

Such as are subject to frequent attacks of the rheumatism ought to make choice of a dry, warm situation, to avoid the night-air, wet clothes, and wet feet, as much as possible. Their clothing should be warm, and they should wear flannel next their skin, and make frequent use of the flesh-brush.

One of the best articles of dress, not only for the prevention of the rheumatism, but for powerful co-operation in its cure, is fleecy hosiery. A medical friend of mine, of long experience and much practice in the isle of Ely, assured me, that the introduction of that manufacture had prevented more rheumatisms, colds, and agues, than all the medicines which had ever been used there. Such of the inhabitants of marshy countries as are in easy circumstances could not, perhaps, direct their charity and humanity to a better object than to the supplying of their poor neighbours with so cheap and simple a preservative. I have even myself experienced the good effects of such warm covering in the rheumatism, to which I was very subject about thirty years ago; but have never experienced any attack of it since I took to warm clothing.

When there are any suspicions of the disease being connected with a syphilitic taint, a long continued course of mercurial alteratives (see *Syphilis*) must be entered upon.

Chronic rheumatism sometimes affects the lumbar region, with an acute pain shooting down into the os sacrum, so that the patient cannot stand upright without suffering considerable pain and inconvenience; nor does he feel any ease when in bed. This affection is known by the name of *lumbago*, and, as it frequently does, when it fixes itself in the hip-joint, it is called *sciatica*. Both of these affections are to be treated in the same manner as chronic rheumatism. In *sciatica* and local pains of the hip and loins, turpentine is often given with relief, as is also guaiacum combined with the essential oil of sassafras; and the external application of the Bath waters have been recommended by Dr. W. Falconer, as affording considerable benefit.

CHAP. XXXI.

SCURVY. (*Scorbutus*.)

THIS disease prevails chiefly in cold northern countries, especially in low damp situations, near large marshes, or great quantities of stagnating water. Sedentary people, of a dull melancholy disposition, are most subject to it. It proves often fatal to sailors on long voyages, particularly in ships that are not properly ventilated, have many people on board, or where cleanliness is neglected.

It is not necessary to mention the different species into which this disease has been divided, as they differ from one another chiefly in degree. What is called the *land scurvy*, however, is seldom attended with those highly putrid symptoms which appear in patients who have been long at sea, and which, we presume, are rather owing to confined air, want of exercise, and the unwholesome food eaten by sailors on long voyages, than to any specific difference in the disease.

CAUSES.—The scurvy is occasioned by cold moist air; by the long use of salted or smoke-dried provisions, or any kind of food, that is hard of digestion, and affords little nourishment. It may also proceed from the suppression of customary evacuations, as the *menses*, the hæmorrhoidal flux, &c. It is sometimes owing to an hereditary taint, in which case a very small cause will excite the latent disorder. Grief, fear, and other depressing passions, have a great tendency both to excite and aggravate this disease. The same observation holds with regard to neglect of cleanliness, bad clothing, the want of proper exercise, confined air, unwholesome food, or any disease which greatly weakens the body, or vitiates the humours.

SYMPTOMS.—This disease may be known by unusual weariness, heaviness, and difficulty of breathing, especially after motion; rottenness of the gums, which are apt to bleed on the slightest touch; a stinking breath; frequent bleeding at the nose; crackling of the joints; difficulty of walking; sometimes a swelling, and sometimes a falling away of the legs, on which there are livid, yellow, or violet-coloured spots; the face is generally of a pale or leaden colour. As the disease advances, other symptoms come on; as rottenness of the teeth, hæmorrhages, or discharges of blood from different parts of the body, foul obstinate ulcers, pains in various parts, especially about the breast, dry scaly eruptions all over the body, &c. At last a wasting or hectic fever comes on, and the miserable patient is often carried off by a dysentery, a diarrhœa, a dropsy, the palsy, fainting fits, or a mortification of some of the bowels.

CURE.—We know no way of curing this disease but by pursuing a plan directly opposite to that which brings it on. It proceeds from a vitiated state of the humours, occasioned by errors in diet, air, or exercise; and this cannot be removed but by a proper attention to these important articles.

If the patient has been obliged to breathe a cold, damp, or confined air, he should be removed, as soon as possible, to a dry, open, and moderately warm one. If there is reason to believe that the disease proceeds from a sedentary life, or depressing passions, as grief, fear, &c., the patient must take daily as much exercise in the open air as he can bear, and his mind should be diverted by cheerful company and other amusements. Nothing has a greater tendency either to prevent or remove this disease than constant cheerfulness and good humour. But this, alas! is seldom the lot of persons afflicted with the scurvy; they are generally surly, peevish, and morose.

When the scurvy has been brought on by a long use of salted provisions, the proper medicine is a diet consisting chiefly of fresh vegetables; as oranges, apples, lemons, limes, tamarinds, watercresses, scurvy-grass, brook-lime, &c. The use of these, with milk, pot-herbs, new bread, and fresh beer or cider, will seldom fail to remove the scurvy of this kind, if taken before it is too far advanced; but to have this effect, they must be persisted in for a considerable time. When fresh vegetables cannot be obtained,

pickled or preserved ones may be used; and where these are wanting, recourse must be had to the chymical acids. All the patient's food and drink should, in this case, be sharpened with cream of tartar, elixir of vitriol, vinegar, or the muriatic acid.

These things, however, will more certainly prevent than cure the scurvy, for which reason sea-faring people, especially in long voyages, ought to lay in plenty of them. Cabbages, onions, gooseberries, and many other vegetables, may be kept a long time by *pickling, preserving, &c.*, and when these fail, the chymical acids recommended above, which will keep for any length of time, may be used. We have reason to believe, if ships were well ventilated, had got store of fruits, greens, cider, &c. laid in, and if proper regard were paid to cleanliness and warmth, that sailors would be the most healthy people in the world, and would seldom suffer either from the scurvy or putrid fevers, which are so fatal to that useful class of men: but it is too much the temper of such people to despise all precaution; they will not think of any calamity till it overtakes them, when it is too late to ward off the blow.

In the course of the disease particular symptoms may arise requiring a separate consideration. Pains of the belly are to be relieved by emollients and opiates; oppression at the chest and impeded respiration by blisters; for bleeding is never to be used in this disease; contractions of the hams and calves of the legs, by fomenting the part with warm vinegar and water, and by the application of emollient poultices and frictions; sponginess of the gums, and looseness of the teeth, by washing the mouth frequently with antiseptic and astringent gargles;* and foul ulcers are to be cleansed and healed by washing them with lemon-juice, or a tincture consisting of equal parts of the tincture of myrrh, and then dressing them with some kind of ointment, or a sorrel poultice. In bad cases of ulceration the charcoal or effervescent poultice may probably be serviceable.

It must indeed be owned, that many of them have it not in their power to make the provision we are speaking of; but in this case it is the duty of their employers to make it for them; and no man ought to engage in a long voyage without having these articles secured.†

* Take Infusion of Roses,	4 ounces,	Take Decoction of Bark,	6 ounces.
Alum, in Powder,	1½ ounce.	Tincture of Myrrh,	1½ ounce.
Honey,	1 drachm.	Muriatic Acid,	12 to 20 drops.
Mix them for a gargle.		Make a gargle.	
or			

† Every body knows how much easier it is to prevent than to cure any disease; but this is particularly true with respect to the scurvy. I have therefore recommended the most assured means of preserving our seamen from its formidable attacks. Vegetable and mineral acids are certainly the best correctives of the acrimony occasioned by the long use of salted provisions. These are one of the chief causes of the scurvy not only at sea, but on land also, where salted and smoke dried meats are a favourite and very customary article of food. It appears from the reports of modern travellers, that the scurvy is almost unknown to the natives of Canada, though they live entirely on animal food, but not salted; while the use of the latter never fails to produce the scurvy. Would it not then be worth while to make various experiments for preserving meat at sea without salt? Surely the resources of human invention are not exhausted. The absorbent and antiputrescent properties of sugar are well known; but it might be deemed too expensive a seasoning. I must leave trials of this sort to persons of more leisure. It is enough for me to suggest the hint. I wish it may lead to a discovery of so much importance.

I have often seen very extraordinary effects in the land-scurvy from a milk diet. This preparation of Nature is a mixture of animal and vegetable properties, which of all others is the most fit for restoring a decayed constitution, and removing that particular acrimony of the humours, which seems to constitute the very essence of the scurvy, and many other diseases. But people despise this wholesome and nourishing food, because it is cheap, and devour with greediness flesh and fermented liquors, while milk is only deemed fit for their hogs.

The most proper drink in the scurvy is whey or buttermilk. When these cannot be had, sound cider, perry, or spruce-beer, may be used. Wort has likewise been found to be a proper drink in the scurvy, and may be used at sea, as malt will keep during the longest voyage. A decoction of the tops of the spruce-fir is likewise proper. It may be drank in the quantity of an English pint twice a-day. Tar-water may be used for the same purpose, or decoctions of any of the mild mucilaginous vegetables; as sarsaparilla, marsh-mallow roots, &c. Infusions of the bitter plants, as ground ivy, the lesser centaury, marsh-trefoil, &c. are likewise beneficial. I have seen the peasants in some parts of Britain express the juice of the last-mentioned plant, and drink it with good effect in those foul scorbutic eruptions with which they are often troubled in the spring season.

Harrowgate-water is certainly an excellent medicine in the land-scurvy. I have often seen patients who had been reduced to the most deplorable condition by this disease, greatly relieved by drinking the sulphur-water, and bathing in it. The chalybeate-water may also be used with advantage, especially with a view to brace the stomach after drinking the sulphur-water, which, though it sharpens the appetite, never fails to weaken the powers of digestion.

A slight degree of scurvy may be carried off by frequently sucking a little of the juice of a bitter orange or a lemon. When the disease affects the gums only, this practice, if continued for some time, will generally carry it off. We would, however, recommend the bitter orange as greatly preferable to lemon; it seems to be as good a medicine, and is not near so hurtful to the stomach. Perhaps our own sorrel may be little inferior to either of them.

All kinds of salad are good in the scurvy, and ought to be eaten very plentifully, as spinach, lettuce, parsley, celery, endive, radish, dandelion, &c. It is amazing to see how soon fresh vegetables in the spring cure the brute animals of any scab or foulness which is upon their skins. It is reasonable to suppose that their effects would be as great upon the human species, were they used in proper quantity for a sufficient length of time.

I have sometimes seen good effects in scorbutic complaints of very long standing, from the use of a decoction of the roots of water-dock. It is usually made by boiling a pound of the fresh root in six English pints of water, till about one-third of it be consumed. The dose is from half a pint to a whole pint of the decoction every day. But in all the cases where I have seen it prove beneficial, it was made much stronger, and drank in larger quantities. The safest way, however, is for the patient to begin with

small doses, and increase them both in strength and quantity, as he finds his stomach will bear it. It must be used for a considerable time. I have known some take it for many months, and have been told of others who had used it for several years, before they were sensible of any benefit, but who nevertheless were cured by it at length.

The leprosy, which was so common in this country long ago, seems to have been near a-kin to the scurvy. Perhaps its appearing so seldom now, may be owing to the inhabitants of Britain eating more vegetable food than formerly, living more upon tea and other diluting diet, using less salted meat, being more cleanly, better lodged and clothed, &c.—For the cure of this disease, we would recommend the same course of diet and medicine as in the scurvy.

I have met with very few cases of real leprosy in the course of my practice. The dry, scaly eruptions all over the body, which are often the effects of the scurvy, are very liable to be considered as leprosy symptoms, and certainly resemble them very much. But no evil can arise even from mistake in this particular, as the same alterative plan, which is advisable in the scurvy, will be generally found efficacious in the leprosy. Perhaps in the latter complaint, we ought to lay a greater stress, if possible, on the benefit of good air, and of frequent changes of the linen worn next the skin. What has been peculiarly called the disease of uncleanness, can only be remedied by the practice of the opposite virtue. I have also found, that, after proper means for correcting internal impurities had been used for some time, the complete disappearance of the leper's sores was often safely and effectually promoted by the ointment for diseases of the skin mentioned in the Appendix.*

The medicinal virtues of the Bath waters, as well as those of Harrowgate, in the cure of the leprosy, are very highly, and I believe very justly esteemed.

SCROFULA, OR KING'S EVIL.

THIS disease chiefly affects the glands, especially those of the neck. Children and young persons of a sedentary life, are very subject to it. It is one of those diseases which may be removed by proper regimen, but seldom yields to medicine. The inhabitants of cold, damp, marshy countries are most liable to the scrofula.

CAUSES.—This disease may proceed from an hereditary taint, infection, a scrofulous nurse, &c. Children who have the misfortune to be born of sickly parents, whose constitutions have been greatly injured by the pox, or other chronic diseases, are apt to be affected by the scrofula. It may likewise proceed from such diseases as weaken the habit or vitiate the humours, as the small-pox, measles, &c. External injuries, as blows, bruises, and the like,

* I have lately seen some instances of inveterate eruptions on the face, commonly termed scorbutic, removed by the use of the dulcamara. Take of the stalks of that plant, half an ounce, liquorice root, two drachms; macerate in two quarts of warm water for two hours, and then boil for ten minutes. Of the strained decoction a tea-cupful with a little milk, may be taken three times a-day. It must be persisted in for some time.

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sometimes produce scrofulous ulcers; but we have reason to believe, when this happens, that there has been a predisposition in the habit to this disease. In short, whatever tends to vitiate the humours or relax the solids, paves the way to the scrofula; as the want of proper exercise, too much heat or cold, confined air, unwholesome food, bad water, the long use of poor, weak, watery aliments, the neglect of cleanliness, &c. Nothing tends more to induce this disease in children than allowing them to continue long wet.*

SYMPTOMS.—At first, small knots appear under the chin, or behind the ears, which gradually increase in number and size, till they form one large hard tumour. This often continues for a long time without breaking, and when it does break, it only discharges a thin *sanies*, or watery humour. Other parts of the body are likewise liable to its attack, as the arm-pits, groins, feet, hands, eyes, breast, &c. Nor are the internal parts exempt from it. It often affects the lungs, liver, or spleen; and I have frequently seen the glands of the mésentery greatly enlarged by it.

Those obstinate ulcers which break out upon the feet and hands with swelling, and little or no redness, are of the scrofulous kind. They seldom discharge good matter, and are exceedingly difficult to cure. The *white swellings* of the joints seem likewise to be of this kind. They are with difficulty brought to a suppuration, and when opened they only discharge a thin ichor. There is not a more general symptom of the scrofula than a swelling of the upper lip and nose. It sometimes begins in a toe or finger, which continues long swelled, with no great degree of pain, till the bone becomes carious.

REGIMEN.—As this disease proceeds, in a great measure, from relaxation, the diet ought to be generous and nourishing, but at the same time light and of easy digestion; as well-fermented bread made of sound grain, the flesh and broth of young animals, with now and then a glass of generous wine, or good ale. The air ought to be open, dry, and not too cold, and the patient should take as much exercise as he can bear. This is of the utmost importance. Children who have sufficient exercise are seldom troubled with the scrofula.

MEDICAL TREATMENT.—The vulgar are remarkably credulous with regard to the cure of the scrofula; many of them believing in the virtue of the royal touch, that of the seventh son, &c. The truth is, we know but little either of the nature or cure of this disease, and where reason or medicines fail, superstition always comes in their place. The submuriate of mercury, however, is by far the most celebrated of all the purgative medicines which have been employed in the treatment of scrofula; and it is undoubtedly a serviceable remedy in many stages of the disease. In prescribing it we must be careful not to give it in such a quantity as to pro-

* The scrofula, as well as the rickets, is found to prevail in large manufacturing towns, where people live grossly, and lead sedentary lives.

duce the specific effects of mercury to any extent. When given cautiously and in moderate doses, so as to act merely as an alterative* or gentle purgative, it agrees well in scrofulous complaints, and greatly contributes to discuss tumours and resolve indurations of this nature; or combined with antimony, or opium, where there is much irritation, or where there are deep-seated affections of the joints, &c. The scrofula, at a certain period of life, often cures of itself; and, if the patient happens to be touched about this time, the cure is imputed to the touch, and not to Nature, who is really the physician. In the same way the insignificant nostrums of quacks and old women often gain applause when they deserve none.

There is nothing more pernicious than the custom of plying children in the scrofula with strong purgative medicines. People imagine it proceeds from humours which must be purged off, without considering that these purgatives increase the debility and aggravate the disease. It has indeed been found, that keeping the body gently open for some time, especially with sea-water, has a good effect; but this should only be given in gross habits, and in such quantity as to procure one, or at most two stools every day.

Bathing in the salt-water has likewise a very good effect, especially in the warm season. I have often known a course of bathing in salt-water, and drinking it in such quantities as to keep the body gently open, cure a scrofula, after many other medicines had been tried in vain. When salt-water cannot be obtained, the patient may be bathed in fresh water, and his body kept open by small quantities of salt and water, or some other mild purgative.

Next to cold bathing and drinking the salt-water, we would recommend the Peruvian bark.† Burnt sponge is another remedy which has been much administered in this disease, and frequently with advantage. It may be given either in the form of bolus or draught.‡ A more active medicine, however, is the carbonate of soda in doses from ten to twenty grains to a drachm, twice or thrice a-day.§ The cold bath may be used in summer, and the bark in winter. To an adult half a drachm of the bark in powder may be given in a glass of red wine four or five times a-day. Children, and such as cannot take it in substance, may use the decoction made in the following manner:—

Boil an ounce of Peruvian bark and a drachm of winter's bark, both grossly powdered, in an English quart of water to a pint:

* Take Prepared Chalk, 1 drachm.
Submuriate of Mercury, 2 to 4 grs
Tartarized Antimony, 2 grains.
Mix, and divide in 12 powders, of which
let one be taken twice a-day.

† Take Extract of Peruvian Bark, 2 drms.
— of Hemlock, 1 drachm.
Make 40 pills; and take two or three
three times a-day.

‡ Take Burnt Sponge, 20 to 30 grains.
Rhubarb, 3 grains.
Honey, enough to make a bolus, to be
taken twice a-day.

§ Take Carbonate of Soda, 2 drachms.
Infusion of Bark, 5 ounces.
Compound Tincture of
Cinnamon, 1 ounce.
Syrup of Orange Peel, 2 drachms.
Make a Mixture, two table-spoonsful of
which are to be taken three or four
times a-day.

or
Take of Decoction of Bark, 10 drachms.
C. Tincture of Cardamoms,
1½ drachm.
Carbonate of Soda, 15 grains.
Make a draught, to be taken two or three
times a-day.

towards the end, half an ounce of sliced liquorice-root and a handful of raisins may be added, which will both render the decoction less disagreeable, and make it take up more of the bark. The liquor must be strained, and two, three, or four table-spoonsful, according to the age of the patient, given three times a-day; but, in place of this, I now use the compound tincture of bark.

The Moffat and Harrowgate waters, especially the latter, are likewise very proper medicines in the scrofula. They ought not, however, to be drank in large quantities, but should be taken so as to keep the body gently open, and must be used for a considerable time.

Hemlock may sometimes be used with advantage in the scrofula. Some lay it down as a general rule, that the sea-water is most proper before there are any suppuration or symptoms of *tubercles*; the Peruvian bark, when there are running sores, and a degree of hectic fever; and the hemlock in old inveterate cases, approaching to the scirrhus or cancerous state. Either the extract or the fresh juice of this plant may be used. The dose may be small at first, and increased gradually as far as the stomach is able to bear it.

External applications are of little use. Before the tumour breaks, nothing ought to be applied to it, unless a piece of flannel, or something to keep it warm. After it breaks, the sore may be dressed with some digestive ointment. What I have always found to answer best, was the yellow basilicon mixed with about a sixth or eighth part of its weight of red precipitate of mercury. The sore may be dressed with this twice a-day; and if it be very fungous, and does not digest well, a larger proportion of the precipitate may be added.*

Scrofulous ulcers which had resisted many other remedies have healed under a weak solution of nitric acid in water (thirty drops or less of the former to a pint of the latter.) In spreading and irritable sores, the application of an aqueous solution of opium, or of hemlock, and afterwards a solution of zinc, may be beneficial. Where the granulations rise above the surface, and are broad and flabby, and where pressure cannot be applied, the sorrel poultice† has proved useful. The topical application of bruised sorrel leaves has been recommended in very flattering terms as contributing essentially to the cicatrization of indolent scrofulous ulcers.

In scrofulous sores of an ugly, gleeting, and ill-conditioned appearance, much benefit has been obtained by the application of a poultice made with crumbs of bread moistened with a solution of about an ounce of the crystals of soda in a quart of water. The sub-borate of soda in the proportion of half a drachm to one drachm mixed with an ounce of spermaceti ointment, or Turner's cerate, has been found an efficacious application to scrofulous ulcers; and by such dressings they have been known to heal in a short space of time, when other applications have entirely failed.

Medicines which mitigate this disease, though they do not cure

* The application of the lunar caustic tends very much to promote the cure of scrofulous ulcers, after they have broke, for they should never be opened. They will bear a pretty free daily application of this stimulus, not only with impunity, but advantage. A. P. B.

† Sorrel, a pound, to be beaten to a pulp, and applied to the parts affected.

it, are not to be despised. If the patient can be kept alive by any means till he arrives at the age of puberty, he has a great chance to get well; but if he does not recover at this time, in all probability he never will.

There is no malady which parents are so apt to communicate to their offspring as the scrofula, for which reason people ought to beware of marrying into families affected with this disease.

OBSERVATIONS.—One of the most effectual means of guarding against the scrofula, is a constant attention to keep the child dry and clean, by the immediate removal of all impurities, which not only taint the air and relax the skin, but vitiate the humours of the body, in consequence of the absorption of their most noxious particles through the pores.

Washing children frequently, forms a necessary part of this plan. At first, lukewarm water is proper, as being best suited to the new-born infant, on account of the warm temperature to which he had been accustomed in the womb, and on account of the delicacy of habit which he may have inherited from his parents. But the warmth of the water should be gradually diminished as the infant gains strength, till it can be used quite cold with great safety and benefit. The cold bath, so essential to the cure of the scrofula, operates with still greater certainty as a preventive. It braces and invigorates the frame, and thus directly counteracts one of the principal causes of the evil, which is relaxation. The whole body ought to be washed every morning, and the lower half every night, after which the child is to be instantly wiped dry, and wrapped up in a warm blanket, to guard against the danger of sudden cold, and to secure all the advantages of so salutary an operation.

My former arguments, in favour of light and loose clothing for children in general, acquire double force when there is the least reason to dread the scrofula. It is little short of murder to keep an infant of a delicate habit smothered in clothes, and panting in a sort of vapour-bath caused by the noxious steams of its own body. The covering both by day and by night should be as light as is consistent with due warmth. The linen next the skin, which is always imbibing perspirable matter, must be changed often; and the same dress ought never to be kept on for more than twelve hours together.

Wholesome unconfined air, and frequent exercise, are grand preservatives from all diseases, but especially from the scrofula. It is not enough to select the most spacious and lofty apartment in the house for the nursery; children should be taken out into the fields every day, particularly about noon, unless the heat be intense, as the most salutary exhalations from the earth then abound, and the air is impregnated with the balmy essence of the sweetest plants and flowers. Cold and wet weather being deemed one of the exciting causes of the scrofula, any wanton exposure to it would be improper; though even in this respect, less caution is necessary, if the use of the cold bath be continued every morning. This will brace the thinnest, finest skin, and harden it against the impressions of a damp, chilly atmosphere.

Exercise, besides strengthening the whole habit, and powerfully

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assisting all the vital functions, has a direct tendency to prevent obstructions of every kind, and those of the glands in particular, which constitute the earliest symptoms of the disease in question.

On the subject of diet, some little deviations must be made from my general plan, in rearing the child of scrofulous parents, or one that is marked with what may be called a pre-disposition to this disease, a thin skin, and a general weakness and flaccidity of the habit. Extraordinary care should be taken to secure a very healthy nurse for such a child; and, after it is weaned, the use of animal food, but light and easy of digestion, should be gradually introduced, and freely allowed at dinner every day. In case of any just apprehensions of the scrofula, we must not trust to a mild regimen, to milk and vegetables, though in general so wholesome and nutritious. They cannot give that tone to the stomach, and that energy to the whole system, which they now stand in need of. A gross, full diet will certainly occasion humours and eruptions; but these are very different from the scrofula, and far more easily cured. A poverty of the blood, a relaxation of the fibres, those sure attendants, if not the principal causes of the evil, require the most strengthening articles both of food and drink.

But I must reprobate, above all things, butter in every form, and other oily substances, which are so apt to turn rancid on the stomach, loading it with phlegm, relaxing and impeding its action, inducing a debility of the solids, and occasioning a great number of complaints, as well as glandular obstructions. One of the worst compositions, of which butter or fat always forms a part, is pastry. I really shudder whenever I see a delicate woman, or a weak child, greedily devouring those palatable poisons. Let it be understood, that I include in this censure gingerbread, plumcakes, and all trash of the like kind. Indeed, a child of a scrofulous habit should never eat any preparation of flour, except plain, well-made, and well-baked bread.*

THE ITCH. (*Psora*.)

THOUGH this disease is commonly communicated by infection, yet it seldom prevails where due regard is paid to cleanliness, fresh air, and wholesome diet. It generally appears in form of small watery pustules, first about the wrists, or between the fingers; afterwards it affects the arms, thighs, legs, &c. These pustules are attended with an intolerable itching, especially when the patient is warm in bed, or sits by the fire. Sometimes, indeed, the skin is covered with large blotches or scabs, and at other times with a white scurf, or scaly eruption. This last is called the Dry Itch, and is the most difficult to cure.

The itch is seldom a dangerous disease, unless when it is rendered so by neglect or improper treatment. If it be suffered to continue too long, it may vitiate the whole mass of humours; and, if it be suddenly drove in, without proper evacuations, it may occasion fevers, inflammations of the viscera, or other internal disorders.

* Delicate children are greatly injured by the common habit of bibbing too much thin warm fluid, such as weak tea. They are chiefly enticed to this practice by the sweetness of these drinks. Such children ought not to be permitted to drink any thing sweet or warm. The stomach is braced by cold applications, as well as the skin. Ed.

The best medicine yet known for the itch is sulphur, which ought to be used both externally and internally. The parts most affected may be rubbed with an ointment made of the flour of sulphur, two ounces; crude sal ammoniac finely powdered, two drachms; hog's lard, or butter, four ounces. If a scruple or half a drachm of the essence of lemon be added, it will entirely take away the disagreeable smell. About the bulk of a nutmeg of this may be rubbed upon the extremities at bed time, twice or thrice a-week. It is seldom necessary to rub the whole body; but when it is, it ought not to be done all at once, but by turns, as it is dangerous to stop too many pores at the same time.

Before the patient begins to use the ointment, he ought, if he be of a full habit, to bleed or take a purge or two. It will likewise be proper, during the use of it, to take every night and morning as much of the flour of brimstone and cream of tartar, in a little treacle or new milk, as will keep the body gently open. He should beware of catching cold, should wear more clothes than usual, and take every thing warm. The same clothes, the linen excepted, ought to be worn all the time of using the ointment; and such clothes as have been worn while the patient was under the disease, are not to be used again, unless they have been fumigated with brimstone, and thoroughly cleansed, otherwise they will communicate the infection anew.*

I never knew brimstone, when used as directed above, fail to cure the itch; and I have reason to believe, that, if duly persisted in, it never will fail; but if it be only used once or twice, and cleanliness neglected, it is no wonder if the disorder returns. The quantity of ointment mentioned above will generally be sufficient for the cure of one person; but, if any symptoms of the disease should appear again, the medicine must be repeated. It is both more safe and efficacious when persisted in for a considerable time, than when a large quantity is applied at once. As most people dislike the smell of sulphur, they may use in its place the powder of white hellebore root made up into an ointment, in the same manner, which will seldom fail to cure the itch.

People ought to be extremely cautious lest they take other eruptions for the itch; as the stoppage of these may be attended with fatal consequences. Many of the eruptive disorders to which children are liable, have a near resemblance; and I have often known infants killed by being rubbed with greasy ointments that make these eruptions strike suddenly in, which nature had thrown out to preserve the patient's life, or prevent some other malady.

As the external use, however, of sulphur is frequently attended with much inconvenience from the dirtiness of the application, as well as its disagreeable smell; other remedies are frequently substituted. The most efficacious of these are a solution of arsenic or oxymuriate of mercury,† different combinations of sulphuric

* Sir John Pringle observes, that though this disease may seem trifling, there is no one in the army that is more troublesome to cure, as the infection often lurks in clothes, &c. and breaks out a second, or even a third time. The same inconvenience occurs in private families, unless particular regard be paid to the changing or cleaning of their clothes, which last is by no means an easy operation.

† Take Oxymuriate of Mercury, 6 grains. Distilled Water, 12 ounces.
Muriate of Ammonia. 10 grains. Make a lotion.

acid;* white hellebore, and a strong decoction of digitalis. In some cases, an infusion of tobacco leaves, used as a lotion, has cured the itch.

Much mischief is likewise done by the use of mercury in this disease. Some persons are so fool-hardy as to wash the parts affected with a strong solution of the corrosive sublimate. Others use the mercurial ointment, without taking the least care either to avoid cold, keep the body open, or observe a proper regimen. The consequences of such conduct may be easily guessed. I have known even the mercurial girdles produce bad effects, and would advise every person, as he values his health, to beware how he uses them. Mercury ought never to be used as a medicine without the greatest care. Ignorant people look upon these girdles as a kind of charm, without considering that the mercury enters the body.

Those who would avoid this detestable disease, ought to beware of infected persons, to use wholesome food, and to study universal cleanliness.†

ASTHMA.

THE asthma is a spasmodic‡ disease of the lungs, coming on by paroxysms, which seldom admits of a cure. Persons in the decline of life are most liable to it. It is distinguished into the moist and dry, or humoral and nervous. The former is attended with expectoration or spitting; but in the latter the patient seldom spits,

or		or	
Take Oxymuriate of Mercury,	12 grains.	Take White Precipitate of Mercury,	2 drachms.
Muriate of Ammonia,	1 drachm.	Superacetate of Lead,	
Decoction of White Hellebore,		Subcarbonate of Potash,	
	12 ounces.	of each,	10 grains.
Make a lotion.		Prepared Lard,	2 ounces.
*Take Sulphuric Acid,	$\frac{1}{2}$ drachm.	Essential Oil of Bergamot,	25 drops.
Prepared Lard,	1 ounce.	Make an ointment, to be rubbed in every	
Make an ointment.		night at bed-time.	

† The itch is now by cleanliness banished from every genteel family in Britain. It still, however, prevails among the poorer sorts of peasantry, and among the manufacturers in England. These are not only sufficient to keep the seeds of the disease alive, but to spread the infection among others. It were to be wished that some effectual method could be devised for extirpating it altogether. Several country clergymen have told me, that by getting such as were infected cured, and strongly recommending an attention to cleanliness, they have banished the itch entirely out of their parishes. Why might not others do the same?

‡ Dr. Cullen, and most other writers, refer the proximate or immediate cause of asthma to a preternatural or spasmodic constriction of the muscular fibres of the air-cells of the lungs, which not only prevents their being so dilated as to admit of a free and full inspiration, but also gives them a rigidity which interferes with a free and full expiration. This doctrine, however, has been disputed by Dr. Bree, who, in a very ingenious treatise on this disease, gives it as his opinion that irritation situated within the bronchia or air-cavities, and arising either from an effusion of serum, or from aerial acrimony, is the true proximate cause of convulsive asthma. The mucus, which is excreted in the course of the disease, and which has been looked upon by Dr. Cullen and others as only an effect, Dr. B. views as a prominent cause of the paroxysm; or when it is absent, only yielding to a different cause equally irritating to the organ, and exciting spasmodic contractions of the respiratory muscles. Dr. Darwin says, that whatever may be the remote causes of paroxysms of asthma, the immediate cause of the convulsive respiration, whether in the common asthma, or in what is termed the convulsive, which are perhaps only different degrees of the same disease, must be owing to violent voluntary exertions to relieve pain, as in other convulsions; and the increase of irritability to external stimuli, or of sensibility during sleep, must occasion them to commence at this time. Ep.

unless sometimes a little tough phlegm, by the mere force of coughing.

It rarely appears before the age of puberty, and seems to attack men more frequently than women; particularly those of a full habit, in whom it seldom fails, by frequent repetition, to occasion some degree of emaciation. When the disease is attended with an accumulation and discharge of humours from the lungs, it is called the humid asthma; but when it is unaccompanied by any expectoration, it is known by the name of the dry or spasmodic asthma.

CAUSES.—The asthma is sometimes hereditary. It may likewise proceed from a bad formation of the breast; the fumes of metals or minerals taken into the lungs; violent exercise, especially running; the obstructions of customary evacuations, as the menses, hæmorrhoids, &c.; sudden retrocession of the gout, or striking-in of eruptions, as the small-pox, measles, &c.; violent passions of the mind, as sudden fear or surprise. In a word, the disease may proceed from any cause that either impedes the circulation of the blood through the lungs, or prevents their being duly expanded by the air.

SYMPTOMS.—An asthma is known by a quick laborious breathing, which is generally performed with a kind of wheezing noise. Sometimes the difficulty of breathing is so great, that the patient is obliged to keep in an erect posture, otherwise he is in danger of being suffocated. A fit or paroxysm of the asthma generally happens after a person has been exposed to cold easterly winds, or has been abroad in thick foggy weather, or has got wet, or continued long in a damp place under ground, or has taken some food which the stomach could not digest, as pastries, toasted cheese, or the like.

The paroxysm is commonly ushered-in with listlessness, want of sleep, hoarseness, a cough, belching of wind, a sense of heaviness about the breast, and difficulty of breathing. To these succeed heat, fever, pain of the head, sickness and nausea, great oppression of the breast, palpitation of the heart, a weak and sometimes intermitting pulse, an involuntary flow of tears, bilious vomitings, &c. All these symptoms grow worse towards night; the patient is easier when up than in bed, and is very desirous of cool air.

After some nights passed away in this manner, the fits at length moderate, and suffer more considerable remissions, particularly when they are attended by a copious expectoration in the mornings, and when this continues from time to time, throughout the day; and, the disease going off at last, the patient enjoys his usual rest by night without further disturbance. The pulse, during the fit, is usually not much affected, but in a few cases there is a frequency of it, with some degree of thirst and other febrile symptoms.

REGIMEN.—The food ought to be light and of easy digestion. Boiled meats are to be preferred to roasted, and the flesh of young

animals to that of old. All windy food, and whatever is apt to swell in the stomach, is to be avoided. Light puddings, white broths, and ripe fruits baked, boiled or roasted, are proper. Strong liquors of all kinds, especially malt liquor, are hurtful. The patient should eat a very light supper, or rather none at all, and should never suffer himself to be long costive. His clothing should be warm, especially in the winter season. As all disorders of the breast are much relieved by keeping the feet warm, and promoting the perspiration, a flannel shirt or waistcoat, and thick shoes, will be of singular service.

But nothing is of so great importance in the asthma as pure and moderately warm air. Asthmatic people can seldom bear either the close heavy air of a large town, or the sharp keen atmosphere of a bleak hilly country: a medium, therefore, between these is to be chosen. The air near a large town is often better than at a distance, provided the patient be removed so far as not to be affected by the smoke. Some asthmatic patients indeed breathe easier in town than in the country; but this is seldom the case, especially in towns where much coal is burnt. Asthmatic persons who are obliged to be in town all day, ought at least to sleep out of it. Even this will often prove of great service. Those who can afford it ought to travel into a warmer climate. Many asthmatic persons who cannot live in Britain, enjoy very good health in the south of France, Portugal, Spain, or Italy.

Exercise is likewise of very great importance in the asthma, as it promotes the digestion, and greatly assists in the perspiration of the blood. The blood of asthmatic persons is seldom duly prepared, owing to the proper action of the lungs being impeded. For this reason such people ought daily to take as much exercise, either on foot, horseback, or in a carriage, as they can bear.

MEDICINE.—Almost all that can be done by medicine in this disease, is to relieve the patient when seized with a violent fit. This indeed requires the greatest expedition, as the disease often proves suddenly fatal. During the paroxysm the body is generally bound, a purging clyster, with a solution of assafœtida, ought therefore to be administered, and if there be occasion, it may be repeated two or three times.* The patient's feet and legs ought to be immersed in warm water, and afterwards rubbed with a warm hand, or dry cloth. Bleeding, unless extreme weakness or old age should forbid it, is highly proper. If there be a violent spasm about the breast or stomach, warm fomentations or bladders filled with warm milk and water, may be applied to the part affected, and warm cataplasms to the soles of the feet. The patient must drink freely of diluting liquors, and may take a tea-spoonful of the tincture of castor and saffron mixed together in a cup of valerian-tea, twice or thrice a day. Sometimes a vomit has a very good effect, and snatches the patient, as it were, from the jaws of death. This, however, will be more safe after other evacuations have been premised. A very strong infusion of roasted coffee is said to give ease in an asthmatic paroxysm.

* Take Compound Decoction of Marsh-mallow,
Mixture of Assafœtida,

of each,
Castor Oil,
Mix for a clyster.

5 ounces,
 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce.

In the moist asthma, such things as promote expectoration or spitting, ought to be used; as the syrup of squills,* gum-ammoniac, and such like. A common spoonful of the syrup or oxymel of squills, mixed with an equal quantity of cinnamon-water, may be taken three or four times through the day, and four or five pills made of equal parts of assafoetida and gum-ammoniac at bed time.†

A combination of foxglove and opium has proved highly advantageous in spasmodic asthma, when given in the dose of half a grain of each every four or five hours. In the petuitous asthma, squill and foxglove might be more advisable.‡ On the authority of a modern writer, galvanism was found most efficacious in relieving habitual asthma.§

For the convulsive or nervous asthma, antispasmodics and tonics are the most proper medicines. The patient may take a teaspoonful of the paretic elixir twice a-day. The Peruvian bark is sometimes found to be of use in this case; it may be taken in substance or infused in wine. Bitter infusions, chalybeate waters, and preparations of iron, particularly the subcarbonate and sulphate, in short, every thing that braces the nerves or takes off spasm, may be of use in a nervous asthma. It is often relieved by the use of asses' milk: I have likewise known cows' milk drank warm in the morning have a very good effect in this case.

In addition to other tonics, exercise either in swinging, sailing, riding in a carriage, or on horseback, but particularly the latter, together with a change of air, will be beneficial to asthmatics: they should try different situations to live in, where the disease is rendered less distressing, or is entirely removed. Their clothing should be warm.

In the arthritic asthma, arising from the retrocession of gout, there are usually intermissions and other irregularities of the pulse, great anxiety of countenance, with a bluish tinge thereon. Large doses of opium, ether, camphor, and ammonia are the medicines most likely to afford relief. Sometimes it is necessary to bleed the patient, and often to apply a blister to the chest, assisted with placing the feet in warm water, &c.

In every species of asthma setons and issues have a good effect; they may either be set in the back or side, and should never be al-

* Take Mixture of Ammoniacum, 4 oz.
Oxymel of Squills, 3 drs.
Solution of Antimony Wine, 40 drps.
Distilled Vinegar, ½ oz.

Make a mixture; of which two table-spoonful are to be taken often, or when either the cough or shortness of breath is troublesome.

or
Take Mixture of Ammoniacum, 1 oz.
Solution of Acetated Ammonia, 2 drs.
Tartarized Antimony, 15 drops.

Syrup of Tolu, 1 d.achm.
Make a draught, to be taken every six hours.

† After copious evacuations, large doses of ether have been found very efficacious in removing a fit of the asthma. I have likewise known the following mixture produce very happy effects: To four or five ounces of the solution or milk of gum ammoniac add two ounces of simple cinnamon water, the same quantity of balsamic syrup, and half an ounce of paretic elixir. Of this two table-spoonful may be taken every three hours.

‡ Take Foxglove in Powder, 6 grains. Syrup of Tolu, enough to make the mass
Compound Squill Pill, 2 scruples. into 12 pills, one to be taken three or four times a-day.

§ See Experimental Inquiry into the Laws of the Vital Functions, &c. by A. P. Wilson Philip, M. D. p. 329.

lowed to dry up. We shall here, once for all, observe, that not only in the asthma, but in most chronic diseases, issues are extremely proper. They are both a safe and efficacious remedy; and though they do not always cure the disease, yet they will often prolong the patient's life.

This disease, though so common with us, is little known in mild climates; and, on that account, it is always advisable to try the effect of a change of climate, which has generally been attended with great benefit. I have already intimated what little confidence I had in the power of any medicine to perform a radical cure of the asthma; but there are many things that will give the patient ease, and, of course, tend to prolong his life. Much, also, may be done by regimen, when drugs are of little service; and I would therefore advise asthmatic patients to procure and keep by them rules for their management both in and out of the fit, adapted to their particular cases. By a proper attention to such rules a man may live many years, and enjoy tolerably good health.

I had a patient some time ago, who was often carried home to his wife in an apparently dying state. She felt little alarm, well knowing what was necessary to be done; and she always brought him about. This good woman did no more than may be done by any woman of common sense, if the doctor will deign to instruct her. General rules will not do; they must, as before observed, be suited to the patient's case and constitution. For want of some such instructions, which a physician should take the earliest opportunity to give, a patient may lose his life before the doctor can be sent for, or any other medical advice or assistance procured.*

APoplexy. (*Apoplexia*.)

APoplexy is a sudden loss of sense and motion, during which the patient is to all appearance dead; the heart and lungs, however, still continue to move. Though this disease proves often fatal, yet it may sometimes be removed by proper care. It chiefly attacks sedentary persons of a gross habit, who use a rich and plentiful diet, and indulge in strong liquors. People in the decline of life are most subject to the apoplexy. It prevails most in winter, especially in rainy seasons, and very low states of the barometer.

CAUSES.—The immediate cause of an apoplexy is a compres-

* Asthma is a disease more immediately alarming in appearance, than dangerous in reality. It is well to be aware that there is hardly an instance known of a person dying during the asthmatic paroxysm. The duration of life seems even rarely to be shortened by this complaint. The celebrated Dr. FLOYER, who wrote on asthma, although he laboured under that disease during his whole life, died upwards of eighty years of age. He was of opinion that he shortened and lightened his fits by drinking some cups of very strong coffee without milk or sugar. I have known more than one asthmatic, who never lay down in bed for a long series of years, and notwithstanding, during the intervals of the fits, enjoyed tolerable health. Much depends on adhering to a dry diet, taking regular exercise, and on abstaining from those things which are known, by individual experience, to disorder the stomach. Considerable benefit is derived, in the nervous asthma, from occasionally taking as much genuine assafoetida, made into pills, as is sufficient to keep the body regular. Smoking the herb Stramonium, shortens the duration of a fit, but does not permanently cure the disease, nor even diminish the number of paroxysms. See "*New Domestic Medical Manual*," by J. S. Forsyth.

sion of the brain, occasioned by an excess of blood, or a collection of watery humours. The former is called a *sanguine*, and the latter a *serous* apoplexy. It may be occasioned by any thing that increases the circulation towards the brain, or prevents the return of the blood from the head : as intense study ; violent passions ; * viewing objects for a long time obliquely ; wearing any thing too tight about the neck ; a rich and luxurious diet ; suppression of urine ; suffering the body to cool suddenly after having been greatly heated ; continuing long in a warm or cold bath ; the excessive use of spiceries, or high-seasoned food ; excess of venery ; the sudden striking in of any eruption ; suffering issues, setons, &c. suddenly to dry up, or the stoppage of any customary evacuation ; a mercurial salivation pushed too far, or suddenly checked by cold ; wounds or bruises on the head ; long exposure to excessive cold ; poisonous exhalations, &c.

Symptoms, and method of cure.—The usual forerunners of an apoplexy are giddiness, pain and swimming of the head; loss of memory; drowsiness; noise in the ears; the nightmare; a spontaneous flux of tears, and laborious respiration. When persons of an apoplectic make observe these symptoms, they have reason to fear the approach of a fit, and should endeavour to prevent it by bleeding, a slender diet, and opening medicines.

In the sanguine apoplexy, if the patient does not die suddenly, the countenance appears florid, the face is swelled or puffed up, and the blood vessels, especially about the neck and temples, are turgid; the pulse beats strong; the eyes are prominent and fixed, and the breathing is difficult, and performed with a snorting noise. The excrements and urine are often voided spontaneously, and the patient is sometimes seized with vomiting.

In this species of apoplexy every method must be taken to lessen the force of the circulation towards the head. The patient should be kept perfectly easy and cool. His head should be raised pretty high, and his feet suffered to hang down. His clothes ought to be loosened, especially about the neck, and fresh air admitted into his chamber. His garters should be tied pretty tight, by which means the motion of the blood from the lower extremities will be retarded. As soon as the patient is placed in a proper posture, he should be bled freely in the neck or arm, and, if there be occasion, the operation may be repeated in two or three hours. A laxative clyster,[†] with plenty of sweet oil or fresh butter, and a spoonful or two of common salt in it, may be administered every two hours; and blistering plasters applied between the shoulders, and to the calves of the legs.

As soon as the symptoms are a little abated, and the patient is

*I knew a woman who, in a violent fit of anger, was seized with a sanguine apoplexy. She at first complained of extreme pain, as if daggers had been thrust through her head, as she expressed it. Afterwards she became comatose, her pulse sunk very low, and was exceeding slow. By bleeding, blistering, and other evacuations, she was kept alive for about a fortnight. When her head was opened, a large quantity of extravasated blood was found in the left ventricle of the brain.

† Take Compound Extract of Colocynthis,	Castor Oil,	1 ounce.
½ to 1 drachm.	Mix for a clyster, to be injected immediately,	
Infusion of Senna 11 ounces.		

able to swallow, he ought to drink freely of some diluting opening liquor; as a decoction of tamarinds and liquorice, cream-tartar whey, or common whey with cream of tartar dissolved in it. Or he may take any cooling purge, as Glauber's salts, manna dissolved in an infusion of senna, tincture of rhubarb, or the like. All spirits and other strong liquors are to be avoided. Even volatile salts held to the nose do mischief. Vomits for the same reason, ought not to be given, or any thing that may increase the motion of the blood towards the head.

In the serous apoplexy the symptoms are nearly the same, only the pulse is not so strong, the countenance is less florid, and the breathing less difficult. Bleeding is not so necessary here as in the former case. It may, however, generally be performed once with safety and advantage, but should not be repeated. The patient should be placed in the same posture as directed above, and should have blistering plasters applied, and receive opening clysters in the same manner. Purges are here likewise necessary, and the patient may drink strong balm tea. If he be inclined to sweat, it ought to be promoted by drinking small wine whey, or an infusion of *carduus benedictus*. A plentiful perspiration kept up for a considerable time has often carried off a serous apoplexy. Out of a fit of serous apoplexy the cephalic and nervous medicines recommended in palsy will be proper, taking occasionally some stomachic purgative. If the disease arise in consequence of a suppression of piles, leeches should be applied to the hemorrhoidal veins, fomentations must be employed, and the intestines stimulated by means of aloetic purges.

When apoplectic symptoms proceed from opium, or other narcotic substances taken into the stomach, vomits are necessary. The patient is generally relieved as soon as he has discharged the poison in this way.

Persons of plethoric or apoplectic make, or those who have been attacked by it, ought to use a very spare and slender diet, avoiding all strong liquors, spiceries, and high-seasoned food. They ought likewise to guard against all violent passions, and to avoid the extremes of heat and cold. The head should be shaved, and daily washed with cold water. The feet ought to be kept warm, and never suffered to continue long wet. The body must be kept open either by food or medicine, and a little blood may be let every spring and fall. Exercise should by no means be neglected; but it ought to be taken in moderation. Nothing has a more happy effect in preventing an apoplexy than perpetual issues or setons; great care, however, must be taken not to suffer them to dry up, without opening others in their stead. Apoplectic persons ought never to go to rest with a full stomach, or to lie with their heads low, or to wear any thing too tight about their necks. When an attack of apoplexy is immediately threatened, blood-letting is the remedy most to be relied on, and the blood should be drawn either from the jugular vein or temporal artery, determining the extent of blood to be taken away by the circumstances of the case, &c. When a lethargic disposition prevails, bleeding should also be adopted, particularly topical, from the temples, by means of leeches, or from the nape of the neck by the scarificator and cupping;

the frequent use of cathartics,* and a blister applied to the head or its immediate vicinity.

The preceding cautions are of far greater importance than such persons may be aware of. The circulation, which is slower during sleep than when awake, is farther clogged by a fulness of the stomach. The low posture of the head not only favours, but seems to invite stagnation; and tight ligatures round the neck, impede the return of the blood from the vessels of the brain, so that an apoplexy, not only very naturally, but almost inevitably follows. Instead of being astonished at the number of those who go to bed in apparent health, and are found dead in the morning, we should consider it as a matter of much more surprise for a person of a plethoric habit, after unchecked indulgence in the pleasures of the table, to go to rest without any regard to the inclination of his head or the tightness of his collar, and ever to rise again.†

COSTIVENESS, AND OTHER AFFECTIONS OF THE STOMACH AND BOWELS.

We do not here mean to treat of those astrictions of the bowels which are the symptoms of diseases, as of the cholic, the iliac passion, &c., but only to take notice of that infrequency of stools which sometimes happens, and which in some particular constitutions may occasion diseases.

Costiveness may proceed from drinking rough red wines or other astringent liquors; too much exercise, especially on horseback. It may likewise proceed from a long use of cold insipid food, which does not sufficiently stimulate the intestines. Sometimes it is owing to the bile not descending to the intestines, as in the jaundice; and at other times it proceeds from diseases of the intestines themselves, as a palsy, spasms, torpor, tumours, a cold dry state of the intestines, &c.

Excessive costiveness is apt to occasion pains of the head, vomiting colics, and other complaints of the bowels. It is peculiarly hurtful to hypochondriac and hysteric persons, as it generates wind and other grievous symptoms. Some people, however, can bear costiveness to a great degree. I know persons who enjoy pretty good health, yet do not go to stool above once a-week, and others not above once a fortnight; indeed I have heard of some who do not go above once a-month.

Persons who are generally costive should live upon a moistening and laxative diet; as roasted or boiled apples, pears, stewed prunes, raisins, gruels with currants, butter, honey, sugar, and such like. Broths with spinage, leeks, and other soft pot-herbs, are likewise proper. Rye-bread, or that which is made of a mixture of wheat and rye together, ought to be eaten. No person troubled with costiveness should eat white bread alone, especially

* Take Submuriate of Mercury, 6 grains.
Compound Extract of Colocynth,
15 grains.

Make 4 pills for a dose.

or
Take Wine of Aloes, 2 ounces.
Tincture of Jalap, 2 drachms
Infusion of Senna, 1 ounce.

Make a cathartic draught.

† Persons inclined to apoplexy derive great benefit from cupping. This operation should never be omitted once or twice a-year. Ed.

that which is made of fine flour. The best bread for keeping the body soluble is what in some parts of England they call *meslin*. It is made of a mixture of wheat and rye, and is very agreeable to those who are accustomed to it.

Costiveness is increased by keeping the body too warm, and by every thing that promotes the perspiration; as wearing flannel, lying too long in bed, &c. Intense thought and sedentary life are likewise hurtful. All the secretions and excretions are promoted by moderate exercise without doors, and by a gay, cheerful, sprightly temper of mind.

The drink should be of an opening quality. All ardent spirits, austere and astringent wines, as port, claret, &c. ought to be avoided. Malt-liquor that is fine, and of a moderate strength, is very proper. Buttermilk, whey, and other watery liquors are proper, and may be drank in turns, as the patient's inclination directs.

Those who are troubled with costiveness, ought, if possible, to remedy it by diet, as the constant use of medicines for that purpose is attended with many inconveniencies, and often with bad consequences.* I never knew any one get into a habit of taking medicine for keeping the body open, who could leave it off. In time the custom becomes necessary, and generally ends in a total relaxation of the bowels, indigestion, loss of appetite, wasting of the strength, and death.

When the body cannot be kept open without medicine, we would recommend gentle doses of rhubarb to be taken twice or thrice a-week. This is not so near injurious to the stomach as aloes, jalap, or the other drastic purgatives so much in use. Infusions of senna and manna may likewise be taken, or half an ounce of soluble tartar dissolved in water-gruel. About the size of a nutmeg of lenitive electuary taken twice or thrice a-day generally answers the purpose very well. See *Diseases of Child-bed Women*.

WANT OF APPETITE. (*Anorexia*.)

This may proceed from a foul stomach; indigestion; the want of free air and exercise; grief, fear, anxiety, or any of the depressing passions; excessive heat; the use of strong broths, fat meats, or any thing that palls the appetite, or is hard of digestion; the immoderate use of strong liquors, tea, tobacco, opium, &c.

The patient ought, if possible, to make choice of an open dry air; to take exercise daily on horseback or in a carriage; to rise

* The learned Dr. Arbuthnot advises those who are troubled with costiveness to use animal oils, as fresh butter, cream, marrow, fat broths, especially those made of the internal parts of animals, as the liver, heart, midriff, &c. He likewise recommends the expressed oils of mild vegetables, as olives, almonds, pistachios, and the fruits themselves; all oily and mild fruits, as figs; decoctions of mealy vegetables: these lubricate the intestines; some saponaceous substances which stimulate gently, as horey, hydromel, or boiled honey and water, unrefined sugar, &c.

The doctor observes, that such lenitive substances are proper for persons of dry atrabiliar constitutions, who are subject to astriction of the belly, and the piles, and will operate when stronger medicinal substances are sometimes ineffectual; but that such lenitive diet hurts those whose bowels are weak and lax. He likewise observes, that all watery substances are lenitive, and that even common water, whey, sour milk, and butter-milk, have that effect: that new milk, especially asses' milk, stimulates still more when it sours on the stomach; and that whey turned sour will purge strongly.

betimes; and to avoid all intense thought. He should use a diet of easy digestion; and should avoid excessive heat and great fatigue.

If want of appetite proceed from errors in diet, or any other part of the patient's regimen, it ought to be changed. If nausea and retchings show that the stomach is loaded with crudities, a vomit will be of service. After this a gentle purge or two of rhubarb, or any of the bitter purging salts, may be taken. The patient ought next to use some of the stomachic bitters infused in wine. Though gentle evacuations be necessary, yet strong purges and vomits are to be avoided, as they weaken the stomach, and hurt digestion. After proper evacuations, bitter elixirs and tinctures with aromatics may be used.

Sulphuric acid is an excellent medicine in most cases of indigestion, weakness of the stomach, or want of appetite. From twenty to thirty drops of it may be taken twice or thrice a day in a glass of wine or water. It may likewise be mixed with the tincture of the bark, one drachm of the former to an ounce of the latter, and two tea-spoonsful of it taken in wine and water, as above.

The chalybeate waters, if drank in moderation, are generally of considerable service in this case. The salt water has likewise good effects; but it must not be used too freely. The waters of Harrowgate, Scarborough, Moffat, and most other spas in Britain, may be used with advantage. We would advise all who are afflicted with indigestion and want of appetite, to repair to those places of public rendezvous. The very change of air and the cheerful company, will be of service; not to mention the exercise, dissipation, amusements, &c.

A want of appetite and loathing of food is not usually an original affection, but prevails as a symptom of some other disease, such as indigestion, and is therefore, to be obviated by aromatics, bitters, bark joined with chalybeates, sulphuric acid, &c. as under that head. In spontaneous anorexy or loss of appetite, where the stomach is loaded with bile, an emetic in the evening, with some kind of stomach purgative next morning, will seldom fail to effect a cure.—See *Indigestion*.

HEART-BURN. (*Cardialgia*.)

WHAT is commonly called the *heart-burn* is not a disease of that organ, but an uneasy sensation of heat or acrimony about the pit of the stomach, which is sometimes attended with anxiety, nausea, and vomiting.

It may proceed from debility of the stomach, indigestion, bile, the abounding of an acid in the stomach, &c. Persons who are liable to this complaint ought to avoid stale liquors, acids, windy or greasy aliments, and should never use violent exercise soon after a plentiful meal. I know many persons who never fail to have the heart-burn if they ride soon after dinner, provided they have drank ale, wine, or any fermented liquor; but are never troubled with it when they have drank rum or brandy and water without any sugar or acid.

When the heart-burn proceeds from a debility of the stomach, or indigestion, the patient ought to take a dose or two of rhubarb; afterwards he may use infusions of the Peruvian bark, or any oth-

er of the stomachic bitters, in wine or brandy. Drinking a cup of camomile tea, with fifteen or twenty drops of elixir of vitriol in it, twice or thrice a day, will strengthen the stomach and promote digestion. Exercise in the open air will likewise be of use.

When bilious humours occasion the heart-burn, a tea-spoonful of the sweet spirits of nitre in a glass of water, or a cup of tea, will generally give ease. If it proceeds from the use of greasy aliments, a dram of brandy or rum may be taken.

If acidity or sourness of the stomach occasions the heart-burn, absorbents are the proper medicines. In this case an ounce of powdered chalk, half an ounce of fine sugar, and a quarter of an ounce of gum arabic, may be mixed in an English quart of water, and a tea-cupful of it taken as often as is necessary. Such as do not choose chalk, may take a tea-spoonful of prepared oyster shells, or of the powder called crabs eyes, in a glass of cinnamon or peppermint water. But the safest and best absorbent is *magnesia alba*. This not only acts as an absorbent, but likewise as a purgative; whereas chalk, and other absorbents of that kind, are apt to lie in the intestines, and occasion obstructions. This powder is not disagreeable, and may be taken in a cup of tea, or a glass of mint water. A large tea-spoonful is the usual dose; but it may be taken in a much greater quantity when there is occasion. These things are now generally made up into lozenges for the convenience of being carried in the pocket, and taken at pleasure.*

If wind be the cause of this complaint, the most proper medicines are those called carminatives; as aniseeds, juniper berries, ginger, canella alba, cardamom seeds, &c. These may either be chewed or infused in wine, brandy, or other spirits; but these ought never to be used, unless they are absolutely necessary, as they are only drams in a dry form, and very pernicious to the stomach. One of the safest medicines of this kind is the tincture made by infusing an ounce of rhubarb, and a quarter of an ounce of the lesser cardamom seeds, in an English pint of brandy. After this has digested for two or three days, it ought to be strained, and four ounces of white sugar candy added to it. It must stand to digest a second time till the sugar be dissolved. A table-spoonful of it may be taken occasionally for a dose.

I have frequently known the heart-burn cured, particularly in pregnant women, by chewing green tea. Two table-spoonfuls of what is called the milk of gum ammoniac, taken once or twice a-day, will sometimes cure the heart-burn. See *Diseases of Pregnancy*.

As pregnant women are very subject to this uneasy sensation, they should first consider, whether it proceeds from any of the causes already explained; in which case the medicines prescribed under each head will probably remove it. But if the internal sense of heat be owing to the state of pregnancy itself; if it arises from the consent between the stomach and the womb, and is not accompanied with much spitting or any acid eructations, the white of an egg, mixed with a little sugar and water, will often afford the only relief that can be expected for some time.

* The heart-burn, if very troublesome, may be almost immediately removed, by taking fifteen or twenty drops of the purified soap lees, the aqua kali puri of the shops, in a cup of linseed tea, or of milk
A. P. B.

NERVOUS DISEASES. (*Neuroses.*)

OF all diseases incident to mankind, those of the nervous kind are the most complicated and difficult to cure. A volume would not be sufficient to point out their various appearances. They imitate almost every disease; and are seldom alike in two different persons, or even the same person at different times. Proteus-like, they are continually changing shape: and upon every fresh attack, the patient thinks he feels symptoms which he never experienced before. Nor do they only affect the body; the mind likewise suffers, and is often thereby rendered extremely weak and peevish. The low spirits, timorousness, malancholy, and fickleness of temper, which generally attend nervous disorders, induce many to believe that they are entirely diseases of the mind; but this change of temper is rather a consequence, than the cause of nervous diseases.

CAUSES.—Every thing that tends to relax or weaken the body, disposes it to nervous diseases, as indolence, excessive venery, drinking too much tea, or other weak watery liquors warm, frequent bleeding, purging, vomiting, &c. Whatever hurts the digestion, or prevents the proper assimilation of the food, has likewise this effect; as long fasting, excess in eating or drinking, the use of windy, crude, or unwholesome aliments, an unfavourable posture of the body, &c.

Nervous disorders often proceed from intense application to study. Indeed, few studious persons are entirely free from them. Nor is this at all to be wondered at; intense thinking not only preys upon the spirits, but prevents the person from taking proper exercise, by which means the digestion is impaired, the nourishment prevented, the solids relaxed, and the whole mass of humours vitiated. Grief and disappointment likewise produce the same effects. I have known more nervous patients who dated the commencement of their disorders from the loss of a husband, a favourite child, or from some disappointment in life, than from any other cause. In a word, whatever weakens the body, or depresses the spirits, may occasion nervous disorders; as unwholesome air, want of sleep, great fatigue, disagreeable apprehensions, anxiety, vexation, &c.

SYMPTOMS.—We shall only mention some of the most general symptoms of these disorders, as it would be both a useless and impracticable task to enumerate the whole. They generally begin with windy inflations or distentions of the stomach and intestines; the appetite and digestion are usually bad; yet sometimes there is an uncommon craving for food, and a quick digestion. The food often turns sour on the stomach; and the patient is troubled with vomiting of clear water, tough phlegm, or a blackish-coloured liquor resembling the grounds of coffee. Excruciating pains are often felt about the navel, attended with a rumbling or murmuring noise in the bowels. The body is sometimes loose, but more commonly bound, which occasions a retention of wind and great uneasiness.

The urine is sometimes in small quantity, and at other times

very copious and quite clear. There is a great tightness of the breast, with difficulty of breathing; violent palpitations of the heart; sudden flushings of heat in various parts of the body; at other times a sense of cold, as if water were poured on them; flying pains in the arms and limbs, pains in the back and belly, resembling those occasioned by gravel; the pulse very variable, sometimes uncommonly slow, and at other times very quick; yawning, the hiccup, frequent sighing, and a sense of suffocation, as if from a ball or lump in the throat; alternate fits of crying and convulsive laughing; the sleep is unsound, and seldom refreshing; and the patient is often troubled with the nightmare.

As the disease increases, the patient is molested with vertigo, syncope, head-achs, cramps, and fixed pains in various parts of the body; the eyes are clouded, and often affected with pain and dryness; there is a noise in the ears, and often a dulness of hearing; in short, the whole animal functions are impaired. The mind is disturbed on the most trivial occasions, and is hurried into the most perverse commotions, inquietudes, terror, sadness, anger, diffidence, &c. The patient is apt to entertain wild imaginations, and extravagant fancies; the memory becomes weak, and the judgment fails.

Nothing is more characteristic of this disease than a constant dread of death. This renders those unhappy persons who labour under it peevish, fickle, impatient, and apt to run from one physician to another; which is one reason why they seldom reap any benefit from medicine, as they have not sufficient resolution to persist in any one course till it has time to produce its proper effects. They are likewise apt to imagine that they labour under diseases from which they are quite free; and are very angry if any one attempts to set them right, or laugh them out of their ridiculous notions.

REGIMEN.—Persons afflicted with nervous diseases ought never to fast long. Their food should be solid and nourishing, but of easy digestion. Fat meats and heavy sauces are hurtful. All excess should be carefully avoided. They ought never to eat more at a time than they can easily digest; and heavy suppers are to be avoided. If they feel themselves weak and faint between meals, they ought to eat a bit of bread, and drink a glass of wine. Though wine in excess enfeebles the body, and impairs the faculties of the mind, yet taken in moderation, it strengthens the stomach, and promotes digestion. Wine and water is a very proper drink at meals; but if wine sours on the stomach, or the patient is much troubled with wind, brandy and water will answer better. Every thing that is windy or hard of digestion must be avoided. All weak and warm liquors are hurtful; as tea, coffee, punch, &c. People may find a temporary relief in the use of these, but they always increase the malady, as they weaken the stomach, and hurt digestion. Above all things, drams are to be avoided. Whatever immediate ease the patient may feel from the use of ardent spirits, they are sure to aggravate the malady, and prove certain poisons at last. These cautions are the more necessary, as most nervous people are peculiarly fond of tea and ardent spirits; to the use of which many of them fall victims.

Exercise in nervous disorders is superior to all medicines. Riding on horseback is generally esteemed the best, as it gives motion to the whole body, without fatiguing it. I have known some patients, however, with whom walking agreed better, and others who were most benefitted by riding in a carriage. Every one ought to use that which he finds most beneficial. Long sea-voyages have an excellent effect; and to those who have sufficient resolution, we would by all means recommend this course. Even change of place, and the sight of new objects, by diverting the mind, have a great tendency to remove these complaints. For this reason a long journey, or a voyage, is of much more advantage than riding short journeys near home.

A cool dry air is proper, as it braces and invigorates the whole body. Few things tend more to relax and enervate than hot air, especially that which is rendered so by great fires, or stoves in small apartments. But when the stomach or bowels are weak, the body ought to be well guarded against cold, especially in winter, by wearing a thin flannel waistcoat next the skin. This will keep up an equal perspiration, and defend the alimentary canal from many impressions to which it would otherwise be subject upon every sudden change from warm to cold weather. Rubbing the body frequently with a flesh-brush, or a coarse linen-cloth, is likewise beneficial, as it promotes the circulation, perspiration, &c. Persons who have weak nerves ought to rise early, and take exercise before breakfast, as lying too long a-bed cannot fail to relax the solids. They ought likewise to be diverted, and to be kept as easy and cheerful as possible. There is not any thing which hurts the nervous system, or weakens the digestive powers, more than fear, grief, or anxiety.

MEDICINES.—Though nervous diseases are seldom radically cured, yet their symptoms may sometimes be alleviated, and the patient's life rendered at least more comfortable by proper medicines.

When the patient is costive, he ought to take a little rhubarb, or some other mild purgative, and should never suffer his body to be long bound. All strong and violent purgatives are, however, to be avoided, as aloes, jalap, &c. I have generally seen an infusion of senna and rhubarb in brandy answer very well. This may be made of any strength, and taken in such quantity as the patient finds necessary. When the digestion is bad, or the stomach relaxed and weak, the following infusion of Peruvian bark and other bitters may be used with advantage:—

Take of Peruvian bark an ounce, gentian-root, orange-peel, and coriander-seed, of each half an ounce; let these ingredients be all bruised in a mortar, and infused in a bottle of brandy or rum, for the space of five or six days. A table-spoonful of the strained liquor may be taken in half a glass of water, an hour before breakfast, dinner, and supper.

Few things tend more to strengthen the nervous system than cold bathing. This practice, if duly persisted in, will produce very extraordinary effects; but when the liver or other viscera are obstructed, or otherwise unsound, the cold bath is improper. It is

therefore to be used with very great caution. The most proper seasons for it are summer and autumn. It will be sufficient, especially for persons of a spare habit, to go into the cold bath three or four times a-week. If the patient be weakened by it, or feels chilly for a long time after coming out, it is improper.

In patients afflicted with wind, I have always observed the greatest benefit from the elixir of vitriol. It may be taken in the quantity of fifteen, twenty, or thirty drops, twice or thrice a-day, in a glass of water. This both expels wind, strengthens the stomach, and promotes digestion.

Opiates are generally extolled in these maladies; but as they only palliate the symptoms, and generally afterwards increase the disease, we would advise people to be extremely sparing in the use of them, lest habit should render them at last absolutely necessary.*

It would be an easy matter to enumerate many medicines which have been extolled for relieving nervous disorders; but whoever wishes for a thorough cure, must expect it from regimen alone: we shall therefore omit mentioning more medicines, and again recommend the strictest attention to DIET, AIR, EXERCISE, and AMUSEMENTS.

MELANCHOLY. (*Melancholia*.)

MELANCHOLY is that state of alienation or weakness of mind which renders people incapable of enjoying the pleasures, or performing the duties of life. It is a degree of insanity, and often terminates in absolute madness.

CAUSES.—It may proceed from an hereditary disposition; intense thinking, especially where the mind is long occupied about one object; violent passions or affections of the mind, as love, fear, joy, grief, pride, and such like. It may also be occasioned by excessive venery; narcotic or stupefactive poisons; a sedentary life; solitude; the suppression of customary evacuations; acute fevers; or other diseases. Violent anger will change melancholy into madness; and excessive cold, especially of the lower extremities, will force the blood into the brain, and produce all the symptoms of madness. It may likewise proceed from the use of aliment that is hard of digestion, or which cannot be easily assimilated; from a callous state of the integuments of the brain, or a dryness of the brain itself. To all which we may add gloomy and mistaken notions of religion.

SYMPTOMS.—When persons begin to be melancholy, they are dull; dejected; timorous; watchful; fond of solitude; fretful; fickle; captious and inquisitive; solicitous about trifles; sometimes niggardly, and at other times prodigal. The body is generally bound; the urine thin and in small quantity; the stomach and

* Few days have passed for a considerable time, that I have not had occasion to recommend the following tincture to some of my nervous patients, and I have seldom been disappointed with regard to its effects:—Take of compound tincture of the bark and volatile tincture of valerian each an ounce; mix them; take a tea-spoonful in a glass of wine or water three or four times a-day.

bowels inflated with wind; the complexion pale; the pulse slow and weak. The functions of the mind are also greatly perverted, insomuch that the patient often imagines himself dead, or changed into some other animal. Some have imagined their bodies were made of glass, or other brittle substances, and were afraid to move lest they should be broken to pieces. The unhappy patient, in this case, unless carefully watched, is apt to put an end to his own miserable life.

When the disease is owing to any obstruction of customary evacuations, or any bodily disorder, it is easier cured than when it proceeds from affections of the mind, or an hereditary taint. A discharge of blood from the nose, looseness, scabby eruptions, the bleeding piles, or the *menses*, sometimes carry off this disease.

REGIMEN.—The diet should consist chiefly of vegetables of a cooling and opening quality. Animal food, especially salted or smoke-dried fish or flesh, ought to be avoided. All kinds of shell-fish are bad. Aliments prepared with onions, garlic, or any thing that generates thick blood, are likewise improper. All kinds of fruits that are wholesome may be eaten with advantage. Boerhaave gives an instance of a patient who, by a long use of whey, water, and garden-fruit, recovered, after having evacuated a great quantity of black-coloured matter.

Strong liquors of every kind ought to be avoided as poison. The most proper drink is water, whey, or very small beer. Tea and coffee are improper. If honey agrees with the patient, it may be eaten freely, or his drink may be sweetened with it. Infusions of balm-leaves, penny-royal, the roots of wild valerian, or the flowers of the lime-tree, may be drank freely, either by themselves, or sweetened with honey, as the patient shall choose.

The patient ought to take as much exercise in the open air as he can bear. This helps to dissolve viscid humours, it removes obstructions, promotes perspiration, and all the other secretions. Every kind of madness is attended with a diminished perspiration; all means ought therefore to be used to promote that necessary and salutary discharge. Nothing can have a more direct tendency to increase the disease, than confining the patient to a close apartment. Were he forced to ride or walk a certain number of miles every day, it would tend greatly to alleviate his disorder; but it would have still a better effect, if he were obliged to labour a piece of ground. By digging, hoeing, planting, sowing, &c. both the body and mind would be exercised. A long journey, or a voyage, especially towards a warmer climate, with agreeable companions, has often very happy effects. A plan of this kind, with a strict attention to diet, is a much more rational method of cure, than confining the patient within doors, and plying him with medicines.

MEDICINE.—In the cure of this disease, particular attention must be paid to the mind. When the patient is in a low state, his mind ought to be soothed and diverted with variety of amusements, as entertaining stories, pastimes, music, &c. This seems to have been the method of curing melancholy among the Jews, as we learn from the story of King Saul: and, indeed, it is a very rational

one. Nothing can remove diseases of the mind so effectually as applications to the mind itself, the most efficacious of which is music. The patient's company ought likewise to consist of such persons as are agreeable to him. People in this state are apt to conceive unaccountable aversions against particular persons; and the very sight of such persons is sufficient to distract their minds, and throw them into the utmost perturbation. In all kinds of madness, it is better to soothe and calm the mind, than to ruffle it by contradiction.

When the patient is high, evacuations are necessary. In this case he must be bled, and have his body kept open by purging medicines, as manna, rhubarb, cream of tartar, or the soluble tartar. I have seen the last have very happy effects. It may be taken in the dose of half an ounce, dissolved in water-gruel, every day, for several weeks, or even for months, if necessary. More or less may be given according as it operates. Vomits have likewise a good effect; but they must be pretty strong, otherwise they will not operate.

Whatever increases the secretion of urine or promotes perspiration, has a tendency to remove this disease. Both these secretions may be promoted by the use of nitre and vinegar. Half a drachm of purified nitre may be given three or four times a-day in any manner that is most agreeable to the patient; and an ounce and a half of distilled vinegar may be daily mixed with his drink. Dr. Locker seems to think vinegar the best medicine that can be given in this disease.

Camphor and musk have likewise been used in this case with advantage. Ten or twelve grains of camphor may be rubbed in a mortar with half a drachm of nitre, and taken twice a-day, or oftener, if the stomach will bear it. If it will not sit upon the stomach in this form, it may be made into pills with gum assafoetida and Russian castor, and taken in the quantity above directed. If musk is to be administered, a scruple or twenty-five grains of it may be made into a bolus with a little honey or common syrup, and taken twice or thrice a-day. The antimonial wine is by some extolled for the cure of madness; it may be taken in a dose of forty or fifty drops twice or thrice a-day in a cup of tea. We do not mean that all these medicines should be administered at once; but whichever of them is given, must be duly persisted in, and where one fails another may be tried.

As it is very difficult to induce patients in this disease to take medicines, we shall mention a few outward applications which sometimes do good; the principal of these are issues, setons, and warm bathing. Issues may be made in any part of the body, but they generally have the best effect near the spine. The discharge from these may be greatly promoted by dressing them with the mild blistering ointment, and keeping what are commonly called the orrice peas in them. The most proper place for a seton is between the shoulder blades; and it ought to be placed upwards and downwards, or in the direction of the spine.

Madness or delirium, which proceeds from mere weakness, requires a different treatment. This must be removed by nourishing diet, exercise proportioned to the patient's strength, and cor-

dial medicines. All evacuations are carefully to be avoided. The patient may take frequently a glass of good wine, in which a little Peruvian bark has been infused.

PALSY. (*Paralysis.*)

PALSY is a loss or diminution of sense or motion, or of both, in one or more parts of the body. Of all the affections called nervous, this is the most suddenly fatal. It is more or less dangerous, according to the importance of the part affected. A palsy of the heart, lungs, or any part necessary to life, is mortal. When it affects the stomach, the intestines, or the bladder, it is highly dangerous. If the face be affected, the case is bad, as it shows that the disease proceeds from the brain. When the part affected feels cold, is insensible or wastes away, or when the judgment and memory begin to fail, there is small hope of a cure.

In some instances the disease is confined to a particular part or set of muscles; but it more usually happens that one entire part of the body from the head downwards is affected, which is known by the name of hemiplegia. If the power of motion and sense of feeling in the half of the body, taken transversely, be impaired, the complaint is denominated paraplegia.

CAUSES.—The immediate cause of palsy is any thing that prevents the regular exertion of the nervous power upon any particular muscle or part of the body. The occasional and predisposing causes are various, as drunkenness; wounds of the brain, or spinal marrow; pressure upon the brain, or nerves; very cold or damp air; the suppression of customary evacuations; sudden fear; want of exercise; or whatever greatly relaxes the system, as drinking much tea,* or coffee. The palsy may likewise proceed from wounds of the nerves themselves, from the poisonous fumes of metals or minerals, as mercury, lead, arsenic, &c.

When palsy attacks any vital part, such as the brain, heart, or lungs, it soon terminates fatally. When it arises as a consequence of apoplexy, it generally proves very difficult of cure. Paralytic affections of the lower extremities, ensuing from any injury done to the spinal marrow, by blows and other accidents, usually prove incurable.

TREATMENT.—In young persons of a full habit, the palsy must be treated in the same manner as the sanguine apoplexy. The patient must be bled, blistered, and have his body opened by sharp clysters or purgative medicines. But in old age, or when the disease proceeds from relaxation or debility, which is generally the case, a quite contrary course must be pursued. The diet must be warm and invigorating, seasoned with spicy and aromatic vegetables, as mustard, horse-radish, &c. The drink may be generous

* Many people imagine, that tea has no tendency to hurt the nerves, and that drinking the same quantity of warm water would be equally pernicious. This, however, seems to be a mistake. Many persons drink three or four cups of warm milk and water daily, without feeling any bad consequences: yet the same quantity of tea will make their hands shake for twenty-four hours. That tea affects the nerves, is likewise evident from its preventing sleep, occasioning giddiness, dimness of the sight, sickness, &c.

wine, mustard-whey, or brandy and water. Friction with the flesh brush, or a warm hand, is extremely proper, especially on the parts affected. Blistering plasters may likewise be applied to the affected parts with advantage. When this cannot be done, they may be rubbed with the volatile liniment.* One of the best external applications is electricity. The shocks or other vibrations should be received on the part affected; and they ought daily to be repeated for several weeks.

As a gentle stimulus to the parts, urtication may sometimes be used, warm bathing, the bath waters, electricity, galvanism, are all attended, in many cases, with much benefit, therefore ought not to be omitted.

When the disease affects several different parts of the body, as in hemiplegia and paraplegia, stimulants should be used both internally and externally. Those in most use are mustard seed, horse-radish, and volatile alkaline salts or spirits, and ether, as directed below.†

Vomits are very beneficial in this kind of palsy, and ought frequently to be administered. Cephalic snuff, or any thing that makes the patient sneeze, is likewise of use. Some pretend to have found great benefit from rubbing the parts affected with nettles; but this does not seem to be any way preferable to blistering. If the tongue be affected, the patient may gargle his mouth frequently with brandy and mustard; or he may hold a bit of sugar in his mouth, wet with the palsy drops, or compound spirits of lavender. The wild valerian root is a very proper medicine in this case. It may either be taken in an infusion with sage leaves, or half a drachm of it in powder may be given in a glass of wine three or four times a day. If the patient cannot use the valerian, he may take of *sal volatile oleosum*, compound spirits of lavender, and tincture of castor, each half an ounce; mix these together, and take forty or fifty drops in a glass of wine three or four times a day. A table-spoonful of mustard seed taken frequently is a very good medicine. The patient ought likewise to chew cinnamon, bark, ginger, or other warm spiceeries.

Although in every instance a dangerous disease, palsy, particularly at an advanced period of life, is sometimes removed by the occurrence of a diarrhoea or fever. A feeling of warmth, and a slight pricking pain, as if stung by ants in the parts affected, with returning sensation and motion, are favourable symptoms.

Exercise is of the utmost importance in the palsy; but the patient must be aware of cold, damp, and moist air. He ought to wear flannel next his skin; and, if possible, should remove into a warmer climate.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| * Take Compound Camphor Liniment, | Two tea-spoonful in a tea-cupful of cold water. |
| Oil of Turpentine, | 1 ounce. |
| Make a liniment. | 3 drachms. |
| or | or |
| Take ² Spirits of Camphor, | 1 ounce. |
| Tincture of Spanish Flies, | 2 drachms. |
| Solution of Subcarbonate of Ammonia, | $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce. |
| † Take White Mustard Seed, | Take White Mustard Seed bruised, |
| | Horse-radish, of each, |
| | Orange Peel, |
| | Pump Water, |
| | 2 ounces. |
| | $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce. |
| | 2 pints. |
| | Make a decoction, and strain, of which a tea-cupful may be taken three times a-day; adding occasionally 20 drops of the Tincture of Valerian. |

OF THE EPILEPSY, OR FALLING SICKNESS.

THE epilepsy is a sudden deprivation of all the senses wherein the patient falls suddenly down, and is affected with violent convulsive motions. Children, especially those who are delicately brought up, are most subject to it. It more frequently attacks men than women, and is very difficult to cure. When the epilepsy attacks children, there is reason to hope it may go off about the time of puberty. When it attacks any person after twenty years of age, the cure is difficult; but when after forty, a cure is hardly to be expected. If the fit continues only for a short space, and returns seldom, there is reason to hope; but if it continues long, and returns frequently, the prospect is bad. It is a very unfavourable symptom when the patient is seized with the fits in his sleep.

The returns of epilepsy are periodical, and its paroxysms commence more frequently in the night than in the day, being somewhat connected with sleep. It is one of those diseases that is frequently counterfeited by impostors to excite charity. It is occasionally combined with mania: and is properly distinguished into sympathic and idiopathic; being considered as sympathic when arising as an affection of some other parts of the body, as acidity in the stomach, worms, teething, &c. and idiopathic, when it is a primary disease,* neither dependent on, nor proceeding from any other.

CAUSES.—The epilepsy is sometimes hereditary. It may likewise proceed from blows, bruises, or wounds on the head; a collection of water, blood, or serous humours in the brain; a polypus; tumours or concretions within the skull; excessive drinking; intense study; excess of venery; worms; teething; suppression of customary evacuations; too great emptiness or repletion; violent passions or affections of the mind, as fear, joy, &c.; hysteric affections; contagion received into the body, as the infection of the small-pox, measles, &c.

SYMPTOMS.—An epileptic fit is generally preceded by unusual weariness; pain of the head, dullness, giddiness, noise in the ears, dimness of the sight, palpitation of the heart, disturbed sleep, difficult breathing, the bowels are inflated with wind, the urine is in great quantity, but thin; the complexion is pale, the extremities are cold, and the patient often feels, as it were, a stream of cold air ascending towards his head.

In the fit, the patient generally makes an unusual noise; his thumbs are drawn in towards the palms of his hands, his eyes are distorted, he starts, and foams at the mouth, his extremities are bent or twisted various ways, he often discharges his seed, urine, and feces involuntary, and is quite destitute of all sense and reason. After the fit is over, his senses gradually return, and he complains of a kind of stupor, weariness, and pain of his head; but has no remembrance of what happened to him during the fit.

* We are informed by Dr. Parry, in his *Elements of Pathology and Therapeutics*, that whatever may be the primary cause of epilepsy, it usually depends immediately on excessive impetus of blood in the vessels of the brain. *Ed.*

The fits are sometimes excited by violent affections of the mind, a debauch of liquor, excessive heat, cold, or the like.

This disease, from the difficulty of investigating its causes, and its strange symptoms, was formerly attributed to the wrath of the gods, or the agency of evil spirits. In modern times, it has often, by the vulgar, been imputed to witchcraft and fascination. It depends, however, as much upon natural causes as any other malady; and its cure may often be effected by persisting in the use of proper means.

REGIMEN.—Epileptic patients ought, if possible, to breathe a pure and free air. Their diet should be light, but nourishing. They ought to drink nothing strong, to avoid swine's flesh, water-fowl, and likewise all windy and oily vegetables, as cabbage, nuts, &c. They ought to keep themselves cheerful, carefully guarding against all violent passions, as anger, fear, excessive joy, and the like. Exercise is likewise of great use; but the patient must be careful to avoid all extremes either of heat or cold, all dangerous situations, as standing upon precipices, riding, deep waters, and such like.

MEDICINE.—The intentions of cure must vary according to the cause of the disease. If the patient be of a sanguine temperament, and there be reason to fear an obstruction in the brain, bleeding and other evacuations will be necessary. When the disease is occasioned by the stoppage of customary evacuations, these, if possible, must be restored; if this cannot be done, others may be substituted in their place. Issues or setons in this case have often a very good effect. When there is reason to believe that the disease proceeds from worms, proper medicines must be used to kill, or carry off these vermin. When the disease proceeds from teething, the body should be kept open by emollient clysters, the feet frequently bathed in warm water, and, if the fits prove obstinate, a blistering-plaster may be put between the shoulders. The same method is to be followed, when epileptic fits precede the eruption of the small-pox or measles, &c.

When the disease is hereditary, or proceeds from a wrong formation of the brain, a cure is not to be expected. When it is owing to a debility, or too great an irritability of the nervous system, such medicines as tend to brace and strengthen the nerves may be used, as the Peruvian bark, and steel, &c.

As a tonic, the cinchona bark* has been much employed in the cure of this disease. It is best, however, adapted to those epilepsies which recur at certain periods, and which are without plethora; in which cases, if given in a considerable quantity before the expected recurrence of the fit, it will most likely prove serviceable; and when taken for any length of time, it may be combined with valerian, gentian, &c. as in some of the forms below.

Metallic tonics have been found more powerful than the vegetable ones, and are therefore more generally employed. Among

* Take Decoction of Bark, 10 drachms. Valerian, ½ drachm.
Tincture of Bark, 2 drachms. Mix for a draught, to be taken three times
Tincture of Ammoniated a-day.

these the oxyde of zinc* has of late been highly extolled for the cure of the epilepsy. Though this medicine will not be found to answer the expectations which have been raised concerning it, yet in obstinate epileptic cases it deserves a trial. The dose is from one to three or four grains, which may be taken either in pills or a bolus, as the patient inclines. The best method is to begin with a single grain four or five times a-day, and gradually to increase the dose as far as the patient can bear it. I have often known this medicine, when duly persisted in, prove beneficial. Sulphate and carbonate of iron; the ammoniated iron; ammoniated copper† of the Edinburgh pharmacopœa (in small doses, increasing it gradually to as much as the stomach will bear.) The powder and other preparations of tin, have all been used in the cure of epilepsy, but their effects appear rather doubtful.

Musk‡ has sometimes been found to succeed in epilepsy; ten or twelve grains of which, with the same quantity of factitious cinna-
bar, may be made up into a bolus, and taken every night and morning.

The nitrate of silver,§ in the cure of epilepsy, has been found to be a valuable medicine, even where the disease has been of many years' standing, and had resisted the powers of others. It is advised to begin with a quarter of a grain three times a-day (for an adult) gradually increasing it afterwards to one grain, or one and a half, in the form of a pill. The oil of turpentine has been used in some cases of epilepsy with manifest success, as well as in other spasmodic diseases. The dose should be considerable to produce any effect, e. g. an ounce for a delicate female; an ounce and a half for a robust female, or small man; and about two ounces for a robust man. It is best exhibited in milk; and the fittest time for taking it will be early in the morning, upon an empty stomach. In some of the worst cases of epilepsy, in which the fits were long and violent; as well as frequent throughout the course of the day, and where the disease has been of long standing, electricity has been found to render them weaker, and to reduce their number very materially in a short space of time. When other means fail to produce the desired effect, galvanism may be tried.

Convulsion fits proceed from the same causes, and must be treated in the same manner as the epilepsy.

ST. VITUS'S DANCE. (*Chorea Sancti Viti.*)

* THE disease termed Chorea, or St. Vitus's Dance, generally attacks young people from the eighth year of their age till the

* Take Oxyde of Zinc.
Compound Powder of Cin-
namon, 15 grains.
Bark in Powder, 1 drachm.
Mix and divide into 12 papers, of which
take one three times a-day.

† Take Ammoniated Copper, 1 grain.
Confection of Orange Peel, 10 grs.
Make a bolus, to be taken twice a-day.

‡ Take Musk.
Castor, of each, 10 grains.

Opium, ½ grain.
Confection of Roses, enough.
Make a bolus, to be taken every 6 hours.

§ Take Nitrate of Silver, 3 grains.
Dissolve it in a few drops of distilled
water, then add crumbs of bread, a suffi-
ciency to form the mass, to be divided
into 20 pills, of which one or two may
be taken two or three times a-day.

O

time of puberty; though it has been sometimes found to occur at a more advanced period of life. Females are more liable to it than males. The first symptom of this disease is generally a slight lameness of one leg, which the patient drags a little, and seems to have lost the power of duly regulating its action. The arms next become affected, and are thrown into various contortions, which deprive persons affected with this disease of the power of feeding themselves, and their awkward gesticulations in attempting to bring articles of food towards their mouth appear ridiculous. One side of the body is in general more affected than the other. The tongue participates of the general disease of the system, so as to render articulation nearly unintelligible. If the disease continue long, it materially injures the constitution, sleep becomes disturbed or is in great measure prevented, the mental faculties are impaired, and revert to childishness; pain is often felt in the stomach, the appetite for food is extremely irregular, being occasionally ravenous, the countenance appears pale and languid, and the body and limbs are much emaciated.

The feebleness and debility caused by this disease seems to have influenced the routine of practice here pursued in the treatment of it. The remedies generally recommended are accordingly of the tonic class, such as Peruvian-bark, steel, bitters, preparations of zinc and copper, cold bathing, and electricity. Notwithstanding the administration of these remedies, chorea has generally proved a tedious and untractable disease, continuing to harass the patient for months and even years, not unfrequently occasioning permanent injury to the faculties of the mind as well as the powers of the body.

DR. JAMES HAMILTON of Edinburgh in his late valuable publication on "*The utility and administration of purgative medicines*," has promulgated so just a view of the nature and origin of the complaint now under consideration, accompanied with a mode of cure so judicious and successful, that it becomes a duty to diffuse a knowledge of his opinions and practice as extensively as possible.

Respecting the plan of treating this disease which has hitherto prevailed, the Doctor observes, "It is melancholy to reflect that months and years, the most valuable in respect of after-life, should glide on, while an effectual check is given to the improvement of the mind, the cultivation of useful learning, or the acquisition of necessary arts; with the hazard of permanent fatuity, to a certain extent, or of a grotesque appearance, from the unconquerable remains of irregular motions being imposed on the young sufferers for life. To these certain consequences of protracted chorea, I will add, the danger that attends it; I have no doubt, but it must have, on some occasions, proved fatal."

The remedies which that enlightened practitioner has found eminently successful in the cure of this disease, consist of active purgatives. From three to five grains of calomel combined with ten or fifteen of jalap; or a sufficient quantity of the aloetic pill, occasionally interposing a proper dose of the tartarized infusion of senna, are so administered as to produce full purging daily, which is to be kept up till the progress of the disease is found to be arrested.

The emaciation and apparent debility of the subjects of this disease, and the unfounded alarms of their friends lest these symptoms should be increased by evacuations, are apt to shake the resolution of the practitioner, and prevent him from following out this practice to a due extent. But the diminution of the involuntary motions, the general appearance of returning health visible in the countenance, and the regularity of the appetite for food, are the circumstances that should regulate his conduct; and their presence ought to encourage him to proceed notwithstanding the weakness of the patient. The quantity of *fœces* discharged during the administration of these medicines is sometimes so enormous as to exceed belief; and this circumstance affords grounds to suppose, either that their retention, or the torpor and inactivity of the bowels, is a chief source of this complaint. The evacuations from the bowels ought to be daily and attentively inspected, and the return of their natural appearance and quantity will be found to indicate and keep pace with the renovation of health.

Dr. H. adds, "Since I have employed purgatives in chorea, I have been disappointed in effecting a cure in one case only." To this statement I can add, my testimony of the complete success of this mode of treatment in three instances in which I have made trial of it.

When the complaint is subdued, the complete restoration of health and vigour is best effected by the use of a light and nutritious diet, with moderate quantity of wine, due exercise in the open air, and bathing in the sea if convenient. A powder composed of five grains of the rust of iron, together with ten of rhubarb, and an equal quantity of fine sugar, may also be taken every morning for some weeks with advantage.' A. P. B.

Some people, particularly pregnant women, are very subject to spasmodic contractions of the joints, coming on periodically, and attended with very violent pain; for the removal of these, anodyne frictions appear to be the best remedy.

THE HICCUP.

THE hiccup is a spasmodic or convulsive affection of the stomach and midriff, arising from any cause that irritates their nervous fibres.

It may proceed from excess in eating or drinking; from a hurt in the stomach; poisons; wind; inflammations or scirrhus tumours of the stomach, intestines, bladder, midriff, or the rest of the viscera. In gangrenes, acute and malignant fevers, a hiccup is often the forerunner of death.

When the hiccup proceeds from the use of aliment that is flatulent or hard of digestion, a draught of generous wine, or a dram of any spirituous liquor will generally remove it. If poison be the cause, plenty of oil and milk must be drank, as has been formerly recommended. When it proceeds from an inflammation of the stomach, &c. it is very dangerous. In this case the cooling regimen ought to be strictly observed. The patient must be bled, and take frequently a few drops of the sweet spirits of nitre in a cup of wine whey. His stomach should likewise be fomented with

cloths dipped in warm water, or have bladders filled with warm milk and water applied to it.

When the hiccup proceeds from a gangrene or mortification, the Peruvian bark, with other antiseptics, are the only medicines which have a chance to succeed. When it is a primary disease, and proceeds from a foul stomach, loaded either with a pituitous or a bilious humour, a gentle vomit and purge, if the patient be able to bear them, will be of service. If it arises from flatulencies, the carminative medicines directed for the heartburn must be used.

When the hiccup proves very obstinate, recourse must be had to the most powerful aromatic and antispasmodic medicines; the principal of these is musk; fifteen or twenty grains of which may be made into a bolus, and repeated occasionally. Opiates are likewise of service; but they must be used with caution. A bit of sugar dipped in compound spirits of lavender, or the volatile aromatic tincture, may be taken frequently. External applications are sometimes also beneficial; as the stomach plaster, or a cataplasm of the Venice treacle of the Edinburgh or London dispensatory, applied to the region of the stomach.

I lately attended a patient who had almost a constant hiccup for above nine weeks. It was frequently stopped by the use of musk, opium, wine, and other cordial and antispasmodic medicines, but always returned. Nothing, however, gave the patient so much ease as brisk small beer. By drinking freely of this the hiccup was often kept off for several days, which was more than could be done by the most powerful medicines. The patient was at length seized with a vomiting of blood, which soon put an end to his life. Upon opening the body a large scirrhus tumour was found near the pylorus, or right orifice of the stomach.

The hiccup may be removed by taking vinegar; or by a few drops of sulphuric acid taken in water.*

CRAMP OF THE STOMACH.

THIS disease often seizes people suddenly, is very dangerous, and requires immediate assistance. It is most incident to persons in the decline of life, especially the nervous, gouty, hysteric, and hypochondriac.

If the patient has any inclination to vomit he ought to take some draughts of warm water, or weak camomile tea, to cleanse his stomach. After this, if he has been costive, a laxative clyster may be given. He ought then to take laudanum. The best way of administering it is in a clyster. Sixty or seventy drops of liquid laudanum may be given in a clyster of warm water. This is much more certain than laudanum given by the mouth, which is often vomited, and in some cases increases the pain and spasms in the stomach.

If the pain and cramps return with great violence, after the effects of the anodyne clyster are over, another with an equal or larger quantity of opium, may be given: and every four or five

* I have frequently seen a very troublesome hiccup put a stop to by swallowing quickly a glass of the strong soda water in a state of brisk effervescence.—The common hiccup may in general be removed by taking a pinch of snuff, or any thing that will cause sneezing.

hours a bolus, with ten or twelve grains of musk, and half a drachm of the Venice treacle. In the mean time the stomach ought to be fomented with cloths dipped in warm water, or bladders filled with warm milk and water should be constantly applied to it. I have often seen these produce the most happy effects. The anodyne balsam may also be rubbed on the part affected; and antihysterical plaster worn upon it for some time after the cramps are removed, to prevent their return.

In very violent and lasting pains of the stomach, some blood ought to be let, unless the weakness of the patient forbids it. When the pain or cramps proceed from the suppression of the *menses*, bleeding is of use. If they be owing to the gout, recourse must be had to spirits, or some of the warm cordial waters. Blistering plasters ought likewise, in this case, to be applied to the ankles. I have often seen violent cramps and pains of the stomach removed by covering it with a large plaster of treacle of the London Dispensatory.

SARDONIC LAUGH. (*Risus Sardonicus*.)

This disease is principally characterised by a fit of laughter, arising without any evident cause, and often continuing in a violent degree for three or four nights, so far as to prevent the patient from sleeping. By its duration in this way great debility is produced, accompanied with frequency of the pulse, and other febrile symptoms; at which time it either proves fatal by its violence or ceases spontaneously.

For the removal of this disease, opium in large doses, musk, castor, asafœtida, camphor, ether, and other antispasmodics have usually been employed without effect; so that, indeed, we are hitherto unacquainted with any remedy that will prove effectual; the spontaneous cessation, therefore, of the fit is more to be trusted to than assistance from medicine.

THE NIGHT-MARE. (*Incubus*.)

In this disease the patient, in time of sleep, imagines he feels an uncommon oppression of weight about his breast or stomach, which he can by no means shake off. He groans, and sometimes cries out, though oftener he attempts to speak in vain. Sometimes he imagines himself engaged with an enemy, and in danger of being killed, attempts to run away, but finds he cannot. Sometimes he fancies himself in a house that is on fire, or that he is in danger of being drowned in a river. He often thinks he is falling over a precipice, and the dread of being dashed to pieces suddenly awakes him.

This disorder has been supposed to proceed from too much blood; from a stagnation of blood in the brain, lungs, &c. But it is rather a nervous affection, and arises chiefly from indigestion. Hence we find that persons of weak nerves, who lead a sedentary life, and live full, are most commonly afflicted with the night-mare. Nothing tends more to produce it than heavy suppers, especially when eaten late, or the patient goes to bed soon after. Wind is likewise a very frequent cause of this disease; for which reason,

those who are afflicted with it ought to avoid all flatulent food. Deep thought, anxiety, or any thing that oppresses the mind ought also to be avoided. Sailors are very liable to this disease; hypochondriacs and pregnant women are also its victims, but males more frequently than females.

The night-mare is frequently occasioned by eating a full meal of animal food, and drinking freely of fermented liquor, after long fasting and bodily fatigue, by which the whole system is debilitated, and the digestive faculties consequently impaired. When in this state, the safest thing a person can take is tea with bread and butter, which will be found to alleviate fatigue much more completely than wine.

As persons afflicted with the night-mare generally moan, or make some noise in the fit, they should be waked, or spoken to by such as hear them, as the uneasiness generally goes off as soon as the patient is awake. Dr. Whyte says, he generally found a dram of brandy, taken at bed-time, prevent this disease. That, however, is a bad custom, and in time loses its effect. We would rather have the patient depend upon the use of food of easy digestion, cheerfulness, exercise through the day, and a light supper taken early, than to accustom himself to drams. A glass of peppermint water will often promote digestion as much as a glass of brandy, and is much safer. After a person of weak digestion, however, has eaten flatulent food, a dram may be necessary; in this case we would recommend it as the most proper medicine.

When the nightmare goes off, as frequently is the case, without the patient awaking, strange aberrations of mind are occasionally produced, which give origin to reputed visions and supernatural visitations, even among people of superior intellectual cultivation. The degree of consciousness, during a paroxysm of nightmare, is so much greater than ever happens in a dream, that the person who has had a vision of this kind cannot easily bring himself to acknowledge the deceit unless he awakes, or is aroused from his paroxysm, and discovers some incongruity in respect to time or place, which proves the transaction to be an illusion.

Persons who are young, and full of blood, if troubled with the night-mare, ought to take a purge frequently, use a spare diet, and exercise in the open air. The carbonate of soda, mixed with ale or porter, form an agreeable beverage for those liable to dyspeptic symptoms and incubus.

SWOONING. (*Syncope*.)

PEOPLE of weak nerves or delicate constitutions are liable to swoonings or fainting fits. These, indeed, are seldom dangerous when duly attended to; but when wholly neglected, or improperly treated, they often prove hurtful, and sometimes fatal.

The general causes of swoonings are, sudden transitions from cold to heat; breathing air that is deprived of its proper spring or elasticity; great fatigue; excessive weakness; loss of blood; long fasting; fear, grief, and other violent passions or affections of the mind.

It is well known, that persons who have been long exposed to

SWOONING.

cold often faint, or fall into a swoon, upon coming into the house, especially if they drink hot liquor, or sit near a large fire. This might easily be prevented by people taking care not to go into a warm room immediately after they have been exposed to the cold air, to approach the fire gradually, and not to eat or drink any thing hot, till the body has been gradually brought into a warm temperature.

When any one, in consequence of neglecting these precautions, falls into a swoon, he ought immediately to be removed to a cooler apartment, to have ligatures applied above his knees and elbows, and to have his hands and face sprinkled with vinegar or cold water. He should likewise be made to smell to vinegar, and should have a spoonful or two of water, if he can swallow, with about a third part of vinegar mixed with it, poured into his mouth. If these should not remove the complaint, it may be necessary to bleed the patient, and afterwards to give him a clyster.

As air that is breathed frequently loses its elasticity or spring, it is no wonder if persons who respire in it often fall into a swoon or fainting-fit. They are in this case deprived of the very principle of life. Hence it is that fainting fits are so frequent in all crowded assemblies, especially in hot seasons. Such fits, however, must be considered as a kind of temporary death; and, to the weak and delicate, they sometimes prove fatal. They ought therefore with the utmost care to be guarded against. The method of doing this is obvious. Let assembly-rooms, and all other places of public resort, be large and well ventilated; and let the weak and delicate avoid such places, particularly in warm seasons.

A person who faints in such a situation ought immediately to be carried into the open air; his temples should be rubbed with strong vinegar or brandy, and volatile spirits or salts held to his nose. He should be laid upon his back with his head low, and have a little wine, or some other cordial, as soon as he is able to swallow it, poured into his mouth. If the person has been subject to hysteric fits, castor or asafœtida should be applied to the nose, or burnt feathers, horn, or leather, &c.

When fainting-fits proceed from mere weakness or exhaustion, which is often the case after great fatigue, long fasting, loss of blood, or the like, the patient must be supported with generous cordials, as jellies, wine, spirituous liquors, and such like. These, however, must be given at first in very small quantities, and increased gradually as the patient is able to bear them. He ought to be allowed to lie quite still and easy upon his back, with his head low, and should have fresh air admitted into his chamber. His food should consist of nourishing broths, sago-gruel with wine, new milk, and other things of a light and cordial nature. These things are to be given out of the fit. All that can be done in the fit is, to let him smell to a bottle of Hungary-water, *eau-de-luce*, or spirits of hartshorn, and to rub his temples with warm brandy, or to lay a compress dipped in it to the pit of the stomach.

In fainting-fits that proceed from fear, grief, or other violent passions or affections of the mind, the patient must be very cautiously managed. He should be suffered to remain at rest, and only made to smell to some vinegar. After he is come to himself,

he may drink freely of warm lemonade, or balm-tea, with some orange or lemon peel in it. It will likewise be proper, if the fainting-fits have been long and severe, to cleanse the bowels by throwing in an emollient clyster.

It is common in fainting-fits, from whatever cause they proceed, to bleed the patient. This practice may be very proper in strong persons of a full habit; but in those who are weak and delicate, or subject to nervous disorders, it is dangerous. The proper method with such people is, to expose them to the free air, and to use cordial and stimulating medicines, as volatile salts, Hungary-water, spirits of lavender, tincture of castor, and the like.

FLATULENCIES, OR WIND. (*Flatulentia*.)

ALL nervous patients, without exception, are afflicted with wind and flatulencies in the stomach and bowels, which arise chiefly from the want of tone or vigour in these organs. Crude flatulent aliment, as green peas, beans, coleworts, cabbages, and such like may increase this complaint; but strong and healthy people are seldom troubled with wind, unless they either overload their stomachs, or drink liquors that are in a fermenting state, and consequently full of elastic air. While therefore the matter of flatulence proceeds from our aliments, the cause which makes air separate from them in such quantity as to occasion complaints, is almost always a fault of the bowels themselves, which are too weak either to prevent the production of elastic air, or to expel it after it is produced.

To relieve this complaint, such medicines ought to be used as have a tendency to expel wind, and by strengthening the alimentary canal, to prevent its being produced there.*

The list of medicines for expelling wind is very numerous; they often, however, disappoint the expectations of both the physician and his patient. The most celebrated among the class of carminatives are juniper-berries; the roots of ginger and zedoary; the seeds of anise, caraway, and coriander; gum asafœtida and opium; the warm waters, tinctures, and spirits, as the aromatic water, the tincture of woodsoot, the volatile aromatic spirit, æther, &c.

Dr. Whyte says, he found no medicine more efficacious in expelling wind than æther and laudanum. He generally gave the laudanum in a mixture with peppermint-water and tincture of castor, or sweet spirits of nitre. Sometimes, in place of this, he gave opium in pills with asafœtida. He observes that the good effects of opiates are equally conspicuous, whether the flatulence be contained in the stomach or intestines; whereas those warm medicines, commonly called *carminatives*, do not often give immediate relief, except when the wind is in the stomach.

With regard to æther, the Doctor says, he has often seen very good effects from it in flatulent complaints, where other medicines failed. The dose is a tea-spoonful mixed with two table-spoonful

* Many nervous people find great benefit from eating a dry biscuit, especially when the stomach is empty. I look upon this as one of the best carminative medicines; and would recommend it in all complaints of the stomach, arising from flatulence, indigestion, &c.

of water.* In gouty cases, he observes that æther, a glass of French brandy, or of the aromatic water, or ginger, either taken in substance or infused in boiling water, are among the best medicines for expelling wind.

When the case of flatulent patients is such as makes it improper to give them warm medicines inwardly, the Doctor recommends external applications, which are sometimes of advantage. Equal parts of the anti-hysteric and stomach-plaster may be spread upon a piece of soft leather, of such size as to cover the greater part of the belly. This should be kept on for a considerable time, provided the patient be able to bear it; if it should give great uneasiness, it may be taken off, and the following liniment used in its stead:—

Take of Bate's anodyne balsam an ounce; of the expressed oil of mace half an ounce; oil of mint two drachms. Let these ingredients be mixed together, and about a table-spoonful well rubbed on the parts at bed-time.

For strengthening the stomach and bowels, and consequently for lessening the production of flatulence, the Doctor recommends the Peruvian bark, bitters, chalybeates, and exercise. In flatulent cases, he thinks some nutmeg or ginger should be added to the tincture of the bark and bitters, and that the aromatic powder should be joined with the filings of iron.

When windy complaints are attended with costiveness, which is often the case, few things will be found to answer better than four or five of the following pills taken every night at bedtime:—

Take of asafetida two drachms; succotrine aloes, salt of iron, and powdered ginger, of each one drachm; and as much of the *elixir proprietatis* as will be sufficient to form them into pills.

On the other hand, when the body is too open, twelve or fifteen grains of rhubarb, with half a drachm, or two scruples of the Japonic confection, given every other evening, will have very good effect.

In those flatulent complaints which come on about the time the menses cease, repeated small bleedings often give more relief than any other remedy.

With regard to diet, the Doctor observes, that tea, and likewise all flatulent aliments, are to be avoided; and that for drink, water with a little brandy or rum is not only preferable to malt liquor, but in most cases also to wine.

As Dr. Whyte has paid great attention to this subject, and as his sentiments upon it in a great measure agree with mine, I have taken the liberty to adopt them; and shall only add to his observations, that exercise is in my opinion superior to all medicines, both for preventing the production, and likewise for expelling of flatulencies. These effects, however, are not to be expected from sauntering about, or lolling in a carriage; but from labour, or such active amusements as give exercise to every part of the body.

LOW SPIRITS. (*Hypochondriasis.*)

This disease, known also by the name of the vapours, is a cer-

* Though the patient may begin with this quantity, it will be necessary to increase the dose gradually as the stomach can bear it. Æther is now given in considerably greater doses than it was in Dr. Whyte's time.

tain state of the mind accompanied with dyspepsy, in which the greatest evils are apprehended upon the slightest grounds, and the worst consequences imagined from any unusual feeling even of a trifling kind; and as regards these apprehensions and feelings, there is always the most obstinate belief and persuasion.

All who have weak nerves are subject to low spirits in a greater or less degree. Generous diet, the cold bath, exercise, and amusements, are the most likely means to remove this complaint. It is greatly increased by solitude and indulging gloomy ideas, but may often be relieved by cheerful company and sprightly amusements.

When low spirits are owing to a weak relaxed state of the stomach and bowels, an infusion of the Peruvian bark with cinnamon or nutmeg will be proper. Steel joined with aromatics may likewise in this case be used with advantage; but riding, and a proper diet, are most to be depended on.—When they arise from a foulness of the stomach and intestines, or obstructions in the hypochondriac viscera, aloetic purges will be proper. I have sometimes known the Harrowgate or Tunbridge water of service in these cases.—When the disease proceeds from a suppression of the menstrual or of the hæmorrhoidal flux, these evacuations may either be restored, or some other substituted in their place, as issues, setons, or the like. Dr. Whyte observes, that nothing has such sudden good effects in this case as bleeding.—When it has been brought on by long-continued grief, anxiety, or other distress of mind, agreeable company, variety of amusements, and change of place, especially travelling into foreign countries, will afford the most certain relief.

Persons afflicted with low spirits should avoid all kinds of excess, especially of venery and strong liquors. The moderate use of wine and other strong liquors is by no means hurtful; but when taken to excess, they weaken the stomach, vitiate the humours, and depress the spirits. This caution is the more necessary, as the unfortunate and melancholy often fly to strong liquors for relief, by which means they never fail to precipitate their own destruction.

Besides the usual symptoms attendant on this disease, hypochondriacs are apt to be troubled with pain in the head and stomach; to relieve which it may be proper to give such medicines as æther, musk,* and opium, either separately or conjointly.

HYSTERIC AFFECTIONS.

These likewise belong to the numerous tribe of nervous diseases, which may justly be reckoned the reproach of medicine. Women of a delicate habit, whose stomach and intestines are relaxed, and whose nervous system is extremely sensible, are most subject to hysteric complaints. In such persons an hysteric fit, as it is call-

* Take Musæ mixture, 1½ ounce.
Spirit of Sulphuric Ether, 30 drps.
Make a draught to be taken three times
a-day.

or
Take Spirit of Caraway, ½ ounce.
Camphor Mixture. 5 ounces.

Spirit of Sulphuric Ether, 1 drachm.
Tincture of Opium,
— of Lavender,

of each, 30 drops.
Make a mixture; two table-spoonsful
three or four times a-day.

ed, may be brought on by an irritation of the nerves of the stomach or intestines, by wind, acrid humour, or the like. A sudden suppression of the *menses* often gives rise to hysteric fits. They may likewise be excited by violent passions or affections of the mind, as fear, grief, anger, or great disappointments.—It appears under such various shapes, imitates so many other diseases, and is attended with such a variety of symptoms, that it is difficult to give a just character or definition of it; and it is only by taking the aggregate of its appearances that a proper idea can be conveyed of it to others.

Sometimes the hysteric fit resembles a swoon or fainting fit, during which the patient lies as in a sleep, only the breathing is so low as scarcely to be perceived. At other times the patient is affected with catchings and strong convulsions. The symptoms which precede hysteric fits are likewise various in different persons. Sometimes the fits come on with coldness of the extremities, yawning and stretching, lowness of spirits, oppression and anxiety. At other times the approach of the fit is foretold by a feeling, as if there were a ball at the lower part of the belly, which gradually rises towards the stomach, where it occasions inflation, sickness, and sometimes vomiting; afterwards it rises into the throat, and occasions a degree of suffocation, to which quick breathing, palpitation of the heart, giddiness of the head, dimness of the sight, loss of hearing, with convulsive motions of the extremities and other parts of the body, succeed. The hysteric paroxysm is often introduced by an immoderate fit of laughter, and sometimes it goes off by crying. Indeed there is not much difference between the laughing and crying of an hysteric lady.

Our aim in the treatment of this disease must be to shorten the fit or paroxysm when present, and to prevent its return. The longer fits continue, and the more frequently they return, the disease becomes the more obstinate. Their strength is increased by habit, and they induce so great a relaxation of the system, that it is with difficulty removed.

It is customary, during the hysteric fit or paroxysm, to bleed the patient. In strong persons of a plethoric habit, and where the pulse is full, this may be proper; but in weak and delicate constitutions, or where the disease has been of long standing, or arises from inanition, it is not safe. The best course in such cases is to rouse the patient by strong smells, as burnt feathers, asafœtida, or spirits of hartshorn, held to the nose. Hot bricks may also be applied to the soles of the feet, and the legs, arms, and belly, may be strongly rubbed with a warm cloth. But the best application is to put the feet and legs into warm water. This is peculiarly proper when the fits precede the flow of the *menses*. In case of costiveness, a laxative clyster with asafœtida will be proper: and as soon as the patient can swallow, two table-spoonsful of a solution of asafœtida, or of some cordial julep, may be given frequently.*

* When hysteric fits are occasioned by sympathy, they may be cured by exciting an opposite passion. This is said to have been the case of a whole school of young ladies in Holland, who were all cured by being told, that the first who was seized should be burned to death. But this method of cure, to my knowledge, will not always succeed

The radical cure of this disorder will be best attempted at a time when the patient is most free from the fits. It will be greatly promoted by a proper attention to diet. A milk and vegetable diet, when duly persisted in, will often perform a cure. If, however, the patient has been accustomed to a more generous diet, it will not be safe to leave it off all at once, but by degrees. The most proper drink is water with a small quantity of spirits. A cool dry air is the best. Cold bathing, and every thing that braces the nerves, and invigorates the system, is beneficial; but lying too long in bed, or whatever relaxes the body, is hurtful. It is of the greatest importance to have the mind kept constantly easy and cheerful, and, if possible, to have it always engaged in some agreeable and interesting pursuit.

The proper medicines are those which strengthen the alimentary canal and the whole nervous system, as the preparations of iron, the Peruvian bark and other bitters. Twenty drops of the elixir of vitriol, in a cup of the infusion of the bark, may be taken twice or thrice a-day. The bark and iron may likewise be taken in substance, provided the stomach can bear them; but they are generally given in too small doses to have any effect. The chalybeate waters generally prove beneficial in this disorder.

If the stomach is loaded with phlegm, vomits will be of use; but they should not be too strong, nor frequently repeated, as they tend to relax and weaken the stomach. If there is a tendency to costiveness, it must be removed either by diet, or by taking an opening pill as often as it shall be found necessary.

To lessen the irritability of the system, antispasmodic medicines will be of use. The best antispasmodic medicines are musk, opium, and castor. When opium disagrees with the stomach, it may either be applied externally, or given in clysters. It is often successful in removing those periodical head-achs to which hysteric and hypochondriac patients are subject. Castor has in some cases been found to procure sleep where opium failed; for which reason Dr. Whyte advises, that they should be joined together. He likewise recommends the anti-hysteric plaster to be applied to the *abdomen*.*

Hysteric women are often afflicted with cramps in various parts of the body, which are most apt to seize them in bed, or when asleep. The most efficacious medicines in this case are opium, blistering-plasters, and warm bathing or fomentations. When the cramp or spasm is very violent, opium is the remedy most to be depended on. In milder cases, immersing the feet and legs in warm water, or applying a blistering-plaster to the part affected, will often be sufficient to remove the complaint. In patients whose nerves are uncommonly delicate and sensible, it will be better to omit the blistering-plaster, and to attempt the cure by opiates, musk, camphor, and the warm bath.

Cramps are often prevented or cured by compression. Thus

I would therefore advise, that young ladies who are subject to hysteric fits, should not be sent to boarding-schools, as the disease may be caught by imitation. I have known madness itself brought on by sympathy.

* Though antispasmodics and anodynes are universally recommended in this disease, yet all the extraordinary cures that I ever knew in hysteric cases, were performed by means of tonic and corroborating medicines.

cramps in the legs are prevented, and sometimes removed, by tight bandages; and when convulsions arise from a flatulent distention of the intestines, or from spasms beginning in them, they may be often lessened or cured by making a pretty strong compression upon the *abdomen* by means of a broad belt. A roll of brimstone held in the hand is frequently used as a remedy for cramps. Though this seems to owe its effect chiefly to imagination, yet, as it sometimes succeeds, it merits a trial.* When spasms or convulsive motions arise from sharp humours in the stomach or intestines, no lasting relief can be procured till these are either corrected or expelled. The Peruvian bark has sometimes cured peiodic convulsions after other medicines had failed.

HYPOCHONDRIAC AFFECTIONS. (*Hypochondriasis.*)

This disease generally attacks the indolent, the luxurious, the unfortunate, and the studious. It becomes daily more common in this country, owing, no doubt, to the increase of luxury and sedentary employments. It has so near a resemblance to the immediately preceding, that many authors consider them as the same disease, and treat them accordingly. They require, however, a very different regimen; and the symptoms of the latter, though less violent, are more permanent than those of the former.

Men of melancholy temperament, whose minds are capable of great attention, and whose passions are not easily moved, are, in the advanced periods of life, most liable to this disease. It is usually brought on by long and serious attention to abstruse subjects, grief, the suppression of customary evacuations, excess of venery, the repulsion of cutaneous eruptions, long continued evacuations, obstructions in some of the viscera, as the liver, spleen, &c.

Hypochondriac persons ought never to fast long, and their food should be solid and nourishing. All acescent and windy vegetables are to be avoided. Flesh-meats agree best with them, and their drink should be old claret or good madeira. Should these disagree with the stomach, water with a little brandy or rum in it may be drank.

Cheerfulness and serenity of mind are by all means to be cultivated. Exercise of every kind is useful. The cold bath is likewise beneficial; and, where it does not agree with the patient, frictions with the flesh-brush or a coarse cloth may be tried. If the patient has it in his power, he ought to travel either by sea or land. A voyage or a long journey, especially towards a warmer climate, will be of more service than any medicine.

The general intentions of cure in this disease, are to strengthen the alimentary canal, and to promote the secretions. These intentions will be best answered by the different preparations of iron and the Peruvian bark, which, after proper evacuations, may be taken in the same manner as directed in the preceding disease.

If the patient be costive, it will be necessary to make use of some gentle opening medicine, as pills composed of equal parts of aloes, rhubarb, and asafœtida, with as much of the *elixir propri-*

* Some persons afflicted with cramps pretend to reap great benefit from small bundles of rosemary tied all night about their feet, ancles, and knees.

etatis as is necessary to form the ingredients into pills. Two, three, or four of these may be taken as often as it shall be found needful to keep the body gently open. Such as cannot bear the *asafoetida* may substitute Spanish soap in its place.

Though a cheerful glass may have good effects in this disease, yet all manner of excess is hurtful. Intense study and every thing that depresses the spirits, are likewise pernicious.

Though the general symptoms and treatment of nervous disorders were pointed out in the beginning of this chapter, yet, for the benefit of the unhappy persons afflicted with those obstinate and complicated maladies, I have treated several of their capital symptoms under distinct or separate heads. These, however, are not to be considered as different diseases, but as various modifications of the same disease. They all arise from the same general causes, and require nearly the same method of treatment. There are many other symptoms that merit particular attention, which the nature of my plan will not permit me to treat of at full length. I shall therefore omit them altogether, and conclude this chapter with a few general remarks on the most obvious means of preventing or avoiding nervous disorders.

In all persons afflicted with nervous disorders, there is a great delicacy and sensibility of the whole system, and an uncommon degree of weakness of the organs of digestion. These may be either natural or acquired. When owing to a defect in the constitution, they are hardly to be removed; but may be mitigated by proper care. When induced by diseases, as long or repeated fevers, profuse hæmorrhages, or the like, they prove also very obstinate, and will yield only to a course of regimen calculated to restore and invigorate the habit.

But nervous affections arise more frequently from causes, which it is in a great measure in our own power to avoid, than from diseases, or an original fault in the constitution, &c. Excessive grief, intense study, improper diet, and neglect of exercise, are the great sources of this extensive class of diseases.

It has been already observed, that grief indulged destroys the appetite and digestion, depresses the spirits, and induces an universal relaxation and debility of the whole system. Instances of this are daily to be seen. The loss of a near relation, or any other misfortune in life, is often sufficient to occasion the most complicated series of nervous symptoms. Such misfortunes indeed are not to be avoided, but surely their effects, by a vigorous and proper exertion of the mind, might be rendered less hurtful. For directions in this matter we must refer the reader to the article *GRIEF*, in the chapter on the Passions.

The effects of intense study are pretty similar to those occasioned by grief. It preys upon the animal spirits, and destroys the appetite and digestion. To prevent these effects, studious persons ought, according to the Poet, *to toy with their books*.* They should never study too long at a time; nor attend long to one particular subject, especially if it be of a serious nature. They ought likewise to be attentive to their posture, and should take care fre-

* Armstrong on Health.

quently to unbend their minds by music, diversions, or going into agreeable company.

With regard to diet, I shall only observe, that nervous diseases may be induced either by excess or inanition. Both of these extremes hurt the digestion, and vitiate the humours. When nature is oppressed with fresh loads of food, before she has had time to digest and assimilate the former meal, her powers are weakened, and the vessels are filled with crude humours. On the other hand, when the food is not sufficiently nourishing, or is taken too seldom, the bowels are inflated with wind, and the humours, for want of regular fresh supplies of wholesome chyle, are vitiated. These extremes are, therefore, with equal care to be avoided. They both tend to induce a relaxation and debility of the nervous system, with all its dreadful train of consequences.

But the most general cause of nervous disorders is *indolence*. The active and laborious are seldom troubled with them. They are reserved for the children of ease and affluence, who generally feel their keenest force. All we shall say to such persons is, that the means of prevention and cure are both in their own power. If the constitution of human nature be such, that man must either labour or suffer diseases, surely no individual has any right to expect an exemption from the general rule.

Those, however, who are willing to take exercise, but whose occupations confine them to the house, and perhaps to an unfavourable posture, really deserve our pity. We have in a former part of the book endeavoured to lay down rules for their conduct; and shall only add, that where these cannot be complied with, their place may, in some measure, be supplied by the use of bracing and strengthening medicines, as the Peruvian bark, with other bitters; the preparation of steel; the elixir of vitriol, and such like.

Among many remarkable cases of the nervous kind, which I have often met with, one very lately attracted my notice in a peculiar manner. It was written by the patient himself, a gentleman of fortune and of liberal education; and it might be justly called a picture from nature, drawn with uncommon sensibility and force. The whole account being too long for insertion, the following extract may serve as a specimen of the writer's sufferings and descriptive talents:—"It is in vain," he says, "that I attempt to impress the Faculty with the real state of my sufferings. The symptoms of the disorders are not to be described, from their unusual pressure upon the mind; nor can they be conceived, I believe, by any but those who have suffered under them. They may be said to constitute a phenomenon in the science of diseases. Since I know of no terms to express them in, or language to describe them by, I am obliged to content myself with denominating the disorder and its effects together a *mental agony*, whose influence creates a real *tedium vitæ*. It attacks me sometimes when sitting, sometimes when walking; and if I were not to throw myself on a bed during the violence of the paroxysm, I should certainly dash myself to pieces. This is accompanied with a lassitude, restlessness, and total incapacity of attending to any concerns in life."

The same spirit animated every part of the affecting description; and the case was accompanied with a list of eleven eminent

physicians, whom the patient had consulted at different times, but whose names I suppress, as their prescriptions did him no good, and did them no honour. When the primary seat of the disease is in the mind, it is stooping to the low tricks of quackery to amuse a patient with false hopes of the efficacy of any medicine. The disappointment that follows aggravates every painful symptom, and makes the unhappy sufferer look forward to death as the only resource. All I prescribe for him is travelling.

I should also have willingly inserted here an account of some other nervous affections of an extraordinary nature, had not their length exceeded the limits I prescribed to myself in these supplementary observations.

‘For this very prevalent and distressing class of complaints, there is not any remedy so much to be relied on as the habit of early rising, which necessarily implies that of retiring also at an early hour to rest. The energies of the nervous system become exhausted and worn out, by the impressions of external objects on the senses, as well as by the mental exertions which are perpetually going on while we are awake. Sleep is the means appointed by Nature for the renovation of these wasted energies. On waking from a state of sound sleep, we find ourselves, in the proper sense of the word, refreshed. Such refreshment, however, is chiefly to be expected from that sleep which takes place before midnight. After a certain hour of the evening, even the most healthy persons experience an increased quickness of the pulse. In feeble constitutions this nocturnal access of fever is still more strongly marked; and the repetition of it is the true cause of that worn, haggard appearance, by which the votaries, or rather the victims, of fashion may, in general, be distinguished. It is by no means advisable to curtail the natural time of sleep. The great Lord Mansfield, himself an early riser, and whose long-protracted life gives importance to his opinion on any subject connected with the preservation of health, used to counsel his friends, as one of the best means of obtaining that blessing, “TO CULTIVATE SLEEP.” But it must be the sound repose of temperance, which can only be found during the early hours of night, not the perturbed slumbers of the noon-day couch. Nothing, indeed, tends more to debilitate the constitution, and in an especial manner to aggravate every species of nervous complaint, than remaining in bed till a late hour of the morning.

Could “the still small voice of reason” expect to be heard in opposition to the imperious mandates of fashion, the present custom of taking the principal meal at so very late an hour of the day, might also be denounced as contributing not a little to produce diseases of the nerves. After the system has been exhausted by long fasting, the stomach is suddenly replenished with a quantity of rich food and stimulating liquors, which the empty vessels absorb with an eagerness far beyond their powers to assimilate. Of this, the immediate consequence is drowsiness, but if the flagging spirits be roused by the presence of company, or the free use of wine, the circulation is hurried; the countenance becomes flushed, and a temporary exhilaration takes place, which must inevitably

be compensated by an equivalent depression during some other period of the natural day. Sleep is disturbed and interrupted, in consequence of the blood-vessels of the brain being irritated by the sudden influx of fresh chyle, by which they are distended; and rendered, more particularly in the supine posture, liable to rupture. May we not venture, without being accused of entering too far into theoretical speculations, to attribute, in part at least, to these causes, the augmented frequency of apoplexy, and its melancholy sequel, palsy? The palpable increase of which complaints in this country of late years is a subject of serious alarm.' A. P. B.

CHAP. XXXII.

DISORDER OF THE SENSES.

WE do not mean to treat of the nature of our sensations, or to give a minute description of the various organs by which they are performed; but to point out some of the diseases to which these organs are more liable, and to show how they may be prevented or remedied.

OF THE EYE.

No organ of the body is subject to more diseases than the eye; nor is there any one of which the diseases are more difficult to cure. Though more ignorant persons pretend to cure these than any other class of diseases, yet a very superficial acquaintance with the structure of the eye, and the nature of vision, will be sufficient to convince any one of the danger of trusting to them. These diseases often exceed the skill of the most learned physician; hence we may easily infer the danger of trusting them to ignorant quacks, who, without all peradventure, put out more eyes than they cure. But, though the diseases of the eye can seldom be cured, they might often, by due care, be prevented; and, even where the sight is totally lost, many things might be done, which are generally neglected, to render the unhappy person both more useful to himself and to society.*

The eyes are hurt by viewing bright or luminous objects; keeping the head too long in a hanging posture; violent head-achs; excessive venery; the long use of bitters; the effluvia from acrid or volatile substances; various diseases, as the smallpox, measles, &c.; but, above all, from night-watching, and candlelight-studies. Long fasting is likewise hurtful to the eyes, and frequent heats and colds are no less pernicious. The eyes are often hurt by the stoppage of customary evacuations; as morning sweats; sweating of the feet; the menses in women; and the bleeding piles in men.

*There are many employments of which blind persons are very capable, as knitting, carding, turning a wheel, teaching languages, &c. Nor are instances wanting of persons who have arrived at the highest pitch of learning, without having the least idea of sight. Witness the late famous Nicholas Sanderson of Cambridge, and my worthy friend, Dr. Thomas Blacklock of Edinburgh. The former was one of the first mathematicians of his age, and the latter, besides being a good poet and philosopher, was master of all the learned languages, and a very considerable adept in the liberal arts.