NECESSITY

FOR THE

UNION OF MEDICINE

WITH A

REGULATED DIET OR REGIMEN,

IN THE

PRESERVATION OF HEALTH AND PREVENTION OF DISEASE.

THE constitution of man is liable, for the greater part of life, to an unequal proportion in its fluid and solid parts; the consequence of which is, a natural and unavoidable repletion of the system; in medical language termed an overfulness, or plethoric state. Nor is this tendency to repletion confined to the human race: it extends no less to animals, which, by a natural instinct, seek their remedy in the fields, and select such herbs as, acting powerfully on the bowels and other secretions, relieve them of this fulness or over-distended state. Thus we see with what anxiety dogs crop grass; horses and cows are excessively fond of green food; and every animal selects some particular substance, known to himself, in the character of medicine.

This tendency to repletion is the natural effect of the unequal balance or proportion between the fluid and solid matter in the body, for the former is as 160 to 60. This excess of fluids, also, when constituting repletion, is attended with another circumstance which prevents the excess relieving itself, for

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the fluids being too attenuated, when in over proportion, do not exert a sufficient stimulus on the secretory organs to be carried off. Hence medicine is essentially necessary, at all times, to the proper regulation of the habit and the prevention of disease; and every person is taught this truth by his own feelings and experience. From this view, the best regulated diet is incompetent of itself to the constant and strict preservation of health, without the occasional aid which medicine supplies; and Dr. Buchan has, therefore, justly stated his plan for the prevention of disease, to be by *regimen*, and what he terms *simple* means, referring to medicinal aid.

All disease, or tendency to disease, consists in an affection of certain principal organs of the system, and the powers of medicine, acting on these organs, afford the means of relief.

The first of these organs is the stomach, the seat of digestion, assimilation, and whatever the wants of the system require. It is the centre of the machine, and the elaboratory of its different processes. This organ, more than any other, requires its powers to be occasionally assisted, its secretion altered and amended, and its contents discharged.

The next principal organ, by which we live and breathe, is the lungs, or the pulmonary system. The functions of this part are, however, to be influenced by a variety of external causes, which call for prompt relief to assist their action, carry off and eliminate their secretions, and allay their too often over-exerted powers.

After the lungs, the liver is a leading organ in the production of disease, if deviating from the healthy state. It consists of a large and complicated congeries of vessels, intended to prepare an elaborated fluid, in order to separate the chyle, or alimentary production, and to act, also, on the feculent parts. No organ is so liable to derangement as this, and, by its

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deviation from health, to produce protracted and fatal disease. It is this organ that directs the state of the bowels, and thus preserves the alimentary canal in an active and healthy condition.

The kidneys, though lesser organs, are no less essential to the preservation of health. It is on their secretion that the removal of any excess of saline matter from the constitution depends; which, after being passed through the circulation, is found no longer necessary to the wants of the system. Hence, a sympathy between them and the skin takes place, by which they mutually relieve each other, where obstruction to the injury of either takes place.

But besides these principal organs, whose functions are so necessary to health, there is, in the other sex, a principal organ, which regulates, at all times, the state and well-being of the female habit. Women, more than men, are intended by nature to possess that plethora, or fulness of the system, already pointed out; and this for the best of purposes, in order to provide that additional nourishment which is wanted in the child-bearing state. This excess then, when not wanted, must be carried off; and nature has admirably provided for this end, though her efforts require to be occasionally assisted. The delicacy of women, when exposed to the most trifling causes, often produces irregularities in this function, that excite a variety of disorders and a general derangement of the constitution. Medicine here offers a certain and powerful aid at all times; and the timid pallid girl is made to show the rose on her cheek, and those of maturer age to enjoy the genial bloom of health, tranquillity, and a regular action of the whole system.

This view will shew the necessity of the use of medicine, at all times, to the human race; and so much has experience and observation confirmed this, that *spring* and *autumn* have been marked, in all ages, as stated periods for using it, to purify the blood and

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to carry off what were vulgarly considered peccant humours: but such limitation is certainly improper. No time is so appropriate as that which is pointed out by the state of the system, and indicated from his own symptoms and feelings to every one.

But still, granting the necessity of medicine at all times to the preservation of health and the prevention of disease, this medicine is not to be given at random, but according to a just selection, as respects its nature, its qualities, and quantities. It is the neglect of these grand and leading circumstances that renders quackery so dangerous to the welfare of the community. The compositions of the quack, ignorantly formed, are so many poisons, held out with the specious delusion of so many specifics for every disease: and it is only dear-bought experience of their fatal tendency, that undoes the spell to the unfortunate individual who swallows them. It is to do away the injurious trade of the ignorant, wicked, and unprincipled empyric, since medicine, as has been shewn, is at all times necessary to be taken, that a Practical Key to Dr. Buchan's invaluable Work is now formed; arranging and preparing medicines according to their proper classes, and directing their fixed object in the prevention and cure of disease, and the preservation of health. Thus each class, or composition, is limited by the hand of science to its proper effect, and the organ it is to act upon; so that the person knows the form of medicine he takes will be certain, prompt, and safe, in that respect for which it is intended, and no other. But along with this there is another point, equally essential as the form of the composition itself, and that is the *genuine quality* of the articles of which it is composed. Medicines, however active from the hand of nature, are too often sophisticated by art and the tricks of commerce. No use of such medicine, however properly and judiciously selected, can ever be depended on in its operation, and disappointment will

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often take place. Besides, in the choice of his articles, the empyric can be no judge. It is with a strict attention to the genuine quality, as well as the proper and judicious selection of articles, all of the choicest kind, and on which no expense has been spared, that the present plan for enlarging the utility and practical application of Dr. Buchan's Work, for the benefit of every individual and family, has been attempted. How superior is this, where every necessary form ready prepared, to the idea of a small family dispensatory! In the latter, forms of prescriptions only are collected; but, in the Key to Dr. Buchan's Work, the medicines, like the tools of the workman, are ready prepared and arranged for use. (See pages 47, 48, opposite.) The prescriptions of the dispensatory, on the other hand, must be sent either to the druggist or apothecary in order to be made up; or, if the person prepare them himself, he must do so from a medicine-chest, subject to all the adulterated trash of the shop, without any dependance on the *genuine quality* of the articles of which they are compounded. But the medicines being here ready prepared, and the articles selected with care, judgment, and experience, under the eye of those interested in their success, calls from the public for a confidence which are entitled to in no other public medicines yet brought forward. Nay, the Proprietor is confident that so long as Dr. Buchan's Work continues to be read, and to inform on the preservation of health and the prevention of disease, so long the present plan of medicine will be found to answer the intended purposes, and to act in union with the wish and second the views of that justly admired and popular author.

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