

THE CONTINUOUS BATH.

“There is nothing new under the sun,” and a perusal of old works on the treatment of insanity proves that the old adage is not astray. From Burroughs, who published his “Treatise on Insanity” in 1828, we make two quotations, one referring to the continuous bath, so much exploited at present, the other anticipating the manic depressive classification.

Bathing.

“The good effect of the bath in the treatment of insanity has been fully appreciated in all ages. But the mode of applying this sovereign agent, and the degree of temperature of the bath, have equally been matter of discussion; some recommending it to be hot, others tepid or cold. Celsus advised beginning with hot, then tepid, and lastly to pour cold water over the head and whole body for some time, and then to dry it and anoint. And he expressly says that it is very beneficial for one who has a weak head to hold it where a strong stream of water may fall upon it. Hence we trace the douche to be of great antiquity.

“Cælius Aurelianus ordered warm fomentations, applied with sponges to the eyelids, because he supposed it relaxed their hardness, and was of service to the brain by penetrating to the membranes through the eyes. Injecting warm infusions through the ears he recommended with the same view. Although we may not be quite satisfied, from this specimen, with the physiological or anatomical knowledge of Cælius, yet we must recollect that he treats very ably of the cure of insanity, and that he doubtless had experienced good effects from the topical application of warm fomentations.

“Immersion in a bath of 90° Fahr. is considered generally as the most useful. The time to continue it must