

her body, became more prominent. Now this unaccountable fulness was at first mistaken for *fat*. As things became more clearly developed, Mrs. B.'s disease was pronounced to be *general dropsy*. Her health steadily continued declining, the "general dropsy" appeared to become more and more confined to the abdominal region, while the attacks of rigor and fever increased every day in frequency and duration. Mrs. B. was now given to understand that her malady had taken the form of *intermittent fever*, for which, after she had been treated fruitlessly for a while, she was advised to seek relief in change of air. Accordingly, with a good deal of difficulty, she was taken to some country place, where, soon after her arrival, she had the misfortune to fall from a carriage, and sustain some internal injuries. From that moment the "swelling about her stomach," which up to this time continued daily to grow, though very slowly, increased rapidly in size, and in a few days it was apparent that the gathering was "coming to a head." A physician who was called in thought proper to lance it, giving discharge to a large quantity of matter. The discharge continued to flow for a week or so, when the abscess was closed, and the fearfully emaciated patient began once more to cherish some renewed hopes of convalescence. But her hopes were only doomed to a speedy disappointment, for the tumor gave evident signs of renewed growth again, and in six weeks it spontaneously burst open, giving exit to a deluge of thin, greenish matter, much more in quantity than at first. Mrs. B.'s spirits as well as strength sunk now to the lowest ebb, and she was carried back home to die. Her original physician was called once more to her assistance, and although he kindly exerted every effort to make her as comfortable as possible, he decidedly could give her no hope of recovery, as her protean lesion had now taken the most hopeless of all turns, namely, that of *pulmonary phthisis*, while the unexpected prolongation of her miserable existence was ascribed to the constant draining of her decaying respiratory apparatus through that "lucky safety-valve" which nature had so kindly provided for her in the form of a fistula; which circumstance sufficed also fully to explain the reason why—according to Mrs. B.'s irrepressible query—she alone of all her fellow-sufferers of the same malady with herself, did not cough and expectorate? And so deeply was the importance of that drain to her miserable existence impressed upon her mind, that I found it the hardest task, in my