

THE THOMSONIAN REMEDIES, TREATMENT OF DISEASE, AND "COURSE OF MEDICATION"

In Thomson's day, directions for treating disease were supplied by himself or his authorized agents when a patent right to practice by the Thomsonian method was purchased. Directions for making his preparations, as well as for gathering plants and purchasing drugs, were given as a part of the franchise.

Throughout America, agents who by authority of Thomson held the privilege of selling the patent right to practice, also carried stocks of drugs to sell to purchasers of the patent. These stocks were something very large, enough to surprise even dealers in drugs of the present day. They were also advertised to readers of Thomsonian literature, as is shown by the following reproductions of an advertisement in the "Lobelia Advocate," 1838:

DR. JOHN ROSE

Still offers to his friends, the Botanic remedies—such as are used by Botanic Physicians: Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, with Bayberry, Cloves Composition, &c. &c. &c. All genuine, and as responsible as any other establishment.

Westminster, June 30.

In like manner the "Botanic Medical Recorder," 1844, presents an advertisement which is of peculiar value in that it gives the prices then prevailing for well-known drugs of to-day, many of which were thus introduced to the trade.

MEDICINES.

We have a good stock of first-rate Medicines, which we will sell for cash cheaper than they have ever been bought in this city, except of ourselves. Among them are,

Lobelia Seed, per lb.,	\$1.00,	Ptelea, an excellent article,	.37½,
Lobelia Leaf,	.50,	Balmony,	.62½,
Cayenne, first quality,	1.00,	Boneset, flowers,	.37½,
Cayenne, 2nd quality, good,	.62½,	Cohosh, blue and black,	.62½,
Bayberry, very best,	.37½,	Wild Ginger, ground, excellent,	.75,
Ginger, first rate,	.37½,	Beth root,	.62½,
Hemlock,	.31¼,	Pleurisy root,	.50,
Raspberry, Witch Hazle,	.31¼,	Elm,	.31¼,
Composition,	.62½,	Golden Seal,	.40,
Bitters, spiced or plain,	.62½,	Nervine,	.62½,
Poplar,	.25,		

And most other articles used in our Practice. When large orders are sent, a small discount will be made on some of the above articles.

BOTANICO-MEDICAL COLLEGE,
South side third street, one door east of Broadway,
Cincinnati, O."

SAMUEL THOMSON

The Thomsonian Treatment and "Courses of Medicine" may perhaps be no more authoritatively shown than by a verbatim reproduction of that section in "The Thomsonian Materia Medica," by Samuel Thomson, thirteenth edition:

RULES TO BE OBSERVED BY THE PRACTITIONER, IN THE TREATMENT OF DISEASE.

1. At the commencement of an attack of the disease, the first thing to be brought to mind should be, what has caused the attack, and how should it be treated, and how removed.

The "ways and means" cause much trouble and speculation with the patient, who should ever be alive to the best means for his future welfare.

2. One of the fundamental principles in the Thomsonian practice is, that all diseases originate from the same cause, directly or indirectly—that is, from the deranged state of the fluids of the body, by the absence of heat, or loss of vitality; which produces an over pressure or excess of circulation to the head, and a proportionate deficiency in the feet.

This creates derangement in the organs of sense, and a proportionate want of action with the digestive apparatus, by which the bowels become constipated, and the evacuations of the body are much obstructed, for want of the requisite action and equilibrium in the fluids, and the consequent order attendant upon such a state of things.

3. This derangement having been produced by the loss of vitality, or taking cold, and the consequent absence of heat at the lower extremities, and an excess at the head in the same degree, to bring about an equilibrium properly through the system, or to establish order where there is naught but disorder, is what we wish. To restore warmth to the feet and reduce the pressure upon the brain, by correcting digestion, promoting perspiration, and removing obstructions from the stomach, bowels, and their dependencies, is the proper mode to effect this object.

4. The best method yet discovered is a thorough Thomsonian course of medicine, when properly administered, which creates a healthy circulating medium in the lower extremities, equal with that of the head, and thus produces order and regularity both in body and mind.

5. The first knowledge with a practitioner should be to understand the principles or cause of the derangement, disease, or loss of heat; and secondly the proper course of treatment to bring the deranged parts to order by restoring the vitality, or heat, by the loss of which the whole man has become diseased.

6. There is no immediate danger in any case where the veins on the patient's hands and feet are full. This is the surest test by which a practitioner may determine whether or not his patient is doing well. Or a long and regular respiration will indicate the same state of the body, as well as a regular pulse.

DIRECTIONS FOR EQUALIZING THE CIRCULATION

Through the system, which must be done in all cases of disease, to restore the patient to health.

In the first place, put the feet of the patient into water as hot as can be borne, increase the heat by adding water of a higher temperature until a copious perspiration is started on the forehead and in the palms of the hands; the patient may be

SAMUEL THOMSON

in the bath if thought necessary; this will afford some relief. Then take brown emetic, cayenne, composition, and nerve powder, of each one teaspoonful, put them into one pint of boiling water and let them steep for ten minutes; sweeten with molasses, and let half the quantity be given as an injection, as hot as it can be borne, and let the patient retain it as long as possible. This will turn the excitement from the head downwards and sickness at the stomach will be produced. Then give a table spoonful of the tincture of lobelia and a small quantity of cayenne, in some simple tea, and if this does not produce sufficient vomiting repeat the dose.

The vomiting will be easy, the veins in the hands and feet will be filled, the head, in consequence of the equalization of the circulation, will be relieved, and the whole system will become quiet and easy.

Let these directions be strictly followed, and by so doing I hesitate not to say that three fourths of the attacks of the disease—such as colic, dysentery, quinsy, croup, pleurisy, head-ache, liver complaint, &c.—might immediately find relief. Let every practitioner lay up these remarks as valuable truths, to be observed in all cases where there is disease or derangement in the system, in attempting to afford relief or perform a cure.

Order must be brought about in the body by an equalization of the fluids, and it matters but little how that is effected—whether by a course of medicine, steaming, bathing the feet in hot water, an emetic, or stimulating with hot liquor, hot medicines, or any other course which will effect this relief on the system. To accomplish this successfully in the greatest number of cases is what constitutes the eminent physician.

STEAM OR VAPOR BATH.

Steaming is an important part of the Thomsonian practice. Many cases which prove too stubborn for the medicine unassisted by the vapor bath, are through its agency relieved. In all diseases where the vital heat has become so far exhausted as not to be rekindled by the administration of medicine, steaming is indispensably necessary. In all cases of suspended animation, a gentle bath and bathing the feet in hot water, should be immediately resorted to. In cases of falls and bruises, or accidents of the like, this treatment rarely if ever fails of affording relief. It is also useful in preventing sickness as well as in curing it.

When a person has taken a severe cold, and disease is rapidly getting hold of the system, a thorough steaming, as hereinafter directed, will frequently throw off the disorder. Always remember while giving the vapor bath, to keep up the internal heat, to prevent faintness; for which purpose give a tea of cayenne, or of any other warming or stimulating article, with occasionally wetting the patient's face and breast in tepid water.

The most convenient and effectual way to administer the bath is to have a box constructed for that purpose. The following plan is perhaps as good as any. Let the box be in the form of a closet, two feet four inches deep, two feet six inches wide, and six feet high. It should be elevated from the floor about six inches, by the means of blocks or legs. Let the bottom be made tight and in form of a sink, with a vessel underneath to receive the condensed water. The door may be five feet and a half high, and one foot ten inches wide, with a hole for ventilation (before which let a curtain be drawn) six by nine inches, about four feet from the bottom. Let the top be boarded tight, and at the bottom, immediately above the sink, let a portable floor, or a board eighteen or twenty inches wide, be supported by

SAMUEL THOMSON

means of cleets fastened to the sides of the box, under which let the steam pass in by means of a lead pipe.

This portable floor will break the volume of the steam, cause it to ascend on all sides of the patient, and prevent its burning his feet. But where a box cannot be had, the following method may be adopted.

Have three or four stones or bricks heated, and let the patient sit in a chair, undressed, with a blanket around him, to confine the vapor and shield him from the air; then place a two gallon kettle with a concave bottom, with about one quart of water, between the feet inside of the blanket, put in one of the heated stones, and as soon as that begins to cool put in another, which continue to do till the patient is sufficiently warm, which will be in from ten to fifteen minutes.

The patient may stand during the operation in this way, instead of sitting, if able. But when too weak either to stand or sit over the steam, it may be administered in bed, by heating several bricks, wrapping them in wet cloths and placing them around him. Or a better plan is, to have a frame made, to place over the patient's body to elevate the covering, and then pass the steam into the bed by means of a pipe.

The method of producing the steam, in order to administer the bath in the first and last mentioned ways, may be as follows: Have a tin or copper boiler constructed in form of a cylinder, in such a manner as for the heat to pass up through the centre, and to be perfectly air tight except one tube by which to put in water (to which a tight stopper may be adapted,) and another for the steam to pass out at, on which a pipe must be closely fitted, and from thence passed to the place where you desire to have it. The boiler may be filled with water, and placed on a stove or furnace. As soon as the water commences boiling, the steam will pass out of the tube and through the pipe to any place desired. The temperature of the steam will be regulated by that of the fire over which the boiler is placed, and must be adapted to the patient's strength and ability to bear it.

TREATMENT OF DISEASE.

In all cases where the patient has little or no appetite, and is declining in health and strength for the want of support, simple treatment, such as tonics, stomachics and soothing medicines, ought to be used; but if they fail to answer the purpose, it is evident that the system is laboring under serious difficulties, and that the patient will not find relief until the obstructions are removed, perspiration made free, and digestion regulated. In such cases the articles that afforded nourishment in health produce excitement and irritation in the stomach, distress in the head, and a general derangement throughout the internal viscera, the arterial and nervous system, and a feverish excitement on the surface. To remove this, we point out the following plain and simple mode by which all curable forms of disease may be treated successfully, and the patient restored to health. There is no danger attending the operation of the medicines, as in the regular practice; therefore if one course of medicine is given more than was actually necessary, no injury will result to the patient, and the time and medicine is all that is lost. How important, then, that thorough treatment should be observed, when so momentous an object as the life and health of the patient is concerned.

TO BE REMEMBERED.

In all cases where there is inflammation or a concentration of febrile excitement to any particular point, for instance a sprained joint, distress in the head,

SAMUEL THOMSON

inflammation of the stomach and bowels, &c., the course of medicine will remove the obstruction by equalizing the fluids throughout the system, by which means the patient will find immediate relief, thus confirming the principle of the *unit of disease*. If such concentration of excitement be caused by morbid matter being received into the system by means of a fetid atmosphere, bad food or putrid water, one course may not be sufficient to exclude all the morbid poison from the secretory vessels, the evidence of which will be the want of an appetite, sickness at the stomach, weakness in the limbs, and a febrile excitement. If so, courses should be repeated at suitable intervals of time, until these symptoms pass away, and by the circulation through the body being equalized a healthy action is restored; the appetite becomes good, the digestive organs perform their natural functions, and the sleep is quiet. Courses of medicine may be successfully employed to remove distress and ease pain, and to make the patient comfortable in all cases of *whitlows, felons, biles, bruises*, or any other excessive inflammatory concentration of the fluids of the body where relief cannot be found from any other course of treatment.

First, soak the affected part in lye made of hard wood ashes, then apply a poultice made of flax seed, or yellow lily, or made of bread and milk, which should be kept moist while under the operation of the course. This will relieve the distress and bring the sore to a crisis, and is perhaps the surest way to relieve the patient. It is expected that all simple means will be tried before the course is resorted to. It should be remembered that all diseases are brought on by derangement of the fluids of the body, and that all diseases can be cured by restoring order and regularity to said fluids. Courses of medicine will effect this, if properly administered and attended to in season. Where there is distress there is disorder and a derangement of the fluids, and consequently a restoration of order and an equalization in the system, will afford relief.

In reading this work, do not forget this important principle; that all diseases herein mentioned are brought about by a decrease or derangement of the vital fluids by taking cold or the loss of animal warmth. And that the name of the complaint depends upon what part of the body has become so weak as to be affected. If the lungs, it is consumption, or the pleura, pleurisy; if the limbs, it is rheumatism, or the bowels, choleric, or cholera morbus.

But after all, these different diseases are caused by the partial loss of vitality or warmth, and all may be removed by a restoration of the vital energy, and removing the obstructions which the disease has generated.

It is thought by some that unless the physician know the name which has been given to the disease by others, he cannot treat it successfully. If he cannot readily call to mind the variety of names so profusely lavished by the regular physicians upon the different forms of disease it will not prevent his medicine from having a beneficial effect, nor prove that the physician has not *valuable practical knowledge*, which is after all the true philosopher's stone of which the patient is in pursuit.

Is it right to infer that because a man cannot command all the names that have been written by other people, as liable to err and as frail as himself, that he cannot by practice, know the use of medicine or the nature of disease: or because he cannot give the respective bones, muscles, ligaments and vessels of the body their appropriate names, he cannot cure the colic or dysentery?

When our pilgrim fathers landed at Plymouth the aborigines brought them long golden ears, of a vegetable substance, which they had never seen or heard of before, neither had the great or learned men of their father land, and we are told that they were kept from starvation, were nourished and rendered comfortable

SAMUEL THOMSON

through a long dreary winter by the support this vegetable substance afforded, furnished by illiterate savages. Now shall we deny that these people were nourished and supported by this valuable plant, because they did not know that it was Indian corn, and because it was furnished by those illiterate savages, who knew not the meaning of a diploma and had no knowledge of the Greek or Latin languages? Impossible!! The virtues and nutriment were in the corn, and the true science in the matter was in having the knowledge of it. In this respect the savages were scientific and the pilgrims were the quacks, notwithstanding their boasted knowledge in other respects. Give us more practical knowledge and less theorizing; more of true science and less speculation. To remove the infirmities of our fellow men, give us more innocent vegetable substances and less poisons. Then shall we be led to rejoice over the bounties of Providence, in filling the soil with innocent remedies that the poor suffering sons of humanity may there find an antidote for every bodily ill.

COURSES OF MEDICINE. No. 1.

First—To prepare for the course, let the patient take a dose of composition, or No. 6, in herb tea, hot, then go into the bath and put his feet into hot water; raise the heat of the bath to about 100 or 110 deg. Fahrenheit. After a lively perspiration starts, and the veins have become full upon the feet, hands and temples, and the pulse much quickened, say to 95 or 100 per minute, take a quart cup of cold water and add hot water to it until its temperature is about that of the surrounding atmosphere; then open the door of the bath, and have the feet taken out of the pail, and pour your water over the head and shoulders, completely drenching the whole surface of the body and limbs. Then let the patient step out of the bath and be rubbed with a coarse napkin or towel. The indications of a healthy action now are, full veins on the extremities and a lively appearance in the flesh throughout the system. Now let the patient go into a warm bed, with a hot stone, brick or jug of hot water at his feet.

Secondly—Take two ounces of No. 3, or canker tea, and put it in a quart bowl, and pour upon it one pint of boiling water; let it steep about ten minutes, strain off three gills, and when hot add two teaspoonsful of brown emetic, one teaspoonful of cayenne, one teaspoonful of nerve powder, and if it is a putrid case, one table-spoonful of No. 6; sweeten it with molasses or sugar. Pour off a wineglass full of this compound, and give it to the patient as soon as he is in bed, and then let half a pint of the same compound be given as an injection. Let two or three wineglasses more be given with about half a teaspoonful of emetic in each, at intervals of fifteen minutes, if that given first does not operate sufficiently. While under the operation of the course, let the patient drink freely of a tea made of spearmint, peppermint, pennyroyal, or summersavory, and also of milk porridge or crust coffee, which will nourish and invigorate the body.

Thirdly—In from three to six hours the patient will generally be through with vomiting and the stomach settled: then let him take a second bathing precisely similar to the first; let him stay in ten or fifteen minutes, remembering to shower with the tempered water on coming out. Let the surface of the body be rubbed thoroughly and then apply to it some cold whiskey and water, to completely close the pores, and the patient may then dress and wash his hands and face in cold water, and if the stomach and bowels have been thoroughly cleansed, he will feel completely well.

SAMUEL THOMSON

Fourthly—Let the patient take of the bitters No. 4, or syrup No. 5, to restore the digestive organs, and his health is soon restored.

This course may be repeated if thought advisable, but it is the most powerful one that is usually administered.

COURSE No. 2.

In case of inflammatory sore throat, quinsy, rattles or croup, take a dose of composition, cayenne, or No. 6, then take a bath as in course No. 1. Bathing the feet alone will answer, if the bath cannot be handily applied: then give one fourth of a glass of tincture of lobelia, after which give an injection as prepared in course No. 1, or the brown emetic may be put into a boiling hot tea of composition, witch hazle, or red raspberry leaves. This will change the field of excitement from the upper to the lower extremities, and will also turn the pressure of blood in like manner from the head, lungs and neck to the bowels and feet.

In all cases of difficulties or inflammation about the region of the lungs or head, the injection should be made sweet with molasses to loosen the bowels, and very stimulating with No. 2, and sufficiently powerful with brown emetic to cause the patient to vomit, and should contain also a teaspoonful of nerve powder, or instead of two teaspoonsful of the tincture of asafetida, to quiet the nervous system while under the operation. Repeat the tincture by the stomach, if the injection does not cause sufficient vomiting, and immediate relief will be the result, unless the patient is very low, or beyond the reach of medicine.

After the medicine is done operating, the steam may be applied as in course No. 1; the body bathed with whiskey and water, and the feet and legs with stimulating liniment. Put a stimulating plaster about the neck, with the sides notched, so that it may extend to the edge of the chin, and over this put one or two thicknesses of flannel to keep the neck warm. The same plasters may also be applied to the feet to good advantage. This treatment turns the circulation so completely to the lower extremities that relief is almost instantaneous. In the recent state of the disease this treatment soon brings the difficulty to a crisis, and the patient recovers with very little trouble. In cases of croup or rattles, cloths wet with hot whiskey and water wrung out and applied to the bowels as hot as can be borne, and often changed, are a great assistant to the other treatment in restoring the lost heat or vitality by absorption.

With such practice we have relieved many cases of violent disease of the chest and head, and these directions should be remembered and followed by all in similar cases.

COURSE No. 3.

There are various forms in which the emetic may be given. A light course may be given a child; by first bathing the feet in hot water and giving freely of penny royal, spearmint, pepper mint, or summer savory tea, with the addition of a little cayenne and lobelia tincture. Then to a cup of the hot tea and half a tea-spoonful of cayenne, the same quantity of brown emetic, and a tea-spoonful of the tincture of asafetida, and give it as an injection. It will produce copious vomiting, take the distress from the head, and produce immediate relief.

After the operation the body of the child may be bathed thoroughly with whiskey and water about blood warm. Put on clean, warm, dry clothes, and place the little patient in bed, and it will feel much relieved and refreshed.

If the stomach is so weak or irritable as to reject the cayenne or emetic, given

SAMUEL THOMSON

as above directed, let the patient drink herb tea until the system becomes moist with perspiration, then give the emetic in form of pills, or in honey, any kind of sweet meats, preserves or syrup, or in weak pearlash, or saleratus water; in any of the mint teas or simple drink; or it may be given in toddy, sling, beer or cider. It may also be taken in lemonade or orange juice and in a great variety of other ways.

If the patient is determined not to take the emetic, he may be deceived by preparing it in one of the above forms, and not know that he has taken it until it begins to operate.

Then by giving the herb teas or composition, a thorough course may be had without much trouble. But if the child detects the taste of the emetic when mixed with these articles, let him taste of some of the drinks made pleasant, just sufficient to produce a desire for more, then put in your emetic, unnoticed by the patient, and let them hurry to drink it before the taste is detected, or they have a chance to know what it is.

COURSE No. 4.

Let the patient take of composition or herb tea till an easy perspiration is started, then administer half a dozen emetic pills; they will gradually dissolve, and the secretions will take up their emetic properties and nausea will be continued for some time before vomiting takes place. If the operation is not sufficient, an injection as directed in Course No. 1, may be administered, or instead of brown emetic, the tincture may be substituted, and if thought advisable a half dozen more pills may be taken. This will generally answer the purpose. After the medicine has done operating, take a vapor bath as directed in Course No. 1, remembering if the circulation is not good in the extremities, to bathe the feet in hot water, and then apply to the feet and legs the stimulating liniment.

The proper application of these courses of medicine, in the various forms of disease to which man is subject, we consider the key-stone in the grand arch and superstructure of the Thomsonian system of practice; for without the lobelia, cayenne and the vapor bath, the grand bulwark of the system would be wanting. These valuable articles stand in the front and foremost rank to oppose all attacks, stages and forms of disease to which frail humanity is subject.

Having given the history of Samuel Thomson, close linked with the record of Lobelia, and his method of treating diseases, it remains to close the chapter with the ending of the life of the most picturesque of all men connected with the evolution of American medicine and the American *Materia Medica*. Comes now as the final word the death of Samuel Thomson.