

WHAT SHALL WE DRINK?

Cold water swallowed during the progress of digestion, instantly arrests it, and the process is not resumed until the water has been there long enough to be warmed from the temperature at which it was drank to that of the stomach; or from forty degrees to one hundred; to accomplish this the heat must be abstracted from the general system, chilling it. Strong, robust persons, may not feel this; but if a man in feeble health drinks cold water at a meal, at all largely, he rises from the table chilly, and soon has fever, while the stomach, being kept at work that much longer in digesting the food, loses its natural vigor, the digestion is imperfect, and the food becomes impure, thus laying the foundation of disease. The inevitable inference from these facts is, that cold water is injurious to health, if taken at meals. Injurious to the most robust, if taken largely, and to persons in feeble health if taken at all, beyond a few swallows at a meal.

I therefore set it down as a clearly established fact, that a glass or more of cold water, drank habitually at meals, or soon after, is a pernicious practice, even to the most healthy.

Injury is done in another manner. Water, or any other fluid, dilutes the gastric juice, and thus weakens its power to dissolve the food. The amount of gastric juice is not lessened, but its power is diminished by its dilution. The finger will be scalded by dipping it into a vessel of boiling water; but if an equal amount of cold water is added, it may be thrust in with impunity, although there is as much heat in the mass as before; but it is diffused.

If cold drinks are injurious at meals, cold food is for the same reason also injurious; thus it is that some of the most terrible forms of disease are brought on by persistence in eating cold food exclusively in winter time.

If cold fluids are injurious at meals, we naturally conclude that warm fluids, in moderation, are beneficial, and rightly so.

It then follows, that if we drink anything at meals, it should be first warmed.—*Hall's Journal of Health.*

Poetry.

BARTIMEUS.

A wail upon the troubled stream of time,
Drifted and tossed about by fickle Fate,
He lived a lone and sorrow-stricken life;
Shut out from nature's beauty, light and joy,
Beret of all that could assuage his woes,
Or smooth his rough and joyless way, None know
So well the selfishness of human hearts,
As those whose stern misfortune has ordained
To test their sympathy.

The only star
That shed a gleam of solace on his gloom,
The one bright oasis, that still kept green
In the bleak desert of his flowerless life,
With nought to break its dull monotony,
Was the remembrance of a mother's love.
Her loving words—the psalms she sweetly sang—
Her tender kisses on his infant lips—
These were the golden memories of his life.
Like some rare jewels kept in poverty,
As sad remembrances of happier times,

Deep in the sacred chambers of his heart
He kept them safe to light his lonely hours;
And, though he scarcely knew what beauty meant,
He thought that one, whose touch was gentleness,
With tones so soft, and heart so warm and true,
Must surely have been to sight most beautiful.
She died ere childhood blossomed into youth,
And left him friendless, destitute and blind;
Of his dead father, memory kept no trace.

'Tis Summer morn: the vivifying dews
Of night the sun has long exhaled: the hills
And vales are robed in deepest emerald,
Besprent with beauteous flowers: all nature smiles;
But the fair scene gives not a single gleam
Of sunshine to the beggar's weary heart;
Whose sightless eyes had never read the signs
By which the living world reveals its joy.
He sits a-begging by the highway side,
In lone despondency; and sick at heart,
That Heaven had made it his unpitied lot
To be both poor and blind.

The scorching sun
Scatters his burning rays, with fierce delight,
Upon the naked hills; and he is driven,
At length, to seek the cool and kindly shade
Of the wide-branching sycamore, which, with
A touch akin to human sympathy,
Spreads its long arms to shield his throbbing head.

It is a sad and unpropitious day
With Bartimeus, for the tiny spring,
At which so long he daily quenched his thirst,
Had dried; and though 'tis past the noon, and men
Have passed along the way since early morn,
Not one has paused to hear his tale of grief,
Or pity his distress. Pensive and lone
He sits; nerving at times his sinking heart
By whispered words of prayer to Jacob's God,
The faithful Friend and Helper of the poor.
But when he thought on the unbroken night,
In which his life was spent, in bitterness
Of soul he pray'd, that he might die, and be
At rest forever from the want and scorn,
Which Fate had mingled with his cup of life.

At length, attracted by the shady tree,
A traveller from Jericho drew near,
And with the beggar shared his homely meal.
And more, he spoke him kindly words, which fell
Like soothing music on his bleeding heart.
He told him of a prophet, great and good,
Who had appeared among Judea's hills;
By whom the lame were healed, the lepers cleansed,
The blind received their sight; and even the dead
Called back from Hades at his sovereign word:
And best of all, the poor and lowly ones,
Whom Pharisees and Scribes contemned with scorn,
Received his ready aid and kind regard.
With rapt attention Bartimeus heard
The wondrous tale; while joy, and doubt, and hope,
And woeper swept across his face;
And from his sightless eyes rolled grateful tears,
Which with his ragged cloak he wiped away:
For he remembered, while the stranger spoke,
Such were the deeds of grace his mother told
The holy prophets wrote the Christ would do.
He was afraid to hope, lest hope should prove
A faithless snare; yet fervently he prayed
That God might send this holy prophet near.
But, when his transient guest had gone his way,
And left him to his lonely thoughts again,
At times, he fancied all was but a dream,
A flash of hope across an ocean of despair.

At length the waning heat signals the day's
Decline; the touch of fairy-fingered eve
Has bathed the world in mellow, golden light,
In which all things look glad and beautiful.
Deeming it vain to tarry longer, he
Prepared to seek the hovel where he dwelt;
But, as he rises to depart, his ear
Catches the hum as of a multitude,
Like the low murmur of a coming storm.
He cannot tell its cause. His heart beats loud
And fast. There may be danger in his path.
Nearer the tumult comes. He cannot flee:
Though sounds of angry strife at hand he hears,
Eager he calls aloud; but none reply.
At last one near him answered, as in wrath,
" 'Tis Jesus, Nazareth's healing prophet come."
A thrill of hope shot through the blind man's soul.
He thought this hour might be his only chance;
It might be God had heard his lowly prayer: