GENERAL PROPOSITIONS.

Many well-meaning persons think that water treatment can be administered just as successfully without a knowledge of the human system, and without a knowledge of why and how water is a remedial agent, as with it. This, however, is a very great mistake, as many a patient has found to his sorrow. There is no system of medicine that is worthy of, or that demands, more careful study than does the hygienic system. In fact, **a knowledge of hygiene is, or should be, the basis of all medical knowledge.**

There are three things to be considered by those who would be successful in the management of the sick.

First, the nature of disease must be under stood. This subject has been fully explained in Part II., to which the reader is referred. Therefore, without repeating the arguments and evidences there introduced, it will be sufficient to state that disease is remedial effort, is vital action, is an effort on the part of nature, i. e., the organism, to expel impurities, or poisons and unusable substances, from the system, and to overcome obstructions to the circulation; consequently, in all cases in which change of organic structure has not taken place, disease is self-

limited in its nature. Therefore, in treating the sick, we should seek to assist nature in her efforts instead of seeking, as do many physicians, to stop her efforts by breaking up the disease. **Since disease is vital action, it follows that if we break up or "cure" disease, we stop vital action. This should be avoided if possible, for the cessation of vital action is death.**

One of the chief reasons why so few of the sick recover is, the physicians give them medicines to "cure" their diseases, and this is effectually accomplished by the patient's expending his vitality in expelling the medicine, until there is not sufficient life force left to carry on the usual life processes, and the patient dies, having been literally "cured" to death.

Instead of endeavoring to stop vital action, we should seek to control and direct it. If one part of the system is inactive, we should strive to induce in it its normal or usual action; **but we should never try to check vital action, except in those cases where the action is so violent as to cause a liability of the destruction of some of the organs**, or a disorganization of some of the tissues.

In all the systems of medicine in which drug poisons are administered, the physician seeks to "cure" or stop the diseased action already existing (which is simply an effort to expel impurities already in the system) by giving a drug to

induce another diseased action (which is an effort to expel the drug), which he has learned is self-limited (it ceases as soon as the drug is expelled). Instead of doing this, we should ever seek to induce in every part of the organism just those actions which take place when the person is in health. That we cannot do this by administering drugs that make a well person sick is self-evident.

The only way in which it is possible to induce healthy action in a diseased organism is by supplying those conditions on which health is based, and by the employment of those agents which are conducive to the maintenance of health. See Part I.

Secondly, the condition of the patient must be understood, otherwise it will be impossible to tell what it is necessary to do to restore him to health. It is not enough to know that something is wrong, **we must know what is wrong if we would remedy the evil; and to know this, it is necessary that we have a knowledge of the location of the various organs of the body, and of the action of each when in health, otherwise we cannot tell with any certainty what organ of the body is diseased**; consequently, not knowing the condition of the patient, whatever we do will be done **blindly**, and will be just as liable to be wrong as right— to do harm as good.

It is a lack of knowledge as to the location and functions of the various organs of the body that constitutes the great barrier to a correct diagnosis of disease, and to its proper management by people generally. If the reader is not acquainted with these subjects, he should at once obtain some work on physiology and acquaint himself with at least these two branches of the subject. Space will not allow the introduction of much physiology in this work; yet it is essential that enough be presented to give the reader a correct idea of the location and action of the vital organs, as it is by a comparison of the symptoms manifested in disease with the known action of the organs in health that we are enabled to ascertain the condition of the patient.

Thirdly, the causes of disease must be under stood, and such as exist externally or are in the alimentary canal must be removed; for it is evident that all treatment administered while the cause of the disease is still operating, unless it be for the removing of that cause, is useless.

The Hygienic Family Physician: A Complete Guide for the Preservation of Health, and the Treatment of the Sick without Medicine, pg. 197-200 by M. G. Kellogg