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JOEL SHEW, M. D., EDITOR.

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THE WATER-CURE.

(From the British and Foreign Medical Review. By John Forbes, M.D., F.R.S., F.G.S.)

[We quote the following article from the above-mentioned medical journal, the leading one in England, and perhaps equal to any in the world. Dr. Forbes does not understand the treatment fully, as Priessnitz practises it—he having discontinued sweating. The article is, however, a very valuable one, on the whole, and indicates progress.]

In consequence of the modern water-cure having been originated by a non-medical and uneducated man, and having been subsequently, for the most part, adopted and professed by lay practitioners, or by medical men of somewhat equivocal reputation,—and yet more, from the system being held out as a *panacea* or cure for all diseases, with an exclusive scorn of medicinal aid,—the medical profession, as a body, have naturally enough, and not inexcusably, treated it with much con-

tempt, not to say aversion, and have shown a pretty general determination not to admit it into the catalogue of therapeutic means. Exercising a natural influence on the public, medical men have succeeded in communicating to a large portion of the intelligent classes the feelings entertained by themselves. Thus hydropathy has become a tabooed subject, being either entirely excluded from medical journals and books, or only admitted into them for the purpose of being ridiculed or utterly denounced. Indeed, it is regarded almost as a violation of professional etiquette to mention this subject in the language of toleration, much more to speak of it with approbation. Accordingly, we think it not unlikely that some of our brethren, and those even of the most estimable, may regard our present article as a departure from what is medically proper, and will pronounce us almost worthy to have the severe sentence of “water-doctor” passed against us. We have, however, been too long accustomed to speak our opinions openly and boldly, when we believed them to be just, whether they were in accordance with the current notions or not, to be deterred, on the present occasion, by any apprehended risk of offending mere professional conventionalism. Whatever we conscientiously believe to be true in medical science, espe-

cially if, at the same time, calculated to promote the great end and aim of all professors of the healing art—the increase of the means of lessening the sufferings of mankind—that we shall freely and fearlessly promulgate, careless of personal consequences.

Our purpose, in this article, being carefully and calmly to investigate the real merits of the system now so widely established under the name of hydropathy, we hold ourselves absolved from mixing up this investigation with any considerations whatever respecting the merits or demerits, the objects or motives, of those who practise it. We regret to think that there is, and has been from the beginning, not a little quackery and mystification mixed up with really effective practice, in hydropathic establishments, and that not a few of the conductors of the water-establishments have been, and are, very ill-qualified to indicate, much less to direct and conduct, any therapeutic processes capable of modifying, in an important degree, the vital conditions and functions of the human body. If it shall appear, however, as we believe it will, on further examination, that the external application of cold water is capable of being beneficially applied, in the cure of diseases, in modes of greater efficacy, and to a much greater extent, than has been hitherto practised by medical men, there remains only one course for the members of the profession to pursue, viz: *to adopt the improvements*—if such they be—regardless of their origin, or their past or present relations. When the religious reformer proposed to adapt profane airs to church psalmody, saying that he saw no good reason why the devil should have all the good tunes to himself, he is generally supposed to have acted as wisely as he thought shrewdly and spoke quaintly. In like manner, we see no good reason why the doctors of the orthodox or legitimate school should refuse to accept good things, even at the hands of the hydropathists. They have done like things before now, as the pharmacopœia, in more pages than one, can testify; and we have not heard that there has been any great reason for that they did so. For our own parts, we

avow ourselves of such a catholic spirit, and so lowly minded withal, as to be ready to grasp any proffered good in the way of HEALING, whosoever may be the offerers, and wheresoever they may have found it. Not merely hydropathy, but even mesmerism, yea, stark-naked and rampant quackery itself, may, in this sense, be a welcome knocker at the gate of physic. It is not the demerits of the donor or the birth-place of the gift, that, in such a case, we are bound to look to—but simply whether it is qualified to aid us in our glorious and divine mission of soothing the pains of our fellow-men. If it is so qualified, the baseness of its source will be lost in the glory of its use; and, if aught of its original impurity still attaches to its application in our hands, the fault will be in us, not in it. A saint may sing the devil's tunes without contamination; a hero may wield the weapon he has wrested from a robber or a murderer; the medicament or the formula of the most arrant quack may be hallowed in the prescription of the true physician.

It is in this spirit we enter upon an investigation of the claims of Hydropathy, as propounded and practised by Priessnitz and his disciples. And we invite our readers to follow us in a like temper, convinced that they will be benefitted by an examination of the subject, whether they adopt our views or not. Some of our views we are sure they must adopt—particularly this: that cold water, applied in the manner of the hydropathists, is a powerful modifier of the condition of the human body, both in health and disease, and, when weighed in the therapeutic balance with other remedies, merits, at least, a fair trial in legitimate practice.

It will be an after-consideration in what manner, or under what circumstances, this trial can best be made; and, supposing the result of the trial to be satisfactory, it will be a yet further consideration, and one of great importance, how the remedy shall best be applied in the ordinary practice of medicine. We ourselves believe that distinct bathing establishments will still be found best for giving full effect to the hydropathic system, although we believe, also, that many parts

of it may be adopted in ordinary practice at the patients' own homes; and the whole of it certainly be conducted at the water-establishments under the authority and general direction of the ordinary medical attendants. If hydropathy is, as we believe, a therapeutic agent of great power and value, it would be worse than absurd to exclude it from legitimate medicine; but, if it is to be adopted by the profession, it can only be adopted in a strictly professional manner. If distinct establishments are found to be requisite for its complete and successful exhibition, the members of the medical profession can, of course, sanction and patronise those only which are conducted by legally qualified and competent practitioners. And they cannot be expected to show any countenance, even to those which, although under the superintendence of legally qualified persons, are conducted on empirical or absurdly exclusive principles. A hydropathic establishment should be simply a great bathing establishment, or water hospital, and should contain the means for using water in all its medicinal forms, hot as well as cold, in the form of vapour as well as liquid, medicated as well as pure. In such a hospital, although drugs would, doubtless, be but in slight requisition, it would be contrary to all rational proceedings to exclude their use entirely. The very fact of a case being sent to such a hospital presupposes the previous failure of drugs, or, at least, presumes their unsuitableness in that particular instance; and they would, for the most part, be dispensed with at the commencement of the treatment, at least: but no unprejudiced or competent observer can assert that drugs should be entirely banished from the treatment of any case at all times. The same scientific judgment and the same practical skill that prescribed the water-treatment as best calculated to fulfil the indications present at any one time, could alone determine whether, at any one time, medicaments might be proper, either as auxiliaries or substitutes.—Nothing but the blindest dogmatism or the wildest empiricism could maintain that, because the water-treatment is found useful, all other means must be useless;

or, reversely, that, because drugs are often found beneficial, that therefore all other kinds of treatment, hydropathy included, must be injurious. The absolute exclusionist, be he water-doctor or drug-doctor, is equally unreasonable and equally unjustifiable.

In the composition of the following article, we have derived our materials mainly from the published writings of hydropathists, but, also, partly from personal observation of the practice of hydropathy itself, and from the reports of patients who had been the subjects of it. We have been careful to select as our authorities the best informed and most impartial of the writers on the subject of the water-cure, and we have used our best endeavors to appropriate what alone seemed trustworthy. It is so extremely difficult for a writer, on any one side of a subject that has become the subject of active controversy, to avoid partiality in relating events and drawing inferences, that we make no apology to our authors for having on many occasions refused their evidence and rejected their conclusions. Many things, however, we have admitted on the authority of the writers alone, when they did not seem to be contradicted by other facts, and were in accordance with the general principles of physiology and therapeutics. We have so far admitted the validity of the maxim—*cuiuslibet in sua arte credendum*; and, so qualified, we think the propriety of the admission will not be gainsaid. But we have gone further than this. We have accepted at the hands of our hydropathic authors more than one alleged fact and explanation, even although their validity seems to us questionable. And we have done this because the statements are of a kind justly to challenge attention, and to demand thorough investigation.

On the whole, then, we wish the reader to be prepared to find in the following article, not simply an exposition of the doctrines of hydropathy, as they appear to us well established, but such also as they are laid down by the best authorities of the water school; one of our objects in writing it being, not merely to endeavor to ascertain what we consider as truth,

for the benefit of our readers, but likewise to incite them to make inquiry and examination for themselves, in order that agencies, of such obvious potency on the human frame, may no longer be permitted free scope if evil, or no longer be debarred from ordinary medical practice, if good.

The internal and external use of water, in the treatment of disease, has been frequently discussed by physicians in all ages, from Hippocrates downwards.— Their opinions will be found cited in detail by the systematic writers on the subject of baths, and, among others, by Sir John Floyer and Lanzani. To them we refer such as are sufficiently curious to wish for an exact acquaintance with the subject, in its historical relations. For our present purpose, and to render the history of the medical use of water clear to the less minute student, we will group it under a few convenient heads.

1. According to Lanzani,* the true method of using cold water consists almost entirely in its internal administration, in very large doses, in certain stages of certain fevers. His work is most elaborate in every sense; learned, methodical, and comprehensive. It is divided into two books: the first devoted to an explanation of the causes, symptoms, complications, and nature of fever; the second, showing that copious imbibition of cold water is the best means of combating the symptoms, on scientific grounds, and consequently the best remedy for fever. This is obviously an argument somewhat theoretical, but it is supported by a chapter of cases, and backed by the opinions of a host of learned doctors, the author's predecessors. The actual value of the work is considerably diminished by its scientific character, because many of the doctrines held in its day have now become obsolete, and tend to enumber and obscure, rather than strengthen and enlighten, the practical facts by which they are accompanied. But the same remark applies to the early advocates of other remedies. Lanzani appears to have had no knowledge of the external use of water, nor of

its application to the treatment of chronic diseases. He used it in combination with drugs.

Lanzani may be regarded as the representative of a considerable number of writers and practitioners, both in Italy and elsewhere, among whom water has been employed (internally) as the most effectual febrifuge.

2. About the year 1700, Sir John Floyer and Dr. Baynard employed water very freely as an external application, in the ordinary manner of cold bathing, preceding it by a course of physic, and accompanying it generally by copious water-drinking.* Their practice appears to have been chiefly in chronic diseases, such as rheumatism, gout, paralysis, indigestion, general debility, and various nervous affections, in the whole of which a large amount of success is said to have been attained. The baths, at which their cases were treated, were frequently designated by some saint's name. Probably a remnant of superstitious reverence for the saint not only assisted to attract patients to the well, but infused into them a faith in the remedy, which materially promoted their recovery. The practice pursued was simply cold plunging, guarded by certain rules and cautions to prevent accidents.

Sir John Floyer supports his views by the citation of numberless learned authorities, from the Bible to Dr. Mead. He seems to have attached rather an excessive importance to grave precedents, causing his portion of the conjoint work to savor more of the library than the bedside. At any rate, he mingles together practical facts and the opinions of writers, in such intricate relations, that it is not always easy to discover on which he relies most confidently for the maintenance of his tenets. Dr. Baynard, on the other hand, deals more in cases, of which he presents an abundant collection. His mode of reasoning is particularly pointed and sagacious. No one can leave the perusal of his work without a strong conviction of his being an honest, shrewd,

* Vero Metodo di servirsi dell' Acqua Fredda nelle Febri ed in altri Mali, sì interni come esterni. Di Nicolo Lanzani, Medico Napoletano. 2da edizione. In Napoli, 1723.

* Psychrolousia; or, the History of Cold Bathing, both ancient and modern. By Sir John Floyer, of Lichfield, Knt., and Dr. Edward Baynard, Fellow of the College of Physicians, London. 2d edition. London, 1706.

enterprising, and diligent contributor to medical literature.

These writers mention the occasional practice of persons bathing in their shirts, and wearing them throughout the remainder of the day without drying; they also give an instance or two of cases cured or relieved by the application of a wet towel. The former practice is alluded to as an instance of rashness on the part of patients, and the latter is so rarely mentioned, that in neither can they fairly be said to have anticipated Preissnitz in the systematic employment of the wet sheet or wet compress—although both were actually employed by them. They also speak in very favorable terms of a course of cold preceded by a month's warm bathing, but not in the modern hydropathic method of the cold following immediately upon the warm, or upon sweating, which is a practice they carefully deprecate. They seem to have had but a slight acquaintance with the use of cold bathing in fever, or acute diseases, though instances of such practice are given.

The following passage from Dr. Baynard, though not strictly a part of our present subject, is a curiosity, and affords a good sample of his peculiar manner. When the period of its publication is considered, it must be regarded, in some of its parts, as a remarkable case of the forestalling of exact experiment by speculative reasoning. Baynard adduces the remarks it contains in support of his hydropathic views; but we need not stay to examine them in that respect. We transcribe portions of the passage:

"I conceive life to be an actual flame; as much flame as any culinary flame is, but fed with its peculiar and proper pabulum, made out of the blood and spirits for that purpose; and my reasons are these, viz.: 1. Life is as extinguishable as any flame is, by excluding the air, &c. For hold your handkerchief close to the mouth and nose of any animal that has lungs, and life is put out, the creature is dead in a moment; there is no skin broke, nor bone broke; no wound, nor bruise; there is your whole man, but dead he is. 2d. No flame will burn without aerial nitre, or a *quid aerium*, whatever it be; some

will have it a mixed gas of nitre and sulphur, but whatever it be, 'tis a *causa sine qua non*, something without which no flame will burn; and that the lungs serve to this use, and are air-strainers, is very clear to me, by that experiment of the candle and two puppy dogs, put into a great oven, and stopped close up with a glass door to see through; and in a little time, when they had sucked in some, and the candle wasted the rest of the niter, the dogs died, and the candle went out with them at the same instant.

"All ustion as the *quid inflammabile* wastes, leaves by incineration alkalious and caustical salts, either fixed or volatile, which, from their figure or imbibed fire, become of a pungent corrosive nature, and fix upon the membranes, being nervous and most exquisite of sense and perception, which, by irritation, cause a light inflammation, which inflammation is called thirst; which salts are melted and washed off by drinking, the grosser by stool with the solid excrements, but those of most solid and subtle particles creep with the chyle into the blood, and have no way out but by the urine. Hence water is the best menstruum to dissolve salts; and that which is most simple and elementary is the best water, as least impregnated; such waters wash off and dissolve their points and angles, by which they prick, sheath, and envelope them in their own pores, and with themselves run off by urine; but if so forced by heat and motion as to disturb them in their passage, the current of urine is checked, and the salts leave their hold of the water, shoot their vortex, and from the channels get into the habit of the body, which, if not dissolved, melted, and thrown off by sweat, they inflame and cause fevers, &c.; nor will they cease their action and inquietude until totally dissolved, or forced back into their common passages, and the salts precipitated and run down by urine. For I look upon the pores and sweat-vents as so many back-doors and sally-ports, by which nature drives out the enemy crept into her garrison. The truth is demonstrated in all fevers, where the caustical salts are not washed off, but remain behind on the glands and membranes, forsaken of their

dissolving menstuum, the water, &c., which that ingenious chemist, Mr. George Moul, by chemical analysis, made appear in six quarts of febrile urine, which I sent him, and he found but the thirtieth part of those salts usually found in a sound man's urine, so that of necessity they must remain behind and be left (like so many French dragoons) to quarter on the blood and spirits at discretion. The history of which is printed in the 'Philosophical Transactions' for some years since.

"Now, that which we call an insensible perspiration is nothing else but the smoke made from the vital flame, and the pores are the spiramenta through which it passes, and when these are stopped, this smoke is returned and the flame becomes reverberatory, which is sometimes necessary to force an obstruction, for the body has its registers and vent-holes, as well as other furnaces. But to proceed, these salts sometimes crystallize, so that the common menstua will not touch them; no more than a file will steel or hardened iron, and then it is a true diabetes (and here the physician is at his wit's end, and that no far journey,) then hey! for lime water, quince wine, and other restringents, which, if it were possible, would rather make a coalescence, and tie the knot harder. No; the cure lies in solution by melting down the salts, which must be done by open, raw, and unimpregnated menstua, such as the Bristol waters are, as most simple, having least contents in them. (pp. 47 et seq.)

(To be continued on page 81.)

ABSTINENCE AN AID TO STUDY.

Boswell, in his Life of Johnson, tells us, "that in 1737 this celebrated individual abstained entirely from liquors, a practice to which he rigidly conformed, for many years together, at different periods of his life."

Mr. Croker, in his edition of his work, recently published, makes the following pertinent observation on this passage: "At this time his (Dr. Johnson's) abstinence from wine, may perhaps be attributed to poverty; but in his subsequent life he was restrained from that indulgence by, as it

appears, moral, or rather medical consideration. He probably found by experience, that wine, though it dissipated for a moment, yet eventually aggravated the hereditary disease under which he suffered; and perhaps, it may have been owing to a long course of abstinence, that his mental health seems to have been better than in the earlier portion of his life. He says, in his *Prayers and Meditations*, p. 13, 'By abstinence from wine and suppers, I obtained sudden and great relief; and had freedom of mind restored to me, which I have wanted for all this year, without being able to find any means of obtaining it.' Selden had the same notion, for, being consulted by a person of quality, whose imagination was strangely disturbed, he advised him, "not to disorder himself with eating or drinking; to eat very little supper, and say his prayers daily when he went to bed; and I (Selden) made but little question but he would be well in 3 or 4 days. (Table Talk, p. 17.) "These remarks," continues Mr. Croker, "are important, because *depression of spirits* is too often treated on a contrary system, from ignorance of, or inattention to, what may be its *real cause*."

Numerous other instances of the same tenor could be readily adduced. "It often happened," says the biographer of the great Luther, "that for several days and nights he locked himself up in his study, and took no other nourishment than bread and water that he might the more uninterruptedly pursue his labors."

We shall conclude, by quoting an article from the Appendix to the Anniversary Report of the Pennsylvania Temperance Society, May, 1830.

"The temperance and abstemiousness of most of the ancient philosophers is well known. Demosthenes, the great orator of Greece, used no other drink than water. In modern times, we ought not to be ignorant of the fact, that Sir Isaac Newton, when composing his celebrated treatise upon optics, confined himself to *water* and a *vegetable diet*: to this abstemious mode of living, probably, may be ascribed the great age, viz. eighty-five years, to which he attained. John Locke, too, died in the seventy-third year of his age; his common drink was water, which he justly consider-

ed as the cause of his life being prolonged to so great an age, notwithstanding the original feebleness of his constitution, and the distressing disease, the asthma, under which he laboured for many years. To this temperate mode of life, too, he was probably indebted for the increase of those intellectual powers which gave birth to his incomparable work on the human understanding, his treatises on government and education, as well as his other writings, which do so much honour to his memory.—*Hosack's Address.*

"Boyle, the father of modern chemistry, and the liberal promoter of science in general, though possessed of a very delicate constitution, attained to the age of sixty-five years. His drink was water. It has been said of him, that 'the simplicity of his diet, to all appearance, preserved his life so long beyond men's expectation : and in this he was so regular, that in the course of above thirty years he neither ate nor drank to gratify the varieties of appetite, but merely to support nature.

"Euler, the famous mathematician, who attained the advanced age of seventy-six years, was strictly temperate. He is represented as of a cheerful and always pleasant temper ; fond of society, and had the art of enlivening it by an agreeable wit.

"Without being able to affirm that La Place, the most original and celebrated natural philosopher, since the time of Newton, drank nothing but water, we have the evidence of this eulogist before the French Institute, that he was enabled to continue his habits of excessive application to study until within two years of his death, without any inconvenience, owing to his always using very light diet, even to abstemiousness. La Place died in the seventy-eighth year of his age."—*Philad. Journal of Health.*

THE PIPE AND POT.

Unhappy man ! that drinks his own undoing,
As tho' his business were to pledge his ruin ;
And that brave texture his sound fathers knit,
With PIPE and POT he does unravel it ;
As if the gods, in anger, gave him wealth
To sacrifice to Bacchus youth and health.
Health, of all earthly blessings, 'tis the best,
Which most is valued when 'tis least possessed.

[DR. BAYNARD, 1706.]

(From the Journal of Health, 1831.)

THE PRAISE OF CLEANE LINNEN

WITH THE COMMENDABLE USE OF THE LAUNDRESS.*

The above is the title of a poem, by the inveterate rhymor, John Taylor, the Water Poet, as he called himself. The epistle dedicatory to the laundress, Mrs. Martha Legge, is an odd piece of composition, full of antithesis and pun—the opportunities for which were increased by the circumstance of Mrs. Legge's husband being a shoemaker, or, more properly speaking, cobbler. "When I thinke," says the Water Poet, "upon the simpathie and correspondence of both your qualities, I approve fortune for a wise, cunning woman, in clapping such a conjunction together ; for hee is a mender and you are a mundifier, or to speak truth, you are both menders ; and God knows how many will be hanged before they will mend : your art is to keep even bodies sweet and clean, and his trade is to set our wicked and crooked soales right and upright : hee is a firme and stable man, and waxeth much oftener than hee wanes."

There is a moral running through the following passage, from the poem, which forces one to reflection, despite the quaintness, if not comicalness, of the style, and the doggerel verse. We give the original orthography.

"*Cleane Linnen*, now my verse descends to thee,

Thou that, preordained, were to be
Our corps first cover, at our naked birth,
And our last garment when we turn to earth :
So that all men *Cleane Linnen* should espie,
As a *memento* of mortallitie ;
And that a Sheet unto the greatest state
Is the Alpha and Omega of his fate,
As at our birth, *Cleane Linnen* doth attend us,
So doth it all our whole lives' race befriend us
Abroad, at home, in Church, or Common-wealth,

At bed or board, in sicknesse, and in health,
It figures forth the churches puritie,
And spotless Doctrine and integritie,

* Dedicated to the most mondifying, clarifying, purifying, and re-purifying, cleanser, clearer, and reformer of deformed and polluted Linnen, *Martha Legge*, Esquiresse, transparent, unspotted, snow-lilly-white laundresse, to the Right worshipfull and generous, the Innes of Court of the Middle Temple, with divers others in the ranke of Nobility, Gentility, and tranquillity ; your poore and unknowne Poetical Oratour, John Taylor, in humility and servility, craves your Patronages ability, in defence of his imbecility.

Her State Angelicall, white innocence;
 Her nursing love and bright magnificence.
 Yet some for Linnen doe the Church forsake,
 And do a surplice for a Bug-bare take;
 But always to the Church I bring mine cares,
 Not eyes to note what robes Church-men
 weares.

Now from the Church let us return but home,
 And then the cloth is laid against you come;
 Though raging hunger make the stomacke
 wroth,

'Tis half asswag'd by laying of the cloth;
 For in the warres of eating 'tis the use
 A table of clothe is hunger's flagge of Truce,
 Whilst in the fight the Napkins are your
 friends,

And wait upon you at your fingers' ends."

The following is a sad enough proof of
 the value men attach to clean linen:

"Most men, *cleane shirts*, at such esteeme
 doe prize,
 That the poor'st thief, who at the gallows
 dyes,

If but his *shirt* is *cleane*, his mind is eas'd,
 He hangs the handsomer and better pleas'd."

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NEW-YORK, MAY, 1848.

ADVICE TO CLERGYMEN, PUBLIC SPEAKERS,
 AND OTHER PERSONS WHO ARE
 TROUBLED WITH SORE THROAT, WEAK
 CHEST, ETC.

Directions of Priessnitz.

The modes of treatment recommended by Priessnitz, in cases of colds, difficulties in the throat and chest, from whatever cause or causes, are exceedingly simple, and, at the same time, effectual for good. We have before us a work entitled "Six Months at Graefenberg," by Mr. H. C. Wright, of Philadelphia, (published in England,) a very accurate writer and observer. This author had himself been for years afflicted with serious difficulties of the above mentioned kinds. He had, likewise, been in the habit of much and long-continued public speaking. He tells

us that for years before going to Graefenberg, he was, as is the custom, wont to eschew the fresh air as much as possible. Flannel shirts and drawers, and a closely-fitting shirt-collar and a neckcloth, were worn, and, whenever the weather seemed to require it, a fur muffler, or a large silk or worsted handkerchief, over the chin and mouth, to exclude all fresh air from the back of the head and neck, the throat, and lungs. He was exceedingly sensitive to cold, and though long accustomed to general ablutions of cold water, the exclusion of cold air, with a view to the preservation of health, had become an object of very particular attention. Heavy clothes and overcoats were worn to protect the body from the air and its free circulation over the surface. He continues: "I now look back with astonishment at my folly; and the more so, because the days of my childhood and youth were chiefly spent in the open air, in the backwoods of western New York. Calm and storm, cold and heat, rain and sunshine, were all alike to me then; and many times since I attained my twentieth year, have I slept with my windows open, in the severe winter nights of New England. But for the last three years, since my lungs began to be affected, I changed my habits entirely, and, by the advice of medical friends, took every precaution against exposure to the air."

Mr. Wright further tells us, that, when he went to Graefenberg, away went the flannel shirts and drawers, and silk, worsted and fur mufflers, and Priessnitz advised him to be in the open air as much as possible, like the other patients. We have ourselves seen at Graefenberg poor, weak bodies, who had for years been wedded to those 'comfortable' things, mercilessly stripped in the manner described by Mr. Wright. And what may

appear strange is, that probably no where in the world can there be found the same number of persons as at Graefenberg with less of coughs and symptoms of cold in the throat or lungs. The freedom from coughs and colds among the Priessnitz's patients is notorious. Be it remarked, also, that there is here in the winter season much of damp, fogs and winds; so that, according to the popular notions on this subject, persons would be much subject to the difficulties in question. But there is among the profession, as well as the people, much error in reference to the effects of wind and damp. We find that one of the best possible things for cough and cold is to go to sea. Consumptive persons, even, are recommended often to go sea voyages, and there appears in cases generally, whether curable or incurable, to be a manifest improvement in so doing. We have known persons, repeatedly, to have a severe cold, attended with cough, on going to sea, to become very soon cured. Now, it should be understood that there is, besides the winds at sea, a great deal of moisture. The atmosphere is, in consequence of evaporation, at all times completely loaded with humidity; and this is not *saltish*, as many suppose, but fresh; for we know that salt is of great specific gravity, and does not rise. In the manufacture of salt, by evaporation in the sun or by boiling, the mineral is left behind, while the pure water passes off. We see, from the above facts, that wind and moisture are not necessarily so deleterious as is generally supposed; but, on the contrary, that they are, under certain circumstances, extremely favorable to health.

If a person has an incurable disease of the lungs, Priessnitz would, of course, be very careful in references to changes of whatever kind. The cases we have referred to be regarded as curable. Such

persons can make much greater changes, with safety, than is generally supposed. Even in cases of incurable disease of the lungs, people are perpetually injuring themselves by too much clothing, confinement in close, overheated and illy-ventilated rooms, sleeping upon feather beds down, pillows, &c. Now in these, often great good may be done in the way of mitigating the disease. But all changes should be made with proper caution, and according to the dictates of an enlightened experience. Inasmuch as the water-means, diet, &c., are the best possible for cure, so, also, properly managed, are they in mitigating the sufferings arising from incurable disease.

Before leaving Graefenberg, Mr. Wright prepared, in writing, a list of questions, which were proposed to Priessnitz, the answers to which were taken down upon paper at the time. Some of these questions were as follows:

Wright.—In case of severe cold on the lungs, attended with much coughing and expectoration, what should be done?

Priessnitz.—Rub the chest and throat with cold water, holding, at the same time, some water in the mouth. In cold climates, the wet bandage around the throat would be of service occasionally. In warm climates, washing and rubbing alone are better.

Wright.—In cases of inflammation and soreness of the throat, attended with hoarseness and difficulty in speaking?

Priessnitz.—Friction, washing, and the application of wet bandages.

Wright.—In cases of long attendance and speaking at public meetings, in hot, close, crowded rooms, and then going out into the chilly night air?

Priessnitz.—The rubbing sheet, washing and rubbing the head and throat well and the use of the foot-bath.

Wright.—When troubled with shooting pains across the chest, occasioned by long speaking at a time?

Priessnitz.—Take rubbing sheets, and rub the throat and chest with water.

In regard to friction, Mr. Wright judiciously remarks, "that it is worthy of special notice that Priessnitz never orders the rubbing to be done with brushes, flannels, or even linen towels. He never applies flannels and brushes to the skin for any purpose; linen is only used for wiping the surface dry, and, even in this process, the rubbing should be gentle. He wishes to have the skin kept as smooth and soft as possible; and hence his disuse of flannels next the skin, and of brushes and hard substances in rubbing. He recommends that the hand only should be used; and it is not possible to be long under his treatment, and to enjoy the delicious sensations resulting from a clear, smooth, soft skin, the almost invariable result of the cure, without being convinced of the correctness of his practice in this respect."

ABSTINENCE AND THE EFFECTS OF MODERATION IN FOOD.

Discourses and Letters of Louis Cornaro, on a Sober and Temperate Life; with a Biography of the Author, by Piero Maroncelli, and Notes and an Appendix, by John Burdell, Dentist, of New York. Fowlers & Wells, 131 Nassau street, New York. Price 25 cents—mailable.

During the five months of our absence in Europe, we have been much, very much, interested in the study of diet; and, after thinking much of the matter, we have come to the conclusion that, notwithstanding we have a constantly increasing confidence in the curative and hygienic effects of water, (if it be possible for our confidence to increase,) the regulation of the dietetic habits has more to do with the true methods in the cure and prevention of disease than has the external application of water, by bathing,

wet sheets, bandages, and the like.—If, then, we are correct in this our conclusion, the more proper name for the true and natural method of healing would be the *diet-cure*. But names are not of so much consequence. Truth, inevitable and unerring truth, this is the great desideratum in the healing art.

We have to-day been confirmed in our opinions of the good effects of abstinence, by reading again the above work of Cornaro; not that it is accurate in every respect, but yet we could wish that every one of our readers would obtain a copy of the work, and study it faithfully. Here we see a rich nobleman, who, by high living and intemperance, found himself, at between the age of thirty-five and forty, with a heavy train of infirmities, which, he says, had invaded and made great inroads upon his constitution, so that all ordinary means were of no avail. He had, moreover, a bad constitution naturally. At this time he made a strong resolution to follow the advice of his physicians. This was, that he should take only such food as was generally directed for sick persons, and that very sparingly; in such quantity as would be received in a perfectly genial and friendly manner by the system. Writing his first treatise, or essay, at the age of 83, in the year 1550, Cornaro says: "I entered with so much resolution upon this new course of life, that nothing has been since able to divert me from it. The consequence was, that in a few days I began to perceive that such a course agreed with me perfectly well; and, by pursuing it, in less than a year I found myself (some persons will not believe it) entirely freed from all my complaints."

Cornaro came to the conclusion, and very properly, that if an abstemious and temperate mode of life had such power to

enable the body to throw off all that complication of grievous disorders he had so long been afflicted with, it must also have great power to *preserve* his health; and thus, unlike many, he continued his abstemious habits, when he might, without apparent detriment, have gone back to his old modes.

One important point Cornaro set himself at work to find out, viz: *whether those things which please the palate best, were, as is the common notion, the most healthful.* This he very soon found to be false. Salad, fish, pork, pastry, &c., he found, disagreed with him, notwithstanding they were exceedingly pleasant to the palate. He, therefore, betook himself to the simple substances, such as were found to agree with the stomach, although they might, at first, be very unpalatable. He determined, also, the truth of the proverb, that one should always rise from the table with a good relish for more food; that a man, to consult his health, must check his appetite.

Besides Cornaro's cure for the time, he found that, by pursuing frigidly and invariably his abstemious course, he no longer experienced those annual fits of sickness with which he was formerly afflicted, and which often, as he tells us, brought him very near to death's door. And up to the time of writing his first essay, he had never experienced a single attack of illness of any kind.

Another remarkable fact in the effects of food Cornaro learned, viz: *that the diet of the individual has great influence over the mind.* While his relatives and friends, who did not lead a temperate life, would become much perturbed and dejected by misfortunes, he could remain calm and serene. If he lost a child or member of his family by death, the affliction was felt most keenly, for a moment as it were, and

then, like a healthful child, his feelings became buoyant, calm, and resigned, and he made the strong assertion, "*that neither melancholy, or any other affliction of the mind, can hurt bodies governed with temperance and regularity.*"

"O, thrice holy sobriety," says this great and good man, "so useful to man, by the services thou renderest him! thou prolongest his days, by which means he greatly improves his understanding, and, by such improvement, he avoids the bitter fruits of sensuality, which are an enemy to reason, man's peculiar privilege: those bitter fruits are the passions and perturbations of the mind. Thou, moreover, freest him from the dreadful thoughts of death. How greatly is thy faithful disciple indebted to thee, since, by thy assistance, he enjoys this beautiful expanse of the visible world, which is really beautiful to such as know how to view it with a philosophic eye, as thou hast enabled me to do. Nor could I, at any time of life, even when I was young, but altogether debauched by an irregular life, perceive its beauties, though I spared no pains or expense to enjoy every season of life. But I found that all the pleasures of that age had their alloy; so that I never knew, till I grew old, that the world was beautiful."

The greatly increased curative power of nature, to bear up against and restore physical injuries, was another point which Cornaro ascertained. He says that when at the age of seventy, "I happened, as is often the case, to be in a coach which was going at a pretty smart rate, was overset, and, in that condition, drawn a considerable way by the horses, before means could be found to stop them; when I received so many shocks, and bruises that I was taken out with my head, and all the rest of my body, terribly battered,

and a dislocated leg and arm. When I was brought home, the family immediately sent for the physicians, who, on their arrival, seeing me in so bad a plight, concluded that within three days I should die. Nevertheless, they would try what good two things would do: one was to bleed, the other to purge me, and thereby prevent any humors from altering, as they every moment expected; to such a degree as to ferment greatly and bring on a high fever. But I, on the contrary, who knew that the sober life I had led for many years past had so well united, harmonized, and disposed my humors, as not to leave it in their power to ferment to such a degree, refused to be either bled or purged. I just caused my leg and arm to be set, and suffered myself to be rubbed with some oils, which they said were proper on the occasion. Thus, without ever using any other kind of remedy, I recovered, as I thought I should, without feeling any alteration in myself, or any bad effects from the accident; a thing which appeared miraculous even in the eyes of the physicians." Thus Cornaro ascertained, in his own person, the wonderful effects of abstinence in enabling the body to bear up under injuries; a good lesson for surgeons, even of the present day, to learn.

Another important matter which this remarkable man satisfied himself of was, *that as a person becomes old, the amount of nutriment should be diminished, instead of being increased.* At one time, to gratify his friends merely, he consented to a small increase daily in his food and wine (for he took the latter article, new, the old, or more alcoholic wine, disagreeing with him). In consequence of this increase and change from the very regular habits he had so long been accustomed to, he experienced a severe attack of fever, which nearly carried him off. He then

took to his old regimen, which had the same good effects as before. This happened in Cornaro's seventy-eighth year, and, as he says, reduced him to a mere skeleton; and he was fully convinced that it was the great temperance he had for so long a time observed, and that only, which rescued him from the jaws of death.

Here is one important lesson of Cornaro, which every one may easily learn for himself, viz: *that accordingly as a person becomes truly temperate, the relish for food improves*; that the plainest articles at length become more agreeable than all of the fine things when the appetite is depraved. At this advanced age (83), Cornaro said that he enjoyed a better relish for his dry bread than formerly, in his youth, for the most exquisite dainties; and "all this he compassed by acting rationally, knowing that bread is, above all things, man's proper food, when seasoned by a good appetite; and whilst man leads a sober life, he may be sure of never wanting that natural sauce; because, by always eating little, the stomach, not being much burthened, need not wait long to have an appetite. It is for this reason that dry bread relishes so well with me; and I know it from experience, and can with truth affirm, I find such *sweetness* in it, that I should be afraid of sinning against temperance were it not for the fact of my being convinced of the absolute necessity of eating it, and that we cannot make use of a more natural food."

How many clergymen, physicians, lawyers, students, and other literary and sedentary persons, are there in our country now-a-days who, when they eat their habitual dinner, become perfectly miserable, unfit for any business, as well as most uncomfortable in body. So it was with Cornaro, until he had learned how to live. But in his abstemious course, he

says, "nor do I ever find myself the worse for writing immediately after *meals*; nor is my understanding ever clearer; nor am I apt to be *drowsy*; the food I take being in too small a quantity to send up any *fumes* to the brain." After his long experience of a half century, he says: "O, how advantageous it is to an old man to eat but little! Accordingly, I, who know it, eat but just enough to keep body and soul together."

Years ago we read Cornaro; but we confess we never had a tenth part of the interest in his work as now. This is, perhaps, in part, owing to the fact of our constantly increasing interest in the subject of diet. We are now in a course of experimenting upon ourselves, as well as others, and are determined to know the length and breadth of the matter. The world has great lessons yet to learn in these things.

Hastily we have made these extracts, hoping that, in consequence thereof, many persons may be induced to obtain and read the book of Cornaro. None, we think, can do so without interest and profit.

A BONE FOR HOMŒOPATHISTS TO PICK. — Why do homœopathsists, to a man, (we never found an exception to the rule) allow their patients the use of tea? We know that they often recommend *black*, instead of *green* tea; and thus people get the idea that the former has no injurious effect. The same medicinal principle is in both. Our readers may not all be aware that one of the fundamental principles of this comparatively new system is to *abstain from all substances of a medicinal nature*; otherwise, say they, the effects of the small doses will be very likely to be destroyed. The use of common salt, which is most strictly a *drug substance*, is also allowed. Gentlemen of

the new school, is this coming fairly up to the work?

THE EYE—ILL EFFECTS OF ARTIFICIAL LIGHT.

THE EYE: ITS DISEASES AND THEIR CURE; comprising a Familiar Description of the Anatomy and Physiology of the Organ of Vision; Rules for the Preservation, Improvement and Restoration of the Sight, with remarks on Optics, on Near Sight, and Aged Sight; and the Use and Abuse of Spectacles, with directions for their selection. By James Powell, M.D.—Price 50 cents, mailable. For sale by Fowlers & Wells, 131 Nassau street.

In many respects, this is doubtless a most valuable and interesting work. We could not, of course, agree with the author in the use of medicines and certain forms of food he recommends; but, from a hasty glance at the contents of the book, we see much that is valuable. The author is opposed to the use of tobacco in every form, inasmuch as it is found often to injure the eyes. There are, also, good recommendations on bathing, not, however, we think, so full and explicit as they should be.

We notice the author argues that artificial lights are not so healthful to the eye as the light of day. Many persons delight to sit up at night and lie in bed of a morning, and thus lose the natural light. We have often spoken of these things before, and need hardly fear of repeating them too often, so perverse are people in their habits.

"Candles and lamps," says the author, "should not be placed before the eyes." How people injure the eyes of children! Children know no more what is good for them than the miller that flies into the candle and burns off its wings. Many parents are so careless that they will wake a child suddenly, holding a light directly before it. Such practices are terrible, and often, no doubt, do irreparable mischief to that important organ of the human body—the eye.

EXTRACTS FROM PATIENTS.

ELKTON, Ky., March 16, 1848.

"Your favor of the 6th March was received, also the numbers of the Water-Cure Journal. I have thus far received great benefit from the water treatment, and particularly from the body bandage. I trust I shall be able to visit your establishment this season. I had been confined about twelve months with the neuralgia; the spine, neck, back of the head, shoulders, &c., were affected. One of my physicians lent me a book published by yourself, (the Water-Cure,) and I have been practising according to the instructions there obtained. I have improved very much."

FALL RIVER, Mass., April 1, 1848.

"My health is much better than it was. For the last six or eight weeks I have worn the wet jacket constantly, and in that space of time have gained *twenty-three pounds*, and I am still rapidly increasing in weight. Indeed, the result of the treatment upon myself has made converts of nearly half the place."

Remark.—This patient is among our best in the way of dieting, as also in the following out of the general treatment. He was some two months in our establishment, but has practised the larger part of his treatment at home.

A FEMALE STUDENT OF MEDICINE.—

The novel event of a female medical student being in attendance at the Geneva Medical College having been the subject of remarks in medical and other periodicals, we are led to state the circumstances, which are briefly as follows:—Shortly after the lecture session now in progress, the faculty of the Geneva College received an application, by letter, for the admission of a lady to the privileges of the institution. The faculty resolved to submit the letter (written by the applicant herself) to the class, and to return a favorable reply, provided no objections thereto were entertained. The class adopted, unanimously, resolutions expressing their willingness that the applicant should be received, and pledging themselves to treat

her with respectful consideration. She was accordingly admitted, and has thus far attended the lectures in all the departments, as well as surgical operations, and dissections, personally participating in the latter. Nothing has transpired as yet to disprove the propriety of the action taken by the faculty and class. In so far as her presence in the lecture room has had any influence, it has been conducive to a more strict observance of decorum than is usual in medical classes, and any embarrassment which may have been felt by all parties has long since disappeared. It is understood that previously to her application to the Geneva College, she had applied to be received at the institutions of Philadelphia, New York city, and Boston, but without success. Geneva College will therefore be entitled to the distinction, meritorious or otherwise, of first practically exemplifying the experiment of opening the door of medical instruction to a female candidate for the medical profession.—*Buffalo Med. Jour.*

The Geneva Medical College has done a noble thing. May we not expect that other ladies will follow the example of the one mentioned above? We care not how many of the sex get the title of "M.D." The more the better, so that they do not steal it, as some of the "water doctors" have done. Once they get that, we will try to teach them some things they do not get in college. We have always advocated that females should be the practitioners of midwifery. Here, at last, will be one, we hope, well qualified.

The young child of Capt. John Banker that was scalded internally by drinking from the nose of a coffee pot boiling upon the stove, is likely to recover. Mothers, watch these little angels while you condescend to dabble with tea and coffee.—Cold water is better.—*New-Bedford Reporter.*

"I don't think, sir, Mr. Doseum takes his physic reg'lar," said a doctor's boy to his employer. — "Why so?" — "'Cause he's getting well so precious fast!"

PROSPECTUS
OF THE
WATER-CURE JOURNAL,
AND
HERALD OF REFORMS,

JOEL SHEW, M. D., EDITOR.

Published Monthly, by FOWLERS & WELLS, 131 Nassau street, New-York.

It is the object of this paper to explain, in a manner suited to the capacity of the general reader, the new and celebrated system called **HYDROPATHY**, or the **WATER-CURE**—a system which is deservedly fast gaining in popular favor, and which, in efficacy to cure and prevent disease, is unparalleled in the healing art.

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BATHING AND CLEANLINESS.

The truly wonderful advantages of bathing and cleanliness, both in sickness and in health, will be extensively treated of in this journal.—Also,

CLOTHING,

which has a material effect on the human body, in reference to its diseases and health.

AIR AND VENTILATION,

important circumstances in the cure of diseases and in the preservation of health.

FOOD AND DRINKS,

which, more than any other agency, affect the system, for harm or for good, accordingly as they are regulated upon scientific principles, or disregarded kind, quantity, and quality, as in society is almost universally the case.

TOBACCO.

This pernicious, life and health destroying substance, so much used by the American people at this day, we shall do unceasing and perpetual war against. We intend to speak "home truths" which shall be for "home consumption" on this great and growing evil of our land.

TEA AND COFFEE.

These always worse than useless articles, which cause so great an amount of sick headaches, nervous debility, and indigestion, we shall, from time to time, treat of, as our space admits.

THE WATER-CURE, now well established, is peculiarly favorable in the treatment of all the maladies, both chronic and acute, to which the human body is subject. We hope, however, to do most in teaching our readers **THE BEST MODES OF PREVENTING DISEASE**. It is a wise old maxim, "avoid physic and physicians, if you value health."

REFORMS.

Reforms, of whatever kind, we shall promulgate accordingly as we think they deserve, and we shall endeavor to make our paper such a one as shall be adapted to the wants of society at large.

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Both having studied with Priessnitz, at Graefenberg, Austrian Silesia, and the latter a member of the Society of Scientific Hydropathists in Germany.

This Establishment, having been discontinued during the winter, (in consequence of the absence of Dr. Shew in Europe, and Dr. Roof being required to attend to the business in the city,) is now re-opened for the reception of patients. Passage daily, from Fulton Market, by steamer Croton, at 3 o'clock p. m., or persons can go as far as Hicksville by the Long Island Railroad, where a stage is in readiness for conveyance to Syosset—time, 9½ a. m. and 4 p. m.

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N. B.—Each person should bring two good woollen blankets, two heavy sheets, (lined are best, but cotton answer a good purpose), two comfortables, ½ dozen coarse towels; or the use of these may be hired in the Establishment.

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Applied to the Restoration of Health of Body and Power of Mind. By O. S. Fowler. With twenty-six engravings on wood. Price 50 cents.

"This will be found a more valuable work for the use of the people generally, than any other which has yet been written. It is free from technicalities, and may be easily understood and applied by every individual. The whole subject of Physiology is thoroughly examined, and all the necessary information relative to our physical well being imparted.

"The author takes strong grounds against the use of Tobacco, Tea, Coffee, Liquor, and stimulant ingredients generally. These portions relating to the effects of different kinds of food on the body and mind are particularly valuable. The causes and cure of Consumption should be read by every youth in the land. By understanding the laws of life and health contained in this work, much agony and suffering might be avoided, and many valuable lives prolonged. Although but recently published, this work has already passed through several editions."—*Hunt's Merchant's Magazine*.

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 and 50 cents. The Water-Cure for Ladies; price, 50 cents. And the Facts in Water-Cure; price 18½ cents. Also, Graham's Lectures on the Science of Human Life; and his Lecture to Young Men.

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