

“When I called the next day, I found his room dark, and filled with a hot and foul atmosphere. The odor was of that offensive sort that sick chambers are too often charged with. But the greatest change was in the sick man, whom I had left so comfortable the day before. He was wrapped in blankets, his skin was dry and very hot, his tongue dry, his lip cracked, his eye wild, his pulse 120, and he was so restless and delirious that it was all his attendants could do to keep him in bed.

“His aunt said she came to nurse her nephew, and had found him with open windows, exposed to noise and currents of air, drinking cold water as freely as he chose, and taking no medicine. These evils she had endeavored to remedy, but in spite of all her efforts he had grown rapidly worse.”

The physician states his conversation with the aunt, and his refusal to continue in charge unless everything was restored as it had been on her arrival. The windows were opened, the stove was removed, a fire made in the chimney, and the blankets were taken from the patient. He goes on to say, “I gave the sick man a tumbler of water, which he drank as if he were quenching an internal fire. All this they bore in silence, but when I called for a large tub, and made preparations for a bath, they remonstrated: a bath, and particularly a cold bath would kill him.

“Remonstrances were unavailing, and my patient got a cool affusion by pouring water all over him. He was then put to bed, lightly covered, and soon went to sleep. By night his condition had considerably improved, and on the next day, twenty-four hours later, his fever assumed its previous mild type. His pulse was about 80, and his head tolerably clear. He made a satisfactory convalescence.”

The case just related is a fair specimen of a very common malpractice, occurring every day, but escaping notice because the effects of carbonic acid poisoning are not often brought out in so bold relief. The gas existing in a small amount as a component part of the atmosphere, and insidiously accumulating in every inhabited room, we do not easily estimate its effects or the frequency of their occurrence, until we undertake its thorough removal; and it is by cases in which this has been successfully done that we can discover the terrible influence of this poison upon acute diseases. I shall therefore further illustrate it by showing the marked improvement that takes place in acute diseases upon the removal of patients from an atmosphere that is saturated with it. The following cases exhibit the subject in a still more marked manner than