

THE WATER-CURE JOURNAL AND HERALD OF REFORMS.

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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.)

(Continued from page 70.)

3. At about the beginning of the present century, Dr. Currie's practice in fever is well known to have consisted principally of cold affusion, or immersion, in the early stages of the disease, and in certain acute affections of the nervous system. His work is so well known that it is unnecessary to enter into any detail as to contents.* He seems to have known but little of the application of cold water to the treatment of chronic diseases, as represented by Floyer and Baynard, or not to have employed the copious libations described by Lanzani. He cannot be said to have forestalled Priessnitz in any other respect, than in the prompt and energetic use of cold water in the suppression

of acute febrile and nervous affections. He brings a large amount of scientific argument and practical experience to bear out his views. He has also placed in a clear light some points of practice on which important errors previously prevailed, such as the safety of cold applications when the body is heated beyond the natural degree, and the relative value and safety of cold or tepid water, of immersion, affusion, and ablution. On these points his work is of great practical value. We may have occasion to revert to some of them hereafter.

4. The prevalent opinions of medical men in this country, on the general subject of the external use of water, previously to the Priessnitzian era, may be considered to be represented in the article BATHING, in the "Cyclopædia of Practical Medicine," published within the last twenty years. The article in question places bathing in a very subordinate position among means available for the actual cure of disease. In its cold form, it is recommended as a valuable tonic, used with many restrictions, in nervous debility and other analogous states; and, in its warm form, its use is almost limited to the allaying of irritation in certain disorders, the more formidable symptoms of which are to be encountered by other remedies. Other articles in the same work

* Medical Reports of the Effects of Water, cold and warm, as a Remedy in Fever and other Diseases. By James Currie, M. D., F.R.S., Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh, 2 vols. 2d edition, London, 1805.

have done justice to Dr. Currie's views. Beyond this, the medical profession have hitherto done little or nothing with bathing as an instrument of cure. We shall hereafter find reason for believing that a vast superfluity of caution has existed in the employment of this remedy, and that some of the supposed cautions have really increased, instead of diminishing, the danger, as well as destroyed the efficiency of its application.

The author of the article in the *Cyclopædia* describes cold bathing as partially or absolutely contraindicated in the following conditions: partially, in infancy and old age; pregnancy; indurations, obstructions, or chronic inflammations of internal parts; acute inflammations of the same; chronic inflammations of mucous membrane: absolutely, during menstruation; in great plethora, or tendency to active hemorrhage, or congestions in important viscera; affections of the heart; loaded state of the bowels; great general debility—though then often advantageous after warm water or vapor bath.

5. The ancient Romans were accustomed to produce perspiration by surrounding the person with heated aqueous vapour, and, while freely perspiring, to plunge into cold water. Interesting remains of baths for this purpose, evidently of Roman architecture, and containing fine specimens of mosaic pavement, may be seen in several parts of England; as, for example, on the margin of the Cranham woods, in the village of Whitcombe, about six miles from Cheltenham; at Bignor in Sussex, &c. It is also well known to have been a frequent practice of the Roman youth to plunge into the Tiber, when heated by exercise in the Campus Martius.

The modern Russians, also, as is well known, excite perspiration in a similar manner, and then roll themselves in snow. A somewhat similar practice has prevailed among the North American Indians. The following description of their process was given by the celebrated Quaker, William Penn, to Dr. Baynard:

"I once saw an instance of it, with divers more in company. For being up-

on a discovery of the back part of the country, I called upon an Indian of note, whose name was Tenoughan, the captain-general of the clans of those parts. I found him ill of a fever, his head and limbs much affected with pain, and at the same time his wife preparing a bagnio for him. The bagnio resembled a large oven, into which he crept, by a door on the one side, while she put several red-hot stones in at a small door on the other side thereof, and then fastened the doors as closely from the air as she could. Now, while he was sweating in this bagnio, his wife (for they disdain no service) was, with an axe, cutting her husband a passage into the river (being the winter of '83, the great frost, and the ice very thick), in order to the immersing himself, after he could come out of his bath. In less than half an hour he was in so great a sweat, that, when he came out, he was as wet as if he had come out of a river, and the reek or steam of his body so thick that it was hard to discern any body's face that stood near him. In this condition, stark naked, he ran into the river, which was about twenty paces, and ducked himself twice or thrice therein, and so returned (passing only through his bagnio to mitigate the immediate stroke of the cold) to his own house, perhaps twenty paces further, and wrapping himself in his woollen mantle, lay down at length near a long (but gentle) fire, in the middle of his wigwam, or house, turning himself several times, till he was dry, and then he rose, and fell to getting us our dinner, seeming to be as easy, and well in health, as at any other time."—(Baynard, pp. 103-4.)

The extraordinary revivifying effect of the cold plunge bath, after the system had been excited by artificial heat, is testified by various evidence of the most unquestionable kind. Numerous travellers have spoken of this very enthusiastically; among others, Stevens, the American, (in his "Incidents of Travel,") who took a Russian bath, after a most fatiguing journey, and came out of it, he says, quite a new man. We have had similar information from more than one private source. This practice, however, similar as it is to

that of Priessnitz, has never, until his time, been extensively, if at all, employed in Europe as a means of curing disease.

6. In the foregoing synopsis are contained the principal forms in which cold bathing and water drinking have been used in the treatment of disease, before these means were so vigorously adopted by Priessnitz. It will be obvious, that, from none of the writers mentioned, could he have learned his bold and comprehensive practice. In his method are combined those of Lanzani, Floyer, and Currie, accompanied by novel and powerful processes, to which those writers were entire strangers. The douche, the wet sheet, the sweating blanket, the cold plunging after sweating, the wet compress, the sitting bath (sitz-bath,) must be allowed to be, in a great measure, peculiar to the Graefenberg peasant and his disciples. From the same source have proceeded some important precepts on the subject of diet and regimen. Priessnitz, moreover, is distinguished from all the authorities quoted, by his entire abandonment of drugs.

Vincent Priessnitz was originally a small farmer, residing at Graefenberg, near the town of Friewaldau, in Silesia. He is about fifty years of age. The following is a description of him by Sir Charles Scudamore :

"Of Priessnitz himself I shall say a few words, and describe my impressions on first seeing him. His countenance is full of self-possession ; rather agreeable ; mild, but firm in expression ; with an eye of sense, and a pleasing smile. The small-pox, and the loss of some front teeth from an accident, impair his good looks. His manners are sufficiently well-bred. On closer acquaintance, you discover he is quick in perception ; is reflective ; prompt, however, in decision ; simple and clear. He inspires his patients with the most entire confidence, and he exacts implicit obedience."—(A Medical Visit to Graefenberg, pp. 2-3.)

Other travellers give a similar description of Priessnitz. They all agree in stating that he is a most arbitrary and tyrannical despot, issuing laws as irrevocable as those of the Medes and Persians, com-

manding obedience with a haughtiness that might well excite admiration and envy even in an autocrat, and exciting as much fear in his patients as is found in the subjects of the Grand Turk himself. He is also represented as remarkably cool and collected in emergencies, ever ready with his remedy on occasions of danger, and possessed of an imperturbable self-reliance. These traits suffice to prove that he is a man of original and powerful mind, exactly adapted to carry out a novel and startling practice. While his firm and decided manner is calculated to secure the confidence of his patients, his coolness and self-reliance enable him easily to bear the responsibility by which such confidence is attended.

His practice originated in a succession of trifling accidents, by which he was led to employ bathing in a neighboring spring, for the relief of disease. It is not necessary to give them in detail. Success in these first attempts procured him a local renown, and he became the village doctor. From villagers his fame soon spread to patients of a higher rank, and Graefenberg gradually became the resort of the hipped and the halt from all the surrounding district. By these his praises were sung louder and louder, until all the world began to furnish him patients by the hundred. He now possesses an enormous establishment, capable of containing several hundreds of patients, which is almost constantly crowded with ladies and gentlemen of every degree, and from every nation ; while his disciples and followers, as is well known, have spread themselves throughout the world, and maintain, in every country, numerous and flourishing establishments formed on the original model of Graefenberg.

His treatment, although apparently constructed of such simple elements, is capable of being varied almost *ad infinitum*, according to the peculiarities of the case or the fancy of the prescriber, and of being rendered so powerful, as often to excite in the patients and spectators apprehensions of danger—and sometimes, no doubt, to produce it in reality. It is scarcely too much to say that he has modified the application of water, and some very

few other means, in a manner so ingenious as to render them no imperfect *nominal* substitute, at least, for most of the drugs in the pharmacopœia. He has his stimulant, his sedative, his tonic, his reducing agent, his purgative, his astringent, his diuretic, his styptic, his febrifuge, his diaphoretic, his alternative, his counter-irritant. Combined with these are peculiar regulations as to diet, dress, and regimen. The following is his general mode of proceeding.

In his first interview with the patient, after hearing sufficient to give him a rude insight into the locality and general features of the malady, Priessnitz proceeds to investigate its suitableness to his method of cure. He does this by sprinkling the surface of the body with cold water, or witnessing the taking of a cold bath, and then watching the development of reaction. If this appears in a certain amount of activity, he pronounces the case appropriate to his treatment; if not, he advises the abandonment of all hydropathic intentions. This is a mode of ascertaining the power of the constitution quite original, and it cannot be said to be unscientific. The power of resisting the external application of cold is a most essential conservative property of the animal system, and the degree to which it exists must be regarded as, in some respects, a criterion of the amount of *vis medicatrix* possessed by the patient. We see no very decisive reason for pronouncing it a more fallacious guide than the orthodox custom of feeling the pulse. The only objection to it that occurs to us is that it may not be always free from hazard.

This point being satisfactorily determined, the patient is straightway admitted into the mysteries of the cure. In the first place, he finds himself restricted to a peculiar diet. Every stimulant is absolutely prohibited, from brandy and claret to mustard and pepper; so, also, are most of the luxuries imported from foreign ports, such as tea, coffee, and every kind of spice. The meals consist of three—breakfast at eight, dinner at one, and supper at seven or eight o'clock. For breakfast, cold milk is the beverage, and bread and butter its only substantial companions. At

dinner, there is no other restriction than those above named. Supper is a repetition of breakfast, with the occasional addition of preserved fruit or potatoes. Throughout the day, no warm beverages whatever are permitted, and much of the food is brought to table considerably cooled. As some compensation for these manifold deprivations, the patient is allowed to gratify his appetite with every reasonable variety, and a free abundance, of substantial and nutritious food. He finds it a maxim that generous diet will promote his recovery, the treatment being responsible for preventing surfeit. He no longer finds an embargo laid on fruit and vegetables, and is not expected to dine seven days in the week off dry bread and mutton chops. So that, on the whole, there is perhaps about an equal amount of indulgence and restriction, as respects diet, to a patient coming to the Graefenberg rules from those of some fashionable physician in London.

In the next place, the majority of patients are directed to enter upon a course of water-drinking, the quantity of water varying from five or six to thirty or forty tumblers in the twenty-four hours. A large portion of this is taken before breakfast, the rest at suitable periods after meals, so as not to interfere with digestion, with frequently a glass or two the last thing at night. Exercise is generally advised at the time of water-drinking, except when this accompanies some other process of treatment incompatible with it.

A third rule insisted on, is, that every patient shall take a large amount of exercise during the day. This is, to some degree, indispensable after the cold baths, as a means of procuring the necessary reaction. Walking in the open air is the mode generally selected, when possible. In case of bad weather, or lameness, other plans are contrived; such as gymnastics, sawing or chopping wood, &c. As a general rule, every patient is required to take a long walk before breakfast. It is a *rex-ata quæstio*, we believe, among hydropathists, as among doctors, whether the patients should rest or walk immediately after a meal; but the water doctors generally incline to advise very gentle exercise at

such times; and, we believe, properly. The well-known experiments on greyhounds, and such other convincing facts, are counterbalanced, to say the least, by the habits of the working-man, who proceeds to his labor as soon as he has swallowed his dinner, and rarely suffers from so doing.

After these preliminaries, and the case being pronounced suitable for the treatment, the next morning witnesses the patient's initiation into more active proceedings. At an early hour of the morning, varying according to the time required for the operation about to be undergone, a bath attendant enters with the formidable machinery for the administration of a rubbing with a wet sheet, a packing in the dry blanket, or a packing in the wet sheet. The first of these processes consists of throwing a wet sheet over the whole person, and applying upon it active friction of a few minutes' duration. A glow is thus excited. The patient then dresses, takes his water, and sets forth upon his morning's walk. The second of the above three operations requires the patient to be enveloped in several blankets, with perhaps the superincumbence of a large feather pillow, until free perspiration is excited, which generally requires a period of about three hours. When the perspiration has continued the prescribed time (from fifteen minutes to an hour, or more,) the patient is subjected to some kind of cold bath, either by the wet sheet, as just described, by pouring water over the person from the pails or watering-pots, or by taking a plunge bath. This being followed by friction and water-drinking, the morning's proceedings are concluded by exercise. Packing in the wet sheet is similar to the foregoing, with the addition, next the skin, of a sheet wrung out of cold water. It is generally of short duration, as forty-five minutes or an hour, the object being to excite a glow, instead of perspiration. It is followed by cold bathing, as just described. During the packing, in both instances, some glasses of cold water are imbibed through a tube.

At other parts of the day, other portions of the treatment are applied, such as

the sitz-bath, the douche, the shower-bath, head-bath, foot-bath, &c.

The sitz-bath is a tub of cold water, in which the patient sits for a period varying from a few minutes to an hour, or even longer, using constant friction to the abdominal region. The other baths mentioned in this paragraph need no description. These, as well as the former processes, are sometimes repeated during the day. In certain cases the day's proceedings commence with some of them, in place of those previously mentioned. A rubbing with the wet sheet is frequently employed before getting into bed at night.

In fever, from whatever source, the patient is enveloped in a succession of wet sheets, renewed as often as they become warm, for a period varying with the intensity of the case—say, from thirty minutes to five or six hours. In other similar cases, cold immersion or affusion is employed with the same view,—viz. to reduce the morbid heat of the system.

The *umschlage*, or compress, is an essential and seldom-omitted part of the treatment. It is a cloth, well wetted with cold water, applied to the surface nearest to the supposed seat of the disease, securely covered with a dry cloth, and changed as often as it becomes dry during the day. It is sometimes covered with a layer of oiled silk, which, by impeding evaporation, prevents the inconvenience of frequent change. This compress speedily becomes warm, and remains so until dry. It is termed a heating or stimulating bandage. In cases of superficial inflammation it is more frequently changed, so as to keep cold, whereby its effect is just the reverse, being then a local antiphlogistic.

In some establishments the sweating has been effected by other means than the simple envelopements of Priessnitz, as by the vapor-bath, or a chamber highly heated by a stove. We have heard of a temperature of 180°, and even that of 198° Fahrenheit, being employed for this purpose. The blankets used by Priessnitz are very bad conductors of caloric, therefore they cause the heat given off by the body to be accumulated around its surface, by the lengthened influence of which

the sudorific action is effected. This process differs in no other manner than in degree and rapidity of effect from exposing the same surface to heat of any other origin. The animal heat, when once evolved, becomes a quality of the surrounding atmosphere. Being kept in contact with the body by blankets, it constitutes an artificial elevation of temperature, and nothing more. Therefore, in cases where active sweating is required, we can suppose no disadvantage to result from using other kinds of artificial heat, and can easily imagine advantages in a higher temperature than that attainable from animal heat alone. But we would limit this remark to dry heat. Aqueous vapour, by a well-known law, impedes evaporation, and would therefore restrict the full completion of the sudorific process. For this reason it is used to prevent plants from parting with their moisture in hot-houses. For the same reason it should *not* be used when the intention is to promote the removal of moisture, or to promote perspiration.

A point uniformly insisted on by Priessnitz, is, that his patients should abstain from wearing flannel next the skin. When we consider how generally the use of this article of clothing has been advised by physicians and adopted by invalids, especially in this country, we can easily conceive that strong prejudices will exist in the minds of patients against relinquishing it. Yet it appears to be almost universally discarded by hydropathists, and, as far as we have learnt, without any mischievous consequences.

Another maxim of Priessnitz is, that his patients are never to take any kind of drug. It should be remarked, that, not being licensed to practice medicine, it would be illegal for him to administer drugs. So that it does not follow, from his disuse of them, that he himself would be opposed to their use *in all cases*, much less that their use is in any way *inconsistent* with his practice. His medical disciples, not being similarly restricted, so far as we can learn, usually employ drugs occasionally, though sparingly.

(To be continued on page 97.)

(From the N. Y. Tribune.)

SYOSSET, OR OYSTER BAY—TEMPERANCE—A
WATER-CURE ESTABLISHMENT, &c.

To the Editor of the Tribune:

The name "Oyster Bay" does not convey to the mind any particular idea of *beauty*; but here is one of the most beautiful and picturesque villages situated on a bay as beautiful as can elsewhere be found. There are water-views, doubtless, where the background being composed of mountains, have, on the whole, a better or more striking effect. But as to real rural beauty, nothing can surpass Syosset, or, as it is more commonly termed, Oyster Bay. Fine groves of locust abound everywhere, and the inhabitants have the good sense to leave an abundance of trees about their dwellings, which keep them shady and cool in summer, and give them a more life-like appearance in winter. Some of these trees are noble and majestic in size, bearing the impress of age, and yet retaining all their primeval freshness. There may also be seen in every direction thick copses of laurel, with its dark glossy foliage, chastening the bright hues of summer and relieving and cheering the dark gloom of winter. Wild flowers also put forth in great luxuriance from the trailing arbutus, which sends forth its fragrance with the earliest breath of spring, to the wild amaranth, which, disdaining the chilling frosts of autumn, perfumes the air until buried beneath the snows of winter. In their season, also, specimens of most delicious grapes are found growing in an uncultivated state. Clams and oysters of the finest qualities abound here, and as the world has improved so much upon the dietetic regulations anciently given by God to the Jews, the inhabitants fare sumptuously upon these articles, unclean though they are, according to the Mosaic code. But some assert that these delicacies have cast a blight upon the place, for men who can go out any time of a morning and dig a basket of clams for breakfast, are not always as willing as they should be to work.

In this apparently obscure village (it having about 500 inhabitants) there are some things of an antiquarian nature that are of interest to the stranger. There is a Baptist church yet standing in a very good state of preservation, that was erected a full century and a quarter ago. But it is a small affair, being only twenty feet square, with a quadrangular roof, and was built in times when large houses of worship were not needed. It is no longer devoted to "lodging folk disposed to sleep," but is used for a stable, which also is apt to remind one that the Saviour himself was born in a manger. Opposite this ancient relic, on the high ground of the present Baptist church,

are yet to be seen the remains of a fortification erected by Col. Simcoe, in the time of the Revolution, to prevent the rebel force from entering the bay. Andre, a short time before his arrest, visited this spot. In another part of the village is to be seen an antiquated house in which the "Father of his country" passed a night, and the very bed on which he slept is still kept standing in the position which it then occupied. In another house is the name of "Arnold," which was inscribed before "traitor" was attached to his name. Here also stands a solitary rock on which George Fox addressed a large assemblage of Indians, and others, in 1672; and near here the celebrated Elias Hicks was born and lived to the day of his death. There is here also, among many others, the beautiful residence of Hon. Vice-Chancellor McCoun, whose professional abilities and acquirements are widely known; and that of Dr. James E. DeKay, author of "Sketches of Turkey," the best work, perhaps, extant on that country, and State author on Conchology, or as one of the old natives here expressed it, "the bug business."

Here are no less than five religious societies and four good and substantial houses of public worship; an Episcopalian, a Presbyterian, a Baptist, a Quaker meeting-house; the Methodists meet in the Academy. The people have mostly become teetotalers, and where rum-sellers formerly did a thriving business, a public house cannot now be supported. There are, however, boarding-houses, the proprietors of which are at all times glad, for a moderate compensation, to look after the wants of the traveller. There is one striking circumstance here in reference to matters of temperance. For many years the principal hotel was kept (much of the time at least) as a regular dirty "grog-hole," as some of the people termed it, a place in which men were made drunkards of the lowest order, and in which some of them even died. But as temperance did its good work, the thing went down; and in this same hotel, Dr. Shew, of your city, the celebrated pioneer of water-cure in the United States, in connexion with others, commenced, last year, an establishment for curing invalids and the sick according to the hydropathic mode. Hundreds of persons resorted here the past summer and autumn, and, as I am told, with scarce an exception, were benefited in health, many to a truly wonderful extent.

The Water Establishment is, in truth, the thing of all others that interests me in this place. The writer has himself experienced the curative effects of water, combined with a well-regulated general regime, in such a degree as can be better felt than expressed. How potent is this "element" of nature, so com-

mon, abundant, cheap, and without price; and yet how much has it been, and how much it is still, neglected! *Pure, simple water* composes eight-tenths (nine-tenths, as some physiologists say,) of the living system by weight. Water, by its temperature, is capable of producing great effects upon the system: great for harm, if wrongly employed, but the most friendly medicinal agent in nature, when suitably employed. It has already done wonders, and the new system has thus far outstripped everything that has gone before it. Of the miserable invalids who go to Dr. Priessnitz, scarce one-half per cent. are lost. What may we not expect from this system when it shall have been improved, as by time and mature experience it will be?

The people of Syosset might enjoy a greater blessing in the formation of this establishment than they probably have yet any idea of. If we judge of them by the generality of mankind, we may suppose that most of them go on taking quack medicines for every little ailment that comes upon them, dosing and drugging themselves with a thousand "cure-alls," the nature and dangers of which they know nothing about. They are doubtless ever ready, like other people, to employ the "genteel," "flashy," doctor who may come among them to "set up business," spreading himself in all directions, and causing himself every Sunday to be called out of the most fashionable church in the midst of service, and riding about as often and in as great haste as if all creation were sick. What tricks do these gentry of the profession practice in serving old Nick! And how ready are people to be imposed upon by men whose qualifications do not render them fit to "doctor" a dog! No doubt, too, the people here, as is common in our country,—the men, and the boys scarcely in their teens, nine out of ten,—use, in some way or other, the abominable thing, tobacco. So we must judge from the appearance of the decayed teeth and dirty mouths. But there is a satisfaction in this matter. The laws of nature cannot be with impunity trampled upon. Poison will always take its effect. *No living being can use tobacco habitually and enjoy health.* Thus it is, the Almighty, in mercy, sends pain upon men, so that, if possible, they may be induced to cease from their physical sins.

The Water-Cure Establishment, by Drs. Shew and Roof, which has been discontinued during the winter, is now in full operation; and though it is yet early in the season, strangers are already visiting the institution—acting from a rational conviction that here is the direct road to health.

May, 1848.

X.

WATER-CURE IN MICHIGAN.

[Extract from a Water Patient.]

Lyons, Ionia Co., Mich.,

June 12, 1848.

For the Water-Cure Manual and numbers of the Journal, please accept my thanks. Since I have read these, I have become an ardent convert to the new system. I believe the treatment will cure every kind of fever and every description of inflammatory disease to which we are subject in this region. In two cases, this remedy has been applied with the most cheering success. The one was a case of chill fever, the other lung fever, or inflammation of the lungs. They soon yielded to this treatment, and have been the cause of making many converts.

About a month ago, as soon as I became convinced of the remedial qualities of cold water, I turned about, and "wheeled about," and jumped into a tub of pure, cold water every morning; rubbed my surface with coarse towels, banished the use of tea and coffee, and put myself under strict regimen; and I must say that I have enjoyed first rate health ever since.

As soon as spring opens, I intend to commence the water-cure process with my children; and this will be no small task, but it must be done.

I wish I could persuade some "water doctor" who understands well the human system and the hydropathic treatment to locate himself here; it would drive the allopathists from us—the calomel doctors, who, if they cure the disease, are sure to undermine the constitution of their patients, and thus doom them to misery for the remnant of their days. A. L. R.

The above statement is from a convert of our associate, Dr. Roof, and may be relied on as the truth. The good people "out west" are ready, more ready, perhaps, than any others, for health reforms. But they need water doctors exceedingly, —right true men, not the interlopers whose highest ambition is the "root of all evil," —men who do not know B from a broomstick in the healing art.

But go forward, good people of the

west. Read and digest the new system as well as you can; and, above all, practise "temperance in all things;" and thus may you, as far as possible, learn to keep clear of *all doctors*.

WATER-CURE JOURNAL, AND HERALD OF REFORMS.

NEW-YORK, JUNE, 1848.

A PILL FOR THE WATER-DOCTORS.

Can there be quackery in the water-cure? Can it be that a system which carries with its very name so much of hygiene, temperance, of every thing good? Can it be, that in this the villainous interlopers and mercenary speculators will come in, doing their vile work, at the very commencement of the reform? Let us for a moment look at the facts.

The water treatment proper is opposed to drugs. It implies that all drug systems, of whatever kind, are wrong; that the practitioners of the established practice of medicine—those who are honest—are laboring under error, and are doing continually a mischievous, life-destroying work. The practitioner of water, then, consistently opposes such a system and all who advocate it. But notwithstanding all this, we find there are those who, while they pretend to oppose the existing pernicious systems, are very glad to append the "M. D." to their names; and this, although they have no more right to the title of "Doctor of Medicine" than had Abernethy's ass, for whom he bought a diploma of a medical college. A pretty business, this, for a man to assume to practise the system of Priessnitz, and yet steal continually the "M. D." title, with the expectation of gaining a little popularity thereby. We do not say of what part of the world precisely we are speaking, but

merely that the water school has saddled upon it a number of this kind of quacks.

One man goes to a city of Germany, and in the practice of his licentious habits, contracts a disgusting disease, the horrors of which are better understood by those who have had it than can be expressed on paper. In his consternation, he flees to Graefenberg, to avail himself of that most potent and best of all curative agents, pure water. He spends there not one year, but some months, lazily, going daily down to the *conditorei*, (confectionary establishment of Pollo, at Freywaldau,) dosing himself at any and all times of the day with the vile things there to be found, Priessnitz's injunctions to the contrary notwithstanding. Returning home, all at once this juvenile heralds himself forth as an "M. D." water doctor, who had studied one year with Priessnitz, and was, in consequence of such peculiar advantages, prepared to do the thing up in its perfection; and he was so very attentive at Graefenberg, (that is, to the confectionary concern alluded to,) that no one ever suspected (not even Priessnitz,) that he was studying the system of water treatment.

There is in the water world a pretended practitioner,—a self-styled "M. D." also,—who gained his "profession" in this wise. A sort of "spoiled child" of a rich father; (it being a general fact, a most unfortunate thing, for a boy to have a rich father,) he "is sent to make a tour in Europe." (That is very *fashionable*, as our readers know.) At length he returns home, and is, as before said, an "M. D." water doctor. He puffs forth that he finished his medical education in such a German university, and has (of course) studied thus and so at Graefenberg. But the facts are, he never had any medical education whatever, and staid at a Ger-

man university not longer than the celebrated character who boasted that he had "been through college," that is, he passed into one door and was kicked out at the other.

In one country a certain practitioner heralds himself as being a "scientific" water doctor, and has the honor of having formed the first hydropathic establishment in the country. The facts of the case are, that others having commenced the system in the country, and one, at least, having published works upon the system, the author being also actively engaged in practice, this great man gets those books, and so betakes himself to see if he cannot make a little money in the matter. He is already a drug practitioner, and a seller of drugs in the bargain. His house is just big enough for a drug shop below, and, besides his small family, for a single patient above. This man having two strings to his bow, viz. drug practising and drug selling, takes also another in the water practice. There is an old saying, that one who has too many irons in the fire gets them burned. So with this man; it is doubtful if in those ways he made his bread and butter. We ought to mention, also, that this great originator of water establishments in a certain country was able to practise upon his one patient with the fine water of a dirty cistern or the stinking well water of a great city. Verily, it may be said, great things come often from the smallest beginnings.

Another practitioner, a self-styled "M. D." also, holds himself forth as the *only* one in the country who understands the true mode of healing by water; and although he often insults his patients at the table, and quarrels with them all, rails at all other practitioners of the new method, cursing and swearing at the diet they use, some of them, and is in his nature so

lecherous and libidinous withal, that he has in his dirty establishment private peep-holes, that he may gratify his evil propensities in watching the lady patients at their baths!! Yet, strange to say, this servant of the devil has a wonderful faculty of making patients believe that he, of all others in the country, does understand the system best; and if people are by him made to sweat daily in the wet sheet six hours, until they get into a perfect night-mare, and are put through various other as abominable forms of treatment not less destructive of health, they yet consent to be humbugged by this villainous character. However, nine out of every ten soon find out their mistake; but often not until they have been water-quacked in a way which will keep up their memories for a time at least.

Thus we might go on at length, discussing the subject of water doctors. But our "pill" is perhaps strong enough for the present. We might speak of men who dress finely, and have a remarkable faculty of "showing off," who take it into their heads that there is money to be made in the new business, who get themselves introduced to some leading practitioner, as having just come from Graefenberg, whereas they knew as little of that place as an unborn child, having never been there at all. Patients, however, soon learn enough, by reading about Graefenberg, to know that such practitioners have been all the time lying to them; and when such of the water doctors are sold out by the sheriff, hydropathy sustains no great loss. We might speak, too, of such as set themselves up as being genuine water-doctors, but who, when they get ill, send at once, in their fright, for a drug practitioner, and have no confidence in a system which they do not in the least understand.

There are various other things we might speak of, but for the present we forbear. We shall be regarded as being too personal, doubtless, and our "pill" will be stronger than will suit the palate of every one. But all we have at present to say, is, "if the garment fits, put it on." Profit by the castigation, if you will; and whether you do or not, understand, the water system will purify itself of its quackery in time, and the true and the false will inevitably be found out.

To the people we may say, there is one thing which shows well the great power of water. In all establishments, however ignorant the practitioner, there will be great, wonderful things, miracles almost, performed. But it is sad to think how many, too, will get their death warrant in cold water, ere people shall learn who among the practitioners are really qualified, and who are not; who can be trusted as honest men, and who are as dishonest vagabonds as walk the face of the earth.

AMERICAN HABITS IN EATING AND DRUG-TAKING.

To one who has just returned from Europe, the hurried and rapid manner in which Americans take their meals, appears very singular. Directly on arriving home, a few days since, we had occasion to pass up that noble river, the Hudson, and in that most splendid of all steamboats, the "Isaac Newton." We had a curiosity to notice how our people would take "tea." We had been in Germany,—"well ordered Germany"—where every thing is done in the most systematic manner; in France, where men are not to be hurried, especially in the matters of eating; in England, where people pride themselves on knowing how to enjoy the good things of life. It appeared singular, then, on the Isaac Newton, to witness the

mode of doing things. Immediately as the cabin doors were opened and the bell rung, there was the greatest rushing to the table, such, apparently, as if life depended on *haste*. The clatter of dishes, the swallowing of tea and coffee, so hot as almost to scald the throat at every swallow, the rapid demolishing of huge pieces of beef steak, of ham, eggs, oysters, fish, hot rolls, salt butter by the mass, &c., &c., was truly astonishing. Fat men were fast making their stomachs more protuberant, and lean men were taking such a quantity, as one laborer said by another who was a great eater, that it would make them lean to carry it about. Thus the thing went on, and in about fifteen minutes the food furnished in such abundance had disappeared, as if by magic. A stranger, seeing these things, would at least suppose that these people had some great and important business to do, or some great entertainment to attend, by which to account for all this hurry and excitement in the taking of meals.

The Americans are regarded by other nations as being a remarkably persevering, as some say, a go-a-head people. This certainly holds good in their manner of eating. And so in tobacco chewing we see the same thing exemplified. It would take too much time to smoke, as the Germans do, before getting up in the morning, all day long, and after going to bed at night; or to open the snuff-box fifty or one hundred times in the day, like the English and the French. Chewing, that most beastly, disgusting, and injurious of all the modes of using the abominable weed,—this is the *American* habit. It does not take up so much time, and a great deal more is accomplished in a given space; and that is the *American* way of doing things.

But we should remember, the Ameri-

cans are getting to be the most unhealthy, sickly, and, in some respects, effeminate people in the world. How many an attack of cholic, inflammation of the bowels, fevers, and the like, are caused by this almost every-where rapid gorging the stomach with food? How many have been sent to their long home with their beef steak, fat pork, sausages, tripe, and other forms of carcass meat, undigested on their stomachs? sent to their graves with their filthy, diseased bodies filled with an additional portion of filthiness for the worms to live upon? How many, too, ignorant, stupid people have at such times been killed by ignorant doctors? A person has overloaded his stomach and brought on a cholic, which is fast running into a dangerous inflammation of the bowels. The doctor is called; the tartar emetic, bleeding, calomel and opium, are brought into requisition. And what is the result? The man suffers days and nights of torture, and dies; or if, perchance, he escapes, it is with but a miserable wreck of a constitution, frail, feeble, nervous, and sensitive as a thermometer to the slightest change. Now in such cases, if the patient had known enough to avoid being a glutton, or if the doctor had known enough (which not one of a thousand does know,) to give a good vomiting by drinking ten, twenty, thirty tumblers of tepid water, till the stomach became perfectly cleansed, which also could be brought about in a few minutes, and in much shorter time than by any drug whatever, and thorough injections of tepid water to free the bowels, why in almost every conceivable case, the difficulty would be cut short at once. After people have suffered enough, which they have not yet, these things will perhaps become better understood, especially the preventive part.

Thus we see, while the American is a most industrious, persevering man in many things, he is the most ignorant and foolhardy in others; and this often in things that concern him most. What is money, compared with health? What is the wealth of Astor, if a man is constantly feeble, nervous, discontented with life, sleepless, and melancholic? The hundreds and thousands in this country who have an abundance of the treasures of this world, and whose health is such that they are tempted oft to destroy themselves, can answer.

We see, too, the same thing exhibited in the never-ending dosing with drugs. No where in the world else, is there half the medicine taken as in the United States. See in all the papers, political and religious, the amount of advertisements of quack medicines, which, it is boldly affirmed, will cure every malady to which human nature is subject. If a person is sick, every friend has some medicine—such a man's pills, or such an elixir, pain extractor, &c., which will certainly cure; and how importunate, too, are these friends that *their* remedy be used. Thus it is in this country more than any other; people eat, drink, dose, and die,—not at the age of one hundred years and upwards, as did Cornaro, but before their natural life-time has half expired.

And what is the remedy for these evils? The spreading of a knowledge of the natural laws—this will do something. But yet how often do we see persons who are well informed on subjects of health, who have not the self-denial and perseverance necessary to enable them to carry out their information in practice? It is comparatively an easy thing to convince a man,—a very different one to get him to act.

HEALTH OF THE CITY.

The City Inspector's Annual Report to the Common Council has just been published. From this document, it appears that the number of deaths during the past year has been 15,788, of which 7373 have been of children under 5 years of age, 511 of children between 5 and 10; 646 persons between 10 and 20; 1947 between 20 and 30; 1833 between 30 and 40; 1279 between 40 and 50; 746 between 50 and 60; 580 between 60 and 70; 389 between 70 and 80; 153 between 80 and 90; 35 between 90 and 100; and 3 have died after having reached the extreme age of 100. The number of males in the whole number was 8525, and of females 7263; 14,922 were whites, and 866 blacks. The total number of deaths for the year exceeds that of the year previous by 4423, and of the year 1845 by 4648. In 1845 the deaths were of one person to every 37 of the population; it is impossible to say what was the proportion of the last year, as we do not know precisely what is the population of the city, but it will probably not vary much from that of '45. The principal diseases by which this mortality has been occasioned have been, typhus and typhoid fever, 1396; apoplexy, 445; cholera infantum, 692; convulsions, 1023; consumption, 1926; pneumonia, 748; debility, 515; dropsy of the head, 559; croup, 274; erysipelas, 162; measles, 275; scarlet fever, 142; old age, 180; delirium tremens, 137; small pox, 53; whooping cough, 86; and cholera morbus, 44.—*N. Y. Tribune.*

Thus it appears that almost *one half of all the deaths of one year in the city of New York were under five years of age!* What an example of the "mysterious providences of God!"

(For the Water-Cure Journal.)

A CASE OF WATER-CURE IN 1822.

Mr. Editor,—Rest assured that the cause of hydropathy is decidedly onward in this region. I think I am perfectly safe when I say that no reform for the last century, in the healing art, has been received with such decided marks of approbation as the water-cure.

Many of all classes, the rich and poor, learned and unlearned, look upon hydropathy as in reality a boon of no ordinary kind,—a harbinger of health and happiness to the human family.

Having become much interested in this reform from some striking facts (in the shape of cures by this safe remedy) which have fallen under my observation, I feel myself under obligations to my fellows to do what I can to remove what seems to me to be an unjust prejudice against the hydropathic practice. In examining a new work just from the Oberlin press, entitled "Medical Reform," by Isaac Jennings, M. D., a skilful practitioner of the old school, who has lost all confidence in the allopathic practice of medicine, and has published this book, a work of 375 pages 12mo., to prove that nature, in most cases, does not need any thing to assist her in curative operations, I came across the following case, quoted by Dr. J. from his own diary. It seemed to me one of the best cases which I had seen illustrating the wonderful virtues of pure water in removing disease. I therefore send it to you. If you think it will do good, please give it a place in your widely circulated and valuable Journal. It seems the more valuable, emanating, as it does, from so able a pen as that of Dr. J., and from the fact that it occurred in 1822, and was written without the most distant reference to hydropathy.

I shall leave the Dr. to tell his own story :

"In 1822, in the family of Mr. J. French, residing at Derby, Ct., North End, there were, within the compass of a few weeks, nine cases of malignant typhus fever, namely, Mr. and Mrs. French, five sons, one daughter, and a sister of Mrs. French. Mr. French and three sons had been hard sick a number of days, when Mrs. F. failed. Worn down with labor 'night and day,' care, and anxiety, she sunk rapidly on first giving out. The most distressing and alarming symptoms, very great prostration of strength, and extreme irritability of the stomach, with constant tending to vomit. A great variety of means, internal and external, mild and severe, were used to allay the irritability

of the stomach, but to no permanent or good purpose. The symptoms, on the whole, became more distressing and alarming. Calling in to see her one morning, about the fourth day of the disease, I was greatly pained and alarmed at her dejected and distressed appearance. Walking out into an adjoining field, that I might the better command my thoughts, I went through with a very minute and thorough review of the whole case, to discern, if possible, what more could be done, with promise of relief, but could think of nothing that offered sufficient inducement for trial. I returned to the house, and inquired of the nurse, what, of all that Mrs. F. had taken, seemed to agree best with the stomach. The reply was, 'Very little difference in any thing except water. When she takes that—and she wants it directly from the well—it stays on the stomach, and nothing else does, no matter what it is.'

"My mind was soon made up on a prescription for the day. Returning to my promenade in the field, where there was an excellent spring of soft water, I took a vial from my pocket, discharged its contents, rinsed it thoroughly, filled it with the spring water; went back to the house, called for a clean vial, into which I turned a portion of the new and choice medicine, and directed *four drops* of the *aqua fontana pura* to be given once in four hours, in a teaspoonfull of water directly from the well, (which also afforded good water) and that nothing else be suffered to enter the stomach till I should see the patient again, except water, which she might take in any quantity, as often as she pleased.

"Called at evening, and, in answer to the usual inquiry, 'How is the woman?' the reply was, 'Comfortable; *you have at last hit upon the right medicine. The drops are just the thing for her.* She has had no sickness of the stomach since she began with them, and but little distress. She has slept some, and has had a very comfortable day.' This case gave me no further trouble. This 'water-cure' occurred in 1822."

With respect, I subscribe myself yours,
for Truth and Reform,

J. CUTLER TEFFT.

ROUND HILL WATER-CURE RETREAT,
NORTHAMPTON, MASS.

The proprietors of this concern advertise, "that it is their intention to make it not only a superior retreat for invalids, whether desiring hydropathic treatment, or otherwise, but also to make it a most agreeable resort for persons travelling for health or pleasure, or for gentlemen and families going into the country for summer relaxation." Drs. C. A. HALL, of Northampton, and J. A. CUMMINGS, late of Boston, have immediate charge of the medical department, with the daily counsel of Dr. S. B. WOODWARD, late of the Hospital for Insane, at Worcester.

Northampton, Mass., is one of the most delightful places in the world; but we do not believe that an establishment "for hydropathic treatment, or otherwise," that is (we suppose,) drug treatment, will, any where succeed. And when there is added to this a "pleasure department," the matter is still worse. Do healthy people want to go among the sick? Or will the gormands, gluttons, wine-bibbers, tobacco smokers and chewers, and tea and coffee drinkers, go to a plain water establishment to glut and satiate themselves? We think not. They must go to such places as where the Devil is served to better advantage than is consistent with any thing that deserves a tithe of the name "Water-Cure Retreat?" Besides, there are, we think, in the above, too many doctors for the good of the patients.

Again we say, Northampton is one of the most delightful places in the world, and one of the most healthful, no doubt. We are not personally acquainted with any of the physicians or others concerned in the establishment, and know them only through "good report." We "wish them well" in their undertaking, and trust they will not be offended with us for our plain

speech. Perhaps we shall find ourselves mistaken in our opinions of a "mixed concern;" but we have now, we must confess, a strong presentiment that no such establishment can succeed. Let us see what time shall bring forth.

"THE PARKVILLE HYDROPATHIC INSTITUTE, pleasantly located at Gloucester Co., New Jersey, ten miles south of Philadelphia, easy of access by steamboat and stages every day, has been opened for water-cure guests, under highly favorable auspices."

The above is the heading of a circular which has been sent us, setting forth to the public this new establishment. The location is said to be a retired and pleasant one, in a region of pine and cedar, and the water good. The medical department is under the control of Dr. SANFORD BELL. Letters are to be addressed, post-paid, to Samuel Webb, Esq., (Secretary of the Board of Managers,) 58 South Fourth street, Philadelphia, to whom application for admission and payments are to be made. We hope this and all other similar establishments will do the fair thing, and be amply rewarded therefore.

PHYSIC.—A Mr. Barry, of this city, once applied to an apothecary for a dose of *cream of tartar*, and received instead a dose of *tartar-emetic*, (tartarized antimony,) and having taken it, was seized with violent spasms and vomiting. A physician was sent for, who gave 15 grains of *white vitriol*! The man died; and no wonder! It is barely possible that the thing might be done again, but we believe that the "Faculty" have been inoculated with PROGRESS, and have got a few steps beyond such deadly humbugs. We mention this to show what the "Faculty" have been capable of. They formerly lost as many cases of measles as they did of small-pox; but latterly they let nature alone as much as possible, and when nature has effected a cure, they take all the glory—and send in a bill! Quite an improvement!—*Boston Investigator*.

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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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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will be published monthly, containing instruction, with reference to the application of this system, adapted to all classes, on the following

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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, (linen 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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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 15¢ cents. Also, Graham's Lectures on the Science of Human Life; and his Lecture to Young Men.

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