

INTERNAL USE OF HOT WATER.

Many believe that the benefits derived, by persons affected with diseases and derangements of various sorts, from the internal use of large quantities of water from medicated springs, would be quite as great if not greater if pure instead of medicated water were used. However this may be, the solvent and cleansing properties of pure water are well known, and its use, either hot or cold, is becoming very general in obstructions and derangements of the excretory organs. The following, chiefly from the *Boston Journal of Chemistry*, bearing upon the subject will prove useful:

The number of invalids, semi-invalids, and those in fair health who sip hot water in the morning of each day, is astonishingly large. The habit has become suddenly fashionable; and if we had no worse fashions to complain of, the world would be vastly improved. Still, however beneficial the free employment of hot water may be to some, it is not an agent which can be indiscreetly used without harmful effects. The employment of hot water for internal use originated in this country; and so eminent a medical authority as the London *Lancet* speaks of it as a "valuable American contribution to medicine." Dr. Salisbury, of Cleveland, claims to have been the first to suggest its use, and it is probable that this claim is well founded. Hot water is at present used very much at random, and but little is popularly known regarding the proper and safe methods of its employment. The question relating to the proper times of administration, the number of ounces to be swallowed, (both at meals and in the intervals between) and the temperature, are very important, and should be well considered. The therapeutical uses of hot water may be varied; but it would seem that its beneficial employment is

pretty well established in those diseases arising from unhealthy alimentation. In these affections the stomach and bowels become distended and obstructed by the abnormal acetic, butyric, hydrosulphuric, lactic, and saccharic acid fermentations; and the idea is to wash away these offending matters, and thus aid in introducing normal functional action. Cold water is in most cases inadmissible, as it is apt to produce distress in sensitive stomachs. Hot water is well borne in both cases; but it must not be lukewarm; it must be hot. And here is a distinction it is well to observe.

Tepid water, if taken in considerable quantities, will sometimes produce vomiting: but if the water be raised to a temperature of from 100° to 150° degrees Fahrenheit, it produces downward movements of the bowels instead of upward. Tea as drunk by dyspeptic tea-drinkers is preferred at a temperature of about 120° Fahrenheit, and this decoction, at this temperature affords great relief to persons of weak stomachs. The demand by dyspeptics for tea, "hot and weak," is founded on observation that in this form it affords genuine relief. If the tea-leaves were left out altogether, the agreeable relief would follow from the use of the hot water with a little milk and sugar added. By hot water is meant water which is so warm that it can only be sipped slowly, and not be poured into the stomach as a draught. In the absence of a thermometer the proper temperature may be ascertained by the effect upon the tongue and fauces; it must not be "scalding hot," but so warm as to be swallowed without inconvenience or danger.

As regards quantity, no fixed rule can be given. Perhaps half a pint may be regarded as a minimum, and a pint and a half a maximum quantity to be taken at one time. The object being mainly to