

frequently." Dr. Todd, in his Croonian lectures, has adopted the theory first propounded by Baynard. The latter writer did not venture an opinion as to the nature of the morbid matter which gives rise to the phenomena of rheumatism. He merely stated, in general terms, that the disease was caused by the non-elimination from the circulating fluid of elements which were destined to be thrown off. The former, however, enlarging upon an idea of Dr. Prout's, has fixed upon lactic acid as the ingredient which, by undue development and retention in the system, produces the rheumatic diathesis and fever. "If," says he, "we take into account the most frequent causes of the rheumatic diathesis and paroxysm, we shall obtain a further clue to the determination of the problem. These causes must be admitted to be imperfect assimilation and vicissitudes of temperature—and here the ill-clad and badly-fed children of the poor are the most numerous victims of rheumatism. If now we remember that the skin is the great emunctory of lactic acid and that bad food, or too little food, may give rise to its undue development, as well as too much food, it is no wonder that, as lactic acid is imperfectly secreted, through its natural channel, in consequence of the influence of cold in checking perspirations, and is too freely developed in the alimentary canal, it should accumulate in the blood and become eliminated at every point. Moreover, the long continuance of the causes which produce the defective cutaneous secretion, and the deranged gastric one, will give rise to the undue development of the lactic acid, in the secondary destructive assimilating processes; thus infecting the blood from every source, and tending to perpetuate the diathesis." Dr. Fuller agrees with Dr. Todd in regarding it as a morbid poison contained in the blood. "Now, although the poison which gives rise to rheumatism has not hitherto received actual demonstration, yet many facts, conduce to a belief in its identity with some natural excretion of the skin." (p. 30.) He considers it probable, therefore, "as the skin is the peculiar emunctory of lactic acid, that in it we have discovered the actual *materies morbi*."

Our author has taken a great deal of trouble to prove that cold is not the proximate or essential cause of rheumatism. More trouble, we should imagine, than is necessary, as there are few in the profession who look upon cold in its relations to an attack of rheumatism, other than as an exciting cause. Rheumatism, he asserts, is more prevalent in warm than in cold climates. Now, Canada may differ in this respect from other cold climates, but certain it is, that the proportion of cases of rheumatism to those of all other diseases admitted into the General Hospitals of Montreal and Quebec, is much higher than in any warm climate. In