

LETTER ON CORPULENCE,

Addressed to the Public

By WILLIAM BANTING.

FOURTH EDITION

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS BY THE AUTHOUR

COPIOUS INFORMATION FROM CORRESPONDENTS AND CONFIRMATORY EVIDENCE OF THE

BENEFIT OF THE DIETARY SYSTEM WHICH HE RECOMMENDED TO PUBLIC NOTICE

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Preface

IT is with no slight degree of pride and satisfaction that I presume to publish a fourth edition of my Letter on Corpulence, in the hope and belief that it may still further interest and benefit the Public. The preceding editions were composed and issued with all sorts of apparent defects and deformities from my utter inability to afford any *substantial* evidence of the merit and utility of the system beyond my own personal and short experience. Five years have now elapsed since the third edition was published. It has happily attained a world-wide circulation, and afforded me a vast amount of pleasure and gratification, derived from the conviction that I have been the means of bringing under public consideration and discussion one of the little known and much neglected laws of nature. The popularity of my unpretending *brochure* is manifest, not only in the surprising sale of no less than 63,000 copies, in this country alone, but by its translation into foreign languages and its large and rapid circulation in France, Germany, and the United States. In addition to this I have received nearly 2,000 very complimentary and grateful letters from all quarters of the world.

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Feeling intense interest in a thorough examination of this important question, I solicited correspondence, in order that I might obtain the fullest information from the experience of others. This, of course, has consumed a great deal of my time, as well as occasioned considerable expense. Fortunately, however, I had leisure, inclination, and means at my disposal, and considered it a privilege to employ them in the service of my fellow-creatures. The correspondence has been a great source of interest to myself, and I

believe will likewise interest and benefit the public at large.

The great principle which Mr. William Harvey (my medical adviser), of Soho Square, inculcated, having been confirmed by my own personal experience, I was enabled to speak with perfect confidence, and I became invulnerable to the ridicule, contempt, or abuse which were not spared in the earlier stages of the discussion. I believe I have subdued my discourteous assailants by silence and patience; and I can now look with pity, not unmixed with sorrow, upon men of eminence who had the rashness and folly to designate the dietary system as “humbug,” and to hold up to scorn the man who put it forth, although he never derived nor sought pecuniary or personal recompense, but simply desired, out of gratitude, to make known to other sufferers the remedy which he had found so efficacious to himself. I heartily thank the public press for the general fairness of its criticisms, and feel deeply indebted to the *Morning Advertiser* for its able article on 3rd October, 1865, when I was so sadly and unjustly attacked by certain prominent members of the British Association, whose feelings, now that the subject has been more widely and intelligently examined and discussed, I do not envy.

My sole objects in issuing a fourth edition are—

First.—To offer my further personal experience on the subject since I published the third edition in 1864.

Secondly.—To adduce some remarkable proofs of the benefits afforded to others by the dietary system, in verification of my own testimony.

Thirdly.—To apply any profits which may arise from its sale to various charitable objects, after the plan I followed with the unexpected gains of the third edition.

I have been strongly and frequently advised to publish some of the highly interesting reports I have received from correspondents, in proof of the great value of a proper dietary system in advanced life, and of the soundness of Mr. William Harvey’s advice, which proved so beneficial to me; but I have hitherto refrained from doing so, under the belief that if the statement of my own personal experience was not credited, no weight would be attached to any other evidence which I could adduce. At length, however, I have yielded to the suggestion, and can only hope that this accumulated and unimpeachable evidence may prove interesting and convincing, even to the most resolute unbeliever.

It has been reported to me that many medical men have argued that I could not have consulted any eminent members of their fraternity on the subject of obesity. I beg leave emphatically to assure the public that, for the 20 years, previous to consulting Mr. Harvey, I had no occasion to consult a medical man, for any other ailments except those which are the inevitable consequences of corpulence; and that, although my medical advisers were neither few, nor of second-rate reputation, not one of them pointed out the real cause of my sufferings, nor proposed any effectual remedy, until I appealed to my friend, Mr. Harvey, the celebrated aurist, on account *only* of deafness.

I will not affirm that I said to each “pray remove my corpulence,” for I had been told that it was, and really thought it to be, incurable; but all my disorders resulted from it, and Mr. Harvey was the first to acquaint me with the fact.

It is possible, and I think probable, that even Mr. Harvey was somewhat surprised at the extraordinary and speedy result of my rigid adherence to his advice, because he had long before prescribed the proper dietary system to reduce or cure corpulence, but his patients having hitherto imprudently slighted his prescriptions, it was only my very strict compliance that completely proved the accuracy of his judgment. My only merit consists in entire obedience to Mr. Harvey’s advice. To him alone belongs all the credit of the remedy. He was the first to lead me on to the true road of health, and I was probably the first of his many patients who kept to it.

I have never assumed the slightest medical knowledge, but, on the contrary, I have assured every correspondent that I was utterly ignorant of the physiological or chemical reasons for the wonderful results produced by the prescribed dietary; nor do I come before the public now with any pretensions whatever to such knowledge, but simply to offer my five past years' experience in confirmation of my original observations upon the great fact, backed by the experience of numerous correspondents in all classes of society, male and female, in the hope that the evidence which I have collected may induce medical and scientific men to promote a still wider knowledge of this important truth, "*that change of diet is frequently necessary in advancing and advanced Isle to secure good bodily health and comfort, particularly to the corpulent and obese.*"

It was unfortunate, and doubtless detrimental, in the early stages of my crusade against Corpulence, that theoretical writers in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, and other influential periodicals, should have dwelt so strongly upon my four meals a day, *presuming they were four heavy meals*. No part of my pamphlet states this. Since attaining manhood I have been rather remarkable for the moderation of my meals, and I very much doubt if any man, in sound health., and actively occupied, has consumed less in the course of the twenty-four hours. I am thoroughly convinced, that it is **QUALITY** alone which requires notice, and not *quantity*. This has been emphatically denied by some writers in the public papers, but I can confidently assert, upon the indisputable evidence of many of my correspondents, as well as my own, that they are mistaken.

I apprehend that people of larger frame and build may require a proportionately larger quantity of the prescribed diet, but they must be guided by their own judgment in the application of the principles laid down.

It was probably my misfortune, never to have heard of a celebrated work, *La Physiologie du Goût*, by Brillat Savarin, and other treatises by Bernard and Dancel; but I had full confidence that our own eminent medical men (second to none in Europe) were well informed of every new scientific fact discovered in Paris or elsewhere, and I never dreamed of consulting those foreign authorities, from whom, as the public press has since informed me, I might have obtained a remedy for the cure of Corpulence.

My unpretending letter on Corpulence has at least brought all these facts to the surface for public examination, and they have thereby had already a great share of attention, and will doubtless receive much more until the system is thoroughly understood and properly appreciated by every thinking man and woman in the civilized world.

I have been told, again and again, that the system was as old as the hills. I will not deny it, because I cannot; but I can say for myself and my many correspondents, that it was *quite new to us*; or some of us would doubtless have been recommended to practise it by medical advisers, as I have no doubt they are now, and as they surely will be hereafter more extensively.

Some writers have assumed that I had no great grievance in my corpulent state. Are failing sight and hearing, an umbilical rupture requiring a truss, bandages for weak knees and ankles, not serious grievances? Those only who have suffered from corpulence can adequately understand its miseries or appreciate the merits of a system so admirably adapted to its relief.

My earnest, and indeed my only desire throughout has been to ventilate this question in the interest of humanity, and to ascertain not only the advantages of the system now called "Banting," but also any possible mischief in its application, and I am bound to say, that I have not met *with any case where harm has ensued from its practice under medical authority and supervision*. Two or three unfavourable results having been reported in the public papers, I instantly set to work to trace them, and proved them to have no better foundation than the frequent reports of my *death*. I may admit that about a month after the issue of the third edition, I received an abusive letter on the subject from an anonymous correspondent, who may flatter himself that he has preserved his incognito, but I venture to assure him that *he has not*, and

that his abuse is no argument against the system, but simply a proof of his own want of manners and common sense.

In my desire to get at the whole truth, I sent a copy of my pamphlet to some of the leading professional men of the day, and I have received several kind and practical replies. A few of these will be found among the evidences I offer. One of these testimonies I cannot resist quoting here as well:

“The rules of diet you found so beneficial have long been “forced upon men who are under training for running, or “prize fights; apparently, however, their especial efficacy "was overlooked, because other rules relating to exercise, “sweating, &c., were mixed up with them.”

This plain, simple statement, in my opinion, unlocks the whole mystery, and solves the problem which had long slumbered, until my perseverance under Mr. Harvey’s treatment happily brought it under complete examination.

No doubt the system was known, and had been practised, but only to promote muscular vigour in healthy people, for special objects, yet had never been applied to the unhealthy and corpulent, because it was impossible for such people to take the necessary exercise and sweating. It is now proved that, by *proper diet alone*, the evils of corpulence may be removed without the addition of those active exercises, which are impossible to the sickly or unwieldy patient.

Another eminent medical man, whose letter will appear among the rest, was actually giving my pamphlets in the course of his practice. I was greatly surprised to hear of it, and wrote to ascertain the fact. He invited me to call on him, and showed me that my information was correct by pointing to a pile of them lying upon his table. He complimented me upon the publication, as it contained sound advice in cases like my own; and added, that the discovery was not Mr. Harvey’s, but was derived from “Mons. Bernard, of Paris.” I replied that Mr. Harvey had told me he had first derived his information from lectures which he had heard in Paris, by Mons. Bernard, in regard to diabetes, and some other complaints, but that he had himself applied it to cases of corpulency. He admitted that the simple record of my own experience of the value of the system had brought it to the clear light of day, and that if it had been written by a medical man, it would scarcely have been noticed by the general public at all.

Probably no one was ever subjected to more ridicule and abuse than I have been, in English as well as in foreign journals. My only object, however, has been the good of my fellow creatures. To have accomplished this object, in any degree, is a sufficient reward for my expenditure of time and means, and an ample compensation for the insolent contempt of some, and the feeble ribaldry of others.

I certainly was somewhat astonished at one time, and not a little amused, to find that my death was generally reported, even to myself~ by some who did not happen to know me personally; and, at another, to hear that I had been seriously ill and afflicted with boils, carbuncles, and other ailments, through my rigid pursuit of the dietary system. I am, therefore, glad of this opportunity to state publicly (what hundreds of my friends can attest) that I do not know what gout or a headache is, that I have always ate, drank, and slept well, have had no carbuncles, boils, or any real illness whatever, since I began the system recommended by Mr. Harvey; indeed, the only ailment which I have had, was a little additional eruption in my hands in 1867, a discomfort by which I had been more or less troubled for years, but from which I was soon relieved, doubtless, by the continued pursuit of the dietary system. I have, therefore, offered no nostrum or quack remedy, but have simply stated the results of my following professional advice, and have only claimed for it a thorough examination by the public, and our highly intelligent medical professors; indeed, I recommended all *to consult their medical advisers* before adopting what I individually considered a perfectly harmless system. I knew nothing of causes, physiological or chemical, for the wondrous effects produced by a generous, in exchange for a meagre, dietary; but believed, as I still believe, that it is a simple remedy to reduce and destroy superfluous fat; that it may be an alleviation, if not a cure, of gout; that it prevents or eradicates carbuncles, boils, and the elements of

dyspepsia; makes advanced life more enjoyable, and promotes longevity. I consider my general health extraordinary; indeed, I meet with few men at 72 years of age who have so little cause to complain. I trust, therefore, that if any future adverse reports of my health and condition should arise, they may be communicated to me through the Post-office, that I may be able at once to contradict, if possible, such silly rumours. I cannot, now, retract anything I have written on the subject, and hence the publication of a fourth edition, *condensed*, with such observations as five years' subsequent experience enables me to offer in verification of its general honesty and truth.

I have no doubt there is already a considerable reduction in the number of my corpulent and otherwise afflicted brethren, through the rigid or even partial adherence to the dietary called "Banting," but I have seen still *far* too many in my rambles about England, and to all such I trust the publication of a fourth edition of my pamphlet may be useful. I earnestly recommend any so afflicted, who choose to make trial of the system, to be accurately weighed, after consulting some medical adviser, before beginning it; and, again, at the end of seven days, during which short period the chief and most extraordinary diminution of weight occurs. This will be ample time to convince the most sceptical of its merit and utility, and I thereby give increased confidence to its further pursuit, under medical sanction. So short a trial of superior in exchange for inferior, or more simple diet, can surely do no great harm to the human frame, should the grievance arise from other causes than undue corpulence; but I believe medical men will be found in all quarters of the world who have been induced to investigate this important subject of late years, and that in consequence the public generally will now be more properly advised on the subject.

Many hundred appeals have been made to me to furnish correspondents with the prescription for the morning cordial, of which I spoke so highly. I could only prudently reply, that it was of an alkaline character, and refer them to their medical adviser, as what suited me might not suit them.

It may, however, save further trouble if I now print it in detail:—

B~ Mag. Carbon

It is, however, of little public utility, as my medical adviser does not prescribe it to all alike indiscriminately, but it may probably allay public curiosity.

It is, perhaps, of small consequence to the public, but it is a question of great importance to me, to show that I have kept faith with them, and may be relied upon for the future I therefore invite their attention to the cost of the publication, and to the manner in which the profits have been expended.

The first edition of 1,000 copies of my pamphlet I presented to clubs, learned and medical societies, and to the public. The second edition, or 1,000 copies, I also gave to the public; and 500 copies of the last I directed to be sold for the benefit of my Printers' Sick Fund, as I found that some preferred to purchase them.

These, and the distribution, cost me about £40, for which I did not expect or receive one penny in return.

I was advised that, to pay for the expense of printing, publishing, and advertising a third edition, of 20,000 copies, I should charge for them one shilling each, but as pecuniary advantage was neither my desire nor aim, I determined to issue them at sixpence each, and rather lose by it than think of profit. The sale, however, increased so wonderfully, that at the end of eight months 50,000 copies were sold, with a result which the press kindly published at the time.

Since that period 13,000 more copies have been sold, and I have increased pleasure and satisfaction in reporting the following total result

£ s.d.

Received- By the sale of 63,000 copies,
as 58,154, or
4,846 dozens, and 2 copies, according to
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and printing 63,000 copies,
bound in wrappers .. 633 13 0

£ s.d. £ s.d.

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and country papers, and in
cidental expenses .. 110 1 8

743 14 8

Leaving a profit to the Author of .. £225 10 0

which I have had the gratification of distributing as follows

£ s.d.

To The Printers' Pension Society, at the
Anniversary Dinner, in March, 1864,

per Chas. Dickens, Esq. 50 0 0

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,, The City of London Truss Society.. 10 10 0

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,, The Sick Fund of the Morning Advertiser 5 0 0

,, The Sick Fund of my Printers' Esta-

blishment 5 0 0

£225 10 0

So much as regards the fortune which it was very generally reported that I had made by the
"speculation"!!

It may possibly interest the public to know the result of my own proceedings and personal experience since I published my third edition in 1864. My weight has continued at about ii stone, from which I have never varied more or less than 3 lbs., principally when I was experimenting to ascertain my own greatest dietetic enemy; and I have proved very satisfactorily that it is and was sugar and saccharine elements.

I have ascertained, by repeated experiments, that five ounces of sugar distributed equally over seven days, which is not an ounce per (lay, will augment my weight nearly one pound by the end of that short period. The other forbidden elements have not produced so extraordinary a result. In these, therefore, I am not so rigid. Some people (as will be seen by their letters) find other things detrimental. I never eat bread unless it is stale, cut thin, and well. toasted. I very seldom take any butter, certainly not a pound in a year. I seldom take milk (though that called so, in London, is probably misnamed), and I am quite sure that I do not drink a gallon of it in the whole year. I occasionally eat a potato with my dinner, possibly to the extent of 1 lb. per week. I spoke of sherry as very admissible, and I am glad of this opportunity to say, that I have since discovered it promoted acidity. Perhaps the best sherry I could

procure was not the *very* best, but I found weak light claret, or brandy, gin, and whisky, with water, suited me better; and I have been led to believe that fruit, however ripe, does not suit me so well taken raw as when cooked, without sugar. I find that vegetables of all kinds, grown above ground, ripened to maturity and well boiled, are admirable; but I avoid all roots, as carrot, turnip, parsnip, and beet. I have not taken any kind of medicine for eighteen months, and find that my dietary contains all the needful regimen which my system requires. In the firm belief and conviction that the *quality* in food is the chief desideratum, and that the question of *quantity* is mere moonshine, I take the most agreeable and savoury viands, meat and game pies, that my cook can concoct, with the best possible gravies, jellies, &c., the fat being skimmed off; but I never, or very rarely, take a morsel of pie or pudding crusts.

My bodily organization *may* be somewhat different from that of others; but the facts which I have related are indisputable, for they are the result of my own personal experience, which I have made known for the benefit of others who have suffered, as I have done, and whose testimony of the efficacy of the remedy confirms my own.

Being fond of green peas, I take them daily in the season, and I gain 2 or 3 lbs. in weight as well as some little in bulk, but I soon lose both when their season is over. For this trespass I quite forgive myself.

The subjoined correspondence is only a portion of upwards of 1,800 letters which I have received. There is scarcely one out of the whole which does not breathe a spirit of pure thankfulness and gratitude for the benefits derived from the dietary system, and contain the most flattering encomiums on my character and motives. One or two, indeed, of a totally opposite character have reached me, and I would not have refrained from publishing them, had the writers not thought proper to deprive them of any authority by concealing their names. I had originally selected a much larger number for publication, but I fear that even these few may be tiresome to some readers, though I have abridged them as far as possible by omitting personal compliments, and irrelevant matter and enquiries, &c., of little importance to any but the writers. They will, however, I believe, be perused with interest by many others, who can select such facts from them as may apply to their own special cases.

A great many of these correspondents—indeed, some of the most interesting—have granted me full permission to print their names and addresses, in verification, and I have no doubt whatever that I could obtain the consent of nearly all to the free publication of their letters; but I consider it quite unnecessary to give more than the number and date of the respective letters, assuring the reader that these extracts have been faithfully made, and that I am ready to produce the originals to any person who applies to me in good faith and honesty of purpose to examine still further this very important subject.

I could certainly have wished that the crowning proof of the veracity and utility of my statements had emanated from one of my own countrymen, but it was not to be, although one of them, as I have shown, unlocked the mystery and so far solved the great problem. I am indebted to a foreigner for this efficient service; and I now, in conclusion, request particular attention to the last article in this pamphlet, namely, —a lecture given before the King and Court of Wurtemberg, at Stuttgart, in December 1865, by the celebrated physician and professor, Dr. Niemeyer, which I have had very carefully translated.

I heartily thank that generous and able man for the valuable testimony which he has borne to the truth of the system, for the honour and credit which he has bestowed upon my medical adviser, Mr. William Harvey, and for his gratifying tribute to my own motives and conduct in publishing my experience to the world.

WILLIAM BANTING.

Kensington,

May, 1869.

Corpulence

OF all the parasites that affect humanity I do not know of, nor can I imagine, any more distressing than that of Obesity, and, having emerged from a very long probation in this affliction, I am desirous of circulating my humble knowledge and experience for the benefit of other sufferers, with an earnest hope that it may lead to the same comfort and happiness I now feel under the extraordinary change,—which might almost be termed miraculous had it not been accomplished by the most simple common-sense means.

Obesity seems to me to have been very little understood or properly appreciated by the faculty and the public generally, or the former would long ere this have hit upon the cause for so lamentable a disease, and applied effective remedies, whilst the latter would have spared their injudicious indulgence, in remarks and sneers, frequently painful in society, and which, even on the strongest mind, have an unhappy effect; but I sincerely trust this final humble effort at exposition may lead to a still more perfect ventilation of the subject and a better feeling for the afflicted.

I had only my personal experience to offer as the stepping-stone to public investigation, and to proceed with my narrative of facts, earnestly hoping that the reader would patiently peruse and thoughtfully consider it, with forbearance for any fault of style or diction, and for any seeming presumption in publishing it, which I still entreat for this further edition.

I felt some difficulty in deciding on the proper and best course of action. At one time I thought the Editor of the *Lancet* would kindly publish a letter from me on the subject, but further reflection led me to doubt whether so insignificant an individual would be noticed without some special introduction. In the April number of the *Cornhill Magazine*, 1864, I read with much interest an article on the subject—defining tolerably well the effects, but offering no tangible remedy, or even positive solution of the problem —“What is the Cause of Obesity ~“ I was pleased with the article as a whole, but objected to some portions of it, and had prepared a letter to the Editor of that Magazine offering my experience on the subject, but again it struck me that an unknown individual like myself would have but little prospect of notice; so I finally resolved to publish and circulate the Pamphlet, with

no other reason, motive, or expectation than an earnest desire to help those who happened to be afflicted as I was, for that corpulence was remediable I was well convinced. The object I had in view impelled me to enter into minute particulars as well as general observations, and to revert to bygone years, in order to show that I had spared no pains nor expense to accomplish the great end of stopping and curing obesity.

Few men have led a more active life—bodily or mentally—from a constitutional anxiety for regularity, precision, and order, during fifty years’ business career, from which I had retired, so that my

corpulence and subsequent obesity were not through neglect of necessary bodily activity, nor from excessive eating, drinking, or self indulgence of any kind, except that I partook of the simple aliments of bread, milk, butter, beer, sugar, and potatoes more freely than my age required, and hence, as I believe, the generation of the parasite, detrimental to comfort if not really to health.

I could not presume to descant on the bodily structural tissues, nor how they are supported and renovated, having no mind or power to enter into those questions, which properly belong to the wise heads of the faculty. None of my family on the side of either parent had any tendency to corpulence, and from my earliest years I had an inexpressible dread of such a calamity, so, when I was between thirty and forty years of age, finding a tendency to it creeping upon me, I consulted an eminent surgeon, now long deceased,—a kind personal friend,—who recommended increased bodily exertion before my ordinary daily labours began, and who thought rowing an excellent plan. I had the command of a good, heavy, safe boat, lived near the river, and adopted it for a couple of hours in the early morning. It is true I gained muscular vigour, but with it a prodigious appetite, which I was compelled to indulge, and consequently increased in weight, until my kind old friend advised me to forsake the exercise.

He soon afterwards died, and, as the tendency to corpulence remained, I consulted other high orthodox authorities (*never any inferior adviser*), but all in vain. I have tried sea air and bathing in various localities, with much walking exercise; taken gallons of physic and liquor potassæ, advisedly and abundantly; adopted riding on horseback; the waters and climate of. Leamington many times, as well as those of Cheltenham and Harrogate frequently; have lived upon sixpence a-day, so to speak, and earned it, if bodily labour may be so construed; and have spared no trouble nor expense in consultations with the best authorities in the land, giving each and all a fair time for experiment, without any permanent remedy, as the evil still gradually increased.

I am under obligations to most of those advisers for the pains and interest they took in my case; but only to one for an effectual remedy.

When a corpulent man eats, drinks, and sleeps well, has no pain to complain of⁷ and no particular organic disease, the judgment of able men seems paralyzed,— for I have been generally informed that corpulence is one of the natural results of increasing years; indeed, one of the ablest authorities in the land as a physician told me he had gained 1 lb. in weight every year since he attained manhood, and was not surprised at my condition, but advised more bodily exercise—vapour-baths and shampooing, in addition to the medicine given. Yet the evil still increased, and, like the parasite of barnacles on a ship, if it did not destroy the structure, it obstructed its fair, comfortable progress in the path of life.

I have been in dock, perhaps twenty times in as many years, for the reduction of this disease, and with little good effect—none lasting. Any one so afflicted is often subject to public remark, and though in conscience he may care little about it, I am confident no man labouring under obesity can be quite insensible to the sneers and remarks of the cruel and injudicious in public assemblies, public vehicles, or the ordinary street traffic; nor to the annoyance of finding no adequate space in a public assembly if he should seek amusement or need refreshment, and therefore he naturally keeps away as much as possible from places where he is likely to be made the object of the taunts and remarks of others. I am as regardless of public remark as most men, but I have felt these difficulties and therefore avoided such

circumscribed accommodation and notice, and by that means have been deprived of many advantages to health and comfort.

Although no very great. size or weight, still I could not stoop to tie my shoe, so to speak, nor attend to the little offices humanity requires without considerable pain and difficulty, which only the corpulent can understand; I have been compelled to go down stairs slowly backwards, to save the jar of increased weight upon the ankle and knee joints, and been obliged to puff and blow with every slight exertion, particularly that of going up stairs. I have spared no pains to remedy this by low living (*moderation and light food* was generally prescribed, but I had no direct bill of fare to know what was really intended), and that, consequently, brought the system into a low impoverished state, without decreasing corpulence, caused many obnoxious boils to appear, and two rather formidable carbuncles, for which I was ably operated upon *and fed into increased obesity*.

At this juncture (about nine years back) Turkish baths became the fashion, and I was advised to adopt them as a remedy. With the first few I found immense benefit in power and elasticity for walking exercise; so, believing that I had discovered the “philosopher’s stone,” I pursued them three times a-week till I had taken fifty, then less frequently (as I began to fancy, with some reason, that so many weakened my constitution) till I had taken ninety, but never succeeded in losing more than 6 lbs. weight during the whole course, and I gave up the plan as worthless; though I have full belief in their cleansing properties, and their value in colds, rheumatism, and many other ailments.

I then fancied increasing obesity materially affected a slight umbilical rupture, if it did not cause it, and that another bodily ailment to which I had been subject was also augmented. This led me to other medical advisers, to whom I am also indebted for much kind consideration, though, unfortunately, they failed in relieving me. At last finding my sight failing and my hearing greatly impaired, in August, 1862, I consulted an eminent aural surgeon, who made light of the case, looked into my ears, sponged them internally, and blistered the outside, without, the slightest benefit, neither inquiring into any of my bodily ailments, which he probably thought unnecessary, nor affording me even time to name them.

I was not at all satisfied, but, on the contrary, was in a worse plight than when J went to him; however, he soon after left town for his annual holiday, which proved the greatest possible blessing to me, because it compelled me to seek other assistance, and, happily, I found the right man, who unhesitatingly said he believed my ailments were caused principally by corpulence, and prescribed a certain diet,—no medicine beyond a morning cordial as a corrective,—with immense effect and advantage both to my hearing and the decrease of my corpulency.

For the sake of argument and illustration I will presume that certain articles of ordinary diet, however beneficial in youth, are prejudicial in advanced life, like beans to a horse, whose common ordinary food is hay and corn. It may be useful food occasionally, under peculiar circumstances, but detrimental as a constancy. I will, therefore, adopt the analogy, and call such food human beans. The items from which I was advised to abstain as much as possible were :-

Bread, butter, milk, sugar, beer, and potatoes, which had been the main (and, I thought, innocent) elements of my subsistence, or at all events they had for many years been adopted freely.

These, said my excellent adviser, contain starch and saccharine matter, tending to create fat, and should be avoided altogether. At the first blush it seemed to me that I had little left to live upon, but my kind friend soon showed me there was ample. I was only too happy to give the plan a fair trial, and, within a very few days, found immense benefit from it. It may better elucidate the dietary plan if I describe generally what I have sanctioned to take, and that man must be an extraordinary person who would desire a better table

For breakfast, at 9.0 **A.M.**, I take five to six ounces of either beef mutton, kidneys, broiled fish, bacon, or cold meat of any kind except pork or veal; a large cup of tea or coffee (without milk or sugar), a little biscuit, or one ounce of dry toast; making together six ounces solid, nine liquid.

For dinner, at 2.0 **P.M.**, Five or six ounces of any fish except salmon, herrings, or eels, any meat except pork or veal, any vegetable except potato, parsnip, beetroot, turnip, or carrot, one ounce of dry toast, fruit out of a pudding not sweetened, any kind of poultry or game, and two or three glasses of good claret, sherry, or Madeira— Champagne, port, and beer forbidden; making together ten to twelve ounces solid, and ten liquid.

For tea, at 6.0 **P.M.**, Two or three ounces of cooked fruit, a rusk or two, and a cup of tea without milk or sugar; making two to four ounces solid, nine liquid.

For supper, at 9.0 **P.M.** Three or four ounces of meat or fish, similar to dinner, with a glass or two of claret or sherry and water; making four ounces solid and seven liquid.

For nightcap, if required, A tumbler of grog—(gin, whisky, or brandy, without sugar)— or a glass or two of claret or sherry.

This plan leads to an excellent night's rest, with from six to eight hours' sound sleep.

With the dry toast or rusk at breakfast and~ tea, I generally take a table spoonful of spirit to soften it, which may prove acceptable to others. Perhaps I do not wholly escape starchy or saccharine matter, but scrupulously avoid those beans, such as milk, sugar, beer, butter, &c., which are known to contain them.

On rising in the morning I did take a table spoonful of a special alkaline corrective cordial, in a wine-glass of water, a grateful draught, as it seemed to carry away all the dregs of acidity left in the stomach after digestion, which, after the first year's practice I left off gradually, and seldom now use.

Experience has taught me to believe that, these human beans are the most insidious enemies man, with a tendency to corpulence in advanced life, can possess, though eminently friendly to youth. He may very prudently mount guard against such an enemy if he is not a fool to himself, and I fervently hope this truthful unvarnished tale may lead him to make a trial of the plan, which I sincerely recommend to public notice,— not with any ambitious motive, but in sincere good faith, to help my fellow-creatures to acquire the marvellous blessings I obtained within the short period of a few months.

I do not recommend every corpulent man to rush headlong into such a change of diet (*certainly not*), but to act advisedly and after full consultation with a physician.

My former dietary table was bread and milk for breakfast, or a pint of tea with plenty of milk, sugar, and buttered toast; meat, beer, much bread (of which I was always very fond) and pastry for dinner, the meal of tea similar to that of breakfast, and generally a fruit tart or bread and milk for supper. I had little comfort and far less sound sleep.

It certainly appears to me that my present dietary table is far superior to the former—more luxurious and liberal, independent of its blessed effect—but when it is proved to be more healthful, comparisons are simply ridiculous, and I can hardly imagine that any man, even in sound health, would choose the former, even if it were not an enemy; but, when it is shown to be, as in my case, inimical both to health and comfort, I can hardly conceive there is any man who would not willingly avoid it. I can conscientiously assert that I never lived so well as under the new plan of dietary, which I should have formerly thought a dangerous extravagant trespass upon health ; I am very much better, bodily and mentally, pleased to believe that I hold the reins of health and comfort in my own hands, and, though at seventy-two years of age, I cannot expect to remain free from some coming natural infirmity that all flesh is heir to, I cannot at the present time complain of any, although six years older than when I wrote my first edition. It is simply miraculous, and I am thankful to Almighty Providence for directing me, through an extraordinary chance, to the care of a man who could work such a change in so short a time~

Oh! that the faculty would look deeper into, and make themselves better acquainted with, the crying evil of obesity—that dreadful tormenting parasite on health and comfort. Their fellow-men might not then descend into premature graves, as I believe many do, from what is termed apoplexy, and certainly would not, during their sojourn on earth, endure so much bodily and consequently mental infirmity.

Corpulence, though giving no actual pain (as it appears to me), must naturally press with undue violence upon the bodily viscera, driving one part upon

· another, and stopping the free action of all. I am sure it did in my particular case, and the result of my experience is briefly as follows

I have not felt better in health than now for the last twenty-six years.

Have suffered no inconvenience whatever in the probational remedy or since.

Am reduced nearly **13** inches in bulk, and 50 lbs. in weight.

Can perform every necessary office for myself.

The umbilical rupture is cured.

My sight and hearing are suprising at my age.

My other bodily ailments have become mere matters of history.

I placed a thank-offering of £50 in the hands of my kind medical adviser for distribution amongst his favourite hospitals, after gladly paying his usual fees, and still remain under obligations for his care and attention, which I can never hope to repay. I am most thankful to Almighty Providence for mercies

received, and determined still to press the case into public notice as a token of gratitude.

I am fully persuaded that thousands of our fellow-men might profit equally by a similar course to mine; but, constitutions not being all alike, a different course of treatment may be advisable for the removal of so tormenting an affliction.

My kind and valued medical adviser is not a doctor for obesity, but stands on the pinnacle of fame in the treatment of another malady, which, as he well knows, is frequently induced by the disease of which I am speaking, and I most sincerely trust my corpulent friends (and there are thousands of corpulent people whom I dare not so rank) may be led into my tramroad.

The very gradual reductions in my weight which I am able to show, may be interesting to many, and I have great pleasure in stating them, believing that they serve to demonstrate further the merit of the system pursued.

My weight on August 26, 1862, was 202 lbs.

lb. lbs.

On September 7, it was 200, having lost 2

27	,	197	,	3	more.
October 19	,	193	,	4	
November 9	,	190	,	3	
December 3	,	187	,	3	
24	,	184	,	3	
Jan 14, 1863	,	182	,	2	
February 4	,	180	,	2	
25	,	178	,	2	
March 18	,	176	,	2	
April 8	,	173	,	3	
29	,	170	,	3	
May 20	,	167	,	3	
June 10	,	164	,	3	
July 1	,	161	,	3	
22	,	159	,	2	
August 12	,	157	,	2	
26	,	156	,	1	
September 12	,	156	,	0	

Total loss of weight in 12 months.. 46 lbs.

I have subsequently lost 4 lbs. more.

My diminished girth, in tailor phraseology, was hardly conceivable even by my own friends, or my respected medical adviser, until I put on my former clothing, over what I now wear, which is a thoroughly convincing proof of the remarkable change. These important desiderata have been attained by the most easy and comfortable means, with but little medicine, and almost entirely by a system of diet, which formerly I should have thought dangerously generous. I am told by all ~ho know me that my personal appearance greatly improved, and that I seem to bear the stamp of good health; this may be a matter of opinion or friendly remark, but I can honestly assert that I feel restored in health, "bodily and

mentally,” appear to have more muscular power and vigour, eat and drink with a good appetite, and sleep well. All symptoms of acidity, indigestion, and heartburn (with which I was frequently tormented) have vanished. I have left off using boot-hooks, and other such aids, which were indispensable, but being now able to stoop with ease and freedom, are unnecessary. I have lost the feeling of *occasional faintness*, and what I think a remarkable blessing and comfort is, that I have been able safely to leave off knee-bandages, which I had worn *necessarily* for many years, and given up the umbilical truss.

After publishing my Pamphlet, I felt constrained to send a copy of it to my former medical advisers, to ascertain their opinions on the subject. They did not dispute or question the propriety of the system, but either dared not venture its practice upon a man of my age, or thought it too great a sacrifice of personal comfort to be necessary advised or adopted, and none of them appeared to feel the fact of the misery of corpulence. One eminent physician, as I before stated, assured me that increasing weight was a necessary result of advancing years; another equally eminent to whom I had been directed by a very friendly third, who had most kindly but ineffectually failed in a remedy, added to my weight in a few weeks instead of abating the evil. These facts led me to believe the question was not sufficiently observed or even regarded.

The great charm and comfort of the system is, that its affects are palpable within a week of trial, which creates a natural stimulus to persevere for few weeks more, when the fact becomes established beyond question.

I only entreat all persons suffering from corpulence to make a fair trial for just one clear month, as I am well convinced, they will afterwards pursue a course which yields such extraordinary benefit, till entirely and effectually relieved, and be it remembered, by the sacrifice merely of simple, for the advantage of more generous and comforting food. The simple dietary evidently adds fuel to corpulent fire, whereas the superior and liberal seems to extinguish it.

Many are practising the diet after consultation with their own medical advisers; some few have gone to mine, and others are practising upon their own convictions of the advantages detailed in the Pamphlet, though I recommend all to act advisedly, in case their constitutions should differ from mine.

I am now in that happy comfortable state that I do not hesitate to indulge in any fancy in regard to diet, but watch the consequences, and do not continue any course which adds to weight or bulk and consequent discomfort.

Is not the system suggestive to artists and men of sedentary employment who cannot spare time for exercise, consequently become corpulent, and clog the little muscular action with a superabundance of fat, thus easily avoided?

Pure genuine bread may be the staff of life as it is termed. It is so, particularly in youth, but I feel certain it is more wholesome in advanced life if thoroughly toasted, as I take it. My impression is, that any starchy or saccharine matter tends to the disease of corpulence in advanced life, and whether it be swallowed in a direct form or produced in the stomach by combination, that all things tending to these elements should be avoided, of course always under sound medical authority.

A kind friend has furnished me with a tabular statement in regard to weight as proportioned to

stature, which may be interesting and useful to corpulent readers

STATURE. WEIGHT.

5 feet 1 should be 8 stone 8 or 120 lbs.
 5 " 2 " 9 0 " 126 "
 5 " 3 " 9 7 " 133 "
 5 " 4 " 9 10 " 136 "
 5 " 5 " 10 2 " 142 "
 5 " 6 " 10 5 " 145 "
 5 " 7 " 10 8 " 148 "
 5 " 9 " 11 8 " 162 "
 5 " 10 " 12 1 " 169 "
 5 " 11 " 12 6 " 174 "
 6 " 0 " 12 10 " 178 "

This tabular statement, taken from a mean average of 2,648 healthy men, was formed and arranged for an Insurance Company by the late Dr. John Hutchinson. It answered as a pretty good standard, and insurances were regulated upon it. His calculations were made upon the volume of air passing in and out of the lungs, and this was his guide as to how far the various organs of the body were in health, and the lungs in particular. It may be viewed as some sort of probable rule, yet only as an average,—some in health weighing more by many pounds than others. It must not be looked upon as infallible, but only as a sort of general, reasonable, guide to Nature's great and mighty work.

On a general view of the question, I think it may be conceded that a frame of low stature was hardly intended to bear very heavy weight. Judging from this tabular statement I ought to be lighter than I am; I shall not, however, covet or aim at such a result, nor, on the other hand, feel alarmed if I decrease a little more in weight and bulk.

I am certainly more sensitive to cold since I have lost the superabundant fat, but this is remediable by another garment, far more agreeable and satisfactory. Many of my friends said, as I progressed, "Oh! you have done well so far, but take care you don't go too far." I fancy such a circumstance, with such a dietary, very unlikely, if not impossible, and I now say this after six years' experience ; but feeling that I have nearly attained the right standard of bulk and weight proportional to my stature and age, I should not hesitate to partake of a fattening dietary occasionally, to preserve that happy standard, if necessary; but I shall always keep a careful watch upon myself to discover the effect, and act accordingly, so that, if I choose to spend a day or two with Dives, so to speak, I must not forget to devote the next to Lazarus.

Little do the faculty imagine the misery and bitterness to life through the parasite of corpulence or obesity.

The approach of corpulence is so gradual that, until it is far advanced, persons rarely become objects of attention. Many may have even congratulated themselves on their comely appearance, and refrained from seeking advice or a remedy for that which they did not consider an evil, but an evil I can say most truly it is, when in much excess, and, in my opinion, it must arrive at that point, unless obviated by proper means.

Some, I believe, would willingly submit to even a violent remedy, so that an immediate benefit could

be produced; this is not the object of the treatment, as it cannot but be dangerous (in my humble opinion) to reduce a disease of this nature suddenly; they are probably then too prone to despair of success, and consider it as unalterably connected with their constitution. *Many under this feeling doubtless return to their former habits, encouraged so to act by the ill-judged advice of friends who, I am persuaded (from the correspondence I have had on this most interesting subject), become unthinking accomplices in the misery of those whom they regard and esteem.*

It has also been remarked that such a dietary as mine was too good and expensive for a poor man, and that I had wholly lost sight of that class; but a very poor corpulent man is not so frequently met with, inasmuch as the poor cannot afford to procure the means for creating fat; but when the tendency does exist in that class, I have no doubt it can be remedied by abstinence from the forbidden articles, and a moderate indulgence in such cheap stimulants as may be recommended by a medical adviser, whom they have ample opportunities of consulting gratuitously.

I have a very strong feeling that gout (another terrible parasite upon humanity) might be greatly relieved, if not cured, by this proper natural dietary, but not without advice.

The word "*parasite*" has been much commented upon, as inappropriate to any but a living creeping thing (of course I use the word in a figurative sense, as a burden to the flesh), but if fat is not an insidious creeping enemy, I do not know what is. I should have equally applied the word to gout, rheumatism, dropsy, and many other diseases.

One material point I should be glad to impress on my corpulent readers—it is, to get accurately weighed at starting upon the fresh system, and continue to do so weekly or monthly, for the change will be so truly palpable by this course of examination, that it will arm them with perfect confidence in the merit and ultimate success of the plan. I deeply regret not having secured a photographic portrait of my original figure in 1862, to place in juxtaposition with one of my present form. It might have amused some, but certainly would have been very convincing to others, and astonishing to all, that such an effect should have been so readily and speedily produced by the simple method of exchanging a meagre for a generous dietary *under proper advice*.

I shall ever esteem it a great favour if persons relieved and cured, as I have been, will kindly let me know of it; the information will be truly gratifying to my mind. That the system is a great success, I have not a shadow of doubt from the numerous and grateful reports sent to me.

Some doubts have been expressed in regard to the vanishing point of such a descending scale, but it is a remarkable fact that the great and most palpable diminution in weight and bulk occurs within the first forty-eight hours, the descent is then more gradual. My own experience, and that of others, assures me that if medical authority be first consulted as to the complaint, and such slight extraneous aid obtained as medicine can afford, nature will do her duty, and only her duty first, by relieving herself of immediate pressure she will be enabled to move more freely in her own beautiful way; and secondly (the same course being pursued by the patient), to work speedy amelioration and final cure. The vanishing point is only when the disease is stopped and the parasite annihilated.

In my humble judgment, the dietary is the principal point in the treatment of Corpulence, and it

appears to me, moreover, that if properly regulated it becomes in a certain sense a medicine. The system seems to me to attack only the superfluous deposit of fat, and, as my medical friend informs me, purges the blood, rendering it more pure and healthy, strengthens the muscles and bodily viscera, and, I feel quite convinced, sweetens life, if it does not prolong it.

As I find there are more Mr. Harveys than one concerned in the question of the cure for Corpulence, and as I have been much troubled by correspondents on the subject, I am glad of this opportunity to repeat that the medical adviser to whom I am so much indebted, is Mr. WILLIAM HARVEY, F.R.C.S., of No. 2, Soho Square, London, W.

I have now finished my task, and trust my humble efforts may prove to be good seed well sown, that will fructify and produce a large harvest of benefit to my fellow-creatures. I also hope the faculty generally may be led more extensively to ventilate this question of corpulence or obesity, so that instead of a few able practitioners, there may be hundreds distributed in the various parts of the United Kingdom. In such case, I am persuaded that these diseases will be very rare.

WILLIAM BANTING.

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May, 1869.