

BETHESDA MINERAL WATER.

In the writings of the ancients we frequently find reference to the healing waters and medical fountains to which the sick and afflicted were in the habit of resorting. Such springs also formed a favorite site for the erection of temples. In Greece the temples of Æsculapius were frequently erected near springs reputed to possess healing powers. The Romans also held medicinal springs in high esteem, as may be seen from their writings. Pliny tells us "they are the gifts of the earth, the cold, the hot, or yet the warm and tepid, announcing relief to the sick, and flowing from the earth for man." He also names the diseases for which certain springs were applicable—the springs of Sineusa for sterility, those of Ænaria for calculous affections, &c., &c.

Many visit mineral springs and bathing resorts for recreation, or to obtain relief from business cares and anxieties, and to enjoy quietude in the cool, refreshing and invigorating atmosphere in the neighborhood of such waters. Others visit them with the view of improving their health, or to get rid of some malady which their medical advisers have tried in vain to cure, and who are only too happy to get the poor unfortunate off their hands, even for a short time. The proprietors of springs have in some instances adopted such a "cure all" style of advertisement as to bring odium upon the whole class of mineral waters, by surrounding them with such an atmosphere of quackery as is repulsive to the scientific physician. Invalids will however, in spite of all that may be said either for or against certain springs, occasionally break through all rules of professional confidence and go upon their own responsibility. Medical men should therefore be prepared to give the sick reliable information on such matters. Many are no doubt benefitted by these waters, but it must always be remembered that pure air, change of scenery, and cheerful society, play no unimportant part in the result.

A mineral water, in the medical acceptance of the term, is one which holds in solution different saline, gaseous or other substances in sufficient quantity to be possessed of medicinal properties. They may be classed under different heads, as alkaline waters, saline, sulphur, chalybeate, purgative, diuretic, antilithic, etc., according to their

qualities and their action on the animal economy. Such springs are more or less frequently to be met with, in almost all countries of the world, and are the resort of thousands of people every year. To these may be added the so-called acid or "sour" springs, containing free sulphuric acid, which are exceedingly rare, there being only three such springs on this continent,—two in the State of New York, at Oak Orchard and Byron; and one, the Tuscarora "sour spring," in the county of Wentworth, Canada.

There is a very good work on the mineral springs of the United States and Canada by Dr. Walton of Cincinnati, published by D. Appleton & Co., New York. In this work allusion is made to the Bethesda mineral springs, of Waukesha, Wis. The waters of this spring contain carbonate of soda and magnesia, iron, lime, chloride of sodium, sulphate of potassa and soda, phosphate of soda, alumina, etc. They belong therefore to the alkaline class, and are decidedly *diuretic*, and have been found of great value in the treatment of diabetes, gravel, calculus, Bright's disease and catarrh of the bladder, and from the diuretic action, of value also in dropsy. This spring was accidentally discovered by Col. Dunbar, of the United States, at that time a great sufferer from diabetes mellitus. He drank of the water and was cured, and has since brought it to the notice of the public in the United States and Canada. Many gentlemen in Toronto claim to have been benefitted by its use. Among those relieved, we may mention Bishop Fuller (of diabetes mellitus), Rev. Mr. Darling, Mr. J. D. Smith, Mr. Brewer (of calculi), Mr. Brimer (diabetes), Mr. Baldwin (Bright's disease). For those who are unable to visit the springs, the water has been imported in barrels, and may be had of Mr. Owen, chemist and druggist, Toronto. The quantity taken per day by patients is eight or ten glasses for the first three or four days, after which the quantity is reduced.

CHLORINE WATER.—H. R. Gray, of Montreal, gives the following as a handy form for Chlorine Water. It is not original with him, being Dr. Watson's formula. Take an 8 ounce vial and fit a good cork into it; put into the vial 10 grains of pulv. pot. chlor., and pour upon it M. xv by measure, of pure acid hydrochlor.; allow it to stand, well corked, for five minutes, then add water ounce by ounce, until the bottle is filled.