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## Original Papers.

### ON THE WATER SUPPLY.

Next to a supply of pure air, in importance as regards health, is an abundant supply of pure water.

Water may be regarded as the second essential of life, and it is of the utmost importance from a sanitary point of view that every dwelling be provided with a wholesome and full supply. The ancients, thousands of years ago, well knew that a supply of pure water was essential to health, and they were vastly more particular in providing it than the people of the present day. Hippocrates must have known the value of it, and also of the best localities in which to obtain it, or, as it is said, 'upon the aspect of its sources as well as upon its elevation.'

The chief medical officer of the medical department of the Privy Council, Mr. Simon, in his annual report, 1869, stated that, 'The doctrine, in general terms, that a vast influence is exercised over the health of communities by the quality of the water which they consume, is one which as far back in literature as any reference to such questions could be expected to exist, may be seen to have universal medical consent in its favour; and during long ages of history, the common instincts of mankind were even purer and stronger than undeveloped science. Of the many invaluable additions and improvements which medical knowledge has received within the last quarter of a century, scarcely any can, in my opinion, be compared for present practical importance to the discoveries which have given scientific exactitude to parts of the above stated general doctrine, and have enabled us definitely to connect the epidemic spread of bowel infections in this country with the existence of certain faults of water-supply. Not only is it now certain that the faulty public water-supply of a town may be the essential cause of the most terrible epidemic outbreaks of cholera, typhoid fever, dysentery, and other allied disorders; but even doubts are