have also seen it successfully tried by a child for dizziness in the head. The child willingly and cheerfully acceded to the proposal, delighted at the thought of a remedy; and in one day the dizziness was entirely removed. Indeed, I have never seen it attempted by any one, in any degree, without beneficial results. As my disease was chronic, a great length of time was necessary to restore my health. It is true, that I frequently departed from the rigor of this discipline; and it is also too, too true, that as frequently I relapsed. However, I soon ceased to give myself any uneasiness respecting my health; for I knew that nature, ever faithful to her trust, would always afford me relief, if I gave her an opportunity. And I was very sure that, physiologically, I was in the narrow road that leads to life, while, with a bleeding heart, I beheld such numbers of my fellow creatures running the broad road to ruin and destruction. "O! that they were wise!"

By degrees, my nervous system became stronger than it had been for many years. Gloom and melancholy fled, and were succeeded by uniform cheerfulness and serenity. Indeed, I felt a buoyancy of spirits, and an elasticity of motion that I never experienced before. My sleep was sound, and almost dreamless. The heat in my head, and other parts of the body, together with palpitation of the heart, entirely left me. I felt no inward exhaus-

tion, no inclination to sigh, no shortness of breath, no aching of the limbs. My physical strength was greater than ever. I had a healthy hue, and my skin was free from all cutaneous eruptions. I gained ten pounds in weight, and was able to read and study as well as ever, although I had been deprived of that pleasure for ten long years. However, as soon as I was fatigued, I abstracted my thoughts entirely from my books, and turned them into another channel. I never felt sleepy in the day time; and, during all the intense heat of the summer, I did not once feel any desire to lie down; it would have been irksome to me; whereas, I never remember to have passed through a summer without lying down very frequently. I walked two or three miles every day, unless the weather, or domestic duties prevented; and I was able to walk a much greater distance, particularly when it was cool. I frequently regretted that the habits of a female are necessarily so sedentary. However, it was my consolation, that abstinence, to which I gradually became more reconciled, sets all things right. Whenever I was absent from home during the dinner hour, especially if it was on business, I took nothing, but two or three tumblers of water, even though I walked six or seven miles, and I returned feeling no need of food, and frequently no fatigue. The water prevented all craving. Persons often remarked, "How healthy you look!" "I never saw you look so well!" "You formerly looked so thin, and too sallow for a person of your age." "I wish I could walk so far," &c. I said but little, because I know that it is always offensive to interfere with the appetite.—However, I felt persuaded that if they had ploughed with my heifer, they would have found out my riddle.

When my body was in so diseased a state, a fast of twenty-four hours caused headache, trembling, and such debility, that I was obliged to lie down; but after I became accustomed to it, and my health was restored, I felt perfectly well in every respect, during so long a fast; nor did I perceive the least diminution of strength. Indeed, I never had a pain, nor an ailment of any kind, that I could not subdue by abstinence and cold water. Even the

toothache, to which I had been formerly much subjected, never troubled me.

I chose to eat at the close of the day, because it seemed to me more rational that my intellectual and physical faculties should be clear and free from all obstructions during the time appointed for labor, whether of body or mind; and I thought that, if I must be heavy and sleepy, it should be at night, the time appointed for repose. Besides, I could not desire to sleep better than I did; and, unless I transgressed, I was rarely sleepy in the evening. It also afforded me some pleasure to have a meal in anticipation at the close of the cares and duties of the day. I had likewise tried the loss of the third meal, and every thing else that I thought calculated to restore my health, until my heart sank within me with grief and disappointment, because nothing answered my expectations.

I am still careful in my diet, and whatever ailment I may feel, I immediately return to my former course—my never-failing remedy—which I continue as long as I find it necessary, and never use any other medicine. Surely, I cannot too highly appreciate this knowledge, notwithstanding all the pain that it has cost me to acquire it; especially when I see so many sallow and worn-out countenances, and listen to the dismal complaints of those who are ignorantly and unconsciously bringing upon themselves misery, disease, and death. I would fain direct them to the right path;—I would fain proclaim the remedy that they all possess; but my efforts, though sometimes effectual to a certain extent, are oftener, alas, of no avail. My advice is not official, or rather, not palatable.

I often think of these words, "Put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite." "Blessed art thou, O land! when thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness!" And I feel no more respect for myself, or any other person who is prostrated by sleep or stupidity, in consequence of excessive aliment, than I do for one who has taken spirituous liquors too freely.

I hope I have forever done with medicine; and I trust that with the blessing of Providence, without which our best efforts

are ineffectual, I shall be able to preserve my mind and body in a healthy condition, until the appointed time come, when I must put off this tabernacle of clay.

But I fear I shall exhaust your patience. I am glad to hear of your success in the practice of Water-Cure; and I hope you will accept this long epistle as a token of respect, from one who will never cease to be, Your grateful and sincere friend.

AN ARTICLE FROM THE ITHACA CHRONICLE, ON HYDROPATHY, OR THE WATER-CURE.

Our friend and patient, Mr. SPENCER, editor of the Ithaca Chronicle, a gentleman well known as an able editor and a champion in the Temperance cause, has written a number of articles on Water-Cure, which are richly worth a place in our Journal. At this time we present our readers with one of them, omitting some parts that are of a personal character, and have no particular bearing upon the general subject. —[ED. JOUR.]

*New-York, April 15.*

"Water, bright water for me."

Water is an element most bountifully supplied. Of the globe we inhabit—of the air we inhale—of the plant and of the animal, how great a proportion is water! Every where, all-pervading—filling old Ocean's depths, the bounds of the Seas, and the basins of the Lakes,—rolling onward in the mighty rivers, or meandering in the peaceful creeks,—distilling upon the earth in dews, or descending in showers and torrents,—pervading even the apparently solid grounds, searching out earth's caverns, and percolating through all its veins,—entering into the plants and the trees, and composing parts of every organized substance and being, is the universal agent Water. Every man, the boasting and proud lord of earth, is composed of the greater proportion of Water. Nothing flourishes, nothing matures without it.

The grasses wither, and the flowers refuse to disclose their many-colored beauties, and to shed abroad their sweet perfume, if a sufficient supply of the friendly element be denied them. The cattle in the fields, the dwellers in the forests, and

the occupants of "ceiled houses," become weary, and faint, and parched, and cease to live, if water be denied them. It is an agent which God does work with, and yet how despised and contemned has it been of Men! How have we sought to adulterate it, to disguise it, to modify its qualities, to infuse into it the acrid, the stimulating and the poisonous, to find substitutes for it, and in every way to dispense with its use in the pure and simple form in which the God of Nature made it. Shall we ever learn that Water is not an enemy, but a friend? that it should not be kept at distance by ceremony and etiquette, but received to our bosoms and confidence, and intimate relations, as a cherished companion?

As a beverage, something has been done to restore bright Water to its proper place in the estimation of men—a place so long usurped by fermented drinks, alcoholic poisons, and other destructive stimulants. The Washingtonians have discovered that Water does not intoxicate the brain, vitiates the passions, estrange the affections, squander the property, dissipate the time, dilapidate the clothing, render offensive the breath, radiate a stench from every pore of the body, reduce to the gutter, and prematurely supply food for the grave. It is a great discovery. Yet with all the zeal of the rescued from the dominions of drunkenness, with the munificent exertions of DELAVAN, and the effective labors of a Father MATHEW, how laggard is the great truth in making its way to the understandings of men with such force as to modify their habits and guide their actions. Vitiating and depraved appetites, and the interests of men whose business it is, by the manufacture and sale of intoxicating drinks, to minister to them, are powerful opponents, and long habits of indulgence are hard to be overcome. Yet will it be accomplished. Light and Truth will one day predominate. Cold Water will come back to its own place, as the drink of men.

It is more recently that attention has been turned to the curative properties of water in the various diseases to which the human form is subject. Medical writers have indeed, at various periods, made some mention of its salutary effects in particular cases, but in regular practice it has had but little place, and in public estimation a less

one, as a curative agent. As a system of medical practice it has been unknown. It emanates not now from the schools—it comes not from the Medical Colleges—its pretensions are unsanctioned by titled Professor or learned Doctor—it boasts not a discovery from the investigations of learned science—no names of established reputation in the world's estimation have heralded forth its virtues and recommended it to public confidence—it was reserved for the Peasant of Silesia, VINCENT PRIESSNITZ, to discover its adaptation to every ill to which flesh is heir, to bring to bear upon its application the treasures of a natural sagacity and a strong mind, to study its effects upon every state of the system and every complication of disease, to apply to its elucidation a practical, though not a learned science, and to reduce its practice to a system. Some thirty years ago did he note some of the effects of the Water Cure in his own person; for several years did he dispense the benefits of a knowledge thus acquired, to the peasantry around him; but it was not till about the year 1830 that the fame of his wonderful cures became so extended that patients began to flock to his humble residence to participate in the "healing of the Waters." Now he has all the patients he can attend and accommodate, numbering several hundreds for the year round, and no one who has been under his charge, or witnessed the results of his practice, but speaks of him, and the wonders which he accomplishes with the simple agent which he employs, with the most perfect enthusiasm. Among his patients are all ranks and grades of men, nobility, gentry, citizen and peasant, from nearly all the countries on the globe—and submitted to his treatment is every malady and every form and complication of disease with which men are afflicted. His establishment has been visited by learned Doctors to scrutinize his proceedings and witness the effects of his treatment, in their own persons or upon his patients, and perhaps no testimony to the value of any measures for the relief of human suffering, has been more uniform or commendatory. Establishments for the practice of the Water Cure have multiplied in Europe, and have been introduced into and are extending in this country.

*Bread.*—Bread is said to be the staff of life. Such it should always be in our diet. Probably the best on the whole that can be made is that of unbolted wheaten meal. The wheat should be the most perfect that can be raised on a pure healthy soil, (for the character of all vegetable productions depends much upon the character of the soil.) It should be perfectly clean, and if necessary should be rapidly washed in pure water, and then dried in a clean, airy place in the sun. It should then be coarsely ground by sharp stones or a mill, so that it may rather be cut into meal than mashed, and kept in a dry and clean place for use. People, by the bye, generally have but little notion of real cleanliness. The mucilage of the bran of such wheat is one of the mildest substances that can be introduced into the stomach in the way of nutriment; and good bread or mush made of such meal is better for keeping the bowels and digestive organs in a healthy state, than any other substance that can be used. We know there has been not a little of prejudice and sneering about these forms of using wheat. Those who think that the coarse bread is less palatable, or less healthy than the fine, certainly have not well tried the experiment. For a long time the superiority of coarse bread has been known. In the time of King George III. of England, the soldiers, when compelled to use coarse bread from scarcity of provision, were found to be more hardy, and soon relished the bread to which they at first sneeringly gave the name of "Brown George." Magendie, the celebrated French physiologist, in experimenting, found, that always when he fed his dogs upon fine bread and water, they died in fifty days, (varying but a day or two,) but when they were given coarse military bread, (*pain de munition*,) and water, they lived, and in no respect suffered. The fine bread was highly nutritious. If mere saw-dust had been mixed with it in due proportion, the dogs would have lived.

The bread furnished at Priessnitz's table is always coarse. Many have complained of the "hard fare," and think

the accommodations any thing but comfortable. But he says the cures would go on much more rapidly if the table were not half as well served as now. The bread, however, is by no means what it should be, as is also true of the other food there used; but the bread is at least as good as is used by society in general, and is not in a too concentrated form—a consideration of great importance.

In towns and cities where bakers' bread is so much used, it is seldom that we can find any but bad bread. This is owing to the fact that people will have such bread. Say the bakers, "We know the bread is well-nigh spoiled by so much raising, but such our customers *will have*." It is seldom true, in this country, where bread stuff is so abundant, that bread is injured by chemical substances, as has been supposed by some. Such substances are too expensive, even if there was a disposition to use them. The bread is too much fermented and raised.

Considering the importance of bread, and its universal use, it is surprising that so little attention has been given the subject. Throughout society how very rare it is to find good bread. Many of our good country-women are in the constant habit of having bread that is perfectly sour. Others again have little or no rule in the matter, so that they never have bread twice alike—occasionally good, but generally bad. Many pay little or no attention to the subject—trusting this important matter to those who take little or no interest in it.

*Wheaten Bread.*—The wheat, we have said, should be the very best that can be obtained—should be perfectly clean, and ground into coarse meal, and never bolted. This makes the most palatable as well as the most healthy bread. The best mode of raising is that by good lively yeast. The meal should be wet with perfectly pure soft water, slightly warm, mixed with the yeast, and well kneaded, (which is generally too much neglected.) This is laborious, and needs perseverance and strength. Bakers use a brake, which can be made on a smaller scale for house use. The dough is thus very easily beaten or kneaded sufficiently, which cannot be

done too much. Then it is to be put by in a trough or tray, and covered with linen, and then a woollen cloth, kept for that use. It should be kept in a place at from 60° to 70° F., or about a moderate summer heat. At 80°, fermentation or raising, goes on very rapidly; at 70°, rapidly; rather moderately at 60°; and not at all below about 30°. All the circumstances which can be reduced to rule—the quantity of meal, water, and yeast—should be methodically attended to. The thermometer, scales, measures, &c., are necessary. As the temperature cannot always be controlled, the dough will need watching. That the process does not go on too fast, a tin tray may be used, which can be set in water, and may easily be regulated in temperature. Recollect that fermentation goes on well only where the yeast has penetrated the mass, so that the most thorough mixing is necessary; otherwise the bread will be filled more or less with holes, which is always a sign that the mixing has not been done right. It should raise about one-third in bulk.

When the dough is sufficiently raised, it should be quickly worked over and moulded into suitable loaves, and put into the oven. Whatever kind of oven is used, the heat should be so managed that the baking goes on evenly above and below. The more rapid the baking the better, if that the bread is done thoroughly through, and not burned. Coarse bread needs a hotter oven than fine. As to kneading, &c., the same general rules apply to fine flour bread as to coarse.—*Water-Cure for Ladies.*

Thousands of persons, physicians not excepted, believe that hydropathy is necessarily only *one thing*—one chilling mode of treatment throughout—that all patients, whether aged and infirm, plethoric and robust, feeble or like a tender infant of an hour old, are alike to be treated by powerful and obilling applications of cold. What a delusion is this? Water, notwithstanding it is one of the most powerful agents in nature, is yet easily rendered the mildest and most friendly that can be brought to act upon the human frame.

# WATER-CURE JOURNAL.

NEW-YORK, MAY 15, 1846.

ON THE EVILS ARISING FROM EXCESS IN FOOD, AND THE GREAT ADVANTAGES TO BE DERIVED FROM ABSTINENCE AND JUDICIOUS FASTING.

Beyond a doubt, the greatest of all causes of disease in the human family, throughout all periods of time, has been, *excess in the amount of food taken*. Compared with "fulness of bread," drunkenness, with all its terribleness of evil, passes into relative insignificance. It has been truly said, that drunkards may live to old age, but never gluttons. The drunkard, notwithstanding he is poisoned with alcohol, by abstinence in food, is enabled to live on, while the system of the glutton, oppressed in its vital energies by excess of aliment, sinks, in consequence of the greater amount of injury done.

We are here prompted to make some brief remarks upon this neglected subject—neglected in theory, and still more in practice—by being presented with the leading communication in our present number; an article which shows very forcibly the great benefits to be derived from moderation in food. Let us then, although very hastily it must be, state what appears to us, from somewhat extended observation, to be facts, hoping at the same time that we shall be able to speak understandingly to those who take it upon themselves to observe upon this important subject

Food that is of a suitable character, when taken at proper times and in appropriate quantity, always produces pleasant, and only pleasant, effects. Every such meal causes not only greater enjoyment at the time it is taken, but permanently improved feelings. Every such meal is a blessing, a gift from heaven, which renders us

always the better able to pursue the cares and toils, the duties of life; to do, think, feel, and act, as rational human beings ever should; in short, to enable us to make, as we ought, every act of life worship to the Author of all good. But how is it with at least ninety-nine of the one hundred of the human race in civilized and Christian life? Scarcely a day passes, or a single meal is taken, but that excess is committed in food. Not only the system of the tender infant at the breast, is daily and constantly overtaxed with too great an amount of aliment, but young men and old, maidens and matrons, all are led by the imperious monster, appetite. Shall it always be thus?

The great rule that should be observed in diet is, *to restrict the quantity of food to the smallest possible amount that is compatible with firm health*. The regulating the quantity is the golden rule. It is true, the quality is of great importance, and it must, of course, be such as will maintain life; but, beyond this, the proper regulation of the quantity is the great thing.—Napoleon was a shrewd observer, as well as a heretic in medicine. Whenever he became ill of too free living, or from over-exertion, he would take no medicine, but at once commenced fasting. It was a maxim with Jefferson, that we never repent of having eaten too little; and Franklin, it is well known, for a length of time, practised fasting one day in each week, and, as he tells us, with great benefit. This practice, however, will not do for every one. A single meal omitted, is in many cases the better mode, the individual taking at the other meal-times an amount of food less than usual.

In many cases of disease, as of inflammations, and fevers, the system actually resists all nourishment, and this for days in succession. In fevers of all kinds, in inflammations of the stomach and bowels,



in diarrhœa, dysentery, cholera morbus, and the like, by far more relapses take place from the taking of too much food, than from any or all other causes combined. There exists the deepest delusion upon this subject at this day in which we live.

In almost every conceivable case of indigestion, the best possible prescription that can be given for the first, is fasting, with but little bodily or mental exertion, for the first twenty-four hours. Then let the patient proceed with caution, taking such quantity of nutriment only, however small it may be, as can be received as a friendly agent in the stomach. Many cases can be cured in no other possible way except by most rigidly regulating the quantity of food; and what may appear singular, in some cases a person soon gains in weight, while the amount of food taken is greatly lessened. Before, all the food of the richest and best kinds, so called, made the individual more lean. We have had a number of marked cases of this kind in our practice within the last three years, some of which have been referred to in the columns of the Journal.

Cases now and then occur, as every one knows, in which it would seem, according to the ordinary modes of practice, that everything in the form of food or drink is inevitably rejected by the stomach, at the same time it is evident that the patient is famishing for the want of food. This happens much oftener in the old modes of drug treatment, by which the stomach is weakened, irritated and poisoned by the medicines administered. We have had experience in numbers of cases of this description; cases in which many kinds of food and nourishing drinks had been given only to be cast off by vomiting. In every one of these cases we have succeeded in causing food to be retained upon the stomach. If this organ is very foul, a good

cleaning of its inner surface must at first, with the aid of pure tepid water, be performed; then a small draught of cold water is exhibited, to "settle the stomach," as is said; after which, repose is allowed the organ, previously to the commencement of giving nourishment. In some cases, we have begun by giving only a half teaspoonful of weak and very slightly sweetened lemonade, as nourishment, gradually increasing the quantity, hour by hour, as can be well borne. In some instances we have commenced with a small portion, say a half teaspoonful of scraped apple, moderately tart and perfectly ripe. In other cases we have begun by giving two or three drops of milk only at a time, proceeding very cautiously until a larger quantity, and of more substantial food, can be borne. In many cases of these vomitings to which we allude, the too great quantities of nutriment given, and the heterogeneous kinds, are the principal causes of the mischief. People often think that when a person is sick he must be nourished into health, and so in ignorance the mischief is done. We recollect of visiting a very sick patient in typhus fever, a worthy old man, whose days were evidently well nigh numbered. His most excellent wife, whom we had known intimately from our earliest recollection, and whose inmost nature had been blending ever more and more into one with his, was as assiduous in her care as woman only is capable to be. She was presenting her husband a bowl of rich soup in which she had melted a large proportion of butter, an article of which he had always been very fond. We exclaimed, What on earth, good woman, are you doing? Do you mean to destroy your husband? "Ah," said she, "depend upon it, as long as my husband lives, the good things he shall have! He shall not be starved!"

In relieving pain, wonderfully beneficial

effects may often be caused by abstinence from food. By omitting one, two or more meals, in many cases all the good effects of blood-letting may be obtained without the bad effects. We know a number of persons who, it would seem, can accomplish almost any thing by mere abstinence from food. Pains in the head, tooth ache, stomach ache, bowel complaints, pain in the back, difficult menstruation, and the like, are all arrested by the one panacea, fasting. Certain at least it is, that much may be accomplished in this way,; other means may of course be, at the same time, advantageously used in connection. The nervous headache, which some persons have, it is to be observed, is liable to be increased by feasting. A small quantity of food as a remedial means is often very beneficial.

The subject of fasting in childbearing, is one that demands consideration, since there is no one in which there is more error than upon this. It is generally believed that there is a necessity for more latitude in diet during pregnancy than at other times. The real fact is, there is no state of the system in which greater care is needed than during this period; nor is there any other condition in which greater advantages are to be derived from a judicious regulation of diet than in this. By practising with great regularity and moderation in food, we have in a number of instances witnessed remarkably favorable results, both in respect to the period of pregnancy, and the mitigation of pain in childbirth. It is not necessary that we here enter into detail concerning the modes, but we merely add, that the general rules we have now, and in other parts of the Journal, given, are to be most rigidly followed.

An effect of a course of rigid diet upon the menstrual function, we must here briefly notice. We have before stated,

that cases every now and then occur under water treatment, in which menstruation ceases for a time, for months, and even a whole year or more, the individual at the time gaining greatly in health and general strength. Two or three cases of this kind have been made known to us, in which a course of rigid diet appeared to have the same effect, the diet being changed from what is called generous to one mostly vegetable. We cannot say, however, that such cases will often occur, but, wherever they do, they are to be regarded only as being favorable.

[From the Editor's Note Book.—Reported by a Medical Friend.]

#### INDIGESTION, CONSTIPATION AND SCIATICA, OR NEURALGIA OF THE LEG.

Mr. Amasa Smith, of ———, Conn. aged 54, a shoemaker by trade, in consequence of his sedentary avocation, became in early life a victim of dyspepsia, and was afflicted with the usual symptoms of that complaint, such as constipation, low spirits, loss of appetite, furred tongue, acid stomach, pain in the bowels, with occasional spasms knotting up the abdomen as it were. He had also been troubled with the piles, and such was the torpor of the intestinal canal, that, for a period of ten months at a time, he could obtain no movement from it without the aid of lavements or medicine.

After suffering thus a long while, he resorted some years since to the Thompsonian system for relief. During the steaming &c. to which he was subjected, a severe pain in the small of the back, of which he then complained, seemed to be transferred to one of his limbs, and a course of sweating for 21 days being persisted in, which brought no relief, resulted in the shifting of the pain to a spot on the outside of the other, the right leg. Soon the cords of this limb were drawn up, the knee remained flexed, without power to extend, while the hip and lower part of the abdomen, in the vicinity of the groin, shared in the suffering. This became so severe that he was obliged to give up his business, and could get about only by the aid of a crutch. In the affected part

there was a constant numbness, with a sensation of pricking, as if from ten thousand needles, and occasional attacks of agonizing pain occurring in spasms half a dozen times a day, and oftener, from which he could only gain relief by such desperate resorts as half-roasting the limb by thrusting it under a hot stove, &c.—Once, while on a visit to New York, a spasm attacked him as he was hobbling about the street, and so excruciating was the pain, that he was compelled to lie down on the side-walk, and there writhe and groan in the greatest agony.

Opiates were tried, but they gave only temporary relief, if they relieved at all. A thorough steaming, according to the most approved practice of the Thompsonian school, for three nights in succession, over hemlock boughs, ("the awfullest steaming" he ever took,) brought no manner of alleviation.

In this pitiable condition he was induced to give the water cure system a faithful trial. Having consulted Dr. Shew, of New York, together with perusing his treatise on the subject, he commenced on the 1st of January, 1845, by using the cold foot-bath for half an hour before breakfast, drinking during that time a quart of cold water, and taking what exercise within doors the crippled state of his limb would allow him. Besides this he made use of the cold sitz-bath, twice in the day, for half an hour at a time, and had the affected limb doused by pouring cold water on the hip. This last caused a singular sensation, as if millions of insects were driven down the leg towards the feet. He also wore constantly an umschlag around his abdomen, and cooling bandages around the seat of the pain, which was confined to a space not much larger than a silver dollar would cover.

These processes at first increased the pains—he had horrid feelings for one or two nights. However, he said nothing of this to his family, lest they should more earnestly beg him to desist, from what seemed to them, folly and madness—but bravely persevered in the course he had marked out, making use occasionally of the rubbing wet-sheet, and lying all one night in wet drawers, (sleeping well, however, and feeling better for it,) and in

the latter stages of his cure, even trying the effects of the cold effusion, having buckets of cold water dashed over him.

And now came the reward of his perseverance. In one week he found the pain had very considerably remitted, and *in a fortnight he was able to walk without crutch or staff.* By spring, he could go about pretty well, and work some on the farm on which he now lived—and in the summer he did considerable labor. In the month of August last, he assisted a carpenter who was repairing his buildings for him; and during this period, in consequence of the fatigue to which he was exposed, he plied the cold water with double diligence. This brought on a crisis, in the form of a general eruption of little pimples, exuding serum, and roughening the skin—attended with very great itching, which nothing but the application of the coldest water would alleviate. Ere two months, however, this had all passed away, and his skin became smooth.

Is now healthy and strong: *has done more work this spring, (up to April 10th,) than for ten years past.* Once could no mount a horse, or climb a fence, but with the greatest difficulty, even when he had assistance—now can jump over a fence as he could when a boy. His old complaint, the piles, has scarcely troubled him at all for a year past. Has hardly had any ailment for months, save a slight cold, which he took on his journey to the city; and this he "would have had off before now had he been at home," where he could resort to his favorite means.—His tongue now is clean, though the coat he used to have upon it could never be removed by medicine. For the last fifteen months, he has never lacked an appetite for his meals. In regard to his diet, it ought to be stated, that, from the first, Mr. S. "docked off his tea and coffee and the use of grease." He breakfasts on potatoes, the coarse bread, fried pudding, &c.; eats meat but once a day; and is confident that he can work longer without weariness upon brown bread and potatoes and cold water, than he ever could when he took beef-steak and coffee for his morning meal. Indeed, he has tried a different diet, while in all other respects continuing the hydropathic treatment, and

found that, then, he did not feel so well or gain so fast.

Mr. Smith, in concluding the account of his case, (which we have given above, substantially as we took it down from his lips,) observed: "There is one thing about it, my cure has cost me nothing, only my labor,—I have had nothing to pay for medicines." Health, however, he regarded as a blessing *worth laboring for* and going to work in the right way, his faithfulness has had its recompense, in his perfect recovery from a severe and obstinate neuralgic affection, of a class in which the medical profession are in most cases compelled to confess the impotence of all the resources of their art.

[For the Water-Cure Journal.]

#### AGUE AND ITS TREATMENT.

Dr. Shew,—I wish through your Journal to give your readers my views and experience of Ague or Intermittent Fever, and its treatment by water. Ague is a disease of the internal organs of the abdomen, caused doubtless by the loss of vigorous or healthy action of the skin. The liver, the stomach, the bowels and spleen, all suffer more or less in fever and ague. Upon some one or all of these organs there is an accumulation of the waste matter of the system, producing congestion. This matter being unvitalized, becomes cold, and its effect upon vitalized matter is morbid in its action upon the extreme nerves and living tissues. It thus abstracts the flow of nervous fluid, causing a stupified action in the part or parts, while at the same time the nervous power is retained in the great centers or fountains, the brain and spinal marrow. This doubtless causes the cold stage in Intermittent or Ague. This accumulation of nervous power finally bursts forth in a reaction, the oxydized blood forces its way to the capillaries, and comes in contact with this accumulated waste matter, particularly in the skin. The oxygen of the blood unites with the waste matter, by which it is literally burned, producing excessive heat or fever. In other words, there is an effort of the system to throw the disease from the more important or internal organs to the skin. This constitutes the second or febrile stage of ague. Thus one extreme has been followed by

another, and still no equilibrium has been obtained. The system becomes exhausted in this last effort to relieve itself of the disease: a relaxation takes place in the cutaneous capillaries, and is followed by profuse sweating, constituting the third stage of ague or intermittent fever.

2. With this view of the pathology of ague, I have adopted the following treatment with uniform success:

When the cold stage commences, place the patient in a bath of warm water, so that the whole body will be immersed. One or two persons should rub him constantly (keeping up the temperature of the water,) until the chill and fever are gone, and an equilibrium is established. At the same time let the patient drink freely of warm water, until he vomits freely.—When taken out of the bath, he should be washed all over in water of a temperature not to produce coldness or chilliness, rubbed dry and warm, and if possible, take exercise in the open air. When the attack is recent, this course seldom fails to arrest it by the second or third application, and often by the first. It should be repeated as often as the paroxysm returns. Washing daily all over in cold water should also be practised. The diet should be plain and unstimulating.

There is another course which I have pursued with about the same success, and is more convenient for common use. That is, wait until the cold stage has passed, and when the febrile stage is formed, then wrap them up in the wet sheet, or a jacket made as follows: Take of coarse domestic linen one and a half yards, let the width of the cloth make the length of the jacket; cut out arm-holes so that it will fit up around the neck; wet this, and wring it as you would a sheet; put this on and change as often as it gets hot; drink plentifully of warm water and induce vomiting. When the patient has sweat freely for an hour or more, then wash them in cold water, rub them dry, and let them take exercise. Repeat this as often as it returns, and on the intermediate days wrap them in the jacket and let them sweat, if possible, and wash as before. Move the bowels by injections of water.

With this course I have never failed to

arrest ague in a few days, and by continuing the daily washing in cold water to prevent a return. In fact, it is the only method in my opinion which can surely and safely eradicate this disease and leave no bad effects behind. In my hands it has never failed when it has been fairly tried. When the disease is recent, a few applications have been sufficient; but when it has been of long standing and chronic, more time and perseverance will be necessary. I do not now recollect of a single case having more than the second or third paroxysm under this course, and each succeeding one much lighter than the former.

This course I pursued at Massillon, O., where chill fever, or ague and fever, is one of the most formidable diseases to eradicate which the physician has to encounter.

Any one who will adopt the above course will find no use for quinine, arsenic solutions, or any of the numerous pills or mixtures and other nostrums of the day.

A. UNDERHILL.

#### FACTS IN DOMESTIC PRACTICE OF WATER-CURE.]

It will be recollected that we gave a most remarkable case of cure, (page 39,) that of "Maria," a colored woman, treated by a benevolent lady sojourning at Fairfield, Conn. This very worthy individual, (now in a southern city,) has repeatedly written us of the good effects she has been the means of bringing about by water. She says of late, "I have been signally blessed in all of my efforts to relieve the afflicted by this means. If any physician had made half the cures by means of drugs which it has pleased God to make through my ministration in cold water, his fame and fortune would be made." Some cases from, this individual we give below. Our country needs many such advocates of water as this truly benevolent lady.—ED. JOUR.

Priscilla, a highly respectable mulatto woman, has been for twenty years afflicted with many weaknesses, and as she says, "paid all she could earn to physicians for herself and her family, but they never did her any good." She had pined to a degree that obliged her to sit whole days upon two chairs, her body resting be-

tween them; nervous trembling, and very severe head-aches; distressing and excessive menstruation, and rheumatism.

Cold bathing twice a day, the sitting bath, drinking very freely of cold water, and strict attention to diet, in a month has restored her to perfect health.

Her little daughter, ten years of age, has inherited scrofula from her father, of which he died, and been subject to all those ills that it produces. Swellings, discharges at the ears and nose, with a nervous restlessness, which scarcely allowed her to be quiet day or night.

She had rheumatism from two years of age, and a continual pain in one hip. She followed the course pursued by her mother, and wore a wet bandage, and for three weeks has been in *perfect health*, with an enormous appetite, and sleeping all night perfectly well.

A friend of mine, the daughter of the first physician here, and through the country considered a man of the finest talents, had an excessive constipation from her childhood. Her father resorted to every measure for her relief, but it was in vain, and she had never any evacuation but by artificial means. Three weeks of bathing and drinking cold water freely, with attention to diet, have produced a *perfectly healthy and free state* of the bowels.

She informed me that "she is in better health and spirits than she has ever been in her life, and she considered her cure as a miracle."

A young man arrived here from New-York in a very bad state of health, and hearing of Maria's recovery, desired to see me. I found he had been nearly four months in the hands of physicians, who had called his complaint asthma, which had been caused by sudden check of perspiration, from having been caught in a rain when he was boating. He had taken emetics daily for a long time, and rubbed upon his whole chest an ointment which had caused a deep sore, now nearly a gangrene! He coughed almost incessantly; and "when he laid down, his wheezing could be heard over the whole house." He had continual fevers, scarce any sleep, prostration of strength, and no appetite. In short, he was in despair; and his poor

wife was so convinced that "nothing could make him any better," that she was very unwilling to have him make any new experiments.

As my services were gratuitous, and I could have no possible object but to do good, they were induced to commence the water-cure.

Before going to bed on the evening after I saw him, he washed and scrubbed himself very thoroughly with warm water and fine soap; then laid a soft linen cloth, wrung from tepid water, upon his breast; and, as "it became hot in a minute," it was constantly changed till he fell asleep; and that night he slept better, and wheezed and coughed less than he had done since the commencement of his illness.

He rose very early and went out to the well, where he washed and rubbed his head and neck for some time, then returned to his chamber, and washed his whole body thoroughly in cold water, putting his feet in the tub. He passed that day comfortably; and thus he practised for fifteen days, when every symptom I have spoken of closed; his breast was nearly healed; and in perfect health, and elastic spirits, in three weeks he returned to New-York, observing "that he did not remember ever to have felt as well in his life."

He observed the same rigid system of diet that I had prescribed for Maria; and after the first night, put cold wet-applications upon his breast. He is occupied in the Navy-Yard at Brooklyn.

*Warm and Hot Water sometimes used by Priessnitz.*—Some have made strong objections to our using, in rare cases, warm or hot water in the treatment of disease. Depending at all times upon well ascertained facts of experience, rather than upon authorities of any kind, we have practised as we do. That Priessnitz, the greatest of all medical men, understands the advantages of warm or hot, as well as of cold water, appears from the following extract by Dr. James Wilson of Malvern, England, who was at Gräfenberg many months himself, undergoing the cure, and at the same time investigating the system as practised by Priessnitz. He says: "It is next to impossible to do more

than lay down general rules in the treatment of any given complaint. The treatment must be changed from day to day, according to the state of the patient, the nature of his disease, and the powers of his constitution. One day, using cold water, sweating, and the *douche*; at another time, substituting the wet sheet, chilled or tepid water, and even sometimes *warm or hot water*, which Priessnitz has recourse to in rare cases; at other times, doing nothing, or next to it."

LETTER FROM DR. ISAAC FISKE, OF FALL RIVER, MASS.

We are always delighted to see medical men come forward to examine candidly the merits of hydropathy. The writer of the following, we doubt not, will meet with ample success in his practice, and we cheerfully recommend the friends of the system in and about Fall River, to avail themselves of his services whenever they may need them. After some preliminary remarks, this friend says:

"I anticipate, not only advantages to myself and family, but the position I occupy as a practising physician, will enable me to benefit my fellow-men in society. In numbers of instances, previous to any knowledge of the Water-Cure Journal, have I effected most surprising results from the use of cold water. I am fully aware of all thy statements in regard to the prejudices existing against the system, especially by the old-school faculty; but I am fully convinced that the time is hastening when the Drug system will be numbered with the things that have been, and its requiem will be sounded far and wide.

Thy friend,

ISAAC FISKE."

*Inflammation and Swelling of Breasts.*—On the evening of the third day after my wife's first accouchement, I came home from Guy's Hospital, where I had been detained since morning, and found her groaning and weeping with intense pain, the breasts red, and enormously enlarged, which the frightened nurse was vehemently rubbing with brandy and oil. The skin was excessively hot and dry, and the pulse was leaping along at the rate of 120°. It was in the month of Janu-

ary—so I walked into the street with a pail, which I filled with snow, and bringing it into the sick room, I piled a heap of it over both breasts, continually adding fresh snow as it melted. In a very few minutes the milk spun out in streams, to the distance of more than a foot, and the tears of torture were at once changed for those of pleasure, accompanied by that hysterical sobbing which is the common result of a sudden transition from intense suffering to perfect ease. The mere absence of pain in these cases takes all the characters of the most delicious and positive pleasurable sensations. In half an hour the inflammation had subsided, the breasts had become comparatively flaccid, the fever had entirely subsided, and not only all danger, but all inconvenience, had utterly vanished. But for this timely succor, suppuration must have supervened in both breasts, and large abscesses would have been the inevitable consequence.—*Dr. Ed. Johnson of Lond.*

**Water-Cure at Northampton, Massachusetts.**—We have before referred to the Northampton Water-Cure Infirmary, pleasantly situated about two miles from that most beautiful New England town, Northampton. This institution is under the care of Mr. DAVID RUGGLES, a man of good education and great industry and energy of character. Mr. Ruggles having been himself for years severely afflicted with disease, has given much attention to the subject of health, and the treatment by water; and as an evidence of the good success attending his practice, we may mention that he has, for a length of time, had more applications than he can attend to. We advise the friends of hydropathy in the vicinity of Northampton to become acquainted with Mr. Ruggles.

**LOVE AND PARENTAGE**, applied to the improvement of Offspring; including important directions and suggestions to Lovers and the Married, concerning the strongest ties and the most sacred and momentous relations of life. By O. S. FOWLER, Practical Phrenologist. (12mo. pp. 143.) Price 25 cents.

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**Notice of the Work.**—"This book is full of excellent advice and instruction for all, whether believers in Water-Cure or not. Its directions for the preservation, as well as restoration, of health are very good, very plain, and all practical; and no person can observe them faithfully without benefit. A great amount of valuable information with regard to Diet, Bathing, Treatment of Children, &c., &c., is here collected from the best authorities, with excellent directions for preparing healthful food and applying Hydropathic remedies."—*N. Y. Tribune.*

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This work is mainly composed of European cases, and are such as can be implicitly relied on. They are good illustrations of the Water Treatment.

☞ These three works we can send by mail to any part of the United States, and, under the new post office law, at a few cents' expense. The three together are afforded at one dollar. The Water-Cure for Ladies, at 50 cents, or the Hand Book and Facts, at the same price; either of which sums may be enclosed and sent postpaid by mail.

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☞ Address, post paid, "Joel Shew, M. D., New-York city." Let every friend of the cause do their utmost to aid us. We ask not gain, but only to be sustained from loss.

Bela Marsh, 25 Cornhill, Boston, Miss A. Paine, Providence, R. I., Colon & Adriance, Arcade Building, Philadelphia, and Wm. H. Graham, Tribune Buildings, New York, receive subscriptions to the Journal.

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