

THE
WATER-CURE JOURNAL.

JOEL SHEW, M. D., EDITOR.

“*Wash and be Healed.*”

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NEW SERIES.]

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PROCESSES OF WATER CURE.

We purpose to devote some part of each number of the Journal to the description of the processes of water-cure, or modes in which the water, as a remedial and hygienic agent, is to be used, according to the new system. We have in possession a variety of works upon this subject,—some of which are very valuable—works that do not at all come under the notice of readers at large. We shall quote from these works the more important parts, especially those relating to the modes of using water—making at the same time such comments and additions as we deem necessary. In accordance with this plan, we here give an account of the wet-sheet and wet-bandages and sweating process, from Dr. Balbirnie's recent work—an English publication.—[ED. JOUR.]

The Wet-Sheet or Lein-Tuch.—This application is used for the two-fold purpose of increasing or diminishing the animal temperature; in either case it is equally *anodyne* and *antiphlogistic*; soothing aches and irritation; removing languor and fatigue; tranquilizing the pulse and subduing fever. It opens the pores, favors cutaneous transudation, and aids the elimination of

effete elements and morbid materials. Hence the intolerable odor sometimes exhaled from the sheets; the thick coating of slimy matter with which they are varnished; the debris, smell, and color of medicines and ointments long before used deposited in them; and the eruptions that soon appear upon the skin. The fluids repelled from the surface by the first chill return with a brisker circulation: the escape of caloric is prevented by the covering; and the moisture of the sheets is converted into vapor. According to the delicacy of constitution, and the feebleness of the reactive power, the temperature of the water and the weight of the covering must be increased. The imbibition of water by the body in this and the other processes is manifested by very *unequivocal* symptoms. *This* origin of the effect in question, in the wet sheet at least, is a *legitimate* inference.

The wet sheet is Priessnitz's greatest discovery, and far outstrips all other therapeutical improvements ever made in the healing art. This is destined to be by-and-bye the universal domestic remedy used by mothers and nurses in the outbreak of all illnesses; and will supersede, in nine cases in ten, both the employment of medicine and the attendance of the physician. With every water-cured person its efficacy will be an article of *faith* that no arguments will stagger, and its

practice in every emergency a source of confidence that no authority will baffle. Henceforth the name of Priessnitz will be a household-word, and a grateful posterity will embalm his memory. Few are the complaints in young or old in which this remedy will not be hailed as one of the best boons ever given by Heaven to suffering mortals. This language is strong, and may be called enthusiastic. But we appeal to those who have tested the powers of the wet-sheet fomentation, whether our meed of praise is commensurate with its merits. In weariness and watching—in fatigue and cold—in restlessness and anguish—in acute diseases and in chronic ailments—in fevers and inflammations—in shivered nerves and fretted brain—in worn-out stomachs and palsied bowels—in irritated skin and broken bones—in quelling morbid heat and soothing morbid sensibility—in the quiet routine of home and the bustle of travel abroad—in infancy and in age—in the weak and in the strong—in cottages and in palaces—in courts and in camps—in hospitals and in prisons—in all climates and seasons—shivering at the poles, or scorching in the tropics—in all the multifarious ills that flesh is heir to—the wet sheet will be the first remedial resource of the sick, and the last earthly refuge of the dying.

The wet sheet is applied in the following way:—A very thick blanket is first spread upon a mattress; a sheet of coarse linen (a) is then wrung out on a pole; this is smoothly spread over the blanket; the patient then reclines at full length, and has the sheet wrapped round him, fitting it closely about the neck, and securely covering the feet. The blanket is then with equal care tucked under the neck and shoulders, the trunk and limbs of one side, and then of the other. This "packing," which resembles a compact bale of goods, is then completed by a load of additional blankets and coverings, or preferably by a down-feather bed, which is well tucked in from the neck to the feet. In this state the patient is allowed to remain from half an hour to an hour. The first impression is disagreeable, but it

(a) When linen is not at hand, the cotton material may be used, and is quite as good.—Ed.

is only for a minute or two; and is succeeded by a soothing freshness heightening into a delicious glow, which would end in perspiration if prolonged. On being unpacked from this envelopment, the patient takes the cold or tepid half-bath or full bath, and is well rubbed in the water by an attendant for a longer or a shorter time, himself assisting in the operation, (b) He then dresses quickly and goes out to his customary walk and water-drinking. This process is usually gone through the first thing in the morning, and commences the daily routine of treatment. It is repeated or not in the subsequent parts of the day, according as it is indicated. The sensations of the patient will often be the monitors for his extrication, and the inducement for its repetition or cessation. When the object is to quell fever, the sheet must be changed every quarter of an hour or half hour, or as often as may be necessary to bring about a cool surface. (c) When the due abstraction of heat and reduction of fever is effected, the patient

(b) Some patients in whose cases the wet sheet is an invaluable remedy, are too weak to aid in or to endure a general bath; the rubbing the body with wet towels is then to be substituted. When a bath is given, if nothing better is at hand, a wash-tub may be made to answer a good purpose, the patient sitting in the water with the limbs outside, provided it be the case of an adult. After washing well the body, the lower extremities are subjected to the same operation, the person sitting up in a chair or standing with the feet in the water. Some of the best cures I have performed, were in cases where the wash-tub was the only convenience at hand for a bath.—Ed.

(c) It is often in such cases better to apply two or three wet sheets at once, to cause a more protracted cooling effect. Leaving off the dry blanket entirely, or using perhaps a single one, only allows of a longer cooling effect, in consequence of the evaporation that takes place. If the evaporation is too rapid, causing too much coolness, the loose blanket is laid over. By managing ingeniously in this way, the wet sheet will comparatively need to be changed much less frequently. After the body has been sufficiently cooled, the "packing" may be made more close, with a view of causing perspiration. Care must be taken at the same time that the body does not become too much heated.—Ed.

is then put into a slightly tepid bath, and well-rubbed.

If determinations to the head occur during this process, cold applications to the scalp are to be constantly renewed as they get warm. If the feet or legs continue cold too long, they may be kept out of the envelopment, and wrapped in flannel. (d)

The fallacy of catching cold from damp beds was long ago sufficiently exposed by one of the shrewdest and ablest practitioners of his day, Dr. Heberden. The soundness of his judgment cannot now be questioned, as the innocuousness of such exposure is confirmed by all the facts of Priessnitz's extensive experience, and by those of his numerous followers. (e)

Whenever any remedial application is made, there should always be a definite object kept clearly in view. Now it is often supposed that the object of the wet sheet is to *sweat* the system. If there is in society hydrophobia, in reference to the use of water, there is certainly the opposite to this in regard to *sweating*. People often

(d) Dr. Balbirnie, as well as nearly or quite all modern writers on water, falls into the error of leaving their readers to suppose that no *warm* applications are ever to be made. In case of cold feet, it will be found much better to apply warmth, than wait an hour or two for the feet to become warm spontaneously, which, by the by, will, in some cases, not take place at all in the wet sheet. It does no manner of good, and may do harm, to lay a long time suffering from sensations of cold. Better by far to apply warm bricks, bottles of warm water, &c., &c., to the feet, pit of the stomach, and spine, than suffer at all more than a few minutes from the effects of cold in the wet sheet. It should be understood that *cold* as well as warm or hot applications are not, strictly speaking, natural—or at least the one, under certain circumstances, is as natural as the other. If we observe the natural instincts carefully, we shall have a better guide than any book.—Ed.

(e) This last paragraph is not sufficiently guarded. Under all circumstances, the human body is liable to take on inflammation, or a severe cold, if it is, for a length of time, exposed to cool or cold moisture. A person *may* lay in a damp bed and not take cold; but in nine cases out of ten this result will take place.—Ed.

suppose that a "sweat" will, with certainty, draw out all of the disease, and that sweating alone will answer. The fact is, sweating is very generally to be avoided. It is a process, rather than otherwise, of weakening the system.

There are two more prominent effects to be brought about by the wet sheet; one the *cooling*, and the other the *poultice*, or *soothing* effect. When the object is to cool the system, as in high fever, we often avail ourselves of the compound action of both cooling and soothing. At first the sheet is cold, but directly becomes warm and soothing, and so long as this last effect does not go too far, and the body does not become too hot, so long it is useful; but as soon as there is the least of too much heat, the sheet must be renewed, or some other means of cooling the system resorted to.

More commonly, the main object in applying the wet sheet, is to promote a more rapid change of matter in the system; it produces a sort of *bleaching* effect, and by this means, morbid matters are drawn off to be replaced by healthy ones, and thus the wet sheet, with the other adjuncts of the cure, causes naturally an increase of general strength. Still, we must remember that the system is not like an old cask that can be cleaned out at leisure, but is to be dealt with moderately. In any case, when the wet sheet causes weakness or headache, it must be for the time discontinued or modified, so as not to cause any unpleasant effect.

There is no reason whatever in saying that the wet sheet is never to be made a tepid or warm one. Its temperature should always be graduated according to strength, or, in other words, the power of endurance of the individual.

In some cases of severe bilious colic, the hot wet sheet, or better still, the hot

wet woollen blanket, is one of the best remedies that can be adopted. It will remove the pain when the most powerful medicines fail of effecting that object. In cases of this kind, and generally, the sensations, as to whether warmth or cold will be most agreeable, furnish the best guide; and a circumstance very favorable in the use of water is, if we hit upon the wrong application, we have warning soon enough that it can be discontinued before any harm is done.—ED.

The Wet Bandages.—These applications accomplish on a small scale, and on fitting places, what the wet sheet does for the whole body. They are employed also with the two-fold object of cooling or heating, of *diminishing* or *increasing* action, according as evaporation is permitted or prevented, and according to the frequency of their renewal. In the one case, when the object is to lessen action (a)—to subdue or prevent inflammation—to allay the irritation of wounds, bruises or fractures—the fomentation is kept constantly renewed, but allowed to evaporate. In the other case, it acts as a counter-irritant; it transfers action from the deeper-seated parts to the surface, allaying irritation, relieving visceral congestions, dissipating engorgements, opening up obstructions, solving spasm, and restoring secretions.

(a) Dr. Balbirtie adopts the theory, that inflammation consists in *increased* action. This doctrine is the more generally received among medical men; but there are exceptions among those of the highest standing in the profession. The opposite we believe to be the true theory; that there is in the vessels of an inflamed part, *diminished*, and not *increased*, action. We admit there is a greater evolution of caloric in the part, but the circulatory vessels are *weakened*, *relaxed*, so that a larger amount of fluids remains in them, and consequently the velocity of the circulation in the part is diminished. The more perceptible throbbing of an artery carrying blood to an inflamed part, is only because of the weakened state of its coats. The heart has no more power to send blood to one part than another, any more than the Croton reservoir to send more water to one house than another, on the same level and with pipes of the same calibre.

These objects are further aided by *derivation* to distant parts, as by the hip-bath and foot-baths.

The wet bandages are applied to various parts of the body. The first or refrigerant bandage consists of linen of suitable size for the part affected, folded several times, and dipped in cold water, gently expressed, and placed on the part affected. This application is renewed every five or ten minutes, according to the cooling effect intended; and continued night and day without interval, until the inflammation is removed or danger averted. Neglect in their change may cause the worst results, by promoting what it is intended to prevent. These cooling bandages are used when active inflammation is going on; in acute affections of the head; in local injuries; in supporting surfaces, as boils; in compound fractures—and wherever the indication is to lessen action, (heat.)

The heating or stimulant bandage only differs from the last in evaporation being prevented by an effectual covering or bandage of dry linen, and in the water being more thoroughly wrung out. These are not changed till they begin to be dry. This fomentation is universally applied in all local chronic diseases, all wounds, injuries and ulcers; in disorders of the liver, stomach, bowels, heart, lungs, and ganglionic nervous centres—in short, to any painful spot, or seat of irritation—to some eruptions and boils, and to gouty and rheumatic joints.

The abdominal fomentation or bandage is almost of universal application. This consists of a towel of about three yards long, and from half a foot to a foot wide. One-third of it wetted and well wrung out is wound round the abdomen and back, and covered by the dry part drawn as tightly as can be conveniently borne: for otherwise it would permit evaporation, and produce chill. (b) It is to be renewed

(b) In some cases, it will be found necessary to cover the wet bandage with a flannel one, of one or more thicknesses, sufficient to retain a comfortable degree of warmth. The heating bandage, as it is called, is more powerful, if the wet part be covered with oil silk, and the clothing is thus better preserved from moisture. Cotton cloth bandages may

whenever it becomes dry; and is usually to be worn by night as well as by day. If the back should remain chilly, the front part only of the bandage is to be wetted; and exercise should be used after it. This fomentation is of great utility in all derangements of the abdominal and pelvic viscera; facilitating remarkably the functions of the stomach and bowels; allaying morbid sensibility and inflammatory irritation in its several tissues; relieving constipation on the one hand, and diarrhoea on the other. Patients subject to sore throats, or to pulmonary affections, wear constantly the heating bandages round the throat and over the chest.

COLD WATER FACTS. BY DR. WM. A. ALCOTT.

Mr. Editor,—

In the beginning of your enterprise, I promised you a few facts in favor of the application of cold water in disease, which I thought might be interesting to your readers. That promise has never, till now, been fulfilled; for which my only apology is, constant, or almost constant, occupation. Forgetfulness is of itself no apology. But now for the facts, whether of much or little worth.

When I was a young man, in my father's family, my health failed. I had heard and read of cold bathing, and I determined to try it. So I suspended a corn basket near the ceiling of a small room, and with its aid had a cold shower-bath as regularly and as slily as Sir Walter Raleigh had his pipe. The results, however, were somewhat different. Sir Walter was only made more nervous and dyspeptic by his smoking, while I, by my cold bathing, was greatly invigorated.

At the time of commencing medical studies, my eyes were very weak, and had been so for ten years. Their weakness commenced at the close of an attack of measles. Whether it was the sequel of the disease, or of the medicine, I never knew. I ought to add, however, that about two months after the measles broke up I had a general dropsy, which lasted

several months, for which I took a vast deal of medicine, and, among other articles, I took for weeks, if not for a month, the blue pill. But I wander from my main point, which was to say, that when I first commenced my medical studies, at the age of twenty-five, my friends, as well as myself, doubted whether I could possibly succeed in my studies on account of the weakness of my eyes. But as soon as I began my studies I began to bathe my eyes in cold water. It was my usual practice to hold them, for some time, in the coldest water I could find, and to open them in the water; and to do this several times a day. The result was that my eyes grew strong during the whole time of my studies.

While a medical student, I called one day at the house of an old friend, who was suffering from fever and dysentery, and to all appearance, declining. One of his constant cries was, 'Give me cold water.' Observing that none was given him, I said to his mother, who was his attendant, 'Why don't you give him cold water?' She said the physician had forbidden it. I said to her, I do not like to step between the physician and his patients; but if I were in your situation and his I would give him cold water; you need not give him a large quantity at a time: 'a little and often' will be preferable. My advice was followed, and the young man recovered.

A neighbor of mine, near sixty years of age, was sick, in a manner not unlike that of the young man of whom I have just spoken. The doctor in this case had prohibited cold water. Half a mile from this house was a spring of uncommonly cold water. Some time in the night the sick man called up his son and told him to go to the cold spring and bring him a gallon of water. The son was obliged to go. The father drank freely of the water, was better the next morning, and ultimately recovered. He is still living, at about the age of 80 years.

Some fifteen or twenty years ago, the father of W. C. Woodbridge, the geographer, then about 70 years of age, and residing in Hartford, Conn., was attacked in one of his knees with paralysis. The son advised him to discontinue his tea

be used when linen is not at hand; and in those cases in which cold is illy borne, cotton will be found best.

and coffee, and use the cold *douche*. He did so, and in the progress of a few weeks, from being unable to go up or down stairs, was able to do both, with nearly as much ease as his son, or myself, or any other individual.

One of my children, then about three years old, was one day attacked with fever, and in the night gradually became delirious. I sponged her with cold water and made her drink as much of it as I could, without compulsion. The next day she was worse, though still very sick. We continued the cold water, and she soon began to mend. In two or three days she was completely restored.

A young lady, residing for a short time in my own family, was suffering greatly from a complication of diseases, among which were spinal disease and menorrhagia. Though exceedingly afraid of cold water, she was persuaded to read some of the best treatises on that subject, and at length became quite a believer in hydrophobia. She resorted to the cold bath in general, and to the sitz bath. The latter was pursued with a perseverance which bordered on obstinacy. The consequence was a considerable melioration of her condition. It is also worthy of remark, that a dense eruption appeared over the lower part of her spine, just as she began to mend; elicited, it was most evident, by the bathing. For reasons which could be named, she did not persevere in the use of the bath long enough, or I believe she would in time have been completely restored.

One individual, who had just been confined, but was a little feverish, consented not only to drink cold water, but be sponged with it. Not, indeed, when the 'fever was off,' as the saying is, but during the time of the highest excitement. Cold water, in this instance, acted like a charm. Not a week elapsed, if I recollect rightly, before she was able to bathe in cold water in the usual manner, and with entire safety. Since that time she does not hesitate to bathe regularly, down to the day of her confinement, and to resume it as soon as all is over.

Facts like these, in great numbers, coming under my observation, how could I help believing in the remedial power of

cold water? How could I help shutting medicine out of my house, except in extreme cases? True, they may be mere trifles to you, but they opened my eyes a little way. I had not, indeed, yet learned that medicine could be wholly dispensed with in croup, cholera infantum, and that cold water could be substituted. And yet, in one case of cholera infantum, which came under my notice, cold water, drank freely, seemed to do more good than all things else. And what adds to my rejoicing, that cold water is coming into fashion for remedial purposes, is a recollection of the eagerness with which I have seen little children, who could not speak, grasp the tumbler of cold water, and drink it as if it were nectar, and immediately begin to rise, as it were, from the dead.

I might relate other cases, dear sir; but enough for once. I hardly need to say that I am watching the progress of Hydrophobia, in these United States, with intense interest. In the hands of scientific men it will do much to lessen the miseries of mankind, and something to prevent future suffering; in the hands of fools, it will share the fate of every other good and perfect gift of Jehovah.

One more word. While I have much confidence in the remedial power of cold water, I have also much confidence in keeping up the expectations of our patients; or, as I have sometimes expressed it, talking up-hill. One secret of the success of Priessnitz consists in the fact that he has no downhill talking. No one is expected to die,—all are expected to get well; and as a consequence in part, almost all *do* get well. I hope the conversation will be up-hill at the institutions of the same kind in the United States.

Yours, truly,

WM. A. ALCOCK.

Long Island Sound, Oct. 23d, 1845.

Total abstinence from every stimulating beverage is absolutely necessary to the success of the treatment by water.—*Dr. E. Johnson.*

The main indication in the treatment of chronic disease is to fortify and strengthen the general health.

LETTER FROM FRIEND KEESE, OF PERU COUNTY, N. Y.

The following letter will show that it is not indispensable to understand Latin, Greek, *Materia Medica*, &c., &c., (things all good enough in their place,) in order to practice well with water. It has, from the first, been our design to be in some humble degree, successful in teaching the *many* the uses of water. There are practitioners of this mode, we are sorry to say, who choose to take a different course. We have often been cheered onward by receiving accounts similar to those below. Some of the very best of cures that have ever taken place through the use of water have been performed by those who have been favored only with *reading* upon the subject. But a few years will elapse before those who take the trouble to think for themselves, will very seldom at all need the physician. For ourselves, we are not very particular how much people "doctor" themselves, so long as we can live so well upon brown bread and water.

Reading these facts from friend Keese, brings to mind an account of a remarkable cure which my old grandmother used to relate. Before the commencement of the Revolution, her father had, by some means, a dangerous swelling upon one of the lower extremities, which the English surgeons said they feared could not be cured. At length, after consultation, they declared that they could do nothing more but to amputate the limb. It was submitted to the wife to determine whether or not this dreadful expedient should be resorted to. She at once stoutly refused, declaring it should never be done. The surgeons said, "Very well; you may have your own way and your husband will die." The surgeons then left, but not without again remonstrating with the old lady for her obstinacy. After the surgeons had left, the wife and daughter set

thoroughly to washing the limb, cooling and cleansing the affected parts. The immediate relief thus obtained encouraged them to persevere, and it was not a little more consoling that the afflicted man should "die in ease," if die he must. In a short time the limb was cured. We have ourselves yet to learn that any limb is ever necessarily to be amputated because of the danger of mortification. Before this can occur there must be a severe course of inflammation, and a limb never mortifies if it is kept sufficiently cool. What terrible mutilations have been performed because of the ignorance of one of the plainest principles of our nature!

Friend Doctor Shew :—The case of my wife, (as what I communicated has not yet appeared,) I will defer at present, as she is yet struggling with the relics of disease, and the effects of medicine long since taken. But all that I have witnessed, increases my confidence in the efficacy of water as a restorative. A few cases of my own treating I will relate.

A friend of mine in Canada West, when I arrived there, had a son some 12 or 13 years of age, who was suffering with a severe inflammation of the lungs. The father being a kind of home-doctor, had bled twice copiously, and then had a blister over the whole of one side just filled, (the flies not removed;) yet the patient seemed again growing worse, having been temporarily relieved the day before by bleeding and physic. The father said he should have to let blood again, but that he disliked bleeding, and never resorted to it when he could succeed otherwise. I remonstrated against blood-letting, and proposed water, offering to stop and assist. The father having considerable acquaintance with me, and apparently some confidence, soon consented, and desired my instruction and assistance. We commenced about sunset—present symptoms, violent pain in head and side, great heat in head, high pulse, dry skin, coated tongue, difficult or hard breathing, a tight cough, an occasional raising of bloody froth, and a general fever. The flies were first removed, and the blisters, which were large,

were emptied, and the part covered with a greased cloth;* a half or sitz-bath (tepid) was given, with much rubbing of the lower parts of the body, even up to the waist. Cold wet cloths at the same time were kept upon the head. He was then wiped off, rested in bed a few minutes, and then we applied the wet sheet, retaining the cold yet upon the head. He was now a little relieved of pain, but complained of great heat,† followed by perspiration and comfort; a subsequent washing and dry dress, and fresh bed prepared for sleep.

If my limits would permit, I would give the whole treatment; but suffice it to say, that the inflammation and pain often returned, and were as often met with the cooling and soothing agent, water, used in the various modes of application, accordingly as the symptoms arose during that night, the next day and night; and on the second morning, after a good sleep, the patient was washed in cold water, walked out about the door, breakfasted at table, and said that he felt like going to work. He was all the time annoyed with the "hateful" blister. On meeting him this morning, I said, "I hope thou wilt never have another." "I guess not," was the immediate reply of the father, "and," continued he, "if thou wilt leave thy water-book, I will lay aside my lancet, and practice water-cure." Being about to leave, I told him I would, and left them full of comfort from the present, and hope in the future success of the *new way*. In divers places and on various occasions, during my western tour of nine months, did I witness equal success in the use of water; and I found the unprejudiced everywhere ready to receive the new doctrine. I could have disposed of many of thy books if I had had them.

I have tested the value of water in allaying the inflammation of the eyes. Myself, wife and niece, caught a severe inflammation which nothing but cold water would effectually allay; sitz-bath and foot-baths were found very useful.

B. F. Smith was taken with a severe pain in the knee, and after trying all of

* A fine moist cloth, covered with a dry one, would have been better.—[Ed. Jour.]

† Care must be taken not to allow of too much heat in the wet sheet, else the fever increases.—[Ed. Jour.]

Thompson's remedies for five days, they sent for me, and at the same time, by the attending botanic physician's request, called a certain regular practitioner for counsel. The limb was exceedingly swollen from hip to ankle, or nearly so, and about and above the knee much inflamed, with great pain, which was so severe that for twenty-four hours the family were alarmed at the failure of strength, and the signs of sinking under it. Indeed, his eyes were sunken and countenance haggard. During an hour's consultation, he often said, "Do something quickly." The Botanic declared suppuration had already commenced, the regular physician was not certain, and therefore would allow cold applications a short time, until it could be ascertained that matter was collecting, but both agreed that cold must not be applied after that—that warm poultices were in that case to be used. The regular physician soon left, having prescribed as above. He believed that his applications would cause pain, in which case opiates must be given; cathartics also must be given, as the fever which prevailed would make it indispensable. The affected part was hard, and of a purple color. It was at length decided that I should try *my way* for twenty-four hours, and the Doctor (Botanic,) call again then and see the result. I ordered the limb first cleaned with soap suds, as it had been poulticed, and greased—caused him to drink freely of soft water, and applied cold wet linen. It was hot weather in August. I watched him closely, and found it needful to change the cold cloths every ten minutes, day and night. I gave a frequent wet rubbing over the surface, sitz-baths and foot-baths—twice a day a wet sheet, and *once* an injection, (this last tepid, all the rest cold.) In less than an hour the pain left and never returned, although the inflammation raged, and tongue remained coated, and urine very high colored, (almost red,) for four days, and on the eighth day after I saw him I made an opening near the knee-pan, which discharged copiously, then and subsequently, black corrupted blood, slightly streaked with yellow. The third day after, bloody water came out, and he began to walk, and got well marvellously quick—never

having to insert a tent, as I was urged to do, to keep it open, the water had so cooled the system and moistened the skin, that no disposition to close appeared. Wet cloths were *continued*, but now from the brook, that was not so cold as what had been used.

No medicine, either vegetable or mineral, was given the whole time, yet the cure was truly wonderful. My own opinion, with many others, is that with warm applications, *gangrene* would have been the result, the water being warm, and the heat in that part raging and obstinate.

I should have written sooner, but a return of sore eyes, by watching nightly with the said patient, and subsequent occurrences, coupled with some neglect, have thus prevented me.

Thine for reform,
SAMUEL KEESE.

WATER-CURE JOURNAL.

NEW-YORK, DECEMBER 15, 1845.

LUNG DISEASE.

CASE OF MISS LYDIA MOTT, OF ALBANY,
NEW YORK.

It is often asked, "Is water treatment applicable in serious disease of the lungs?" And the inquiry is a very natural one, since more die of such disease than from any other cause whatever. This is true, at least, of this country and England, and probably of various other parts of the world. I design hereafter to devote a considerable part of the Journal to the consideration of diseases of this kind—to the modes of prevention as well as of cure, I hold that water treatment judiciously administered in lung disease is as strikingly beneficial as in any class of diseases to which the human frame is subject. There is, I know, a prevalent opinion that the contrary is true; that water treatment is not only of no avail, but often positively injurious in lung diseases, especially in tubercular consumption. As yet, comparatively but few experiments

have been made in treating consumption by the new mode, and considering the amount of prejudice that exists concerning the treatment, it is not strange that the practitioners generally promise little or nothing in this most formidable disease.

About the first of October last, my friend, Sidney Howard Gay, of this city, called to confer with me concerning the case of Miss Lydia Mott, of Albany, given up by her physicians, as he was informed, in a hopeless state of consumption. I said to him in substance, as I always do in reference to this disease, that water treatment is altogether more powerful to save than any other known mode, and that in case a cure is necessarily impossible, the treatment, incomparably more than any other, *will prolong life and render the sufferings less.*

In two or three days after this conversation with Mr. Gay, I received a letter from the sister of Miss Mott, asking my opinion of her case. The sister informed me that the physicians declared Lydia's case to be one of tubercular consumption, and that they despaired of medicines reaching her case. She said furthermore, "for the week past we have tried the wet-sheet, and bandages during the day, with no other result but an apparent suspension of the disease."

In one week from this time, I had the pleasure of seeing both the sister and Lydia at my house in this city. I had advised her to continue the treatment which appeared to be doing so much good, and that as soon as possible, for a change of air, it would be one of the best things she could do to make a journey down to the city. They remained two or three days, Lydia feeling decidedly better of the journey, and having obtained my directions for future treatment, then returned home to Albany.

Concerning the true nature of Lydia's

disease, there may be some doubt. I am myself not fully satisfied what it was.— Up to the time of her commencing water treatment, she had been under the judicious care of Drs. Ward and Paine, of Albany, and Dr. Bryan, of Troy, as counsel. I have not yet had the satisfaction of conferring with either Dr. Ward or Paine. I met with Dr. Bryan, who told me that when he saw the patient, she had, without any mistake, *hepatization*, as it is called, (*hardening*) of the right lung.— As to his opinion concerning *ulceration*, I do not recollect. He considered her case a very dangerous one, and he should watch the progress of the disease under the water treatment with much interest. Drs. Ward and Paine, as I am informed, declared that there was actual ulceration of the lung. Not having seen Lydia until she had considerably recovered, I cannot give any positive opinion of my own.— There could not have been any mistake as to the *hardening* of the lung; and this alone is dangerous enough without ulceration, which did probably exist. If ulceration did exist, it was caused either by the inflammation and breaking down of tubercles, or it was the result of inflammation of the substance of the lung, causing *hardening*, and the *hardening* resulting in ulceration. This, however, seldom takes place, although it sometimes does. The ulceration is by far oftener caused by the inflammation of tubercles, than by inflammation resulting in *hepatization* or *hardening* of the part. Whatever was the state of the lung, I am confident there was likewise severe rheumatic pains in the chest, which amounted to a good deal of suffering.

It is proper here to state more of the history of this case. The patient is a person of very active habits, and during the last spring took a severe cold, which settled upon the lungs. This caus-

ed a serious illness at the time, and which continued to trouble her very considerably during the whole summer. She did not, as she usually has done, spend a part of the hot season in the country air, but remained actively engaged during the whole of the past hot summer. About the first of September, she took again a very severe cold, settling, as before, upon the lungs, and resulting in the dangerous illness described above.

Beginning now again at the time when Lydia returned home from visiting New-York, she continued to use water nearly two weeks longer, at which time I was at Albany, and called, according to promise, to see her. Before commencing at all the use of water, Drs. Ward and Paine very candidly said that, notwithstanding they considered the case now entirely hopeless, they would be glad if water treatment could be fairly tested, but that themselves, not having given the subject sufficient attention, could take no responsibility in its use. In making this statement, these gentlemen exhibited a degree of candor which we too seldom find. How many physicians are there yet of our country who have ever seen the application of the wet sheet? and yet very generally they assume to know as much about it as if they had administered it as often as they have doses of calomel. This is not as it should be; and if they do not choose thoroughly and impartially to investigate the new mode, patients will practise upon themselves, as in such case they should. But to return to the treatment in this case.

The wet sheet, as has been said, was used each day. It was wrung from water that was rather mild of temperature, and applied according to the usual mode. It produced a soothing and relieving effect, and was followed by an ablution in water of a moderate temperature. Four well

wrung wet towels were arranged about the chest to meet at the side, making two thicknesses of wet linen upon every part of the chest. Over these towels still another moist bandage was placed, and over the whole an abundance of flannels, to retain the warmth. These were worn at first, I believe, only during the day. It would have been still better to have continued them at night also. The effect of the sheet, the ablutions, and the bandages in removing pain, preventing general fever, cough and night-sweats, was indeed wonderful. She improved astonishingly in strength, and, as before said, was able to journey to New-York in two weeks.

During a part of the following two weeks, she is now of the opinion, that she used too much of cold applications; or that, as the general feverishness of the system, and particularly of the chest, was at this time considerably removed, the same applications as before made, were not now well borne. The system did not as before re-act sufficiently against the cold. During the most of this second two weeks, the patient thinks she rather lost ground than otherwise.

In four weeks she came again to the city to remain with us, to undergo a more thorough treatment than could be conveniently carried on at home; besides, she felt that she needed special advice, as new symptoms might arise. The right lung was at this time still very weak. I should have said that on first seeing her, that is, two weeks from the commencement of water treatment, the hardening of the right lung had given away considerably, so that the air penetrated some distance downward. At the end of the four weeks, there was still much pain through the chest, particularly the right side, and extending to the right shoulder, and under the right shoulder blade. The right arm could only be used with great difficulty. In the most com-

fortable situation it could be placed, two or three days were required to finish a single letter. The treatment by the wet sheet once daily, and ablutions and bandages, was kept up. In two or three days she was able to bear a mild shower-bath, and in two or three days more, a small douche. This proved very strengthening, and was powerful in removing pain. At Albany, she could scarcely go in the open air at all. The milder air of this city agreed much better, and she was, day by day, able to take more exercise in the open air, and in less than two weeks she could walk at one time some miles without inconvenience, and with benefit. After a few of the first days she took two shower or douche baths daily, besides the one following the wet sheet, in all three general baths daily.

After remaining nearly three weeks, she thought, as a matter of experiment, feeling now so much improved, she would make some friends a visit on Long Island. She remained about one week, continuing the daily use of water, and returned still more improved. She could now undergo as much exertion as she had been able to do for years, and has now (Nov. 26th,) returned to Albany, after having used water in all about eight weeks, to remain I hope in the enjoyment of good health. With the good care she will now observe, there is reason to believe that no recurrence of the disease will take place. Still it must be remembered the chest is contracted and weak, and that this will be the part most likely to give way first.

Food, it should be mentioned, was taken very sparingly. During the first two weeks it consisted almost entirely of grapes. During the second two weeks, friends had urged that flesh meat should be taken to promote strength; as her health was, if it had been said, to promote pain, inflammation, coughing, expectoration and weak-

ness, the fact would have been stated. While with us, she partook of farinaceous food, as coarse bread, milk, toast, buck-wheat cakes, potatoes, squashes, turnips, stewed fruit, &c., using of animal food only what little was contained in the preparations in which milk was used. No butter, or food in any way prepared with butter, was taken. Salt was almost entirely abstained from. We care not what chemical physiologists tell us from *theory* about the *necessity* of salt. We go for facts. Salt, like other medicines and medicinal stimulants, we choose to abstain from. Miss Mott partook of food but twice a day, and on the whole, the regulation of the diet had no small share of effect in her remarkable cure.

She is now able to endure nearly or quite as much exertion in the open air as she ever has been, and more than most ladies of good health. Time will determine how permanent her cure may be.

It should have been mentioned that while upon Long Island, Miss Mott, feeling quite strong, thought she would try the experiment of discontinuing the bandages upon the chest. She found, in less than one day, that she could not yet do without them. A sensation of sinking and weakness in the chest was experienced. It will be best, for a time at least, that the bandages be continued both night and day, as they have been.

WATER TREATMENT MAY CAUSE SUPPRESSION OF MENSTRUATION.

It will sometimes happen in water treatment, that menstruation will be for a time entirely suppressed. I do not recollect ever to have seen or heard the suggestion from any source. Early in my practice I was led to the observation of this fact in two particular instances at the same time. I at once formed for myself a sort of theory, that nothing was to be feared from

this occurrence, so long as no inconvenience was experienced by those in whose case the symptom occurred. These first two cases of the kind, were of persons who had become very much debilitated by long continued, and severe indigestion. Menstruation was suppressed, I believe, about a twelvemonth in both these cases, all of which time the subjects were gaining in health, flesh and strength, remarkably. The fact of this cessation may perhaps be accounted for in this way:—The water processes cause a vigorous action in the wasting powers of the system. The skin and other excretory passages are rendered more active and vigorous, and thus the effete or worn-out matter of the system is quickly cast off, and thereby menstruation is prevented. Whether this is the true explanation or not, the symptom does happen, and is attended with no unpleasant effects. So long as a person does not in any respect suffer from this occurrence, no fear need be felt.—[*Ed. Jour.*]

Colored Water to cure Disease.—It is said on good authority, that in the celebrated siege of Breda, in 1625, by Spino-la, the garrison suffered extreme distress from the ravages of scurvy; and the Prince of Orange, being unable to relieve the place, sent in by a confidential messenger, a preparation, which was directed to be added to a very large quantity of water, and to be given as a specific for the epidemic. The remedy was administered, and the garrison recovered, when it was acknowledged that the substance in question was no other than a little coloring matter.

Cases of Treatment.—Hereafter, in each number of the Journal, cases of treatment will be given.

LETTER FROM MR. GRAY, OF BOSTON.

"It is pretty generally known among the friends of hydropathy in this country, that Mr. John H. Gray, of Boston, (whose letter we give below,) has nobly acted the part of a pioneer of the new system in Boston and New England generally. It could not escape the observing mind of Mr. Gray, while on a tour in Europe, that this system was destined soon to become known and appreciated in our own country of enterprise; and as one of the earliest and most efficient promulgators of this system, he deserves thanks of all who have been, and are to be, benefitted, by this greatest of discoveries in the healing art.

As to the allusion in our last number, to the water of Brattleboro', we are glad, through Mr. Gray, to make a correction. We spoke from what we heard, and from what we believed was good authority. Since that article was written we have become personally acquainted with the character of the water along the Connecticut river, and although we have never been as high up as Brattleboro' by some fifty miles, we should judge from the geological character of the country, that there are, at many points along this river, springs of first rate quality.

Vermont has nobly taken the lead in hydropathy. The incorporating, by an act of the Legislature, the institution at Brattleboro', is to be hailed as a most favorable omen, and is an example which, sooner or later, will be followed by other states. But few years can now elapse before this system will become extensively appreciated through every state and territory in the Union — this great "humbug" of a system, as so many are pleased to call it.

[ED. JOUR.]

LETTER OF MR. GRAY.

J. Shew, M. D.

Dear Sir, —

I am happy to see mention made in

your last Journal of so many Water Cure establishments already growing up in this country. The more the better, provided they are in the right hands. I visited, along the Rhine, three establishments within ten miles of each other, which have each accommodated from two to six hundred patients at a time, during this past season, making nine hundred constant boarders for nine months. And you will please remember that this was within a distance of ten miles. Now in the United States we could not accommodate two hundred all combined, while, at least, some thousands are ready to present themselves for treatment, and would fill fifty establishments. One good doctor with an assistant, can attend to six hundred patients, as is proved at Boppart. Patients often change from one institution to another in Germany. It is natural to do so, while the process is long, and variety needed. I see no harm in this, but earnestly hope it will occasion no ill feelings in our growing establishments. The public call upon the managers of these, to communicate together, to act with unanimity, and ensure greater success by their combined experience. Now is the time to make a right beginning, to sacrifice private feeling. Let each make advances; his cause is a noble one; he cannot be repulsed.

Let me say a few words in relation to an erroneous statement which has been given you, and which appeared in your last Journal. The water at Brattleboro' is proverbially soft and good, and will dissolve any soap but a Connecticut wooden soap ball. The whole village is supplied by the same quality of water, as there are no wells, and rain water runs to waste, as it now does in New-York. The establishment there, under Dr. Wesselhoest, has averaged forty patients the past summer, and about twenty remain for the winter. It has been incorporated by the Legislature of Vermont, in order to give every one interested in it an opportunity to add to its means. It will be enlarged shortly, so as to accommodate one hundred patients.

Dr. Kitteridge, a regular physician at Lynn, Mass., sailed the first of November, on his way to Graefenberg, and the Rhine, to learn the practice of the Water Cure,

with the intention of getting up an establishment at Lynn, on his return. His practice is very large, in that town, and he leaves it all to become a Hydropathist, from an honest conviction that it is an act of justice he owes to suffering humanity. Dr. Wesselhoest offered him every facility of learning the practice at 'Brattleboro', and gave him ample directions for proceeding in Germany.

The excellent letter by Bulwer, published in your Journal, has added much to the confidence felt in water treatment by all its friends, and hydropathy is making rapid strides in New England.

Yours, &c.

JOHN H. GRAY.

Boston, Dec. 1845.

CASE OF "MARIA," A COLORED WOMAN.

A most Remarkable Cure.

The following case, among a number of others, (which we shall give hereafter,) is sent us by a most worthy lady, who was the past summer sojourning for a time in the village of Fairfield, Conn. From motives that every one can appreciate, we are not at liberty to give her name. She is one whom we greatly esteem—one who emphatically goes about doing good. It is now but a short time since we were informed that 'Maria' still remained, well, or rather continued to grow firmer in health than at the time of the narration we are about to give. The case is a very striking one, and is an example of what not unfrequently takes place in the treatment by water—a cure so remarkable as to be believed only by being an eye-witness.

"Fairfield, Conn., Aug. 22, 1845.

On my arrival here to pass the summer, I was directed to Maria, a colored woman, of 51 years of age, to do my washing. She hobbled to the door, apparently in great pain, and, in answer to my inquiry, said she was so very unwell that she was afraid to undertake my washing.

When I asked what was the matter, she replied "Oh! dear mam, everything—it seems to me that I have every pain that

any body ever had under the sun." And indeed so it seemed. Rheumatism; stranguary, so that her only relief for eighteen months had been by instruments; constipation, which was never relieved but by medicine; head-aches of the most excruciating kind, which for the time caused partial blindness, and from which at that moment she had been without relief for six weeks, night and day.

There was also excruciating pain in her hip, (an old disease, caused by having been cruelly beaten by her drunken husband, which confined her to bed for nineteen months and obliged her to use crutches for twelve years, though she now hobbled upon one;)—an entire loss of appetite, with emaciation. The white of her eyes, was covered with a thick yellow mucous coat, threaded with brown, and she could see but imperfectly. She had, at that time, great pain at the pit of the stomach, and habitual pain in the bowels.

Upon her right ribs was a large swelling, which was caused at ten years of age by having been cruelly beaten, and then thrust by her mistress against the side of the house, which bent inwards three of her ribs. After this the poor creature was long deranged, and bed-ridden, with bleeding at the lungs and from the stomach, with a cough which had never left her. She was taken into the family of a physician and kindly cared for, but took great quantities of medicine, and was three times salivated.

It occurred to me, if a kind Providence had sustained her through such complicated sufferings, she might be reserved to rejoice in a restoration by the water-cure, and as the physicians had abandoned her case as hopeless, I took courage to begin with her.

She made a thorough ablution with soap and tepid water upon going to bed, and in the morning washed her head and whole body in cold water from the well—applied a wet bandage around her body, which she changed frequently during the day. At night she bathed as in the morning, always rubbing thoroughly for some time every part of her body, till she was in a complete glow and began to perspire. Twice a day she used the sitz bath for 20 minutes—drank a great deal

of cold water (nothing can be finer than the water here;) lived upon farinaceous food, vegetables, fruits and milk.

She began to recover at once, and after one week only of trial, she wept tears of joy. "Never in my life did I expect to be as well," she said to me.

As we had to encounter great prejudices and opposition, (the country people exclaiming "she will certainly be killed;") I visited her twice a day, and she deserves great praise for her faithful observance of all my directions.

After three weeks she was restored to perfect health. "I have not an ache or pain of any kind, and I have been to church all day, and sat without fatigue or pain, and for twenty-five years I could not say that I have ever been at church even half a day, without the greatest suffering, and longing for the church to be out." She made these remarks to me upon her return that evening.

I have forgotten to state that her menstruation continues to this time, and has always been attended with such excruciating pains that she was confined to bed for a week or ten days, and her screams were heard by all her neighbors. Many of them have told me, that for weeks they have watched over her sick bed, expecting every moment to be her last; so that her recovery is looked upon as a miracle.

From all and every one of the complaints I have detailed, she has recovered, and begins to walk firmly without her cane, and for three weeks has done washing in cold water for twelve persons. The swelling upon the ribs has disappeared. Her appetite is so good that she "could eat all day," and her sight is good—the mucous coat entirely gone.

Some days after writing the above, this lady gave us the following additional particulars concerning this case: "I am very happy to inform you that Maria, whose case I have detailed, went to church yesterday (more than a quarter of a mile from her house) *without her cane*, suffering not the least pain or inconvenience, and mounted the stairs to the gallery. It is *twenty-five years* since she has walked without her crutches, or hobbled upon a cane."

Hydrophathy for the People, is the title of a work lately published in England, in which we learn that there is in that country a society called "Nature's Beverage Society, or Independent Order of Horebites," established April 13th, 1842. The pledge of the society is, "We, the undersigned, (believing that 'Water is best,' and that any attempt to improve it by the admixture of alcoholic, narcotic, or aromatic substances, only tend to injure it, and those who take it,) hereby agree to abstain from all artificial beverages, and in all suitable ways to discountenance their use throughout the community." This work appears to emanate from the said society of Horebites. On the title page we find the following exposition of their principles: "Whosoever desires to enjoy Health and Longevity, and to be quickly cured of all accidental indispositions, should prefer vegetable to animal food; should swallow nothing hot; drink only milk or water; be lightly clad; avoid artificial heat and drugs, and take much exercise in the open air,"—and it should have been added, "above all, never eat to excess."

Cheapness of the Journal.—A number of the friends of the cause have already obtained ten, and in some instances more subscribers, to be furnished to one address, at the rate of fifty cents per volume. Certainly every family that can afford to buy tea and coffee, (articles always injurious,) not to mention many other superfluities, ought to be able to take the Journal. Those that still prefer drugs in some cases, cannot fail of obtaining much that is valuable from the Journal.

To aid in the enterprise, some individuals have forwarded us five dollars, for the ten copies for circulation.

Cases of Cure by Dr. Schiefferdecker, of Philadelphia.—We are compelled to wait until our next for room to give a number of interesting cases from this gentleman.

The American Phrenological Journal, by O. S. Fowler, 131 Nassau street, New York, is published as above, regularly, every month. This highly valuable periodical is well known, and needs no particular recommendation at our hands. We cannot, however, agree with Mr. Fowler in every particular—as, for instance, when he says, in the prospectus to the Journal, that *animal magnetism*, as a remedial agent, exceeds, and will eventually supersede, all others. Animal magnetism has been tested now for nearly seventy years, and what has it accomplished? Comparatively nothing in the treatment of disease. We are glad, notwithstanding, to see one of Mr. Fowler's ability and candor, examining this subject. Let us have the facts.

We must not omit to mention that Mr. F. is a bold advocate of water, and the prevention of disease generally. We wish him all good success. The very low terms of his Journal (monthly of 32 pages) are \$1 for a single copy, 3 copies for \$2, 9 for \$5, or 20 for \$10.

The Subscribers of the Old Series of the Journal.—The publishers of the old series having by accident lost many numbers of the Journal, rendering it impracticable to go on to the end of the volume, it was deemed best that a new series should be commenced. The old series consists of nine numbers, and the subscribers to that series are to be supplied with fifteen numbers of the new series, making in all the amount of a full volume. The new series, we trust, will be found decidedly improved, and that it may be received entire to the end of the volume, we propose to the old subscribers, that each one obtain one or more new subscribers, and for so doing we will consider them as subscribers to the whole of the new series. Every one can induce some friend to subscribe.

Water-Cure Institution in New York.—The Editor is prepared to receive in his own family, a number more persons as patients. Such as come to us should bring at least four heavy woolen blankets, towels, syringes, &c., or these things can be purchased at low rates in the city. Our terms after the first consultation, are from five to ten dollars per week, the price varying according to the treatment necessary, the room occupied, the time of remaining with us, &c.

Transient Board.—We intend to be able at all times to accommodate friends of hydropathy with board, lodging, and baths, by the day or week, as may be desired. *Residence 56 Bond street.*

Treatment of Infants.—We have some strong facts for our readers in the treatment of infants. We hope to do something to subvert those causes which operate to destroy one-half of civilized mankind before the age of five years.

BOOKS ON WATER-CURE.

BELA MARSH, 25 Cornhill, Boston, has for sale, the large work on Hydropathy, or the Water Cure: by Joel Shew, M. D.; price \$1. The Hand Book of Hydropathy; price, 37½ & 50 cts. The Water Cure for Ladies; price, 50 cts. And the Facts in Water Cure; price, 18½ cts. Also, Graham's Lectures on the Science of Human Life; and his Lecture to Young Men.

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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 no gain, but only to be sustained from loss.

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

Wright, Printer, 74 Fulton street, cor. Gold.