

# THE WATER-CURE JOURNAL.

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*"Wash and be Healed."*

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## NOTES ON WATER-CURE.

BY DR. ALCOTT.

*Mr. Editor:*—I have given you, in a former number, a few facts which came under my observation, from time to time, and led me, gradually, to place great confidence in the remedial effects of cold water. One other fact of great importance, but which escaped my recollection at the time, I hasten to communicate.

At the age of fourteen I had the measles. As my friends did not suspect the cause of my disease, they treated me with stimulants; and among the rest, attempted, by high external heat, to "sweat" me, as they termed it. But *humanity is tough*, and I recovered in spite of them. In a few weeks, however, I was seized with a general dropsy; on account of which, I took, for a month or more, the blue pill, alternated with Lee's pills, both of which contain either mercury or calomel. I was also dosed with digitalis. It was not, however, till these were all laid aside, and I drank large quantities of the tea of certain sweet roots—practically large quantities of water, since the roots could have had but little effect—that I began to recover. And even then, my recovery was not perfect. The measles or the medicines—joined perhaps to other causes—had left me with weak eyes, and with a very troublesome eruption of the skin.

The latter complaint, during hot weather especially, became at length so severe that I was obliged to abandon the use of fermented and spirituous liquors, and in truth, of all salted food. I was forced against my will to become, in some measure, a water drinker, and almost entirely a "vegetable eater." I returned, however, at times, in the winter, to more stimulating drinks and food; and as a just penalty, always suffered again the following summer. Thus I went on; alternately living, when compelled; more in accordance with physical law; and then again disobeying, and suffering the penalty.

Driven at length from the farm on which I was brought up, I became a constant school-master. But though I suffered less here from *external* heat than on the farm, yet I suffered the good people with whom I "boarded round" to ply me with internal stimulants, especially high seasoned food, till my eruptive affection became as bad as ever. In this condition I sought medical advice, and was led to the use of a wash of *corrosive sublimate*! After using this wash a while, I was attacked with a most violent erysipelas, of the right half of the head and face. I sought again for medical aid; but medicine had no effect, and the danger became imminent.

In this extremity, I was directed to the use of water. My custom was to sit in

fore a pail kept filled with the coldest water, and by means of wet cloths, apply it to the inflamed parts. Many folds of linen nearly ice cold would be heated through, so great was the inflammation, in a few seconds.

This treatment was continued—for so great was the pain that I could neither eat nor sleep—till at length the inflammation began to abate. Not, however, till gangrene had begun on the forehead and eye-lids, as well as on the cranium; the marks of which mortification I shall bear till I go to the grave. But my life was spared, and I attribute the hair-breadth escape, under God, to the timely application of cold water.

The eruptive affection, however, returned afterward in hot weather, though with mitigated severity. There were reasons, however, for this mitigation of suffering; for it was about this time that I began to be thorough in the external use of cold water. Still I suffered. About fifteen or sixteen years ago I laid aside all drinks but water, and soon after, all animal food but milk and its products. From this change, I was a greater gainer still. It was not, however, till I had abandoned butter and condiments and became a thorough vegetable-eater and water-drinker, that I entirely recovered.

W. A. ALCOTT.

#### THE SWEATING PROCESS.

This is the most abused of all the water-cure measures, and requires for its due administration more practical acumen, and pathological knowledge, than any of the other parts of the treatment. It is a powerful depletant, draining the system of its fluids; and indiscriminately prescribed, or injudiciously prolonged, determining the worst evils. Priessnitz's eyes are now, however, happily opened to the danger of the indiscriminate and excessive sweating; and its place, in nine cases in ten, perhaps, is now supplied by the safer and simpler application of the wet sheet. May his followers—especially the unprofessional ones—imitate his salutary example! as their practice must chiefly contribute to propagate the bane of his errors.

Fully to decarbonise the blood—to purify it from the poisonous properties ac-

quired in its returning circuit—the *equilibrium* of the circulation and respiration is necessary. The want of the due relative proportion between the circulation and respiration—the more excited state of the former relatively to the latter, produces a greater afflux of blood into the lungs than can be fully oxygenated: hence streams of this fluid, greater or less, unchanged by the vivifying process, and charged with their noxious ingredients, must again go the round of the system, to the manifest detriment of the more delicate functions.

A large coarse blanket is spread upon a mattress;—the patient lies down upon it, as in the wet sheet, and is closely packed from neck to toe, and covered with a number of other blankets, preferably with a feather bed: the amount of covering being regulated by the difficulty of perspiration: to any diseased part a wet compress is applied; and it is generally requisite to enclose a urinal in its proper place. If there be headache or fulness of the vessels of the head, the wet (evaporating) compress must be kept on it.

This operation is generally performed the first thing in the morning, so early as four o'clock; or if the sweating is with difficulty produced, an after period of the day, when the patient is warmed by exercise, is selected. When perspiration breaks out (which is sometimes, especially at first, several hours after the packing,) it is allowed to continue a longer or shorter time, according to the necessities of the treatment, and the *tolerance* of the constitution; during this time the window is opened to admit fresh air, and the patient is supplied with a small glass of cold water every quarter of an hour. The active exercise of the limbs in the blanket, sometimes recommended to promote perspiration, is, on the grounds above stated, dangerous counsel, as it is bad practice. Having duly (and too often, *unduly*) sweated, the patient is unpacked, and steps into a shallow bath, preferably a plunge-bath, if at hand, containing tepid or cold water. If the shallow bath be used, the water should not be above a foot deep, and he should be thoroughly rubbed from two to ten minutes by an attendant, and have a few buckets of cold water poured over

him. After a little practice, the cold plunge-bath is preferred as possessing more tonic power; or two baths are used, one cold, the other having the chill taken off; the patient transferring himself from one to the other. In all cases, as a general rule, the patient washes the face, head, and chest just before immersion.

This transition from copious perspiration to cold water is not only perfectly innocuous, but highly salutary. A powerful reaction, and a high degree of exhilaration and vigor are the result. Active exercise should then be taken, if possible, and the prescribed quantity of water drunk before breakfast.

In this process, there is a powerful revulsion of the fluids of the body from the centre to the surface. Hence there must be a general elimination of morbid elements by the skin. This is manifested in the change of the nature of the perspiration as the process is persevered in: from clear, aqueous and devoid of smell, it becomes colored, viscid, glutinous, fetid, &c. The odor, and sometimes the *color* of medicines, in the sweat of those who have "drugged" much, is very remarkable. The urine also alters in like manner; even the breath and open sores come to partake of the same fetor. These morbid phenomena *appear* to be *critical*, and are hailed as tokens of convalescence. They are generally intense in proportion to the powers of reaction; and the reaction is *cæteris paribus*, in proportion to the suddenness and intensity of the stimulation produced by the change from heat to cold.

In persons of full habit, of inflammatory diathesis, or laboring under pulmonary congestions; in cases characterised by much nervous debility; in fevers, catarrhs, &c., the sweating blanket is bad practice, and should give place to the wet sheet.

The blanket perspiration—in cases where it is *tolerated* and indicated, as in gouty and rheumatic subjects, and in cold, sluggish, and phlegmatic temperaments—is a much more favorable preparative for the cold bath, than the sweat produced by *heat from without*, as in the vapor bath. The chief noxious effect in this case is from so much heated air being inhaled by the lungs, and consequently not only irritating the lungs by its heat, but robbing

them of their due supply of oxygen by diluting it. The cool air inhaled by the lungs in the sweating blanket, and the cool liquid taken into the stomach, make an essential difference in favor of the latter process.—*Dr. Balbirnie.*

#### THE DRINKING OF WATER.

The advantages of drinking water are not modern notorieties, though abundantly more common since Temperance Societies have laid the axe to the root of the tree of the most prolific moral and physical evils. The health and strength, the hearty appetite, the vigorous digestion, the unclouded mind, and the unfailing spirits of water drinkers, have always been remarked. There is no constitution, age, sex or season, wherein pure water disagrees. It allays thirst better than any other drink. It cools the stomach, soothes irritation, and astringes relaxation of its mucous lining; it mixes with the alimentary masses it meets there, it softens, penetrates, breaks up and dilutes the too solid parts; thus at once facilitating their passage along the intestinal tube, and affording a medium in which to present more extensively the nutritious particles of the food to the absorbed mouths of the lacteals.

Taken in larger quantity and beyond these ends, pure water is rapidly absorbed from the surface of the stomach, and is carried with the blood and mixes with it, through the entire rounds of the circulation, penetrating to every part of the body, permeating every tissue: it dissolves and abstracts in its course morbid elements of effete materials, affording both the requisite condition to give effect to chemical combinations, and the medium of their elimination in new shapes for the system—literally *washing out* all its surfaces and canals—*scouring off* the accumulating animal debris, or the excess of materials introduced into the economy over and above its nominal wants. That this powerful *draining* of the system, and evacuation of morbid elements, or effete materials, in a result of the copious dilution of the fluids with water, is manifest; because the blood-vessels can only contain a determinate quantity of fluid, and the essential constitution of the blood, as regards the relative

proportion of water, remains nearly uniform. What is in excess, therefore, continually passes off by the two chief emunctories of the fluids, the kidneys and the skin, and is always more or less highly charged with impurities. Any undue tenacity or consistency of the blood is thus diminished, and the exit of any effete or noxious elements capable of being dissolved or diluted by it, is facilitated.

In this way the elements of the body are clarified—the blood purified. The process has only to be repeated sufficiently often, and continued sufficiently long, to evacuate anything acid, acrid, irritating, or effete; and without the forced, unnatural, and exhausting efforts of the organism which drugs induce.

Oxygen is co-important with food to the continuance of life: if the place of pre-eminence is to be assigned to either, it is oxygen. Water drunk in considerable quantities unquestionably affords oxygen for the purposes of the economy: it is thus supplementary to the function of the lungs. Water is not devoid of nutriment, as some assert. The water-drinker who attempts his long morning walks without drinking, will soon be convinced of this.

To the beneficial effects of free water-drinking, active exercise is essential; otherwise the excess of fluid introduced into the system, does not pass off freely by the kidneys or the skin, and oppression of the stomach and a temporary plethora of the circulation, are the results. When the kidneys and skin act freely, there is no *gêne*, oppression, or repugnance of the stomach to it. The activity of the skin and kidneys, and the amount of exercise taken, must be the measure of the quantity of water to be drunk. There is no absolute rule on the subject. Some inconvenience may be experienced at first by certain persons; the taking of it, however, must be persevered in. It is understood that the water be unexceptionable in quality; the less foreign ingredients it contains the better: the fresher from the fountain, the cooler, and more sparkling—the more carbonic acid it contains, the better. The cardinal rule for all persons must be to drink as much and as frequently as possible, short of producing a disagreeable distension of the stomach; the

largest part of the daily average to be taken before breakfast. Active exercise must always be taken during the drinking. If active exercise cannot be taken, and if the body be chilly, much water is inadmissible: large drafts of cold water too much rob the system of animal heat in these circumstances, and produce disagreeable oppression of the stomach, determining constriction of the interior vessels and congestion of the tissues.

Between breakfast and dinner, when active exercise is to be again resumed, is the second time for the free drinking of water. It is to be drunk very moderately at meals, and for two hours after, especially if the patient's digestive powers are weak or have been deranged. In the afternoon and evening walk, the patient to complete his prescribed dose, or to drink according to the amount and duration of the exercise taken.

Great excess is committed by the patients at Graefenberg, and some other water establishments, in the drinking of water. From twelve to twenty-four half-pint tumblers of water should be the minimum and maximum doses; and are enough, or more than enough, to accomplish any salutary purpose in the economy. The diluent effect of such an amount of water, conjoined with active exercise, may be readily conceived—washing out crudities from the stomach and alimentary canal, attenuating and eliminating morbid secretions, dissolving accumulations, and lending the aid of its oxygen to carry on the work of decomposition, and facilitating the reconstitution of the tissues. Its mere bulk will often provoke the peristaltic movement of the bowels. It powerfully assists in the dilution and passage of the heavy meals which the patient's improved appetite and digestion call for and dispose of. No wine, spirits, or ale, are half so potent a promoter of the vermicular motions or "peristaltic persuader," nor produce so brisk animal spirits. The convivial hilarity of water-drinkers is remarkable.—*Dr. Balbinnie.*

#### LAVEMENTS AND INJECTIONS.

Lavements and injections of cold water are staple articles of water-cure treatment. The former thoroughly remedy

constipation; and afford relief in certain cases of diarrhæa. Their use for the former purpose may safely be left to the discretion of the patient: or at least should be a standing order; if the other processes of the cure fail to produce a daily evacuation. A large quantity, as two pints, taken to produce distension of the colon, and then immediately rendered, will generally operate more effectually than a small quantity, which is apt to be retained and absorbed, and fail of its effect; a second lavement may sometimes be necessary fully to relieve the bowels. The best time for its use is immediately after breakfast. This is its use as an ordinary measure of hygiene. In the treatment of the disease it is a great subsidiary aid; but its administration must be under professional direction.

Cold injections into the urethra and vagina are of indispensable necessity in all chronic or acute mucous or muco-purulent discharges of those passages. For leucorrhœa and uterine catarrh, the most effectual restoration of the relaxed mucous lining, when the *fountain of the issue* has been dried up (which ordinary water remedies will fail to do,) is the introduction of a small tube (speculum) into the passage, and retained while the patient takes the cold hip-bath. This instrument is four inches long and of various calibres, from half an inch to two inches in diameter, made of a sheet of zinc wire-work. This allows the water to come in contact with the walls of the passage. Its introduction is not painful; and its salutary results inconceivable by those who have not used it. In painful uterine affections, in dysmenorrhœa, cancer, neuralgia, (the irritable uterus of Gooch,) used in the tepid hip-bath, it is an unfailing resource. In passive uterine hæmorrhage it is a *specific*; but the soundest knowledge and discretion must dictate its use in such cases.—*Dr. Balbirnie.*

“Hydropathy is calculated to do much good. I find it a most powerful auxiliary in persuading men to join our glorious society, and take the total abstinence pledge.”—*Father Mathew.*

“We never repent of having eaten too little.”—*Jefferson.*

DO STIMULANTS GIVE STRENGTH?—A great deal of mischief has arisen from the misapplication of the term “strength” to the intoxicating power of “strong drinks,” as they are called. Potations are said to be “strong,” and thence, I have no doubt, first arose the silly notion that they possess the power of strengthening the body—of communicating some portion of their own strength, I suppose, to the body of the potator. People seem to suppose that by swallowing strong drinks they actually swallow strength; as though strength were some tangible substance which can be chewed, swallowed and assimilated like a potatoe. We say that onions have a “strong smell,” and we might as well expect to derive strength from swallowing onions as to do so by drinking fluids which have a strong flavor. We call them strong, because they affect us strongly; and this of itself is another proof of their mischievous tendency; for whatever affects us *strongly* cannot be merely “chip-pin porridge.” And if it be not good and necessary, it must of necessity be not only simply injurious but highly so.—*Dr. Ed. Johnson.*

#### SINGULAR EPITAPHS.

Dr. Wilson, the distinguished practitioner of water at Malvern, in England, tells that while wandering in the burial ground attached to the picturesque old Abbey-church raised by the old monks in Malvern, he found engraved upon an unpretending slab the following lines:

*“Pain was my portion,  
And physic was my food;  
Groans was my devotion,  
And drugs done me no good.”*

This epitaph is not very different from another we have heard quoted, something like the following:

*“I was well;  
Wished to be better,  
Took physic,  
And here I lie.”*

“Hydropathy does but assert the supremacy of God.”—*Dr. E. Johnson.*

MRS. MARY S. GOVE.

We noticed, in a former number, the fact that Mrs. Mary S. Gove was at Lebanon Springs, devoting her energies to the cause of hydropathy. We expressed a hope that she would remain at that place permanently. Mrs. Gove has, for many years, been severely afflicted with disease of the lungs. Dangerous and almost fatal hæmorrhage from those organs has, at different times, taken place; and, from the knowledge of the human system she had acquired, she always, in such instances, resorted to that greatest of agents for arresting hæmorrhage, cold water. At Lebanon the arduous labors she underwent proved too much for her slender frame. Hæmorrhage again recurred, and she was obliged to desist. We advised her at once to try the effect of the air of the city of New York, which is considerably milder than that of the hills at Lebanon. The double object of less care and a milder air, two very important considerations, would thus become available. At the solicitation of friends, Mrs. Gove has come to the city. We are happy to notice, furthermore, that she still intends giving her talents to the subject of health. She is about to receive a splendid *manikin* from Paris, which will aid materially in illustrating the subjects she is already so well prepared to teach. Instruction to mothers on the female frame is, in this country, and at this day, greatly needed—the opinions of some medical men to the contrary notwithstanding. If people set thinking well for themselves, on health, nine tenths at least of physicians' fees will be prevented; and this is one of the greatest hindrances to the spread of hydropathy. People very soon learn too much about teaching themselves and the preventing of diseases. This will not do. "The world owes us, (medical men,) a

living. We must be supported." Alas! what a world we live in!

We shall take pleasure, hereafter, in noticing more at length the advantages to be derived from an attendance upon the instructions of Mrs. Gove. When Mr. Combe was in this country, he spoke in terms of high commendation of her talents as a teacher upon physiology and health. Ladies, friends of hydropathy, we advise you strongly to listen to the instructions of Mrs. Gove.

The following cases are given at our request, and others from the same authority will hereafter appear:

*Dr. Shew*, the following are cases which were treated by water under my observation several years since.

*Case of Typhus Fever.*—Miss Judith M. Sargent was attacked with typhus fever at Ware, Mass., twelve years since. The fever was of a malignant form. She resided in my family; her health had been very poor for years. We called Dr. James Peterson to attend her. We were fully convinced of the virtues of water. The Dr. remarked that he believed nothing was needed but water externally and internally applied, to cure fever; "but," said he, "I cannot remain with the patient; accident may frustrate our endeavors. If you will take the responsibility, and administer water, I shall think you do well." I agreed to make the effort to treat the case with water, and during the fever fits the patient was constantly bathed with very cold water from a deep well. Clean linen was daily put about her; every thing offensive or slightly soiled was removed, and fresh air at all times admitted. She drank freely and constantly cold water. Napkins, wet in cold water, were constantly applied to the head, till relief was obtained.

The recovery was considered then remarkably rapid. In three weeks Miss J. was attending to ordinary duties, with much better health than before this attack of fever.

*Case of Scarlet Fever.*—Eight years since a young man was attacked with malignant scarlet fever, attended with deli-

rium. His throat was terribly swollen and inflamed for several days; he had not a minute of rest or sleep. The ordinary allopathic remedies were used with an aggravation of all the symptoms. No relief was obtained till cold water was plentifully applied, and wet cloths put over the chest and around the body. He then slept and awoke free from delirium. From this time water was constantly applied during the fever fits, and wet bandages were put on the head and chest. He drank water most freely. The patient recovered, to the astonishment of those who had witnessed the malignity of the disease before the exhibition of water.

*Case of Red Gravel.*—Mrs. ———, of Boston, was afflicted with red gravel. The complaint was of long standing. She commenced cold bathing and diet of fruit and vegetables, hoping to improve her general health, but not expecting to remove her local difficulties. Some months of careful living, bathing and drinking water, wrought quite a change in her health. She continued to drink the purest water she could obtain, and made all her habits as right as possible. After some months, to her astonishment, she began to pass large quantities of red sand without pain. In no very long time, she passed a pint of this sand. Perseverance in plain living and the use of water restored her to excellent health. This was some years since. Yours, respectfully,  
M. S. Gove.

**HORRORS OF OPIUM EATING.**—A writer in India, who has been a constant witness of the terrible effects of opium eating, draws a most startling picture of the horrible sensation to which the victim of this practice subjects himself. In two years from the time he commences its use he must expect to die, and a death most terrible, and which makes one tremble to think of. After the habit becomes confirmed, the countenance presents an ashy paleness—the eyes assume a wild brightness—the memory fails—the gait totters—mental and moral courage sinks, and frightful marmasus and atrophy reduces the victim to a ghastly spectre,—a living skeleton. There is no slavery of the body and mind equal to that of the opium

taker.—Once habituated to its doses as a fictitious stimulant, every thing will be endured rather than the privations of it, and the unhappy victim endures all the consciousness of his own degraded state, while he is ready to sell all he has in the world—to part with his family and friends—rather than surrender the use of this fatal drug—this transient delight. The pleasant sensations and imaginative ideas arising at first soon pass away; they become fainter and fainter, and at last give place to horrid dreams and appalling pictures of death. Spectres of fearful visages haunt the mind: the light of heaven is converted into the gloom of hell; sleep, “balmy sleep,” flies forever; night succeeds day, to be clothed in never-ending horrors; incessant sickness—vomiting and total derangement of the digestive organs ensue, and death at last relieves the victim of this sensual enjoyment.—*Sun.*

**TOBACCO TRADE OF PHILAD'A.**—The total amount of inspections of tobacco at the city warehouse of Philadelphia, from the 1st day of January up to the 1st November, inclusive, was 3575 hhds. The stock on hand on the 1st of November, was 2662 hhds.

The tobacco trade of Baltimore, we are gratified to say, is steadily on the increase. The inspections of the present year will amount to seventy thousand hogsheads. The advantages which Baltimore possesses on the score of climate, moderate business charges, active competition of foreign and domestic capital, and other collateral circumstances, render it the best tobacco market of the Union, both for buyers and sellers. With her railroad, finished to the Ohio, her trade in this article would be vastly increased.—*Balt. American, Nov. 14.*

It is, we believe, pretty generally understood that the use of tobacco in this country is fast increasing. There are a variety of causes by which we are to account for this change in the habits of society,—the prosperous state of the country, the greater facilities for growing, manufacture and transportation, the practice of using the article becoming more and more

fashionable. But one great cause, certainly by us not to be overlooked, is to be found in the temperance movements of the day. As long as it is not understood that, in order to secure the highest degree of bodily and mental health, all stimulants are to be avoided so long as people will substitute to a greater or less extent, one or more of the forms of artificial stimuli for another. The same as of tobacco, is true of opium, tea and coffee. It is said upon statistical authority, that during the first three years of the Washingtonian movement, the consumption of opium had increased four-fold, and that of tobacco ten-fold. The temperance movement, inestimably good as it is, will yet come far short of its thorough work, until friends of the great movement can be induced to carry out in practice the truth, that all poisonous stimulants are to be avoided. This is the great doctrine of hydropathy.

## WATER-CURE JOURNAL.

NEW-YORK, JANUARY 1, 1846.

### DIET AT GRAEFENBERG—SOME RULES TO BE OBSERVED IN DIET.

It will be recollected that we regard Priessnitz, the founder of hydropathy, as being one of the shrewdest and closest observers, and the greatest genius in curing disease, that has ever lived. No man of whom we have any knowledge, previous to his time, has met with any thing like the success of Priessnitz. It would be natural, then, to expect that the observations of this man in regard to diet, would be at least highly valuable. We are convinced there has been considerable of misapprehension on the part of some writers concerning the diet of Graefenberg. It has been represented to us as being decidedly bad—consisting of a variety of crude, indigestible, gross and pernicious articles. We were pleased of late in hav-

ing a conversation with a gentleman, (Mr. Colvin, of Albany,) a short time only from Graefenberg, to learn more minutely the particulars concerning the diet there. He informs us that if, in the hurry of providing for some hundreds of patients, some food of an unfit character should at times find its way upon the tables, there is always such an abundance of that which is of the best quality that any one is himself alone to blame if he partakes of bad food.

The changes that Priessnitz has made in diet, from that now ordinarily used, are numerous. Different individuals, and at different periods of time, have come to like conclusions as to the most healthy forms of food. The coarse or brown bread has had many advocates; and the same may be said of the use of cold water as the only drink. But no one has done any thing that will at all compare with Priessnitz in *persuading men to carry out his precepts*. For his indomitable perseverance in this thing, he deserves great praise. It is one thing, and no very difficult task, to *theorize and teach*, but a very different one to practise, and cause others to do the same.

The first consideration to which we should direct attention in the selection of diet, is that of the nature of the articles to be used. Those substances only should be taken that are capable of supporting, and are friendly to life. Probably the greatest error in the dietetic habits of the race generally, is that of partaking of food that is *too rich in nutrition*. The system of almost every one is constantly overtasked by food that is too rich—not so much in *bulk* by any means, as a general thing, as some suppose, for if the food is plain and coarse enough, little is to be feared on this score. A man famishes in a few weeks if he attempts to subsist on fine wheat bread and water, but if he substitutes that which is coarse, as of wheat.



or rye, in which none of the bran or husk has been separated, he thrives perfectly well. He might, it is true, at first lose some of his bad blood and flesh, but there would be no danger of starvation, and very little of having to send for the doctor.

Priessnitz says, decidedly, "If you wish the best cure, live upon coarse bread and water." And again he says, "When I prescribe bread and a tumbler of milk for breakfast, you must take two tumblers of water, because your food is too rich."

*Animal Food not indispensable.*—As to the necessity or utility of using animal food there are differences of opinion. It is a misnomer to call any kind of diet "vegetable," (as has been done to some extent in this country,) so long as those animal substances, milk, butter, cream, and eggs, are used. These articles are as strictly *animal* as flesh meat, and vegetable diet must either stand or fall without these at all being included. Whatever may be said in favor of animal food, facts abundantly prove that it is not indispensable to life and health.

*Too much Animal Food eaten in this country.*—It is pretty generally admitted that in this country there is by far too much animal food used. There are few but that believe it to be better to partake of flesh meat but once a day, whereas it is generally taken two or three times, and in full quantity.

*Kinds most suitable to use.*—None but the lean, healthy flesh should be used. The Jewish law concerning the kinds to be allowed should be rigidly lived up to, not because it is a Jewish law, but because it is, and ever will be, a law of the human system, that the flesh of "clean beasts" is more compatible with health than the unclean. The regulations set forth in this law every one examines for himself. The fat of animals should always be avoided. "Ye shall eat no manner of fat of

ox, of sheep, or of goat," is a law written as indelibly upon the human constitution as Omnipotence could write it. Fat or animal oil of any kind, including also butter, is always gross, hard of digestion, and consequently unfit to be eaten. It causes a great deal of indigestion, biliousness, sallowness of complexion, eruptions, constipation, bowel complaints, depression of spirits, and ills too numerous to mention.

*Milk, Cream, Buttermilk, and Sour Milk.*

—These are, on the whole, the least objectionable forms of animal food. There are some, however, for whom fresh milk is more unsuitable than a moderate quantity of plain flesh. Such persons generally bear it much better in the cooked forms of food, as in milk-toast, porridge with bread, plain baked puddings, custard, and the like.

Cream is a decidedly better article of diet than butter. Besides, as a condiment instead of butter, it may be used in a variety of ways in the cookery of plain food. It must be remembered, however, that it is a very rich article, and contains much of the oily or oleaginous principle. It is not, therefore, very easy of digestion, although as much more so than butter, as it is more soluble in water.

Some few have a great liking for buttermilk. When fresh it is a good article of the kind. It is less nutritious than cream, and in that respect is less objectionable. It will agree with the sick often where cream does not. Some have much confidence in buttermilk as a sort of medicinal diet. When it is made into a porridge and sweetened a little, it is by no means the most objectionable article to eat with bread.

Sour milk, or "bonny clabber," if that is the right name, I believe to be the very best form of animal food that can be used. It may be a little sweetened, and eaten with bread and potatoes and the like. It

can always be obtained fresh and good in a few hours, by setting milk in a warm place. Buttermilk is often much more difficult to procure. It is decidedly easier of digestion than the sweet milk or cream. Farmers tell us that swine become unhealthy, and often die if kept on milk, whey and like food in a sweet state. These should first become sour before being given to the animals.

Priessnitz furnishes the "bonny clabber" upon his table the year round. He long ago discovered that it was easier of digestion than the sweet milk.

*Farinaceous Food.*—Farinaceous articles, as wheat, rye, corn, rice, buckwheat, potatoes, sage, tapioca, arrow-root, &c. &c., are in general more easy of digestion than animal food, and consequently cause a less expenditure of the vital powers in the process of digestion. Those kinds of food are more conducive to strength, health, and the general well-being of the race than animal food.

*Frequency and Regularity of Meals.*—

A vast deal of depraved health is caused by eating too frequently and irregularly. In children especially these errors are common. They are allowed to eat, and eat, and eat, until a terrible fever, dysentery, cholera morbus, or inflammation of some vital part, is brought on, so that it is nigh a miracle they are saved. The very great proportion of deaths that occur in infancy and childhood is much owing to improprieties in food. No child that has teeth should, under any circumstances, have food more than four times a day, and we believe that three times in the twenty-four hours would be better. A great many older persons; for example, such as are sedentary, clergymen, lawyers, merchants, teachers, clerks, students, sempstresses, &c. &c., will find a decided change for the better, by taking food *only twice per day*. The wife of the editor, and

numbers of others, have tested this matter thoroughly. She has at this time a remarkably healthy and large infant at the breast, of about three months of age, and for a number of months, indeed mostly for about three years, she has taken food but twice a day. She has at this time great cares—by far too great—too much bodily exertion as well as mental, and yet she has lost no flesh in restricting herself to but two meals per day. She has made the experiment repeatedly of taking the third meal, but has invariably found two meals to be the best. A little girl we have, about two and a half years of age, has for the past year and a half generally taken but two meals a day. Her health and freedom from disease are that of one of a thousand. She drinks neither milk, tea nor coffee,—only cold water; eats no animal food other than what little of milk is used in the preparation of the plainest forms of vegetable food. Coarse bread, rice, potatoes and fruits—these are to her the very luxuries of life.

The canon of Jefferson, that we never repent of having eaten too little, is very true. Man's greatest bodily enemy is his propensity continually to over-eat. If he can but manage to govern his appetite, nothing is too great for him to accomplish.

We have thus given crudely, hastily, and imperfectly, a few ideas concerning diet. We hope hereafter to do the subject a better justice, and meantime we trust these hints may prove in some degree useful. Hydropathy brings us to understand, and to do, in food and drinks, what has never before been conceived of. It is likewise, not only *the system of systems* for healing, but the harbinger of temperance universal.

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Water treatment requires as much skill and good judgment as any other mode.

**BATHING TO BE PRACTISED DURING THE TIME OF MENSTRUATION.—TREATMENT IN SUPPRESSED AND PAINFUL MENSTRUATION, &c.**

*Dr. Shew:* Will you permit one to ask of you, through the columns of your valuable journal, an answer to the following important questions:

1. When you say every person should practise bathing daily, do you mean to include the time of the menstrual period, and if so, what mode or modes of bathing do you recommend?

2. In cases of suppression of menstruation from the taking of cold, what treatment do you prescribe?

3. What do you recommend in cases of painful menstruation?

By answering the above questions, you will confer a favor upon many of your readers. M.

*Answers.*

1. It is not only perfectly safe, but highly useful, to continue bathing during the menstrual period. It is then even more necessary than at ordinary times. The individual will experience less inconvenience, be more cheerful, and in every respect, bodily and mentally, decidedly better to continue bathing during this time. It is often advisable to take two or three baths instead of one per day; and, as a general rule, these should be of similar temperature and kind to those ordinarily taken.

If a person is undergoing a course of treatment at an expensive establishment away from home, it is a consideration of some importance, not to be obliged to lose one fourth part of the time, by being required to discontinue treatment during menstruation. This is done by some of the practitioners of the new system, and for what reason it is difficult to conceive, except it be from ignorance of the plainest principles of physiological science, or from motives of gain. Our reputation as a physician may stand or fall upon what we

have said as to the safety and efficacy of the practice we here recommend. We speak decidedly in this matter, and from the experience of years.

2. We said in a former number, that we had been led to observe in a number of instances, that a vigorous course of bathing or treatment sometimes caused a total suppression of the menstrual function for months, for a year, or more, and that this occurrence is not necessarily attended with any unpleasant or injurious effects. The question by our correspondent refers, however, to those cases in which we say a cold is taken. This is called, in technical language, *amenorrhœa*, and is ordinarily neither more or less than a symptom indicating the state of the general system. Hence the treatment must be general. Those who are accustomed to cold often obtain immediate relief by a cold shower bath. But such are very seldom inconvenienced in this way. It is by far oftener the indolent, or those who from necessity or otherwise, do not accustom themselves to open air, exercise, bathing, and changes of weather, that are afflicted in this manner. A good vapor bath or two, or a mild perspiration two or three times in the wet sheet, in either case with a thorough ablution, the water being tepid, cool or cold, according to the power of endurance, with a good share of exercise in the open air, regulating the habits,—these are the means to be used. Hip baths, warm foot baths at night, warmth to the feet, and the drinking of much fluid, warm or cold, it is well understood are useful means. Cause a perspiration at night, sleep warm, and take the cold bath in the morning. This is good treatment.

3. Painful menstruation (*dysmenorrhœa*.) has a variety of causes. Like suppression, it often arises from damp and cold. It may arise from any cause or

causes that operate to deteriorate health. The general health is always at fault.

It is one of the most severe and painful affections to which the female frame is subject. The grinding and bearing down pains, as they are termed, are sometimes more severe even than those of labor, so that for years the individual suffers more at each monthly sickness than is ordinarily suffered in childbirth.

The luxurious and idle are more subject to this disease, but attacks those who are too active as well as the inactive. Living as the world does, without knowledge of the natural laws, it finds its subjects among all classes.

The water treatment is peculiarly applicable, in this complaint, both to prevent and to cure. In many instances, a short time of regular daily bathing, with suitable attention to air, exercise, and diet, will be sufficient to effect a decided change. In other cases, a more thorough course will be needed. Every possible means should be taken to restore and invigorate the general health.

When the severe pains are experienced, a variety of treatment may be resorted to. If there is chilliness, a warm or vapor bath may be taken, to be followed, as usual, by a cool or cold one. Hip baths, with much rubbing of the back, loins, and abdomen, are very useful. The body bandage is also good, and the wet sheet, to soothe, is invaluable. By the wet sheets, hip and other baths, and bandages, we can, like magic, reduce the pain, even when the most powerful opiates fail of accomplishing the object. There is little danger of using cold water too much, as long as any pain of this kind lasts. It should be mentioned, that to prevent the pain, it is best sometimes, and perhaps always, to use alternately hot and cold applications locally, as by hip baths and fomentations, or bandages. To remove deep-seated

pain, heat is often the best means, and as to the time when, a little experience or trial will indicate. The cold applications likewise take better effect when the part to which they are applied is hotter than natural, so that heat may often be well used, first to increase the temperature, afterwards to be diminished by cold water. This practice is upon the same principle as that of the ancient Romans in going instantly from a hot vapor bath to a cold one, and the Russians to this day practise in the same way.

Women who labor under very painful menstruation, especially if it be profuse, are not apt to conceive. This kind of barrenness is almost always curable by water.

If there is profuse menstruation (*menorrhagia*), whether attended with much pain or not, the same general principles of treatment are to be observed. In cases when the very life seems to be running away, the water treatment will be found to be incomparably the most beneficial that can be resorted to. It is by no means common for these cases to be regulated perfectly the first month of using water. I have known this to take place in repeated instances in which a great variety of means had been used, and without avail. If the disease is allowed to go on, it is certain to result in great debility, headache, listlessness, despondency, paleness of countenance, chilliness, coldness of the extremities, constipation, diarrhæa, and not unfrequently dropsy, are caused by this complaint.

*Chlorosis*.—We cannot close without speaking of that common complaint, generally affecting young females, called chlorosis, or green sickness. It is the non-appearance of the menstrual discharge, and if allowed to continue, inevitably results in a serious derangement of the general health. It is characterized by a pale, lurid complexion, great debility,

listlessness, hurried and laborious breathing, palpitation, derangement of the stomach and bowels, and, in short, a depraved state of the general health. Surprisingly efficacious is water treatment in this disease, and as we have explained the means of invigorating the general health, every one will know how to proceed. If the system has been much weakened, it must be remembered time will be required to effect the restoration to good health. The system of the young is more susceptible, however, and the treatment proves so speedily beneficial, that such feel great encouragement to proceed.

#### CHILD-BIRTH—TREATMENT OF INFANTS— FROM NOTES BY THE EDITOR.

Mrs. C. a poor woman of this city, not long since, made known to me, that in her destitute condition she would receive, as a great favor, if I would attend her in child-birth. She informed me that on previous like occasions, she had suffered beyond description, both at the time of confinement and subsequently. She had borne two children—the first it was necessary for her physician to destroy before the birth could take place. The birth of the second was also attended with the greatest difficulty. It was now some weeks before her expected time. Her husband had deserted her, so that she was compelled to follow her occupation (that of a sempstress,) during the whole day and much of the night. From this constant sitting and confinement within doors, she had become much enfeebled, and had a severe and constant pain in the side. I directed her to wash the whole body daily twice, when not chilly, in Croton water, and to take each half day as much exercise in the open air as she could possibly find time for and could practise without causing too great fatigue. The woman followed the directions, and was at once sensibly

benefitted. The severe pain in the side left her almost immediately. When her period arrived, delivery took place in a very short time, and comparatively with little suffering. Bathing in mild forms was practised the day of, and subsequent to, delivery, and this patient walked about each day, and was scarcely confined a single hour.

There was one fact to be mentioned in her management of the infant. She was directed at first to have it washed in tepid water. Supposing she would follow the same course for the future daily washings, I made no further inquiry till some days after, when I ascertained that she had used the water of the natural temperature. I asked her why she did not moderate the temperature of the water as at first, and as people generally do. She answered, that when she bathed herself before the child's birth, every bath seemed to strengthen it very much; and, therefore, she chose to use the cold water now for the same reason. She had the good sense always to keep the child sufficiently warm, particularly after the bath. It is proper to mention that the Croton water at this time was not far from 65° F. The child has been, and is now, one of the healthiest and most vigorous I have ever seen of the age.

The above notes were written some months since. The case is again brought to mind by the mother's coming to-day to work for us at her usual occupation. She says, "What a strange thing it is my little baby has never been sick a single hour. What wouldn't I give if my other boy could have been so." The child is one of the brightest imaginable; knowing, observing, good natured, and now, at the age of six months, sits near his mother, playing, laughing, crowing—the most perfect picture of health. He is every day, and generally twice, washed in cold water. The

other boy had been very subject to croup. The mother feared much that this child would suffer in the same way. I told her that whenever she saw the least symptoms of the disease, to give at once a thorough washing in cold water, put well wrung wet towels about the chest, and then to get him warm, and as often as the symptoms returned, no matter if ten times in a single night, repeat the process, and she need not fear the croup. In every instance when the least wheezing has taken place, she at once cut it short by the mode recommended. This is the kind of treatment that mothers should understand, such as many already do understand, and as will eventually cause a large part of physicians to be under the necessity of changing their occupation.—[ED. JOUR.]

New York, 12th mo. 12th, 1845.

#### WARM AND HOT APPLICATIONS OF WATER.

We have said elsewhere that writers upon hydropathy generally do not appear to understand well the effects of warm and hot applications; or, in other words, their readers are left to infer that none but cold ones are used. The common-sense fact is, that warm and hot applications, in many cases, are highly beneficial, while cold ones are injurious. Hot fomentations are very useful, for example, in cases of severe colic, spasms of the stomach, in acute pleurisy, in severe pain of the spine, the kidneys, or the womb, and in fact in deep-seated pains generally, *hot* applications, oft repeated until the pain is subdued, are to be used in preference to any others. It is entirely a wrong notion that in water treatment we are to use *cool* or *cold* applications only. As a general fact it may be stated, that when the body, or any part, is cold, it is to be warmed; and on the contrary, that whenever the body or any part of it is hot, it must be cooled. In regard to the warming of the body it is,

to be remembered that the natural means, as by frictions, exercise, &c., are the best when practicable; but when impracticable, artificial warmth is to be resorted to. Sometimes it is better to practise alternately with hot and cold applications. Good judgment is to be exercised in the use of all remedial means, and in general, if either a cold or hot application does not agree, or causes an increase of pain, the opposite treatment is necessary. There is no danger in experimenting, if we look well to the sensations as a guide.

The best mode of applying wet bandages, warm or hot, (called usually fomentations,) is by means of flannels wrung out of hot water. The hands are to be put in cold water first, to enable us the better to bear the heat, as in acute disease attended with severe pain, perseverance must be used. The wet fomentations are better to be covered with dry flannels, the more effectually to retain the heat.

It may be objected to these modes that applications, when above the natural temperature, are weakening. This we admit to be in general true; but in many instances it is better, with the hot cloths, even to blister the surface (although this is never necessary) than to allow the inflammation and pain to go on in some weaker and more important part. Besides, while one part—as, for instance, the whole side, in case of pleurisy—is being nearly blistered by heat to draw the blood outward, the general feverishness of the system can be removed by cool or cold applications made to other parts, by drinking, sponging the surface, &c. &c. Hot applications to parts, and warmth over a part, or even the whole of the body, will often be found highly useful.—[ED. JOUR.]

Vapor baths may be made very useful, in connection with the tepid, cool or cold bath.

**DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LINEN AND COTTON SHEETS, BANDAGES, &c., AS USED IN WATER-CURE.**—Some place much stress upon using linen instead of cotton in the appliances of water. We contend that for many purposes linen is best, but not always necessarily so. It is a more rapid conductor of caloric and moisture than cotton. Hence a person remains cold longer in a wet linen sheet than in a cotton one. If the object then is to cool or chill the system, the linen is decidedly *preferable*, but in case the sheet cannot be well borne, as when there is too low a state of the calorific functions of the system, and when quicker reaction or warmth is required, it is better to use a cotton sheet. Patients can, therefore, be at times much benefitted by the use of the cotton sheet, when the linen would prove too powerfully cooling. A good course of treatment can be administered, using only cotton sheets and bandages; but as a general rule, the linen material is to be preferred.

**BURNS.**—We often see going the rounds of the public prints, recipes for burns. Not many years will elapse before it will be generally understood in this country of general reading, that *water* applications are in all cases the best that can be made in the treatment of burns. If a burn is merely of small extent, we have only to apply cold water as long as it is productive of comfort, and the cure obtained. This is altogether more effectual than the old mode, or the homœopathic one, whichever we please to call it, of holding the part to the fire; a practice unnatural and revolting. If a burn is of such a character as to destroy a portion of the surface, leaving an ulcer, the treatment must be somewhat different. We must not only reduce the inflammation, (heat,) but must likewise continue the applications until a good de-

gree of healing has taken place; and it is particularly important to maintain the part of an agreeable and pleasant temperature, else a second inflammation is caused—a *cold*, as it is usually called—often a troublesome matter to deal with. After the pain is gone, fine wet cloths or wet lint, and a dry covering, suited to the feelings of comfort, are to be kept constantly applied until the cure is effected. Burns that are of large extent must be treated upon the same principle as small ones. In cases of a want of reaction, and chills, following a large burn, cold applications would prove injurious, and in some severe cases, dangerous. Local and general warmth, soothing and reviving applications are to be made. The patient should not be stimulated and poisoned by alcoholic or other heating stimulants, which always eventually do harm; but the heat of the body should be retained, and at the same time warm applications made until a reaction takes place, if fortunately such an occurrence is possible. Then we are again to combat the fever as usual by the cooling means.

It is an important fact—one that we had the good fortune to find out quite a number of years ago—that *a blister can never be formed under cold water*. Place the part instantly in the coldest water and the blister is prevented.

**THE AMERICAN PHRENOLOGICAL JOURNAL**, by O. S. Fowler, 132 Nassau street, N. Y.—This highly valuable monthly commences a new volume the beginning of the New Year. It is, as usual, full of interesting facts, miscellany, &c., &c., on the health, longevity, and happiness of the human race. Every family should have it. It forms a rare volume, and at only one dollar a year. Mr. Fowler has become distinguished as an author, lecturer and teacher upon his favorite subjects.

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☞ These three works may be sent by mail to any part of the United States, and, under the new post office law, at a very small expense. The three together are afforded at one dollar. The Water-Cure for Ladies, at 50 cents, or the Hand Book and Facts together, at the same; either of which sums may be enclosed and sent by mail. *Address, post paid, L. Barney, Water Cure Journal office, 56 Bond street, New York.*

**DR. SCHIEFERDECKER OF PHILADELPHIA.**—We have before alluded to this gentleman's practice. When we find that patients speak highly of their physician, and especially if this is true of those who take up their residence in his family for treatment, to become more thoroughly acquainted with the whole man, we must regard it as a true indication of worth and ability. We have been gratified, not unfrequently, with the good reports of patients who have

placed themselves under the charge of Dr. Schieferdecker. We have a brother (necessarily detained in Philadelphia,) who has been for some time undergoing his treatment, and is much benefitted. Again we wish the Doctor abundant success.

**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 woollen 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.

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