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A
GUIDE TO HYDROPATHY

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A
TRIBUTE
TO
HYDROPATHY.

BY
SIR J. E. EARDLEY-WILMOT, BART.,
RECORDER OF WARWICK,
AND JUDGE OF THE BRISTOL COUNTY COURT.

THIRD EDITION.

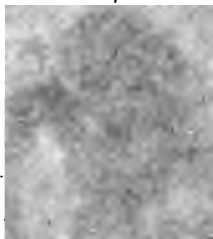
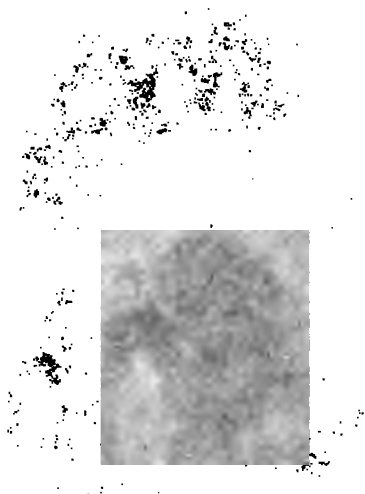
"Can earth, or fire, or liquid air,
With water's sacred stream compare?"

HEBER, *Transl. from Pindar.*

LONDON:
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN AND LONGMANS.

1855.

151. C. 84.



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TO
SIR EDWARD L. BULWER LYTTON, BT., M.P.,
THE NOVELIST, THE POET,
THE PHILOSOPHER, AND THE STATESMAN,

THIS EDITION OF
A TRIBUTE TO HYDROPATHY
IS WITH GREAT RESPECT INSCRIBED,
BY HIS OBLIGED AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.



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PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

THE Second Edition of this little Watery Tablet having been long out of print, I have been requested to allow a Third Edition to swim to the press.

I considered at first that so fragile a memorial would have sunk, when it had no longer the fact of Hydro-pathy being a novelty to buoy it up, and when Stansted-Bury, the scene of the liquid discipline described, became forsaken for more commodious baths, *or for more favourite resorts.*

But my friends remind me that sickness belongs to no certain period of time and to no particular locality ; and that although Stansted's rills and fountains no longer warble comfort as they flow, yet that Sudbrook Park, with its excellent accommodation, and the lovely scenery of Richmond contiguous to it, or Malvern with its healthful steeps and numerous receptacles for the Water Friend, still invite the invalid to forget his sufferings, and lead him back agreeably and insensibly to Health.

For my own part, I can now speak with the experience of twelve years as strongly as ever in favour of the Water Cure : under its auspices, and from time *to time fortified by its libations*, I have,

under the Divine Blessing, been able to breast the billows of an arduous profession, and to struggle, not without some success, against the difficulties of life.

I frequently see those around me, harassed and shaded by anxiety and care, the victims to social allurements, or to a want of hardihood to break off habits of luxury, indolence, or dissipation; to such I would gladly say, Hasten, while there is yet time, to the quiet shades of Sudbrook, or the breezy slopes of Malvern.

There, while the body is refreshed by the cool draughts which Nature pours you out as medicine, will the *mind acquire new and unwonted power*

and tone; the passions, which wear and fret and corrode the vital machine, will be lulled for a time to rest: Man will not only find Philosophy, but happiness, in water, and after a short season spent in the healing process, he will be better able to set a correct estimate on Pleasure, and he will experience a firmness of vigorous purpose, which will laugh at opposition, and enable him to throw aside the obstacles in his path, as if it were the foam upon the ocean wave.

Bristol, June 12, 1855.

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A TRIBUTE TO HYDROPATHY.

Υγίεια πρεσβίτα Μακάρων

Μετὰ σεῦ ναίοιμι

Τὸ λείπόμενον βιοτᾶς·

Σὺ δέ μοι πρόφρων σύνοικος εἶης·

Gk. Antholog. vol. i.

"Health, most venerable of the powers of Heaven !
may I live with Thee the remainder of my life ; and be
Thou the willing inmate of my dwelling."

YE who have hitherto sought in vain to recover that invaluable blessing, thus beautifully appealed to by the Greek poet ; too good friends of the chemist, who have spent much upon physicians, and yet grown worse ; who no longer know that joyousness of heart and elasticity of spirits which made existence *happiness, before pain and languor overcame*

you ; hearken to the grateful words of one formerly a fellow-sufferer with yourselves, but now, through the mercy of the Divine Physician, restored to health and strength by the simple agency of water. To you, whose common sufferings unite you in a freemasonry of sorrow, I address this tribute I gladly pay to that beautiful element, the virtues and wondrous potency of which have hitherto remained unvalued and unknown. You, on the other hand, who are rejoicing in the pride of health and vigour, despise not the remedy, as a matter in which you have no interest or concern ; for sickness walketh abroad in the noonday, and oftentimes amid the darkness entereth man's habitation when he deems himself most secure.

The hope that others may derive a similar benefit from Hydropathy, has induced me

to describe, in the following pages, the treatment I underwent. In addition to this, I am anxious to lend my small assistance towards removing that misconception which generally exists on the subject in the minds of the people of England, and, combined with other causes, which I shall hereafter mention, has rendered its progress here less rapid than in other parts of Europe. When I returned, with a whole skin, from the Temple dedicated to Neptune, many friends requested me to give them some account of the mysterious and, as they imagined, dreadful rites and ceremonies, which its votaries submitted to within its walls. All I ask of them is, not to judge of any part of the treatment by itself, but to weigh the whole of it fairly and impartially in the scale with the system of remedies by *means of medicine.*

4 I FIRST SEE A HYDROPATHIST, AND

It is now more than twelve years since a near relative in orders, whom I had last seen before he left England in search of health, called on me at my chambers in the Temple, and on my expressing my great astonishment at the improvement in his appearance, he replied that he had found, in a spring of cold water within thirty miles of London, the relief which he had hitherto tried every remedy to obtain at home and abroad without success. He had given a fair trial to several of the German baths; still his bodily debility and nervous sensations continued, precluding him altogether from the discharge of his arduous duties as a minister, when he accidentally met with a book on the Water-Cure. As a last resource, he visited Stansted-Bury, and in the course of a short time found his *distressing symptoms alleviated, his strength increased, and by strictly adhering to the*

rules laid down for him during the following winter, was enabled to undertake more duty than he had done for nearly two years. Although he spoke with the most fervid enthusiasm and confidence, I was at first incredulous, and could not understand how the application of wet bandages to the stomach, or the sitting in cold water for twenty minutes could do otherwise than inflict serious injury upon the constitution.

Soon after the visit of my relative, I was attacked in my turn by severe indisposition, arising from biliary derangement. For these bilious attacks, which recurred so frequently as to render necessary my having recourse to powerful medicines, and to prevent any great or long continued exertion of body or mind, I had consulted many eminent physicians, but their prescriptions seldom varied much. *Preparations of calomel and blue pill formed the chief ingredient in them; but these*

6 I FEEL INCLINED TO BECOME ONE.

“exhibitions” gave me no permanent relief. To endeavour to weaken the violence of my powerful enemy, I had confined myself to the plainest and most wholesome food, had lived almost by rule, and passed months together in the country or at the sea-side, with the view of preventing the return of my indisposition by air and exercise. At the end of five weeks, during which time I had been almost entirely confined to my room, finding myself no better, I determined at once to give up all medicine, and try cold water. A careful perusal of the work of Claridge (to whom every hydropathist owes a deep debt of gratitude, for his strenuous exertions in the cause) raised my hopes; and the recommendations of a friend,* most eloquent in its behalf, confirmed my deci-

* *T. Assheton Smith, Esq., who hunted five days a week before he became a hydropathist, and six afterwards.*

sion. In vain the members of my family remonstrated with me on what they called madness after a long course of mercurial treatment, and one, kinder than the rest, obligingly informed me, "that I was the greatest fool he had known in his life,"—and his life had not been a short one. I stood like a rock against the terrors and dangers with which they threatened me, and soon afterwards, making a glorious and extensive bonfire of my pill-boxes and prescriptions, I hastened to Stansted-Bury.

As I drove up to the door of the establishment, a small grotto, with the crystal stream flowing into an inverted shell, and a table, upon which stood two or three tumblers covered with icicles, presented themselves to view; and these, on the 1st of March, after several days of severe weather, *with snow upon the ground, made me quake*

at the uncomfortable process into which I was about to be plunged. However, it was now too late to draw back. The institution at Stansted-Bury, the first set up in this country for the votaries of Hydropathy, but which has been since abandoned for Sudbrook Park near Richmond, Malvern, and other localities, was about twenty-three miles distant from London, on the North-Eastern Railway, and about four miles from the town of Ware. The Roydon Station was within ten minutes' walk of the house, and this was pleasantly situated on a hill close to the little church of Stansted. The village was about a mile distant, that of Roydon rather less. The contiguity of the churchyard to the shrubbery of the mansion frequently afforded a topic of jocular sarcasm to those friends who came from time to time *to look at the patients*. For my part, I

confess, I often used to love afterwards, in the bright mornings, to bask and sun myself in the road that skirts the resting place of the dead; at one time marking the airy flight of the wood-pigeon as it sprung disturbed from the ivy-mantled tower; at another, leaning over the paling to decypher the rude memorials of the rural ancestry; then turning my eyes, on the approach of the noisy train, from this scene of solemn stillness and peace to the rich meadows spread beneath my feet, I watched the mightiest work of man's inventive power, as with headlong rush it wound its easy way up the valley towards the great metropolis. The contrast between the busy hive which it soon would reach, and the calm repose around me, reminded me of that beautiful image of the poet, where he *describes the sense of security not unallied*

to pleasure, with which the landsman, standing on the quiet shore, looks out upon the distant vessel in the ocean battling with the storm. Surely, thought I, if health of mind or body is to be recovered, no more fitting place for it than this.

Having arrived too late for dinner, I was first introduced to my brother-hydro-pathists at supper, which, certainly, seemed a most cheerless and miserable meal. The long table was spread with decanters of cold water, jugs of cold milk, bread of various kinds, but of excellent quality, and fresh butter ; here and there a cold roast-apple, as a satire upon luxury, relieved the monotony of the repast. I observed the invalids set to, however, with vigorous appetite, and was much amused with their animated *discussions* as to the relative goodness of the *different loaves* on the table. But I soon

learned to discover that the simplicity of the diet, and the mode of life, produce a wonderful acuteness and delicacy in the organ of taste. Our party consisted at that time of a doctor in medicine, who had the post of honour, as doing by his conversion most credit to the institution; a clergyman, two other gentlemen, and two ladies; but before I left the institution, the numbers were greatly increased. The severe cold in February had driven away many patients, though I heard that on Christmas-day, a merry party of aquatics had sat down to roast beef and cold water, to the number of twenty-eight.

In the evening I had the usual audience of the doctor, who delivered a paper of mysterious import, containing instructions, to the bath attendant, and I soon after retired to *bed, where the bliss of ignorance as to the*

future, secured me a sound sleep. Exactly at four on the following morning the bathman* entered my room, and having with difficulty roused a sleepy mortal to a sense of the importance of his visit at that early and unseasonable hour, he proceeded to spread an immense blanket—such a blanket as could only be seen at that period at Stansted—upon a stretcher which lay alongside of my bed. As many possess the notion that patients are wrapped in wet blankets, I may as well mention here that the blanket is always perfectly dry, and in order the better to secure this qualifica-

* A clever and intelligent Scotchman, Andrew Henderson, who having made himself thoroughly conversant with the Hydropathic treatment, studied medicine and surgery, passed a good examination at the College of *Surgeons*, and is now practising in North Audley Street, *London*.

tion, is daily, after each operation, hung for several hours in a drying house. The inexorable bath-man, or rather *bad* man, as they would say in Germany, ordered me to strip and lay myself flat upon my back in the blanket, and then a novel and vehement process of pulling and pushing, tugging and tightening commenced, till I lay like a chrysalis, incapable of motion. My head was then encircled with a dry sheet, then over my own personal and peculiar blanket were placed three other blankets of ordinary household dimensions, and at top of all a huge feather-bed. The sensation was for the first half-hour very oppressive—the great weight upon the chest, the wearisomeness of lying so long in the same position, and the dry state of my skin stubbornly resisting the woollen *calificator*, all made me wish bad luck to

so horrible an invention. An insufferable sense of drowsiness came over me, but as I had been expressly charged by my myrmidon not to fall asleep, I kept my eyes steadfastly fixed upon the light of a dim tall spectre-like candle, which stood sentinel over me for this purpose from the highest eminence in the room. Every now and then the bath-man solemnly opened the door to see if I was alive, but was deaf to my entreaties for only a partial removal of the lofty apparatus under which I lay. The loaded waggon at the top of me was so skilfully piled, that it was impossible for me to remove it, and I had no other resource than to lie still and console myself with thinking of the far more dreadful instrument of torture by which, in barbarous *times*, the unhappy criminal who refused to *plead*, was pressed to death. But then, on

the other hand, he, poor wretch, might perhaps, by a timely assertion of his innocence, or confession of his guilt, have obtained from his persecutors a remission of his punishment, while I pleaded in vain.

At half-past six the doctor entered my room, and having by the light of a candle examined my forehead and countenance, pronounced that I should do (I thought he should say "be done") in half-an-hour. At the same time he ordered the deliverance of one of my fellow-prisoners in terms which sounded very oddly to me at the time: "Take the clergyman out." It reminded me of the language in which a despotic French *chef-de-cuisine* would command his under-strapper to remove a turbot at the critical moment from the saucepan, or to unravel a steaming pudding from the cloth.

Accordingly, in half-an-hour, which seemed an age, I heard the hasty step of the attendant, afterwards so familiar to me, advancing along the gallery. He threw open the door of my apartment, and brought with him my reprieve. Approaching quickly the pallet where I lay,—for though the member of the cloth had been let loose according to orders, more were yet to be rescued from this state of thralldom, and no time was to be lost,—

“ Here he flung the pillow, there the bolster,
This way the coverlet, another way the sheets,
Aye, and amid this hurly, he intended
That all was done in reverend care of me.”

Then uncovering my legs, and poising me on my feet, he directed me to step without delay into an empty sitting-bath, which stood ready to receive me at the foot of my *stretcher*. Here, while I stood shivering

and as uncomfortable as a lobster who has just cast his shell, while with my back turned to the bath-man, I was wondering at the novelty of my situation, and considering what was to come next, all of a sudden down on my head came a large towel dripping-wet with water, the chill just taken off. The shock was tremendous; though it did not fell me to the ground, as it did a certain stout gentleman of my acquaintance there, it set my head a-shaking on its pivot, like that of a China mandarin, when it is moved from its equilibrium. While I rubbed myself well down, as a groom would a racehorse hot from running, another and another wet towel descended on my head. The operation lasted for about a minute, and then drying myself as quickly as possible, I was ordered to *dress and hasten out for a walk, and*

drink four tumblers of cold water before breakfast.

Before being released from the blanket or wet sheet, the patient takes through a glass tube about a quarter of a tumbler of fresh water, which repairs the exhaustion produced by the copious perspiration. After two or three mornings, the towels are saturated with water completely cold; and cold water is also poured upon the head at the end of the ablution. In warm weather the cold plunge-bath, of which there were two in the establishment, was substituted for the wet towels. In winter there is danger of a chill being taken in passing through the passages from the blanket to the bath. To one who had often tried to take exercise, and as often been obliged to abandon the attempt, from its *producing lassitude* and fatigue for the re-

mairder of the day, the walk for one whole hour fasting in the open air, while the ground was covered with hoar-frost, seemed quite impracticable. But I found it rather refreshed me than otherwise, on the first morning of my discipline. Nor did the quart of cold water produce disagreeable feelings. The first draught which I took, produced a momentary chill, which was followed by a luxurious warmth within my waistcoat; this fortified me against the cutting east wind which blew keenly against it from without, and as I occasionally, after a few turns round the terrace, came back for a fresh supply of the invigorating fluid, I already felt that the strength of ten men could not keep me from the spring.

It might be supposed, that after such a process as the blanket, the patient would *be liable to catch cold*: but if he entertain

any such apprehension, he is agreeably mistaken. The cold water produces a powerful and immediate reaction; while the skill of the hydropathic doctor is particularly displayed, in his permitting the invalid to perspire only so long as to ensure a certainty of this reaction taking place. If the exhaustion has been suffered to proceed too far, the subsequent ablution does more harm than good.

The breakfast is usually taken about eight o'clock, and consists of cold milk, or cold milk and water, stale brown and white bread, and butter,—occasionally honey and fresh eggs, if required by the patient. Tea and coffee are totally excluded. When there exists extreme debility in the digestive organs, cocoa is allowed, but this *indulgence* is of rare occurrence. Even on *the first morning* after my arrival, I sat

down to this quaint and infantine meal with an unwonted appetite and hearty relish. At eleven o'clock A.M. my next operation commenced. My feet were placed in a foot-bath, containing about two inches in depth of cold water, just drawn from the spring, and rubbed briskly by the bath-servant, while in the water, for the space of six minutes. The first sensation produced was a cold and sudden thrill, which seemed to pierce through me as high as my chest, but as the blood returned to the extremities, and the temperature of the water gradually rose, the operation became very enjoyable, and gave rise to exhilaration of the spirits, and a feeling of vigour over the whole frame. I was surprised to find, upon putting the thermometer into the water, after my feet were removed, *that the mercury had risen from 51 to 57*

degrees of Fahrenheit. This would not, of course, have been the case, had the volume and depth of water been greater. The ablution is said to give tone to the abdominal viscera; but it is only recommended to be adopted at certain periods of the day: the best time for it is immediately, or soon after breakfast, and brisk exercise is always necessary after it. If the patient is suffering from headache, the chill of the water is taken off, and the legs are covered with a blanket and rubbed with flannel. Between breakfast and dinner, it is considered advisable to drink the greater part of the cold water ordered to the patient internally. My daily dose consisted of twelve half-pints; four of which were always taken before breakfast. At half-past twelve, the lower part of the abdomen was *rubbed with cold water* for six minutes.

At half-past one the patients all sat down together in the *salon* to dinner, the commander-in-chief also dining with them. All soups were prohibited; and during three weeks' stay at the establishment, I did not once see fish, though I heard it was sometimes introduced, but seldom found to be popular with the invalids. The standing dishes, and by far the greatest favourites were roast beef, and roast and boiled mutton, with potatoes and succulent vegetables. Pork and veal were forbidden. Poultry and game were frequently seen on the table, but seldom touched. The fact is, that the fresh air, exercise, and cold water, combine to create universally a strong and healthy appetite, which will not be trifled with. The absence of all medicine, in every shape, banishes, of course, all necessity for *slops*, such as gruel, broths, arrow

root, and the like. During three weeks, I never heard any one complain of want of appetite, nor observed any one absent from the dinner table, except on the first day after the arrival of the patient, when the astonishment into which his system was thrown by the extraordinary treatment it has met with, generally produced headache, as it did in my own case : but this never lasted beyond a single day. In fact, the hearty manner in which a number of invalids, suffering under various disorders, dispatch their food, is in itself a sufficient contradiction to those who imagine that the hydropathic treatment weakens the stomach. As a general axiom, of course with some exceptions, the appetite is the best criterion of health. I was in danger of starving for the first few days I was at *Stansted* ; for, not being aware how hungry

a race I had come amongst, I exercised my tongue while others employed their knives and forks, and was left to finish my dinner at half-past one on the following day. Where there was only one substantial meal, I afterwards learnt it required some tact to lay in a sufficient stock of provisions, within the time usually dedicated to the repast. The second course was composed of fruit tarts, according to the season, and a variety of farinaceous puddings. These disappeared as rapidly as the joints, and were followed by cheese,—which not being permitted to patients under treatment, was handed round as a sort of test of their obedience, and partaken of by the doctor alone. As a contrast to his practice, he always took occasion, at the time he was eating it, to enforce upon us its indigestible qualities. *Water was the only beverage taken at*

table. There is a difference of opinion as to whether much or little should be drank ; Dr. Weiss used to say that the feelings and inclination of each individual were the best guide to him to follow in this particular. Where the skin is naturally dry, and the saliva deficient, copious potations will rather facilitate digestion than otherwise.

After dinner, we usually strolled to the billiard table, which was placed in the greenhouse on the lawn, and formed a tolerable substitute for exercise in wet weather. There was also a covered walk adjoining the gardens, about fifty yards in length, which in the winter season was much frequented. Here were gymnastic poles, and their use was much recommended in slightly paralytic or rheumatic affections. About three o'clock the more *serious business* of walking recommenced,

and from that hour till six, seldom any one was seen within doors; occasionally a stray patient would emerge, after having been encompassed with a wet bandage, or undergone an ablution. At this time the doctor was accustomed to enjoy his pipe in the open air, *à l'Allemand*, and as the blue clouds of smoke issued from his meerschäum, and threw a perfume delicious to lovers of tobacco upon the atmosphere, I was much amused by the device of a Scotchman, who, being an ardent lover of the weed, but debarred from his favourite luxury by the rules of the institution, used to follow at a short distance in his wake, and snuff the fragrance second-hand.

At six I had my sitz bath,—and this constituted to me the chief enjoyment of the day. A common hip bath contained *about six or eight inches of water in depth,*

and in temperature about 52 degrees of Fahrenheit. In most cases this bath is used in the earlier part of the day. If taken after dinner, three or four hours must elapse before it can be resorted to with advantage, or even with impunity. During the first stages of digestion the cooking apparatus inside, which conducts the process, would rebel against the unseasonable abstraction of fuel. In this bath I seated myself, covering my back and shoulders with a blanket, and remained for fifteen minutes. I was ordered to rub the whole abdomen all the time, alternately with either hand, dipping it in the cold water. After this operation, which was very soothing and agreeable after the shock caused by the first immersion was got over, I felt always invigorated to an extraordinary degree. *However tired I might have been*

with the many miles I had walked since morning,—and during my stay they usually averaged about twelve,—the sitz bath never failed, not only to remove my fatigue, but also to impart to me a sense of strength and vigour I had not felt at any time during the day. After the sitz bath, I usually ran or walked for twenty minutes or half an hour, till my whole frame became in a glow.

The hour for supper was seven o'clock, and it was a repetition of the breakfast, except that a more moderate repast was considered advisable during the treatment. The recommendation, however, from headquarters, to go to bed supperless altogether, was seldom attended to. I tried it once, and should have been famished before morning, had I not taken the precaution of abstracting *from the supper table the major part of a*

brown loaf, which I deposited, in case of an emergency, within reach of my bedside. I believe no invalid whatever, be his complaint what it might, ever slept at Stansted without a wet bandage round his body, covered by a dry one. This is as familiar an appendage to the cure as the more objectionable aperient draught is in the hands of the allopathist. The former aims at results analogous to the latter, but acts in a milder form : it is also said to strengthen the loins and back.

The treatment which I have above described, or a modification of it, was continued daily, unless any symptom developed itself in the patient which rendered an alteration necessary. The slightest change was immediately remarked by the superintendent, whose observation was no less *acute, than his attention assiduous and*

unremitting. Every morning at half-past six, he came round the apartments of the patients, inquired how each had passed the night, and examined his countenance. Sometimes he looked at the tongue, when the digestive organs were deranged; less frequently he felt the pulse: the eye is the chief guide of the skilful hydropathist. At this time he instructed the attendant, who always accompanied him on these occasions, how long the patient was to remain in the sheet or blanket, according to the state in which he found him; and he gave general directions, according to the nature of the case. The wet sheet, in which the patient usually lies for about an hour and a half, and to which is superadded the packing process of the blanket, I found the least agreeable operation at Stansted: with *some it was very popular, and they had it*

on alternate mornings. I had two blankets to one sheet, and was quite satisfied with the arrangement, not having so much caloric in me as my friends. The tumbling into it naked, at five in the morning, from a warm bed was certainly anything but pleasant: but even this *penance* is regarded by the patient, after a few trials, with comparative indifference. It is curious to observe how quickly the most nervous and sensitive persons become reconciled to the discipline. And here let me pay a particular and well merited compliment to the fair sex, who not only submit to its inconveniences with more fortitude than the lords of the creation, but also wait the result which, in cases of long standing, must be a work of considerable time, with far greater cheerfulness and patience.

But to return to the wet sheet. It is in

fevers and all inflammatory disorders that its virtues are most conspicuous. It is then renewed every three or four hours, or the patient left to perspire freely in it after it becomes dry. In such cases as these, the superabundant animal heat will thoroughly dry the sheet in an extraordinarily short time; while it is obvious that the absorption necessary to produce this effect must quickly lower the pulse. There were two varieties of the wet sheet made use of by Dr. Weiss.* In ordinary cases, he preferred a wet cloth, extending only from

* Since the Second Edition of the "Tribute" appeared, I have deeply to deplore the loss of the worthy and excellent doctor, whose skill and attention are testified to in these pages. He died after a surgical operation at Freiwaldau, near Grafenberg, not long after he had been appointed resident Physician at Sudbrook Park, near Richmond. This Institution is now under the able management of Dr. Eilla, who studied the treatment at *Grafenberg* under Preissnitz.

under the arms to the knees, to the large sheet in which the whole body is enveloped. His experience of the humidity of our English climate, and the consequent difficulty of producing reaction, led him to adopt, latterly, this variance from the treatment of Preissnitz, reserving the whole sheet for acute disorders, and for treatment of crisis. The ablution after the wet sheet is the same as after the blanket, except that where considerable inflammation exists tepid water is used. The temperature of the room, accordingly as it is high or low, lengthens or abridges the period of captivity which the patient undergoes, under the process of the wet sheet or blanket. In winter, where the constitution is dull and phlegmatic, it is advisable to have a fire lighted early in the bed-room, and thus an *hour or two's* confinement may be saved.

THE BLANKET CANNOT BE SUPERSEDED. 35

On the other hand, where the patient perspires too easily, it is not judicious to produce artificial heat in this manner; for the perspiration should be gradual, to do good, and besides, the warmed atmosphere containing less oxygen than it would have done if more condensed by cold, according to the dicta of Liebig,* is not so refreshing to the lungs. And here I would remark, that although the operation is always more or less a tardy and irksome process, and one which all would gladly dispense with, yet the attempts of hydropathic practitioners to produce perspiration in any other mode, have hitherto failed of success; either because, instead of causing the skin to act of itself, they have produced an artificial and extraneous action upon it which has led to irritation, or because they have

* See his valuable work on Organic Chemistry.

gone counter to that principle which has decided that the perspiration must be gradual, in order to be beneficial. In fact, it is not advisable, in all cases, to continue the blanket up to the perspiring point; where the lungs are delicate, the patient is seldom allowed to perspire; but before he is enveloped in the blanket, a wet bandage is placed round his chest, and when warm he is taken out. Since the Second Edition of the "Tribute" was printed, a much rarer use of the blanket and wet sheet has been introduced, and doubtless they are both powerful agents and ought to be used with caution.

After three or four days I began to experience the salutary effects of the treatment, in increased appetite and strength. The skin had been scoured into a more *healthy appearance*, and began to lose its *analogy to parchment*; while I no longer

wondered at the quaint observation of the old Frenchman at Schlangenbad, when he said that the water almost made him "amoureux de soi-même." I have no doubt this will induce many of my fair friends to become water-lilies, by the aid of this purest and best cosmetic. Moreover, the abandonment of all drugs, simple, gentle, and compound, was a blessing to which I had long been a stranger. The constant exercise too in the open air, early in the morning at this period of the year, when Nature had just begun to recover from the trance into which winter had thrown her, and the vegetable kingdom was daily bursting into life, was such a purifier of the blood, such a cordial to the heart, and such a quickener of the animal spirits :

"Sweet is the breath of morn! her rising sweet
With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the sun,

38 THE EARLY RISING AND EXERCISE.

When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flow'r,
Glistening with dew."—*Paradise Lost*, B. xiv. 641.

At the expiration of a fortnight from the time of my arrival, I was so far recovered as to petition the doctor to pronounce my dismissal; but on my having an interview with him for this purpose, he shook his head ominously, foretelling that in three or four days I should feel sick. This prediction might do credit to his sagacity, but was not to me the most agreeable news, and I thought of the proverb, "If you are well, 'twill make you sick;" but I had full confidence in my adviser, and awaited the event with patience and equanimity. Accordingly, on the fourth day the indisposition which he had predicted made its appearance, and formed, I suppose, a sort of *crisis*. Its effects, however, were very

trifling ; I could take my exercise as usual, and went on with my baths. It is quite a mistake to suppose that the appearance of boils on the body is necessary to a crisis. Some patients who are suffering from acute or chronic local disease undoubtedly have boils, and they are hailed with satisfaction by the hydropathic doctor, but in ordinary cases the treatment does not produce them, and many patients have either no crisis at all, or it shows itself in the form of diarrhœa or fever. While on this subject, I must describe a ludicrous scene which I remember taking place at Stansted. A gentleman who had been awaiting the arrival of his crisis with anxiety, having discovered an angry spot somewhere on his proper person, hurried to the doctor to make an exhibition of it. The doctor, *who was a man of few words, and spoke*

40 ANECDOTE OF THE INTERPRETER.

very little English, having examined it, merely exclaimed, "Furoncle, Furoncle."* The patient, who understood less German, sped with the cabalistic word, while it was fresh in his memory, to the interpreter, whose capabilities always reminded me of the school etymology: "lucus a non lucendo." He was in like manner called an interpreter, from never interpreting. Considering for a moment, and scratching his head, "Furoncle," says he, "that means your father's brother." A hearty laugh of course followed this absurd interpretation. The Clergyman happened to be present, and being not quite so convinced as our friend of the necessity of boils to insure a cure, suggested it should have been "your grandmother." Crisis or no crisis, what-

* Anglicè "a Boll."

ever indisposition I had, passed off in a few days, and at the expiration of another week I returned home, grateful for the benefit I had received, and with the warmest enthusiasm in behalf of that extraordinary discovery, by which so many of the evils which human flesh is heir to, may be mitigated, if not averted.

Nor did these feelings emanate solely from the benefit I experienced in my own case. It was such an enjoyment to observe daily the gradual improvement in those around me, to watch the feeble step as it became more firm and elastic, and to see the bent and emaciated frame grow more upright. With what pleasure did I listen to the grateful expressions of those, who, for years, had despaired of amendment, and had hitherto beheld before them a dark vista of suffering and pain, shut

out, perhaps, from the happiness of an active life, and from joining in the pursuits of their fellow-men,—now speaking with deep emotion of their delightful experience of returning strength, and of the probable astonishment of their families, sceptical on their departure from home, at their wonderful restoration to health, and hope, and joy.

It is obvious that the society of many invalids must be highly beneficial to each other. Not only is the persevering discipline necessary to so laborious a treatment as that adopted in Hydropathy, thus maintained, but the spirits and cheerfulness of the patient are elevated and promoted by conversation, and by his constant observation of the advantageous results of the mode of cure, in cases perhaps more difficult than his own. Many a wretched

dyspeptic or hypochondriac, who would, if alone, have retarded his recovery, by dwelling despondingly upon his miseries, learnt at Stansted to join the harmless joke at his own complaint, or at all events, to think less frequently or more lightly of it. And here I would remark, that entire submission to the whole regimen adopted is imperative on all admitted to the institution. The medicine chest must be surrendered at discretion. The patient cannot pursue so much of the treatment as he likes, and declare against the rest; as long as he remains he has no free will of his own. All mental exertion within the institution was absolutely forbidden; nor could the victim to strenuous idleness, "*valdè fortitèr nihil agens,*" shut himself up in his own apartment; for if he did, the doctor was soon *apprised of it*, and he was quickly driven

44 BUT WITHOUT MENTAL EXERTION.

from his lair. The intervals, therefore,—and they were not many,—when the patient was not in active exercise, in the air, or water, could only be passed in society and conversation; the mind was thus constantly kept either passive or amused, and becoming gradually disengaged from the pressure of disease, expatiated in new ideas, which were of a more gay and cheering aspect. During my stay I witnessed the good effects of this judicious distribution of the patient's time, and of his being continually occupied by the treatment, in more than one instance. In one case, the expression of the invalid's countenance—a confirmed dyspeptic—was completely changed. A few weeks converted a melancholy face into a cheerful and happy one. In another instance the sufferer was a young man of twenty-two or *twenty-three* years of age, who had been

struck with paralysis in the foot and hand. When I first went to Stansted, this patient, who was the son of respectable but not wealthy parents in the neighbourhood, could with difficulty get about with a stick, and his arm hung useless at his side. The daily use of the douche for some time brought out over his body a violent eruption, which continued for several days, and at the end of this period a decided improvement in the affected parts commenced. The day before I left the institution I saw him running at a good pace round the garden, and wheeling a wheelbarrow with both hands. He had for some days exercised his hand with the billiard-cue. The alteration in his countenance was also very remarkable. Though I fear his case was of too long standing to admit of a *perfect* cure, yet I have no doubt he so

far recovered the use of both limbs as to enable him to earn his livelihood by an honest and industrious occupation. Who would imagine that the delicate girl who, the morning I came away, was walking round the lawn almost without assistance, and seemed to drink with such delight the balmy fragrance of the air, was brought but six short weeks ago to Stansted, on a forlorn hope, her case despaired of by the physicians, against the wishes of even the director himself, who said that they had sent her there to die. Her form had just rounded into womanhood, and she was standing on the threshold of youth, ready to step forth attired with grace and beauty, when disease struck like a blight her damask cheek, and turned the fond parents' *pride to anxiety and fear*. Now each day *brought with it some favourable symptom,*

and kindled in her eye the sparkling beam of health. Pour forth for her, O Water, thy most healing streams, and do thou, O Spring, shed thy genial influences on her returning strength!

It is an extraordinary circumstance in favour of hydropathy, that no invalid who has once tried it, although he may not derive benefit to the full extent of his expectations, is willing afterwards to return to the old system. The unfailing result of the Water-Cure in relieving his bodily pain, its tranquillizing effect upon his nerves, its quickening influence over his perceptive faculties, the relish with which he eats his food, and the exercise which he fearlessly takes in the most severe and inclement weather, fully account for that enthusiasm with which he asserts its superiority over *all other modes of treatment.* And here

48 HYDROPATHY WILL OBLIGE PHYSICIANS

let me pause for a moment to compare, by the aid of my own experience, the modern practice of medicine with Hydropathy. Take, for instance, the merchant, who is chained to his desk in the crowded city, harassed, as he often is, by over-application to business, his organism enfeebled by want of active exercise, or by continued anxiety and excitement; take the lawyer, who tasks his brain till his digestive powers abandon him, his liver becomes inactive, his circulation weak and stagnant; when they hasten to the physician, and recount to him their sufferings, when they tell him of the aching head and deranged stomach, does he wait to trace the malady to its secret source, and does he not often treat the effect rather than the cause? A *hastily-written* prescription is received *with joy* by the patient; he continues his

unhealthy occupation as before, Nature for a short time is stimulated and forced to do her work; then the overtasked machine, unfed by that fuel which supplies the vital powers, either gives way, or gets more and more out of order, and the unhappy sufferer is left to drag on a life of hopeless disappointment. As an illustration of what I have said, I remember when I was at the University, and was suffering from severe hepatic dyspepsia, brought on by intense application to study, combined with violent exercise, I wrote to the late eminent Dr. —, enclosing him the usual fee, and with a detailed account of the wretched state I was in, begged he would recommend me something for my relief. The third day's post accordingly brought his reply in the shape of a recipe. Being then happily a novice in such things, I did not under-

stand the curtailed hieroglyphics it contained, but I got the medicine made up, and took it as labelled. In a week's time, finding myself in a far worse condition, and my nerves more unstrung than before, I went to the chemist's, and inquired of a sallow individual there, who was pounding some offensive material behind the counter, what it was my doctor had ordered me? "The ordinary black draught, Sir," said he, scarcely raising his eyes from the mortar, and putting more force into what he was about, "'alternis diebus manè,' to be taken every other morning till the doctor orders it to be discontinued, Sir. Done you much good, no doubt, sir." On the other hand, let such sufferers as I have described go to the Hydropathist for relief. What is his reply? He tells them, "*By taking medicine, you have begun at the wrong end,*

and you only aggravate your disorder. You must quit for a while that excitement and those employments which have brought you to this state. You must exchange the close atmosphere of your counting-house or your court for the pure air of Heaven and the open field. The tone of your stomach will gradually return to you by a judicious application of cold water, both external and internal. While we make use of those remedies which we consider requisite in your case, we shall keep up your strength, and renovate your nervous system by constant exercise, and a course of diet in which no stimulants are admitted. And though we cannot hold out to you the hope of enjoying that robust health hereafter which is seen in the hardy inhabitants of the country, yet we can promise you, if you follow our directions, as great a share as is

possibly consistent with the artificial habits in which you live."

The patient, after a residence in the establishment, experiences the truth of what has been said. He acquires the habit and the love of rising early and taking exercise; he acquires too the love of cold water as applied in the Hydropathic system, and he returns to his sedentary habits, fortified against their baneful effects. Indisposition is occasionally the lot of all, and it would be folly, as well as presumption, to say that any system whatever will preserve man in perfect health; but this much may be said, that a steady observance of the hydropathic rules will mitigate disease, and render its recurrence less frequent.

It may be asked, what diseases are most successfully encountered by the *Water-Cure*. It may be answered, stomach com-

plaints are those which give way to it most readily. Next to these, fevers, rheumatism, gout, cutaneous diseases, and the train of distressing symptoms induced by mercury. I should be inclined to think that all disorders curable by medicine are curable by water. Whenever there is no actual change of organism the patient may expect relief. The Water-Cure should not be attempted in cases of advanced pulmonary consumption, nor in the latter stages of dropsy, nor in affections of the heart. Cases such as these were invariably rejected by Preissnitz. It is no objection to Hydropathy that it cannot cure them; for if it fails, it fails in common with the ordinary medical practice.

Perhaps in this place a few general hints may be useful to those who are desirous of *carrying out* or continuing the Water-Cure

54 THE TEMPERATURE OF COLD WATER.

either wholly or partially at home. At all periods of the year the invalid should leave his bed early, and while warm, should go immediately into a tub, where he should wash himself copiously with cold or tepid water. In summer the water cannot be too cold ;—at Gräfenberg it is often found necessary to render it colder by means of ice ;—in winter it is usually recommended to increase the temperature to from 55° to 65° of Fahrenheit. It should be here remarked that the temperature of what is termed cold water, as applied in the cure, is 48°, that of tepid, 65° to 70°. Attention should be paid to this circumstance ; for, in the depth of winter, when the surrounding medium of the atmosphere is so low, and, according to Liebig, the body gives out heat, it will be more difficult to produce *reaction*. In the meanwhile the tempera-

ture of the body being always at 98°, and never varying at the pole or the equator, if the mercury, on being plunged into the vessel of cold water about to be used, sinks as low as 35° or 40°, it will of course require a greater quantum of vital force to be put in action for the body to recover its natural warmth. Dr. Weiss used to recommend the use of that water for bathing in winter, which had stood all night in the bed-room. If the weather is so unfavourable as to prevent the morning walk, which, should, if possible, invariably follow the ablution, and that immediately, the temperature of the water may be raised as high as 70° Fahrenheit. In fine weather the invalid should not linger in his room, to complete his toilette, but after hastily dressing himself, go out immediately for his walk, which *may be long or short*, according to his in-

56 PROPER TIME FOR ACTIVE TREATMENT.

clination or the time he has to spare. The shallow bath may be used in the morning with great advantage, but it requires an attendant. A slipper bath is made to contain four inches in depth of water about 60° of Fahrenheit, and in this the patient seats himself, stretching his legs under the water. In the meanwhile the attendant rubs him well all over with wet towels for the space of two minutes. This process I have found more refreshing than the ordinary ablution. If the shallow bath is used perfectly cold, the patient should wet his head and face before seating himself in it. The best time for active treatment, either by the sheet or blanket, is decidedly the morning. At that time the brain is cool and tranquil, the stomach and digestion *undisturbed*, and the morbid humours *more easily* made to quit the system through

the medium of the skin. More time is thus left to the patient during the day for exercise in the open air, and for water-drinking. Afternoon treatment may be requisite in some cases, but it is apt to interfere with digestion, and produce determination to the head. No person would think of taking a dose of physic on a full stomach. During treatment, the principal meal should be taken in the middle of the day. In the day time, the food is, or ought to be, digested; in the night, and during sleep, it is changed into blood. If, therefore, the solid meal is taken late in the evening, these two processes, which ought to be distinct, viz. digestion and assimilation, are carried on during the time allotted by Nature to one only; the circulation is unnaturally quickened; an imperfect and defective change of the substance of the

food is the consequence ; and the patient wonders that he has passed a feverish, and often a restless, night. In the hydropathic establishment, the time elapsing between the several meals should be properly regulated. Not more than five hours should elapse between each ; if there is too long an interval between breakfast and dinner, the patient will feel a sense of emptiness and oppression, which will act unfavourably on the cure. After dinner is over, the patients should not be permitted to huddle over the fire, which they will feel inclined to do, from a chilliness which the treatment occasions ; but they should be made go into the open air, while their apartments should be well ventilated. A thorough ventilation should also, every day, take place in their *sleeping* rooms. Strict discipline is essential where dispositions and tempers vary

“Suavitèr in modo, fortitèr in re.” “Mildness in the manner, firmness in the execution” of his rules, should be the maxim of the hydropathist. And yet, on the other hand, it is extraordinary to observe how amiable is the aspect of the human character, where a number of individuals are associated together for the common purpose of gaining health. Either because the disposition bears most resemblance to its original state, when divested for awhile of those passions which distort and disfigure it in the world—ambition, envy, emulation, hatred, variance—or that patients who are thrown so much in each other’s way, have, like husband and wife, no other alternative but to be agreeable; or because illness naturally softens and subdues the mind, and, by a wise dispensation of Providence, causes *it to disregard* the objects of man’s desire,

the farther it is removed from a participation in them.

What has been already said in relation to the diet at the Water-Cure Establishment, is applicable to the patient under home treatment. He will find it difficult to deprive himself, at first, of the sociable but enervating beverage of tea—called by the Arabians “hot water and conversation.” But Hydropathy is absolute in requiring a total relinquishment of this truly English luxury if taken in the usual way. It may however be indulged in, if copiously diluted with milk, in the proportion of one part to four. Coffee is also admissible with the same proviso. Bread, at least a day old, may be eaten at discretion; and a lightly boiled egg, or a rasher of bacon, forms an agreeable addition to the repast. If, however, *milk* be taken alone, it is not advisable

to add the bacon. With regard to wine, it is a mistake to imagine that it is altogether inadmissible in the Water-Cure: I have known Dr. Weiss even recommend it in some cases, but in very sparing quantities, and always after the patient has quitted the hydropathic establishment. A glass or two, taken occasionally in society, will never do anybody any harm. It is the regular and constant habit of using it as a stimulus which is to be avoided. Claret is preferable to port and sherry, as containing less alcohol. Fermented liquors, as ale, beer and porter, are excluded during treatment; but where there is no debility or derangement of the digestive organs, a moderate and occasional use of them at other times is not prohibited. Ardent spirits, whether diluted or not, are at all *times* inadmissible; and even although the

Hydropathist may tolerate an occasional indulgence in wine or malt liquors, where it is difficult to break off at once long-formed habits, yet he would remind the invalid that no drink is so strengthening to body and mind as "honest water," which, as Shakspeare says, "never left man i' the mire."

When the value of the crystal element first began to be duly appreciated, Bacchus and Æsculapius conspired to invent the following story, when they found their dominions invaded and their empire in danger. It is reported that a certain individual, whose rubicund physiognomy and circular appearance discovered him to be deeply impregnated with generous port, determined to consult a Hydropathic Doctor, with a view of getting rid of some uncomfortable symptoms which had shew

themselves within his own hogshead. The Doctor looked at his nose instead of his tongue, felt his pulse, which strongly indicated the alcoholic vibration, and after a few plain directions as to diet, and with the intention of gradually breaking him into the harness of the Water-Cure, ordered the *Umschlag*, or wet bandage, to be his companion for the night.

The patient bowed and withdrew, but when, on retiring to rest, he was about to apply the cold girdle to his loins, the chilly sensations it produced caused him such uneasiness, that, emptying some of his favourite beverage into a wash-hand basin, he steeped the bandage in its more genial stream, and then, enveloped in its folds, he consigned himself with tolerable equanimity to repose. On the morrow the Doctor arrived, eager to see the effect of his pre-

scription upon the patient. "I feel decidedly better, Sir," said the latter. "Produce your bandage," said the Water Leech. The delinquent made its appearance. The Doctor scanned its purple hues with curious eye, and an appearance of evident satisfaction. "Here," exclaimed he, "are rich scientific results already developed, and which I fully anticipated. Do you see, Sir, these stains upon the bandage? This is the Port wine you have been drinking for the last five or six years already finding its way out through the skin, and thus affording you relief." The patient gazed upon the mystic folds with well feigned astonishment and admiration, and having paid his fee, hastened home to renew so wonderful an operation.

Hydropathy can well afford to laugh at *the above fiction*, though some of its dis-

ciples carry their enthusiasm for it beyond the verge of common sense, and are ready with the imaginary Water Doctor to expect the indulgences of many years to be washed out by a single operation.

Hand in hand with health in the Hydro-pathic train, comes Exercise with ruddy cheek and airy tread, a nymph from Dian's choir. Fair maid, I follow thee in sweet pursuit, along the mountain side, or through the shadowy glen. In these aquatic haunts, too, thou art of double nature—a Naiad as well as a Deity of the woods and fields, and not least lovely,

“Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
In twisted braids of lilies knitting
Thy amber-dropping hair.”

To speak less allegorically, and therefore

perhaps more intelligibly, exercise is an indispensable adjunct to the Water-Cure.

Gentle exercise, continued for a length of time, is to be preferred to that which is short and violent,—I mean, of course, for one who is not in vigorous health. If the invalid is obliged by circumstances to dedicate many hours to business which confines him within doors, he should, if possible, and if the place where he is employed be at a distance from his home, go to it and return on foot. He should throw open the window of the apartment where he sits as much as is practicable or consistent with comfort, and quit his sedentary occupation for half an hour in the middle of the day. In bad weather, he may promote circulation by means of *dumbbells*, or follow the example set by

the denizens of Gräfenberg, in sawing wood, which is a capital nostrum for a torpid liver. As he becomes more robust, and his frame more accustomed to vicissitudes of heat and cold, he may indulge in stronger and more athletic exercises. If he is young and active, he should enter occasionally, with spirit and interest, into all those games and amusements which, while they preserve the bodily activity and prevent premature rigidity of the muscles, act, by the complete relaxation which they occasion, with a bracing and tonic effect upon the powers and energies of the mind. The exercises most suited to the fair sex are riding on horseback and walking. Dancing, too, is beneficial, if it be not carried to an immoderate extent, or protracted till very late hours. In the villages *on the Continent*, dancing forms a holiday

pastime of the peasantry ; but then it takes place generally in the middle of the day, and frequently in the open air. Even as we follow the amusement in this country, if caution be used not to expose the body afterwards to cold and draughts, it will conduce to health, when the short days and "blasts of January" have, during the morning, deterred the English maiden from venturing out of doors. He who resides in the country should join in the enlivening chase, or beat the stubble and the heath, in search of health. If he has no taste or opportunity for these diversions, he may find abundance of wholesome occupation in his garden, or on his farm. In a mountainous region, the exercise of walking is of itself sufficient to bring the muscles into full developement and action, while the *ascent of steep eminences* acts beneficially

upon the chest and diaphragm. In towns, where the thoroughfares are flat and even, something more is wanting: here every description of games should be encouraged. Quoits, bowls, tennis, cricket, fives, archery, fencing and rowing, should counteract those tendencies to disease, the seeds of which are sown by close confinement and sedentary occupations. It is not to be wondered at that the statesmen of antiquity bestowed such care on these subjects, and made national games a part of the public administration. They thought that the emulation produced in the minds of men by these amusements, and the interest which they took in them, while they promoted bodily health, often kept them from vicious habits. Let us, who account ourselves more civilized, take a lesson from them. Facilities for obtaining recreations such as I have

described, should be afforded to the industrious classes, particularly in the vicinity of large manufacturing towns.* Gymnasia, or places of resort, where, after toilsome application to the loom or the engine, the artificer might unbend his cramped limbs, and breathe fresh air in joyous idleness with his fellows, would be the means of correcting many a disposition which might, with the gin-shop alone for a recreation, become habituated to intemperance, or hardened into crime. Perhaps we have already entered upon that stage of a nation's greatness, characterized by Bacon, as pre-eminent in arts and commerce. "First arms," says the philosopher, "then learning, then both together for awhile, then

* Since the First Edition was written, parks, cricket grounds, and gymnasia have been established in almost all the great cities.

mechanical arts and merchandize."* Be it that Alma, Inkerman, and Balaclava are names as proud as the most glorious in our annals ; yet the habits of the nation are not warlike. Peace is our vocation, and the victories of Civilization are our true mission of to-day. The mind is educated, far more than formerly ; science has gone to and fro on the earth almost with the speed of the lightning's wing ; and knowledge is much increased. There is, in the meanwhile, danger lest, while we stretch the mind to its full powers, if not beyond them, we over-stimulate and weaken the frail tenement in which its habitation is. Every mode, therefore, natural and artificial, by which the latter can be strengthened, so as to enable it to meet the increased demands made upon it, deserves

* Essay on States.

the attention of the physiologist, and the well-wisher to mankind.

To return from this short digression on the moral influence of exercise, to the chemical and hydropathic view of it, the able discoveries of Liebig appear to have shewn, that the oxygen of atmospheric air taken into the lungs at every respiration, and acting upon the carbon of the food, is the source of animal heat. Man is a kind of furnace; the food he consumes is the fuel; the air he breathes keeps the fire alive. While he is employed in business, or while his mind is occupied in study, the respirations which he draws are less frequent, the air which he breathes contains less oxygen, and he feels less inclination for food; moreover, his attention being often wholly bent upon the pursuit in which he *is engaged*, his chest is contracted over his

books or desk, the wheels of life drag heavily; and occasionally he will draw a deep sigh, as in grief or wonder. Exercise restores the balance; his respirations then become more frequent; he takes into his lungs a greater volume of atmospheric air at a time, and of better quality than he inhaled while shut up within doors; his circulation becomes consequently more rapid, and he feels a healthy appetite for more food or fuel. If, without exercise, he indulges a certain craving for food, which is often occasioned by exhaustion, but differs materially from the appetite caused by exercise, he will produce more carbon than there has been oxygen inspired to consume it, and disease will inevitably be the result. For the same reason, a person with weak digestion should not take violent exercise. The weakness of his stomach is such, that he

74 AIR AND EXERCISE PRODUCE APPETITE.

cannot produce sufficient carbon to meet the increased supply of oxygen inhaled, which in this case combines with a part of the substance of the body itself, and occasions emaciation and disease. The whole of this subject is so interesting, and the importance of exercise so clearly demonstrated in the treatise of Liebig,* that I should recommend the reader to peruse it, —only adding here, that the external application of cold water to the body, is an artificial way of accelerating the respiration, and hence follows increased appetite, or in other words, a greater demand for carbon. A difficulty may occur, if the patient be thirsty when heated with exercise, what he should drink. I put this question to Dr. Weiss, and he was of opinion that no harm whatever would ensue from the drinking of

* See his Organic Chemistry.

cold water at that time, if the active exercise be continued afterwards. The danger is when the patient drinks cold water after exercise, and then sits still and allows the sudden shock thus inflicted to operate upon the system. The labouring man while at work, will drink copious draughts of water without experiencing the slightest injury.

I have not said anything on the subject of the cold plunge-bath, as it is a luxury within the reach of few, beyond the walls of the hydropathic establishment. When the patient can indulge in it, he should not forget, before entering the bath, to wet his face, chest, and hands. Immediately on going into the water, where he should not continue above half-a-minute, or a minute, at a time, he should, if the depth of the bath does not allow of his plunging in head first, stoop so that his body should be

entirely immersed, and then raising himself quickly, he should rub his whole frame vigorously with both hands. In pools and rivers which are exposed to the action of the sun's rays, or in the open sea, he may remain a longer time in the water, during the summer months. There is no exercise by which all the limbs are brought so actively into play at the same time, as by swimming. It is also, if not indulged in too frequently, or too long at a time, very strengthening to the health. Old Horace, from whom we can get a useful hint on most subjects, thought so too:—

“Ter uncti

Transnanto Tiberim, somno quibus est opus alto.”

“Let those who are in want of a good night's rest, swim thrice, anointed with *oil*, across the Tiber.” Dr. Weiss was of *opinion*, that the time the bather should

stay in the water should not exceed ten minutes. If too long protracted, this hardy exercise will produce considerable exhaustion; and a sense of weakness or chilliness will exist frequently during the remainder of the day, in consequence of too much vital heat having been expended to resist the constantly cooling action of the water. The best time for swimming is, from an hour after breakfast till two or three in the afternoon, and always before dinner. In London a swimming society has been formed, and prizes are annually offered to the greatest proficient in the art.

The subject of clothing is of importance, and one on which, with reference to hydro-pathy, some misconception exists. There is a general idea, that Preissnitz made his patients at Gräfenberg discard all warm *clothing*. But I understand, from a gentle-

CLOTHING.

man who has been there for several months during the winter season, that such was not the case. Great-coats, and even furs of every description, were as much in requisition there as anywhere. On the contrary, any warm material worn next the skin, as flannel, for example, was objected to by Preissnitz, as having a tendency to produce irritation, when coupled with the stimulating effects of the treatment. If the assertion of Liebig be true, that the body gives out heat when the temperature of the skin is higher than the surrounding medium of the atmosphere, and receives heat when it is lower, it must follow that a bad conductor of heat, as wool or fur, is necessary in winter, to retard the vital warmth from too rapid an escape; whereas in summer we wear those materials, which, being good conductors of the heat which we are cor-

nually receiving, accelerate its passage out, and act as a constant refrigerant upon the skin. Always keeping the principle in view, that the invalid should, as much as possible, leave off gradually the additional clothing to which he has been accustomed, he should be guided for the future very much by his own feelings. If while taking exercise (and this is the great criterion) he finds his flannel and great-coat oppressive, he may boldly fling them aside ; if, on the contrary, he finds that, by exercise, he cannot create a comfortable warmth, and his extremities remain chilly, he had much better retain them till he becomes more robust, even at the risk of being considered less hardy than his neighbours.

If the hydropathist be troubled when at home with occasional indisposition,—as who *will not* ? if his stomach be disordered,



if he is visited with dyspeptic symptoms, he should, of course, under medical sanction, apply the wet bandage to the abdomen for two or three hours, which will generally afford him relief. The bandage may be also put on after meals, and, when thus worn, inasmuch as it promotes and fosters the animal heat, it is said to assist digestion. It is about three yards in length, and thirteen inches in breadth, and always made of linen. About a yard of this wrapper, or more, according to the circumference of the patient, is dipped in cold spring water, and then well wrung out. Over this comfortable waist-band, the two yards which remain dry are closely folded, so as to exclude the air. Some recommend a piece of caoutchouc, or oiled silk, of the same breadth as the bandage, to be substituted for the dry linen folded round the body.

by this contrivance, the bandage underneath retains its moisture for a longer time than it would otherwise have done. For this reason, perhaps, it is better to be worn during the night. During the day, when the patient is taking exercise, he will, I think, find it too oppressive and relaxing. A local application of a small piece of caoutchouc, over a wet rag to a part where pain is felt, will not cause the same inconvenience, and will act with a wonderfully soothing influence. This mode of drawing out inflammation is very often now resorted to in the hospitals instead of the ordinary poultice, and is called "The German Water Dressing." For a common cold, the half-wet sheet, taken early in the morning till the patient is thoroughly warm, and followed by the shallow bath, or wet towels, dipped in water at about 68° of Fahrenheit,



will be found very efficacious in arresting its progress ; or the patient, an hour before he leaves his bed, may wrap the wet bandage round his chest, and lie well covered with plenty of bed-clothes, till perspiration ensues ; he should then be washed all over with tepid water. He will find it refreshing and strengthening, to begin the ablution with tepid water, and finish with water entirely cold, after the manner of the Romans in their baths. He should also sponge the neck and chest with cold water for two or three minutes several times in the day, and afterwards rub those parts for a minute or two with dry flannel or a hair-glove. After mental or bodily fatigue, the sitz bath, taken for fifteen minutes, at about 60° of Fahrenheit, is a most *delightful restorative*. A walk for a few *minutes* should always follow it. Before

going a journey, where the traveller is subject to the discomfort of cold feet, the foot bath, used for a few minutes at 52° or 54° of Fahrenheit, the feet being well rubbed while in it, also followed by exercise, will prevent his suffering in that way. These remedies, however, should never be resorted to without permission from the hydropathic doctor, and the knowledge that they are compatible with the temperament and constitution of the individual wishing to avail himself of them.

The most favourable months for pursuing the hydropathic treatment, are April, May, June, July, September, October, November, and even December. During the other months the progress of the patient is not so rapid; and sometimes, during the extremes of temperature, the excessive heat of summer, and the intense cold of winter,

THE DOUCHE.

he cure has been observed to be completely stationary. In the former case, the body is often exhausted by excessive perspiration, and in the latter, remains too chilled by the combined powers of water and external temperature, for the necessary quick reaction, by exercise, after bathing, to take place.

The douche is one of the most formidable looking parts of the hydropathic machinery. Though it is a common remedy on the continent, it is not much known in England, and I will therefore describe it. A column of water, issuing from pipes, the diameters of which vary from one inch to the thickness of a man's arm, and descending from a height of sixteen or eighteen feet, is brought to bear upon different parts of the body. The bather, standing close *this* column, but just outside of it, dis

his two hands over his head, and thus receives the first onset. He then exposes his arms, legs, back, and sides to the shock, avoiding the region of the stomach and abdomen. Its action is very powerful, and the directions for its use must be rigidly attended to. At Gräfenberg the death of a patient ensued from his receiving the blow upon his head, contrary to the instructions given him by Preissnitz. The part exposed to the water becomes instantaneously red, as if it had been violently beaten. The operation lasts from one to two minutes. When the proper precautions are taken, it is not attended with the slightest danger; and no part of the treatment is looked forward to with such pleasure, or produces such exhilarating effects. Frequently, after leaving the establishment, when there is no longer any necessity for his undergoing the

whole discipline, but something yet remains to perfect the cure, the patient takes lodgings in the neighbourhood, in order to have daily access to the douche. This bath is always taken in the middle of the day, and before dinner, and must be followed by exercise. In bad weather it is usually discontinued. At Stansted, a small wooden building apart from the house, resembling an overgrown sentry-box, was appropriated to it; this contained four apartments opening upon the fall of water, for the convenience of patients to dress and undress in. The water was conducted into the building by pipes laid down immediately from the spring in the orchard. When the douche was at work, the noise of the torrent thundering upon the wooden floor was very great, and materially added at first to *its terrors*, which, however, rapidly vanished *on a nearer acquaintance*.

The "abreibung," or wet sheet bath, was never, that I heard of, introduced by Dr. Weiss at Stansted, although at Malvern and Sudbrook it is at the present time constantly in use. It was a part of the treatment much in favour with Preissnitz, who often made use of it as a mode of testing the strength and constitutions of patients on their first arrival at Gräfenberg. After seeing the effect it produced on the skin, he at once, with that decision and sagacity so remarkable in him, gave directions for their future treatment. For this purpose, a large wet sheet was thrown over the patient, and while he was, as I may so express it, under cover, his body was rubbed all over by the attendant, and frequently by Preissnitz himself; after he had stood in the sheet for two or three minutes *is was* removed, he was rubbed dry, and

either took exercise or went into the bath, accordingly as Preissnitz* might direct. A friend of mine, now at Gräfenberg, had eight of these abreibungen daily during his crisis.

There was one part of the discipline at Stansted which I omitted to notice in its proper place. Its introduction was not of very frequent occurrence. It is called "covering up." Sometimes, when anything like a crisis takes place, or symptoms of casual indisposition show themselves, instead of being encased in the blanket, the patient is allowed to remain in bed when the bath attendant comes round early in the morning, the bed-clothes which he has

* Vincent Preissnitz died at Grafenberg about two years ago, having lived to see the system of which he was the founder, promulgated in both hemispheres.

over him are folded tightly round his person, and more are added. On the only occasion when this indulgence was shewn me, the doctor, on entering my room and seeing the stretcher devoid of its usual incubus, with looks full of consternation, exclaimed to the bath-man, "Gone! Gone!" It was not till the curtains of the bed were drawn back, and the motionless mummy exhibited to his view, that he was satisfied that his prisoner had not escaped. The fact was, that patients sometimes stole off to London over-night, on temporary errands of business or pleasure, without apprizing him of their intentions, and he was not over partial to this interruption of the treatment, which he did not discover till he found the birds flown on the following morning, when he went his rounds. It happened, too, *that restless and irritable individuals, after*

90 OBSTACLES IN THE WAY OF HYDROPATHY.

murmuring for some time at the discipline, took French leave of the institution altogether in this manner. I must add, for the honour of Hydropathy, that these instances of impatience and pusillanimity were extremely rare.

The dismal stories which such refractory subjects took care to circulate on their return home, as an excuse for their flight, would not, I think, injure the good cause. The more Hydropathy is studied and canvassed, the more widely must it spread. At the same time, there are powerful obstacles arising out of the long established habits of the people of this country, which must be encountered and overcome, before the system can become general. In England, more than any where, we see *the truth of that saying*, "Time is money." *The omnibus* or train conveys the London

merchant daily from his residence almost to the door of his counting-house, but it is often at the sacrifice of his health. Everything is urged on and precipitated at railroad speed. The invalid cannot wait to be cured by Hydropathy; however great his sufferings, he cannot quit his professional avocations for a short month or two, without serious injury to his future prospects;—

“ If you give way,
Or hedge aside from the direct forthright,
Like to an entered tide they all rush by,
And leave you hindmost ;—
Or like a gallant horse fall'n in first rank,
You lie for pavement to the abject rear,
O'er-run and trampled on.”

Troilus and Cressida.

He will, perhaps, consult Dr. Wilson or Dr. Gully,* and ask them, as many have

* * These two gentlemen have published very scientific works on the Water-Cure, and both practise at Malvern. A third, Dr. Ramsden, is said to have a good Water reputation there.

92 HYDROPATHY CHALLENGES THE INQUIRY

done, if he can be cured by water in a week. The doctor will shake his head, and ask how reasonable it is for one who has been ailing for months or years, to hope for a radical cure in a few days. The patient will probably return to his business, and his old palliative of medicine, with disappointment: the fault is not in Hydropathy, but in society, which makes wealth of such importance, and time, the parent of it, so very precious. This is one discouragement to the progress of the Water-Cure. Another is the obstinate determination hitherto evinced by many of the most distinguished men in the medical profession, not to turn their attention to the subject. Another is the expence attending the sojourn in Hydropathic Institutions, the discomfort of an *invalid's* being separated from his family, *and the difficulty, almost impossibility, of*

properly carrying out the treatment at home. Another obstacle, is the unwillingness of the public to receive anything which is new or extraordinary ; particularly at the present day, when one remedy is succeeded by another, in consequence of the conflicting principles of medicine, and the proverbial disagreement of doctors as to the nature and treatment of diseases. Another impediment to its advancement arises from the difficulty of self-denial in the gratifications of the palate and the lateness of fashionable hours. In the metropolis, where the resources of amusement are few, compared with the multitude of inhabitants, the pleasures of the table are very generally indulged in. These saturnalia of course bring with them their day of retribution : the contents of the chemist's shop are put *in requisition* ; and with avidity is swallowed

the potion, however nauseous, on which is written, "Intemperance reconciled with health."

It is a proverb on the continent, that the English drink more wine and take more physic than any other nation upon earth. Hydropathy strikes at the root of these two partialities: it withdraws either stimulus; exercise, water, and the most nourishing food; it enables the constitution, by the work of Nature, to become stronger, while the disease gradually becomes weaker, and finally abandons its hold of the body altogether. It draws the morbid juices to the surface by copious perspiration, and, at the same time, creates a healthy action to the skin. By sudden transition from heat to cold, it equalizes and gives tone to the circulation, and renders the frame cap

of enduring the great varieties of temperature to which our uncertain and capricious climate is subject. By prohibiting the use of hot liquids, it leaves Nature to engender a gradual warmth in the stomach, by which its energies are restored and the digestive organs confirmed and strengthened. And, lastly, it not only tends of itself to elevate the spirits and to produce an habitual cheerfulness and serenity in the mind, but it banishes, indirectly, through the total prohibition of medicine in every form, that languour and depression which constant purgatives must necessarily give rise to; and that susceptibility to the external influences of atmosphere, which the drugs so frequently prescribed—as, for example, mercury, in whatever shape—must sooner or later, produce.

As the application of the cold water

appears to frighten more invalids than any other part of the system, I will attempt to give a short account of its uses, referring the reader for further information to the excellent work of Dr. E. Johnson on Hydropathy,* where the subject is clearly and philosophically discussed. When a part comes affected, the blood flows more rapidly into it, than when in a state of health; while the vital principle, being diminished, is less able to throw the current off, through the smaller blood-vessels, to the other parts of the animal economy. The object, therefore, of the cold bath is, to accelerate and repair the vital energy, so as to enable it to accomplish this object. A redness,

* Dr. E. Johnson, one of the most skilful practitioners of Hydropathy, has lately migrated from Umberslad to the great Water Colony at Malvern.

commonly called a glow, immediately follows the sudden immersion of the whole frame into cold water. In the meantime, the blood has been made to quit the affected part, and carried generally over the system; or rather, it has rushed towards the skin, to supply and renew the natural heat, of which the cold water had deprived it. Immediate exercise (the importance and necessity of which, in the hydriatic treatment, are thus evinced) following the immersion as soon as possible, the patient being hurried into the open air, retains the blood where it had been thus diffused; and the vital energy in the affected part is then left to act more freely, having a less degree of inflammatory action to resist. How powerfully the efforts of Nature to bring about a cure, when unsuccessfully exerted, in consequence of the debility of

the patient, may thus be aided and seconded by the plunge-bath, or the shock of cold wet towels, applied as I have described them, will be easily imagined. The more constant the repetition of the remedy, the more readily does the circulation flow from the affected part ; while the unnatural irritation has been allayed, and the pulse lowered, by the copious draughts of cold water administered internally. The body, in the meanwhile, is acquiring gradual strength and vigour, by nutritious diet, pure air, relaxation from business, and as much exercise as can be taken without fatigue ; till at length the spontaneous equilibrium of the circulation is restored, and the diseased organ recovers its natural tone, and performs its natural functions in a *healthy* manner. In uniformity with this *principle*, the sitz-bath, foot-bath, and local

application of cold water, either with friction or without, afford the relief which, to a superficial observer, seems so wonderful. They have, moreover, a collateral and independent action of their own, in bracing the relaxed muscular fibres,—in reinforcing the nervous energy,—and in thus enabling Nature frequently to throw out, in the form of abscesses, those impure humours which have become commingled with the blood. Here, also, the copious perspirations have their advantage. They exert a twofold influence: the one is, to reopen a free passage to the secretions of the skin, which have become clogged and interrupted by some of those external causes, natural and artificial, which affect the general health: the other acts in subordination to the principle before mentioned. For, where the *animal heat* has been thus abundantly and

universally subtracted by excessive perspiration, it must follow, that, upon immediate immersion into cold water, the body will more than ever require the blood to hasten to the surface, to defend the parts where the perspiration has induced a temporary weakness, which causes the patient to shrink even from the first exposure to the atmosphere, much more from the contact of the cold water. Hence it arises, that frequently the more languid the constitution, the more the patient thrives upon the blanket. Had the plunge-bath, in such a case, been resorted to, without the precedent perspiration, the circulation would not have been so powerfully impelled, and the reaction, which is so enjoyable, would have resulted in a less degree, *perhaps* not at all, for a considerable time. *till* additional strength had been supplied

to the system, by water, air, or food. This is an observation of every day recurrence in the Hydropathic treatment. The protracted imprisonment in the blanket is made up for by a delightful sense of warmth, and heightened animal spirits throughout the whole day. At the same time, it should be borne in mind, for fear of an apparent contradiction, that the heat produced by accumulation of external covering, while the circulation remains unaccelerated, and the respiratory organs unexcited, is very different from the heat created by active exercise, which is always more or less accompanied with fatigue and exhaustion of the spirits. Thus it is perfectly reconcileable, that the patient should steadily improve under the operation of the blanket, and yet scarcely make any progress during the burning heat of summer.

In fact, he not only is made to go through the heating process in a passive state, without more fatigue than the unpleasantness of the posture and compressing weight occasion, but he encounters it renovated with the refreshing sleep he has had during the previous night.

If cold water, applied externally, be of such powerful influence, its internal use is no less efficacious. Its refreshing and reviving properties, when drank, arise in a great measure from its being taken at once into the system by means of the absorbent vessels, without the necessity of digestion. This can be said of no other substance for the quick relief it affords to a person suffering under extreme exhaustion. When combined with exercise in the open air, it strengthens the coats of the stomach, puri-

ties the blood, and removes obstructions, which medicine either cannot reach at all, or at all events, not without injury to other parts. But great caution must be used not to drink large draughts of cold water without exercise. For the primary effect of the water being to chill, unless the internal warmth is restored by exercise, the object which Hydropathy ever keeps in view, namely, to enable Nature to forward the circulation generally and equally to every organ of the human frame, will be altogether defeated, and much disappointment, if not mischief, ensue.

It may be objected that I have spoken of the Water-Cure as a discovery. Parts of the system certainly have been long known: but no one can deny that Preissnitz put them together, and, at all events, invented *some*, without which the fabric would have

been incomplete. Dr. Currie, many years ago, ventured to try cold water in fever and frequently with success; but the wet sheet, the invaluable sitz-bath, the application of the wet bandage to the chest and abdomen, and the whole calorific process by means of action on the skin, followed by the cold ablution, are due to Preissnitz and to Preissnitz only.

The discovery, then, I think, I may venture to call it, is of equal value to every class of men, to every profession. The economist of time will be indebted to it less than the economist of health. To a man of business the value of an hour or two in the morning, spent in wholesome exercise, before the sedentary occupations of the day are commenced, has been already *set forth*. Among the members of the legal profession I have always anticipated that

the system must become very popular. The exhaustion consequent on close attendance in courts of law, and the frequent transition from one extreme of temperature to another, are so trying to the constitution, that any system by which the nervous energies may be repaired and supported, and the body fortified against fatigue, cannot but acquire many proselytes. I can myself bear testimony to its good effects in this way. Immediately on leaving Stansted, I attended court from morning to night for nine days, Sunday only intervening, and though I had been before that time subject to most violent headaches, I never once suffered from the least indisposition of this kind during the whole time; and, moreover, I found I could apply to any business which required mental exertion, for a considerably longer interval, and with far less inconvenience to myself, than at any former period.

With the hope that others may reap equal benefit, and in their turn bear equal testimony to the efficacy of the Water-Cure, I have thrown together these few observations. To some, perhaps, they may appear too frivolous and trifling; but I have dealt only with simple facts, leaving it to the chemist and the anatomist to explain more fully why these things are so.

I ought to apologize to my readers for so frequently speaking of myself; but I felt that an exact and minute account of the treatment I underwent, would, perhaps, most readily interest that very numerous class of persons who are daily suffering as I once did—for it is to this class that the Water-Cure is most applicable; and I can thus vouch for my statement being the *plain, unvarnished truth*. Besides, the *importance of the object* of pursuit led me on: *for, what gift of riches, or talent, or station,*

is in any degree comparable to health? With it the sturdy ploughman, whistling behind his team, is enviable—without it the mightiest monarch on his throne is poor indeed. Well might Ariphton the Sicyonian, already quoted,*—even the inhabitant of a country where pleasure and luxury constituted the chief happiness of its people,—exclaim with rapture on his recovery from sickness :

Εἰ γὰρ τίς ἢ πλούτου χάρις ἢ τέκεων
 Τᾶς ἰσοδαίμονος τ' ἀνθρώποις
 Βασιλῆιδος ἀρχᾶς ἢ πόθων
 Οὐς χρύφίοις Ἀφροδίτης ἄρκυσι θηρέομεν
 Ἴη εἴ τις ἄλλα θεόθεν ἀνθρώποισι τέρψις
 * Ἡ πόνων ἀμπνοὰ πέφανται,
 Μετὰ σείῳ Μάκαιρ' Ὑγίεια
 Τέθῃλε πάντα, καὶ λαμπει χαρίτων ἔαρ·
 Σέθεν δὲ χωρὶς οὐ τις εὐδαίμων.

* *Ante*, p. 1, Greek Anthology.



108 VIVE VALEQUE—WHICH MEANS,

Thus translated by Johnson :—

“For whatever there is of beauty or of pleasure in wealth, in descendants, or in sovereign command, the highest summit of human enjoyment, or in those objects of desire which we endeavour to chase into the tolls of love; whatever delight or whatever solace is granted by the celestials to soften our fatigues; in thy presence, thou parent of happiness! all those joys spread out and flourish: in thy presence blooms the spring of pleasure, but without thee no man is happy.”—*Rambler*, No. 48.

My enthusiasm, therefore, on such a subject, needs not the same indulgence; at the same time, it can do no harm. If Hydropathy be proved (instead of being, as I believe it, a discovery imparted to man by a merciful Providence for his good) to be a dangerous experiment by which our credulity and common sense are to be for awhile imposed upon, as some physicians tell us, and which will presently vanish away and leave room

for fresh fallacies, to deceive the unwary ; it will, like other discoveries unsupported by reason, be quickly exploded, notwithstanding all the arguments spoken or written in its favour. If, on the other hand, it be built on the solid foundation of truth ; if the simplicity of its theory, and the successful issue of its practice, commend it to the meanest understanding, the opposition of science falsely so called, cannot and will not avail to extinguish or overthrow it. Medicine,* in the truest acceptation of the word, is not the art of administering drugs, but the art of healing. He is the best physician as well as philosopher, who removes or assuages those evils to which the human frame is liable, with least violence done to Nature ; and while

* Lat. "*Medeor*," to cure or heal.



110 **BECOME A HYDROPATHIST.**

he obviates the present inconvenience, endeavours, as far as lies in his power, to leave the vital powers unweakened, and undiminished by the remedies he applies.

FINIS.

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