

lant to promote circulation and warmth to the old, debilitated and paralytic." "It is also valuable in anæmia and scrofula, and as a restorative after lingering and painful maladies."

It is not necessary to quote further at this point to establish the fact that sunshine has been for upwards of two thousand years a therapeutic agent of acknowledged efficacy and value. Nevertheless, it remains indisputable, incredible as it may seem, that so far as this remedy is concerned, we are still on the threshold as regards both practical and scientific knowledge. The reason of this is not far to seek. In exhibiting the solar ray the medical practitioner deals with an agent of dangerous potency, of unusual clusiveness, and of great complexity. All physicians are more or less familiar with sunburn, and not a few are acquainted with sunstroke, and none need to be told that the sunbeam has power like a swift poison to reach with disastrous effect the very seat of life, as well as to work various minor physical evils. As to clusiveness, the quantity and quality of sunshine depends so closely on the season and the passing changes of the weather, that it is a matter of doubt, whether, on the average, a solar prescription can in our latitude be satisfactorily filled in nature's great pharmacy during more than four hours out of the twenty-four, or more than four months out of the twelve.

And finally, to appreciate the complexity of the agent in question, we have only to recall the fact that the sunbeam is resolvable into rays of various colors, mysteriously embodying in different proportions the two great forces of light and heat, and the third subtle form of energy known as actinism, which is essential to the chemical miracles of photography or solar art, and not improbably may yet be found quite as miraculously potent in heliosis, or solar therapeutics.

It is one of the current facts of popular knowledge that the sun has been, and not without reason, practically deified by the highpriests of modern science as the god of force, the Hercules of the nineteenth century. As the enthusiastic Tyndall, eloquently writes: "There is not a hammer raised, a wheel turned, or a shot thrown that is not raised, turned, or thrown by the sun." And he might have added: There is not a seed quickened, a plant nourished, or an animal perfected, that is not nourished, perfected and vitalized by the sun.

Nevertheless, this system of things is so poised, that like the lightning's flash or the sweep of the tornado, this great power may become a destructive curse, and the seed may shrivel, the plant wither, the animal perish from excess of the very force without which it could not exist. With human beings the trouble generally is that the pernicious effects of an excess of solar light and heat are so sedulously avoided that we err in the opposite direction, and it is quite safe to assert that in civilized countries three persons out of every four are suffering more or less from insufficient solarization—which convenient term may be employed to denote the total beneficent action of the sun's rays on the human system.

Heat, whether hygienically or therapeutically considered, is an agent of great efficacy and value; nevertheless the profession at large