

A

GUIDE TO HEALTH,

BEING AN

EXPOSITION OF THE PRINCIPLES

OF THE

THOMSONIAN SYSTEM OF PRACTICE,

AND THEIR

MODE OF APPLICATION

IN THE

CURE OF EVERY FORM OF DISEASE;

EMBRACING A CONCISE VIEW OF

THE VARIOUS THEORIES OF ANCIENT AND MODERN PRACTICE.

~~~~~  
BY BENJAMIN COLBY.  
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Third Edition, enlarged and revised.

Let us strip our profession of every thing that looks like mystery.—RUSH.

MILFORD, N. H.

JOHN BURNS.

.....

1846.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Quaint and antiquarian though this book may seem, Colby, a more polished voice than his mentor, Samuel Thomson, was dealing as best as possible with the arrogant, hubristic and mechanistic disarray of Medicine between 1800 and 1860. The Thomsonians were radical populists that espoused the rude concept that common sense and a little learning was a better doctor than professionals seemingly addicted to bloodletting, purging with heavy metals, and heroic cleanses. They were a popular and robust "sect", with lay practitioners crawling all over the woodwork like ticks on a feeble dog.

The substantial presence in later years of "irregular" physicians (licensed M.D.s) such as the Eclectics and the Physio-Medicalists, as well as medical Homeopathy, was opposed with almost religious fervor by the "regulars" of the Eastern Establishment. Better funded (often by public moneys) and with close ties to full universities, the regulars prevailed in almost all arenas by the first decade of the twentieth century. The last Eclectic Medical School closed to resounding indifference in 1938. Well before that time, mainstream American Medicine had responded to the CAUSE of opposition by cleaning its house, and reestablishing the general trust of most Americans. The populist movements, by whatever name, had served the greater good...and sealed their own doom.

Frankly, the problems of mid-nineteenth-century medicine uncomfortably resemble the state of medicine at the end of the twentieth century, with alternative medicine/healing/therapy presenting a populist resistance to Standard Practice Medicine that seems to be growing almost exponentially. The slow, ritually scathing indictment by Colby of Medicine in his day may seem quaint...unless you remember that the physicians he verbally eviscerates were products of the most rigorous training available anywhere. His denouncement of the quack remedies of his age are blamed upon the people's loss of faith in regular medicine, a state disturbingly similar to our present circumstance.

In my life I have seen DES therapy and the standard practice of thymus implants with radium come and go...a few brief years later scoffed at as "primitive". Yet hundreds of thousands of physicians still in practice dutifully used BOTH of these modalities at the time, with nary a question (until later). To the educated outsider, it seems astonishing how little attention is given by Medicine to its own history...even that of a decade or two past. History of Medicine as taught in medical schools consists of the exposition of its SUCCESSFUL lineage, whereas the most important parts are not who first observed the circulation of blood or saw the potential of the Digitalis in a Herb Woman's brew. The greatest lessons medicine has learned in the last several centuries has come from CORRECTING its mistakes.

If the last century is an example to learn from, it will be many frantic years before we "irregulars" bring about the re-ordination of mainstream medicine back into the vitalist center. In that context, as well as for some of its surprisingly sound observations, this popular little book from 150 years ago can serve as a parable for our present perceptions of the early-stages of medical decline.

Michael Moore

LATIN NAMES: These are all added by myself, since Colby did not use them in the original text. Herbs such as Coolwort were dropped rather quickly from latter Thomsonian and Physiomedicalist writings. References to "The Entire United States" must be viewed within the context of 1846. The plants, understandably and properly, were weighted heavily towards New England...where the whole thing started.

A GUIDE TO HEALTH

by Benjamin Colby
Milford, N.H., 1846

PART IV.

FORMULAS

CHAPTER VIII.

COMPOUNDS.

The principal objects in combining medicines are, to increase their strength, accomplish different indications at the same time, or to render them more pleasant and agreeable. A large number of the compounds offered to the public, are prepared without any regard to either of these objects, but according to the fancy of the one who prepares them. Much imposition is practiced on the people by compounds, that could not be done with simple medicines, as a knowledge of their component parts would destroy their value.

We do not say that the compounds hereafter mentioned are the best that could be prepared, or that they will invariably effect a cure; but we know them to be useful in the cases for which they were designed.

Dose of Medicine.

The quantity of medicine to be taken at a dose, depends on the age, sex, or peculiarity of constitution. The quantity mentioned in this work is an average dose for a full-grown man. Females require less. For children the doses may be graduated by the following rule:—

For a youth of fifteen years, the dose may be two thirds the quantity for a grown person;

For a child of ten years, one half the quantity;

For one of two years, one sixth the quantity;

For a child of one year, one tenth the quantity.

COMPOSITION POWDER.

Take of bayberry (<i>Myrica</i>).....	2 lbs.
ginger (<i>Zingiber</i>).....	1 lb.
Cayenne.....	2 oz.
cinnamon.....	2 oz.
prickly ash (<i>Zanthoxylum</i>).....	2 oz.

All to be finely pulverized, and sifted through a fine sieve, and well mixed.

DOSE.—One teaspoonful in two thirds of a cupful of hot water, sweetened; milk or cream may be added to make it more agreeable.

This compound, being stimulant, astringent, and tonic, is an invaluable family medicine, being adapted to all forms of disease, in connection with laxatives, if costiveness be a prominent symptom, or relaxants in cases of constriction.

SPICED BITTERS.

Take of poplar bark (<i>Populus spp.</i>).....	2 lbs.
golden seal (<i>Hydrastis</i>).....	8 oz.
prickly ash bark (<i>Zanthoxylum</i>).....	12 oz.
ginger (<i>Zingiber</i>).....	8 oz.
cloves.....	8 oz.
cinnamon.....	4 oz.
balmony (<i>Chelone glabra</i>).....	8 oz.
Cayenne.....	6 oz.
white sugar.....	5 lbs.

The whole finely pulverized, sifted, and well mixed. This is an excellent tonic compound, useful in all cases of indigestion, loss of appetite, jaundice, general debility, and all other cases where the system is in a weak, relaxed state. They should not be used in cases of constriction, as in fevers or tightness of the lungs.

DOSE.—Take a teaspoonful of the powder, in half a cupful of hot water, three times a day, before eating; or take the same quantity into the mouth dry, and wash down with cold water.

DIARRHŒA POWDERS.

Take of bayberry (<i>Myrica</i>).....	4 oz.
golden seal (<i>Hydrastis</i>).....	4 oz.
rhubarb (<i>Rheum</i>).....	4 oz.
saleratus (<i>sodium bicarbonate</i>).....	1 oz.
gum myrrh (<i>Commiphora</i>).....	1/2 oz.
cinnamon.....	2 oz.
peppermint plant.....	2 oz.
loaf sugar.....	1 lb.

All finely pulverized, sifted through a fine sieve, and well mixed.

This is one of the most valuable preparations known for diarrhœa, cholera morbus, summer complaint of children, dysentery, &c. It comes the nearest to a specific for these forms of disease, in the early stages, of any medicine we have ever used.

DOSE.—Put a teaspoonful of the powder into two thirds of a cupful of hot water, and add two teaspoonfuls of loaf sugar, and for a child one year old, give one or two teaspoonfuls of the tea once in fifteen minutes, until the desired object is accomplished.

FEMALE RESTORATIVE.

Take of poplar bark(<i>Populus alba</i>).....	5 lbs.
cloves.....	8 oz.
cinnamon.....	8 oz.
bethroot.....	1 lb.
witch hazel leaves.....	1 lb.
loaf sugar.....	8 lbs.
Cayenne.....	6 oz.

All finely pulverized, sifted, and well mixed.

This compound is particularly designed for weakly complaints of females, such as fluor albus, bearing down, weakness, profuse menstruation, &c.

DOSE.—Teaspoonful in 1/2 cup of hot water, 3 times a day.

FEMALE STRENGTHENING SYRUP.

Take of comfrey root.....	4 oz.
elecampane root.....	2 oz.
hoarhound.....	1 oz.

Boil them in three quarts of water down to three pints; strain and add while warm—

bethroot pulverized.....	1/2 oz.
Loaf sugar.....	1 lb.
Brandy.....	1 pt.

DOSE.—From half to two thirds of a wine glassful, three or four times a day.

This is used in female weakness, bearing down of the womb, fluor albus, debility, barrenness, &c.

THE MOTHER'S CORDIAL.

Take of partridge-berry vine, dried (*Mitchella repens*).. 1 lb.
high cranberry or cramp bark (*Viburnum opulus*) 4 oz.
unicorn root (*Chamaelirium*)..... 4 oz.
blue cohosh (*Caulophyllum*)..... 4 oz.

Boil in two gallons of water to one; strain and add one pound and a half of sugar, and three pints of brandy. Its effects are to shorten and diminish the sufferings of childbirth, and thus place both mother and child in a state of safety. It should be used daily for two weeks immediately preceding confinement as a preparatory.

DOSE.—From half to a wine-glassful two or three times a day, and one at bed-time, in a little hot water. [Dr. P. F. Sweet.]

FEMALE POWDERS

Take of gum myrrh (*Commiphora*)..... 4 oz.
Cayenne..... 4 oz.
unicorn..... 4 oz.
tansy..... 4 oz.
gum aloes..... 1/2 oz.

All finely pulverized, sifted, and well mixed.

DOSE.—Half a tea-spoonful in molasses or honey, three or four times a day. This compound is designed for obstructed or suppressed menstruation

COMPOUND FOR CANKER.

Take of bayberry (*Myrica*)..... 4 oz.
white pond lily..... 4 oz.
Cayenne..... 1 oz.
loaf sugar..... 2 lbs.

All finely pulverized, sifted, and well mixed.

DOSE.—Half a teaspoonful in honey, or a teaspoonful steeped in a cupful of water, to gargle the mouth and throat. Useful in all cases of canker in the mouth, stomach, or bowels.

ANTI-DYSPEPTIC POWDER.

Take of Cayenne.....2 oz.
golden seal (*Hydrastis*).....2 oz.
saleratus (*sodium bicarbonate*)..... 1/2 oz.

DOSE.—Half a teaspoonful, when well mixed, in half a cupful of hot water about fifteen minutes after eating. Useful in all cases of indigestion or pain in the stomach after eating.

PILLS—No 1.

Take of lobelia seed.....4 oz.
Cayenne.....4 oz.
valerian.....4 oz.
slippery elm.....2 oz.
dandelion extract.....4 oz.

Mix and roll in slippery elm. Designed to relax the system gradually, so as not to produce vomiting. Useful in all cases of constriction or fever, head-ache, liver complaint, &c.

DOSE.—From one to four at night, or as often as the nature of the case may require.

PILLS.—No 2.

Take of butternut extract.....2 oz.
rhubarb (*Rheum*).....2 oz.
Cayenne.....1 oz.,
cinnamon.....1 oz.
lobelia seed.....1 oz.
aloes.....1/2 oz.
golden seal (*Hydrastis*).....2 oz.
slippery elm.....4 oz.

Moisten with gum arabic water. Mix and make into pills. These pills are designed for universal application in all cases not accompanied with looseness of the bowels. Their efficacy in biliary obstructions and costiveness has been unprecedented.

INJECTION POWDER

Take of bayberry (<i>Myrica</i>).....	4 oz.
Cayenne.....	1 oz.
lobelia herb.....	4 oz.
slippery elm.....	2 oz.
valerian.....	2 oz.

All finely pulverized, and well mixed.

DOSE.—Two teaspoonfuls in a gill of hot water, given about blood warm.

ELDER SALVE.

Take the white-pithed elder sticks, run them quickly through hot embers, and the cuticle will easily slip off. Then scrape off the green bark, and make a strong decoction. Put into a quart of this, a half-pint of mutton tallow, as much neat's foot oil, and a tablespoonful of balsam of fir. (Sweet oil or fresh butter, and pine turpentine will do, instead of neat's foot oil and balsam, when these cannot be had.) Boil till it ceases to sparkle and make a noise, when it will be done. More mutton tallow would make it harder; less of this, and more oil would make it softer. It should be very soft for cancers and burns, and pretty hard for fresh wounds that contain no canker. No better salve is made than this. It combines the properties of a protector and healer, while it is entirely permeable to the matter of the sore, and if often changed, will eventually remove it.

[Dr. Curtis.]

HEALING SALVE.

Take of beeswax.....	1 lb
white turpentine.....	1 lb.
balsam fir.....	1 lb.
fresh butter.....	1 lb.

Melt and simmer them together, then strain off for use; to be applied to cuts, bruises, ulcers, &c. after the inflammation is removed.

ADHESIVE AND STRENGTHENING PLASTER.

Take of rosin.....	2 lbs.
beeswax.....	2 1/2 oz.
mutton tallow.....	2 1/2 oz.
camphor.....	1 oz.
brandy.....	1 gill.
oil of hemlock.....	1/2 oz.

The beeswax and tallow to be put in first, then the rosin; melt over a slow fire, stirring them till melted; then add the camphor; after it is dissolved, add the brandy gradually, then turn it into cold water, and work it until it will remain on the top of the water. This is a valuable application for pain in the side, back, &c., rheumatism, or weakness in any part of the system where it can be applied. It may also be applied to ulcers, wounds, &c, as a salve. It may be used also to confine the edges of deep or large wounds, and thus enable them to heal with greater facility.

ANTI-SPASMODIC TINCTURE, OR THIRD PREPARATION OF LOBELIA

Take of lobelia seed, pulverized.....	1 lb.
Cayenne.....	4 oz.
valerian.....	4 oz.
Holland gin.....	1 gal.

Infuse for ten days in a closely-stopped vessel, shaking it every day; then strain off for use.

This preparation is valuable in violent attacks of any form of disease, such as lockjaw. fits, hydrophobia, suspended animation, to expel poison of any kind from the system; as an external application, it is useful in sprains, bruises, rheumatic pains, &c.

DOSE.—A teaspoonful, repeated as often as the nature of the case requires, in some warming tea.

DYSENTERY OR CHOLERA SYRUP.

Take of white pond lily, root.....	4 oz.
green peppermint plant.....	8 oz.
bayberry (<i>Myrica</i>).....	4 oz.

Boil in one and a half gallons of water down to one gallon, strain and add—

Gum myrrh (<i>Commiphora</i>).....	1 oz.
Cayenne.....	1/4 oz.
Rhubarb (<i>Rheum</i>).....	4 oz.
Saleratus (<i>sodium bicarbonate</i>).....	1/2 oz.
Loaf sugar.....	1 lb.
Fourth proof brandy.....	1 pt.

DOSE.—Half a wine-glass once in two hours. This syrup is an invaluable remedy for diarrhœa, dysentery, cholera morbus, and the summer complaints of children.

WORM SYRUP.

Take of butternut bark (<i>Juglans cinerea</i>)....	4 oz.
sage (<i>Salvia spp.</i>).....	2 oz.
gum myrrh (<i>Commiphora</i>).....	2 oz.
poplar bark(<i>Populus alba</i>).....	2 oz.
bitter root (<i>Apocynum androsaemifolium</i>)	4 oz.

Boil in one gallon of water down to two quarts, strain and add two pounds white sugar and a half pint of Holland gin.

DOSE.—Four teaspoonfuls once an hour until it acts gently on the bowels. Designed to expel worms from the stomach and bowels.

EMETIC POWDER.

Take of lobelia, herb.....	4 oz.
lobelia, seed.....	4 oz.
bayberry (<i>Myrica</i>).....	2 oz.
Cayenne.....	4 oz.
valerian.....	2 oz.

All finely pulverized, and well mixed.

DOSE.—Put four teaspoonfuls in a cup of hot water, and give four teaspoonfuls of the tea, after the sediment settles, once in ten minutes until it operates freely as an emetic.

STIMULATING LINIMENT.

Add 1 oz. oil hemlock, 1 oz. oil cedar, 1 oz. oil spearmint, to a pint of the antispasmodic tincture. Useful in all cases of pain, not attended with inflammation and paralytic affections.

COUGH POWDER.

Take of Cayenne.....	1/4 oz.
lobelia, herb.....	1 oz.
slippery elm (<i>Ulmus fulva</i>).....	2 oz.
skunk cabbage (<i>Symplocarpus</i>).....	1 oz.
wake robin (<i>Trillium</i>).....	1 oz.
valerian.....	1 oz.
prickly ash (<i>Zanthoxylum</i>).....	1 oz.

All finely pulverized, and well mixed.

DOSE.—Half a teaspoonful in hot water, sweetened, once in two or three hours. Valuable in all cases of cough, consumption, croup, asthma, hoarseness, &c.

COUGH DROPS.

Take of lobelia herb.....	4 oz.
hoarhound (<i>Marrubium</i>).....	2 oz.
comfrey.....	2 oz.
elecampane (<i>Inula</i>).....	2 oz.
boneset (<i>Eupatorium perfoliatum</i>).....	4 oz.

Boil in three quarts of water to three pints, strain and add two pounds of white sugar and one pint of Holland gin.

DOSE.—Two or three teaspoonfuls once an hour; for asthma, croup, cough, whooping cough, consumption, &c.

TINCTURE OF MYRRH.

Take of gum myrrh (<i>Commiphora</i>).....	4 oz.
alcohol.....	1 qt.

Infuse for twelve days, and strain. This is an excellent wash for offensive ulcers, and for all wounds where there is a tendency to mortification.

TINCTURE OF LOBELIA.

Take of lobelia, herb.....	4 oz.
alcohol.....	1 pt.
water.....	1 pt.

Infuse twelve days, and strain. This is a convenient form to

administer in many cases, especially for children, and for external application in eruptive forms of disease.

An acid tincture is prepared by putting 4 oz. lobelia herb into a quart of vinegar.

TINCTURE OF CAYENNE:

Take of Cayenne.....4 oz.
alcohol or vinegar..... 1 pt.

Infuse for ten days, and strain. Used in all cases of paralysis for bathing, and for rheumatism, swelled joints, &c.

COMPOUND TINCTURE OF MYRRH. OR HOT DROPS.

Take of gum myrrh (*Commiphora*)..... 12 oz.
Cayenne..... 1 oz.
fourth proof brandy..... 1 gal.

Put them into a jug or glass demi-john, and shake them several times a day for a week, when the liquor may be poured off and bottled for use.

This preparation is useful for bathing in cases of debility or a relaxed state of the surface, as in night sweats—to check diarrhœa, relieve pain in the stomach or bowels, and also for the toothache.

DOSE.—From one to four teaspoonfuls in hot water. For the toothache, wet a piece of cotton in it, and put it into the tooth.

STIMULATING CONSERVE.

Take of golden seal (*Hydrastis*).....2 oz.
poplar bark (*Populus alba*)..... 2 oz.
prickly ash (*Zanthoxylum*)..... 2 oz.
cinnamon..... 2 oz.
Cayenne..... 1 oz.
loaf sugar..... 4 lbs.

All pulverized and well mixed. Knead them into a stiff dough with the mucilage of slippery elm, adding 1-4 oz. each of the oils of pennyroyal and peppermint. It may be made into cakes or loaves of a convenient size. This preparation is useful for coughs, colds, sore throat, hoarseness, &c. It may be carried in the pocket and eaten freely.

TINCTURE OF FIR BALSAM.

Take of fir balsam (*Abies balsamea*)..... 1 oz.
alcohol..... 1 pt.

Shake them well together. To be applied to fresh wounds, burns, and ulcers. A teaspoonful taken two or three times a day is beneficial in coughs, soreness of the bowels, &c.

ESSENCES.

Take, of the essential oil of the essence you wish to make, one ounce, alcohol one pint, shaking them well together.

PILE OINTMENT.

Take of hemlock bark, finely pulverized, one ounce, fresh lard six ounces; mix them together thoroughly. It may be confined to the parts by means of a bandage, and a piece of cotton.

DIURETIC SYRUP.

Take of queen of the meadow (*Eupatorium purpureum*)... 4 oz.
juniper berries (*Juniperus communis*) 4 oz.
cleavers (*Galium aparine*)..... 4 oz.
burdock root or seed (*Arctium*)..... 4 oz.

Make a strong decoction; strain and add two pounds of honey and half as much Holland gin as there is of the tea, and bottle for use.

DOSE.—Take half a glass three times a day. This preparation is very useful in gravel, strangury, dropsy, &c.

HEAD-ACHE SNUFF.

Take of bayberry (*Myrica*)..... 1 oz.
blood root (*Sanguinaria*)..... 1/2 oz.
sassafras bark..... 1 oz.

Finely pulverized and mixed.



BLOOD ROOT.

SMELLING SALTS.

Take of pearlash.....1 oz.
sal ammoniac..... 1/2 oz.

Pulverize each by itself, and mix. Preserve in a closely stopped bottle.

ELM POULTICE.

Take of slippery elm (*Ulmus fulva*).....2 teaspoonfuls.
lobelia herb..... 1 teaspoonful.
ginger (*Zingiber*)..... 1 teaspoonful.

Mix in warm water. Useful in cases of pain and inflammation; if the skin is off, the ginger may be omitted.

ANTI-DYSPEPTIC PILLS

Empty the contents of three large ox galls into a quart bowl, immerse into a vessel of boiling water, and keep the water boiling quite gently for the space of six or eight hours, or until the gall shall have acquired the consistency of thick molasses; then remove it from the fire, and let it stand until it becomes cool; then mix with it a powder, composed of five parts of finely pulverized golden seal, and one part Cayenne, and mould it into a pill-mass; then divide it into five-grain pills. Administer from two to four, according to the nature of the case, three times in twenty-four hours. They rectify the acidity of the stomach and remove the distress, and regulate the bowels. [Thomsonian Advertiser.]

ANTI-EMETIC DROPS.

Take of salt..... 2 oz.
Cayenne..... 1 oz.
vinegar..... 1 qt.

Mix. Dose, a tablespoonful whenever there is great nausea or vomiting.

TOOTH-ACHE DROPS.

Take of oil of sassafras..... 1/2 oz.
oil of summer savory..... 1/2 oz.
oil of cloves..... 1/2 oz.

Mix; dip a piece of cotton in the drops, and put it in the tooth.

WINE BITTERS.

Take of poplar bark (*Populus alba*)..... 3 lbs.
golden seal (*Hydrastis*)..... 1 lb.
scullcap (*Scutellaria*)..... 8 oz.
unicorn (*Chamaelirium*)..... 8 oz.
Cayenne..... 4 oz.

Put these materials into a convenient vessel, add four gallons of water, and boil gently for half an hour, or until the liquid is reduced to about three gallons, keeping the vessel in the mean time closely covered; strain through a coarse cloth, and add fifteen pounds of sugar, and boil again until the scum ceases to rise, which will be in about five minutes. This done, strain the liquor a second time through a cloth or sieve. and when nearly cool add the infusion of half a pound of prickly ash berries and a pound of cinnamon, prepared by steeping them in a close vessel with twelve gallons of sweet Malaga wine. The preparation is then fit for use, and should be put into clean bottles or kegs.

DOSE.—Half a wine glass three times a day before eating. Useful in dyspepsia, loss of appetite, debility, sinking at the stomach, drowsiness, headache, &c.

FOR POLYPUS IN THE NOSE

Take blood root, bayberry, and black pepper, equal parts, all finely pulverized and well mixed. To be taken as snuff, or blown into the nose through a quill.

SYRUP FOR PURIFYING THE BLOOD.,

Take of yellow dock root (*Rumex crispus*)4 oz.
dandelion root.....4 oz.
wintergreen (*Gaultheria*)..... 4 oz.
sarsaparilla (*Smilax*)..... 4 oz.
blue cohosh (*Caulophyllum*)..... 2 oz.

Boil in one gallon of water; strain and add one pint of Holland gin. Dose, a wine-glassful once a day. Useful in all cases of scrofula, mercurial disease, cancer, or any eruption of the surface, depending on an impurity of the blood.

SPRUCE BEER.

Take four gallons of water, boil half of it; let the other half be put cold into a barrel, and upon this pour the boiling water; then add three quarts of molasses and a little of the essence of spruce, stir them together; add a gill of yeast, and keep the whole in a moderate heat, with the bung out, for two days, till the fermentation has subsided; then bottle it, and it will be fit for use in a week or ten days.

DR. HULL'S BILIOUS PHYSIC.

Take eight ounces aloes, one ounce each of mace, myrrh, cinnamon, cloves, saffron and ginger; four ounces of the dried leaves of the garden sunflower. Pulverize the articles separately, and mix them thoroughly. Dose, a teaspoonful.

We insert this recipe for the benefit of those who wish to take occasionally a portion of physic; it is probably as good as any thing of the kind.

SUDORIFIC POWDERS.

Take of lobelia, herb..... 4 oz.
pleurisy root (*Asclepias tuberosa*)..... 4 oz.
skunk cabbage (*Symplocarpus*)..... 4 oz.
crawley root (*Coralorhiza*)..... 4 oz.

DOSE.—A quarter of a teaspoonful once an hour, until a gentle perspiration is produced. In typhus or scarlet fever it may be increased as the case may require. Valuable for producing perspiration and equalizing the circulation; highly useful for a cough, and admirably adapted to break up a cold.

FEMALE TONIC POWDERS.

Take of comfrey..... 2 oz.
elecampane (*Inula*)..... 2 oz.
rosin..... 1 oz.
loaf sugar..... 8 oz.

All finely pulverized and well mixed.

DOSE.—A teaspoonful once a day in hot water. A valuable remedy for the fluor albus or whites.

ITCH OINTMENT.

Take of tincture of myrrh (*Commiphora*).. 1 qt.
tincture of lobelia..... 1 qt.
spirits turpentine..... 1/2 pt.

Mix and apply to the entire surface night and morning.

CANCER PLASTER.

Take of red clover blossoms any desirable quantity, and water sufficient to cover them; boil gently until the strength of the blossoms is extracted, which will be in about an hour; strain through a coarse cloth, and use pressure sufficient to force out all the liquid; pour this into some convenient vessel, and place it in a kettle of water over the fire; boil until the liquid is of the consistence of tar.

Spread this on a piece of linen, or soft leather. It is one of the best applications for open or running cancers and ill-conditioned sores or ulcers of every description, deep, ragged-edged and other wise badly conditioned burns.

CATARRH SNUFF.

Take of blood root (*Sanguinaria*)..... 2 oz.
skunk cabbage (*Symplocarpus*)..... 1 oz.
lobelia..... 1/2 oz.
snake root (*Asarum*)..... 1/2 oz.
slippery elm..... 1 oz.

All finely pulverized, sifted and well mixed. Useful in catarrh and stoppage in the nose.

MEADOW-FERN OINTMENT.

Take of meadow-fern leaves and balm of Gilead buds, well bruised or pounded, each three ounces; fresh lard, a pound. moisten the buds with water, and simmer them in the lard over a slow fire until they cease to be glutinous, which will be in three or four hours; then add the meadow-fern burs, also moistened with water, and continue the simmering until their strength is extracted, which may be determined by rubbing them through the fingers, and ascertaining that they do not emit a fragrant smell. Pass the ointment through a coarse cloth or sieve, and pour it into some convenient vessel.

An excellent application in tetter, scald head, soreness of the lips, itch, poison from ivy or dogwood, various cutaneous eruptions.

DR. ELISHA SMITH'S ANTI-MERCURIAL SYRUP.

Take of sarsaparilla (*Smilax*).....2 lbs.
guaiacum chips (*G. officinalis*)..... 1 lb.
blue flag (*Iris versicolor*)..... 6 oz.
prickly ash bark (*Zanthoxylum*)..... 3 oz.
liquorice (*Glycyrrhiza*)..... 4 oz.
*stramonium seeds (*Datura*)..... 1/2 oz.

* *This article we always reject from the compound, for reasons well known to Thomsonians*

Boil in two or three waters, until the strength is obtained, forming two gallons of the decoction; to which is to be added, when cold, one and a half gallon of molasses and two ounces of the oil of sassafras; the whole to be well shaken together and bottled for use. This compound is highly recommended by Dr. Smith of New York, for cancerous, scrofulous, and all other humors and taints, particularly for those forms of disease produced by mercury that everywhere exhibit themselves, and venereal.



BLUE FLAG.

CHAPTER IX.

A COURSE OF MEDICINE.

This does not consist in the application of a single remedy, as many have supposed, but of a series of remedies, following each other in quick succession, by which disease is overcome immediately, instead of allowing it to progress a great length of time. It includes injections to evacuate the bowels, and stimulate them to action; vapor bath, to promote perspiration, and throw from the system the morbid matter that has been retained; relaxants and stimulants, to arouse nature to throw off the morbid accumulations of the stomach; a second administration of the injection and application of the vapor bath; concluding with washing over with cold or warm saleratus water.

ENEMAS OR INJECTIONS.

This mode of administering medicine constitutes a very important part of the Thomsonian practice, and ought not to be omitted in consequence of a false delicacy on the part of the patient, or to avoid the labor on the part of the physician. In no other way can medicine be administered to accomplish so much, in obstinate cases, as by injections. They not only act on the bowels to remove fecal matter, but also produce the effect with much more promptness, than the medicines composing the injections will produce, when taken into the stomach. In all cases of irritability of the stomach, colic, stoppage in the bowels, costiveness, fits, lock-jaw, &c., injections are indispensable. They should be prepared in reference to the indications to be accomplished.

If the object is simply to evacuate the bowels, half a teaspoonful of composition, and as much slippery elm in a gill of hot water, will answer the purpose. If to check a diarrhoea, or for the piles, a strong tea of hemlock bark should be used instead of hot water. But the formula under the head of compounds will be the best for ordinary cases, increasing or diminishing the quantity of lobelia, &c., as the case may require. Dr. Thomson says, with much truth, that it is better to administer injections ten times when they are not necessary, than omit them once when needed.

VAPOR BATH.

This invaluable remedial agent has been in use from time immemorial. Among the Russians, Egyptians, and Turks, it has been used for centuries as a luxury, and as a cure and preventive of disease. It is a well-known fact that for five hundred years Rome had no

physician but her baths, which they frequented at least once a week, and by many daily, whether in a state of health or sickness. The Rev. W. Tooke says that he has no doubt but that the Russians owe their great longevity, their extraordinary robust health, and their entire exemption from certain moral diseases, to their daily use of the vapor bath. The use of the vapor bath is quite common among the Turkish ladies, who probably would not suffer in point of beauty and delicacy, by comparison with the females of any other country, yet they use the vapor bath, followed immediately by the cold shower bath, which gives them a ruddy, florid glow of countenance, unknown to but few females. The American aborigines have their baths, out of which they rush, and plunge into cold running water, beside which their baths are purposely built. In view of the fact, that three fifths of all we take into the system is thrown out through the pores of the skin, what can be more important to health, than an unobstructed state of that organ? and what remedial agent better adapted to remove the cause of disease than the vapor bath? which tends to remove obstructions from the skin, and arouse a healthy action is the system, determines the blood to the surface, and throws from the circulating fluid the various impurities with which it is loaded.

The modes of applying the vapor are various. The most convenient and economical mode we have ever seen, is a tin box, about four inches square, with a horizontal partition, about one and a half inches from the top, in which are inserted five tubes, the size of common lamp tubes, to come even with the top of the box, with a hole for turning in alcohol, which should be stopped tight, and the partition wiped dry before lighting the wicks; this is to be used for a lamp to generate heat, after putting in wicking and filling it with alcohol; another box of the same size, with legs about four inches long, the cover soldered on to the top, and a half inch tube inserted to allow the steam to pass off; this box should be nearly filled with water and placed over the lamp, after lighting the wicks. Place this under a chair in which the patient is to sit, divested of all his clothes. Take a blanket or a piece of oiled cloth or silk, the size of a blanket, sew the sides together, and run a string into the top, so as to draw it up, around the neck. Put this over the patient and chair; the feet should be immersed in warm water at the same time; and warming teas or composition administered while steaming. A pipe may be fixed to convey the steam from the boiler to the bed, if the patient is unable to sit up, or to apply it to any portion of the system. When there is sufficient vitality in the system to favor reaction, the last vapor bath of the course should be followed by a cold hand-bath or washed all over with cold water; after which the patient should be rubbed briskly two or three minutes, and dressed, if able. After remaining in doors an hour or two, he may

take exercise in the open air, if the weather is sufficiently mild and pleasant, and he feels able so to do.

DIRECTIONS FOR A COURSE.

Put four teaspoonfuls of composition, one of valerian, and 1/2 of cayenne into a pitcher, pour on it a quart of boiling water. Give the patient two thirds of a cupful of the tea. Then administer an injection according to the directions under that head. As soon as the injection has done operating, administer the vapor bath according to the directions on the preceding page, giving the composition tea two or three times while steaming. After the patient has remained in the bath fifteen or twenty minutes, he should be wiped dry, put on his shirt and get into bed, and a steaming brick be put to his feet. He is then ready for the administration of the lobelia.

ADMINISTERING LOBELIA.

Put one teaspoonful of the seed of lobelias and two of the herb; well pulverized, into a cup, add one teaspoonful of Cayenne, one of nerve powder, and a few drops of the oil of sassafras, and fill the cup with hot water. After it settles, give four teaspoonfuls of the tea once in ten minutes until the patient vomits freely; give in the mean time half a cupful of the tea from the pitcher or pennyroyal tea once in five minutes. If the patient is sick at the stomach and does not vomit, give half a cupful of the tea from the pitcher, with a little saleratus in it. After the patient has vomited once, give porridge and pennyroyal tea freely. If the quantity of lobelia mentioned above does not produce vomiting and nausea, add a teaspoonful of the seed to the sediment, fill it up with hot water, and give the tea of it at one dose. After the vomiting is over and the stomach well settled, another injection should be administered, after which the patient should be steamed a second time, and washed over with cold water, if there be sufficient heat in the system to produce a reaction. After the course is completed, he may eat a light meal, and if the weather is very mild and pleasant he can go out; if not, he should remain within doors.