

### Physiologic Therapeutics.

By the term physiologic therapeutics nowadays one understands it to mean that part of the treatment of disease which is conducted without the aid of drugs or surgery. The importance of this class of remedies has never been properly insisted upon in medical colleges and the success of many "irregular" practitioners has been due not a little to the neglect of this branch of therapeutics by the medical profession.

Yet in many instances, perhaps in a majority of cases, the physiologic remedies prescribed by the physician are of much greater importance than the drugs. For instance, when a patient with an uncompensated heart lesion is advised to stay in bed and take digitalis, it is usually true that the rest is far more potent for recovery than the drug. When a child with chorea is taken from school and given arsenic, the rest is again of much more importance than the drug. The baths are of much greater importance in the average case of typhoid fever than the medicines. These instances may be easily multiplied.

There are many other procedures, however, neglected by many of the profession, almost equally efficacious and but little more difficult of application. Properly prescribed diets, for example, are really few. A diet for a particular case should be definite and should be insisted upon. Carbonic acid gas baths, the Nauheim treatment, are of undoubted value in many cases of valvular and myocardial insufficiency. They can be given in any glazed bath tub.

Electricity is a highly useful therapeutic auxiliary. The fact that many enthusiasts use it when other measures would be better is no reason why its real usefulness should be neglected. Scientific hydro-therapy as practiced by Winternitz and Baruch is another sadly neglected branch of therapeutics as is massage. The use of breathing exercises and definite calisthenics for narrow chested patients should be prescribed by the physician.

We have heard a great deal of late concerning mental therapeutics. As a matter of fact there probably never was a really successful family physician who was not consciously or unconsciously an expert in the use of suggestive therapeutics. Yet we are now learning that much more could be done with this force than most of us have attempted.

The conclusion one must reach is that much more attention should be paid to these forms of therapeutics in medical schools. Students should have definite instruction and practice in prescribing these treatments.—*Detroit Medical Journal*.