

scarcely dream of the bowels being *exhausted* by their frequent and reckless interference. These organs can be called into play in virtue only of the nervous power which they possess, and this power is as susceptible of waste from the operation of purgatives as that of the muscles by their continued exercise.

We are inclined to think that the best constitutions—such as exhibit a combination of the *muscular* and *nervous* temperaments—have a tendency to constipation. Those who are examples of this class may be described as follows: They have no superfluous flesh. They are lean, and have active and well-knit frames. They can undergo great fatigue and labor, and are readily refreshed to enter upon the same tasks. They are generally of a restless and enterprising character. The ease and alacrity with which they step, and almost every movement of the body, are evidence of the activity of the nervous system. They are liable to few diseases, and what they suffer from are mostly of an acute inflammatory nature. Why such are frequently prone to constipation is not difficult of explanation. The *quantity* of the excrementitious matters in the bowels, which has to be expelled, clearly depends on two causes—the amount of food taken, and the degree in which it is digested and conveyed *into* the system in the form of chyle, which becomes blood the moment it reaches the lungs. We will suppose the amount taken, by different individuals, equal, the *residue* of it, which has to be removed by the action of the intestines, will vary in each.

This fact, which is indisputable, leads to the consideration of interesting and important views. A difference in the quantity of the *residue* can arise only from a difference in the activity of the *absorbents* of the bowels, whose office it is to select and convey *into* the circulatory system that which is to constitute the future nourishment of the body. The activity of these vessels is modified by various circumstances. It is increased by all kinds of muscular movements, as walking, running, horse exercise; and by mental application, within moderate

limits, if only slightly sedentary in its character. The reason is obvious: bodily motion produces several effects—an accelerated circulation of the blood, an augmented distribution of it towards those organs which are brought prominently into action, and at the same time a more stimulating condition of this fluid; and the causes of these effects are accompanied with an expenditure of vital power, and hence a constant demand is created for a supply somewhat proportionate to the loss, which necessitates a corresponding activity on the part of the absorbents of the bowels. They extract, not only rapidly the nutritious matter which is in contact with their open mouths, but a far greater quantity than when the same vessels are not thus excited by the causes in question. Nutrition, in fact, flows in those directions where it is quickly wasted. Compare an individual, who is a type of this mixed temperament, with one who belongs to the phlegmatic, and then it will be easy to appreciate the justness of the foregoing train of reasoning. The latter is active only by fits, if active at all. If he walks, his steps are slow and measured. The spirit by which he is animated, urges him gently along his course, whether it be business or pleasure. Even the pursuit of the latter scarcely makes him restless, or materially accelerates his movements. He is prone to quiet and sensual indulgence. It is evident that the chyle, resulting from the process of digestion, is differently circumstanced in such a constitution from what it is in the other. There are not the same demands for it in the direction of the extremities and surface of the body, from frequent or long continued muscular exertions, and hence the *residue* of the digestive process of the bowels will be more abundant, and will give rise to more copious evacuations than in the other case, and there will rarely be a tendency to constipation.

This *residue* arises from two sources, the consideration of which will explain the modifications to which it is subject, both in quantity and character, in the same individual at different times, as