

these minor sources, some of which are the connecting links between the nerves of the intestines and the great nervous centres.

The organs here specified suffer from the undue expenditure of the nervous power. The heart occasionally palpitates from debility, or is readily roused to increased action—the liver becomes torpid or sparingly secretes bile—the stomach labors inefficiently in the digestion of food—the lungs not unfrequently exhibit symptoms of disturbance, as short or quickened respiration—the urinary bladder presents indications of irritability, as manifested in the necessity of frequent micturition—the generative system is weakened, and general lassitude or a feeling of exhaustion prevails.

We are here alluding to effects which are often observed to follow the use of purgatives in constitutions which are delicate, or suffering from disorders that have greatly diminished the energies of life. Under these circumstances they are invariably prejudicial and should be scrupulously avoided. The object which they effect may be attained by milder measures.

Before passing to the consideration of other matters involved in this inquiry, we must leave no ambiguity on the mind of the reader—no doubt or embarrassment concerning what is meant by the *nervous relations* of the bowels; or how these and the system generally are affected by the action of purgatives.—The nerves of the intestines are the cause of all muscular and vital changes in the condition of these organs, and every operation in which they are engaged is the expenditure of nervous power, which has to be supplied from immediate and remote sources; and consequently the forced evacuation of the bowels, under a variety of circumstances, exercises an extremely debilitating influence on the whole of the nervous system. It never fails, as a rule, to aggravate the constipation, which the severe means employed are intended to correct.

It is little imagined that purgatives may be regarded as a *peculiar mode of abstracting blood from the body*. To or-

dinary observers it is a colored fluid; but the coloring matter is only one of its constituents. It is formed of various chemical principles, and watery, or frequent evacuations, draw from the circulatory system the fluid which was previously in motion, carrying life and energy to all parts of the animal economy. Those who object to bleeding, on the ground of its exhausting effect, should be equally obstinate, and from the same reasons, to the prejudicial influence of purgatives. The latter bleed them in another way, but substantially the same.

If the bowels are loaded with accumulated matter, its removal is necessary, but such accumulation is a rare occurrence: it is not the rule, but the exception. But when it exists, simple measures are equal to its expulsion; and it is scarcely necessary to observe that the milder these are, the less disturbed will be the condition of the whole of the organs which co-operate in the digestive process.

[TO BE CONCLUDED IN OUR NEXT.]

FOOD AND ITS ADULTERATIONS.

In the April number of the London Quarterly Review we find a very interesting paper upon the adulteration of food. The facts upon the subject are derived chiefly from the researches and analyses of Arthur Hill Hassall, M.D., chief analyst to the Sanatory Commission of London, from the years 1851 to 1854 inclusive.

These investigations demonstrate an amount of turpitude and indifference to human health, on the part of a majority of London grocers, butchers, and other dealers in the necessities of life, which are truly astounding.

We advise all tea and coffee drinkers, and all *bon vivants*, to peruse the entire article, and then appreciate how God in his mercy has spared them from paralysis, and other serious maladies.

We make the following quotations from the article alluded to:—

“If we could possibly eliminate, from the mass of human disease that is occasioned by the constant use of deleterious