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Popular Health Movements and Diet Reform in Nineteenth-Century America

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Introduction

Food is deeply related to culture and society.[1] While human beings have consumed a variety of things in their daily lives, they have attached a wide range of cultural meanings to what they select to eat, how they prepare their food, with whom they eat, as well as what they consume on special occasions.

Several kinds of foods exist simply to be eaten at various ceremonial gatherings held at specific stages in the life cycle. Food is thus an important measure expressing the way that humans are linked to the environment and to one another. Eating is an expression of one's way of life, and statements of one's faith and beliefs are often demonstrated through food-related codes and ceremonies.

The United States grew with immigrants from diverse areas whose individual food cultures were an important element in their ethnic identities. A new "creolized" food culture took shape through the fusion of those food cultures and foodstuffs in the new land in a concrete manifestation of the meeting of cultures.

The food culture of the United States experienced great changes from the 1820s to the 1890s. There was a significant expansion of the country physically and at the same time the promotion of internal migration. By

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1848 what had been a cluster of colonies on the Eastern seaboard had grown into a continental nation stretching from sea to sea between the Canadian and Mexican borders. In 1820 the total population of the United States was 10 million people, with only 55,000 living in the territory of Illinois at the western periphery of the settled country. By 1840 that figure had ballooned to 17 million people, with the frontier moving on to Iowa and 500,000 people living in Illinois.[2]

The people who moved ever westward encountered new foodstuffs and devised new ways of cooking items that were harvested regionally. A mixed food culture was thus fostered through the various communities that migrated across the country.

At the same time that people were moving westward, a second movement was also taking place in the United States—that of people relocating from the countryside to the city. In cities people met those who were unlike their neighbors in their original hometowns, and they had to live and eat under different human-relationship situations. Some people experienced for the first time the custom of cooking and eating with just their immediate nuclear family, shifting away from the custom of cooking food and eating together with a larger extended family.

In addition to those migrating internally, there were thousands of immigrants to the United States coming from abroad. In the Northeastern United States, the local food culture developed on a foundation laid in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by English, Scottish, and Dutch food cultures that made use of cooking ingredients taken from the Atlantic Ocean. Irish, French Canadian, and Scandinavian workers in the New England flour mills in the late nineteenth century also influenced the food customs of the region.

The British yeoman food culture introduced by the early Puritan settlers served as the central type of food in New England until the nineteenth century, with such ingredients as wheat, barley, rye, pulse (beans), beef, mutton, pork, butter, cheese, and fruits being used. In the early years, however, wheat and other grains had to be replaced by maize, which grew naturally in the United States. The preferred food of pease porridge, brown bread, and "boiled dinner" of meat and vegetables, along with drink—dark beer and fermented cider—of seventeenth-century New Englanders continued to grace the dinner tables of such old colonial cities as Boston and New Haven. However, by the end of the Victorian era, a wide variety of foods had been introduced owing to a variety of influences. Nonetheless, from the Puritan era until the end of

the nineteenth century, regional foods were retained, such as Indian pudding, succotash, hoecakes, popcorn, johnnycakes, pumpkin bread, pumpkin pie, cranberries, and turkey.

In the Mid-Atlantic States, meanwhile, Dutch, Swedish, British, and German food customs made use of rich cooking ingredients taken from the fertile land and the Chesapeake Bay. New York City grew as the largest cosmopolitan center in the United States and set trends in a diversified ethnic food culture. In Philadelphia, Quaker food culture mixed with other European food customs.[3]

In the mid-nineteenth century, thanks to a consumption revolution, various foods became easily accessible in the form of purchasable products, and particularly those people living in urban areas began to enjoy eating white bread and cakes purchased from shops and going out to dinner at restaurants. Most of the recipes for bread in the first cookbook published in the United States, which came out in 1796, were for flat bread. Until yeast became available as a product some fifty years later, many Americans consumed corn bread or flat bread, which were baked once or twice a week and which became hard several hours after being removed from the oven. It was a big change when bread made from wheat flour and containing yeast and preservatives became easily available in stores.[4]

Coffee drinking expanded rapidly because of the rise of the price of tea during the Revolutionary War years, and also because tea had come to be regarded as not a patriotic drink. The customs of France, which had advanced the techniques of brewing coffee, were actively adopted. By the time of the War of 1812, coffee drinking had become well established in the country.[5]

The consumption of meat in the United States in the nineteenth century also underwent a transformation thanks to the improvement of meat-processing procedures and meat distribution. Although livestock such as pigs, sheep, and cattle were raised and slaughtered by people at home until the beginning of the Victorian era, by the end of the century meat packers processed animal meat brought in by the railroad, letting people purchase a variety of products from butchers.[6]

At the same time, though, a movement arose in the country questioning the food culture that had grown so much richer and more diverse. In the antebellum period, particularly, that reaction appeared in the statements of a popular health movement that opposed the modernization of medicine and dietary changes.

While the popular health movement arose in opposition to standard medicine, it came to take on the nature of a movement of health reform that proposed new methods of healing and care that focused especially on diet. The questions it posed about health, well-being, and way of life were aimed at reforming the "bodies and souls" of Americans.

That movement was revolutionary also in the way it questioned the tradition of sitting around an abundant dinner table as a sign of success in the new country.

In this essay I focus on the statements made by people in the popular health movement regarding food culture, what sort of "problems" they saw as reasons for concern, and what they thought was an "appropriate" lifestyle during the antebellum period, when the notion of the United States as a single nation first began to cohere. Food culture or "foodways" describes the beliefs people have and lifestyle choices they make as they relate to food. Foodways were viewed as an index of the level of transformation and accomplishment in a person's "reformation."

I. The Popular Health Movement and Diet

The popular health movement that arose in the United States in the early nineteenth century and lasted until the Civil War raised questions about the fraught situation of medical treatment and health of the era. Beginning with Thomsonianism (the botanical movement that started in the 1820s), it came to include Eclectics, hydropathy (the "water-cure" movement), and homeopathy.

Even today, in the twenty-first century, alternative medicine is an active option in the United States in various forms. However, the large-scale alternative medicine movement that sprang up in the nineteenth century was a unique response to the emergence of what is called "standard medicine."

With the rise of sociohistorical research in the 1970s, the popular health movement of the antebellum period was studied as an epochal event in American cultural history.[7] Before the 1970s, the focus of medical history on that period was limited to the careers of prominent physicians. Since then, however, researchers in the social history of medicine, American history, and women's history have investigated the movement as representative of the multiple changes that the United States underwent during the period before the Civil War.

Despite many assertions that were made about diet in each of the alternative medicine movements, there has been little concentrated and comparative research done from the perspective of food culture. Most researchers have studied the characteristics of each popular health movement on a separate basis. In this essay I particularly make a comparative study of Thomsonianism (a botanical movement) and hydropathy (a water-cure movement), which both made distinctive assertions about food.

Thomsonianism was the only one of the popular health movements that was purely American. It was distinguished by its leader being a farmer—an "amateur" in medicine. Later, it was introduced to Lancashire and Yorkshire in England. Previous research on Thomsonianism has not paid particular attention to its method of treatment, taking the view that it varied little from the supportive medical measures carried out by regular medicine in the same era.[8] Although its founder, Samuel Thomson (1769–1843), made many remarks and practice-related proposals concerning the spread of physicians and changes in midwifery, no study has been made of them in detail.[9]

Also, while there have been attempts to situate Thomsonianism within American cultural history,[10] they overlook Thomson's arguments that treatment was an act similar to cooking.[11] Also, insufficient attention has been paid to his autobiography, which describes his activities as an itinerant healer and which constitutes a valuable record of the specific changes in the environment of rapidly urbanizing regions such as Philadelphia, New York City, and Boston, as well as the changes in human relationships surrounding treatment.[12] I explore those ways of thinking about food that were deeply involved with health and views of treatment as a background to a study of cultural change.

Hydropathy supported women healers, unlike many other medical fields of the period, and so previous research has primarily analyzed hydrology's perspective on women's health and related activities.[13] Hydropathists elaborated their plan because they were concerned about the deterioration of people's health, especially that of women.

Despite hydropathy emphasizing primarily a vegetarian diet far more than other movements did, little attention has been given to its contents and significance. In this essay, I focus on the discourse dealing with diet and vegetarianism to clarify health reformers' concerns in that area and what they saw as optimal health.

I also look at the ideas of these two popular alternative medicine movements, the Thomsonianism botanical movement and the hydropathy

water-cure movement, in the more general area of food, thus illuminating thought and debate on health and food lifestyles of Americans during the antebellum period. In part II I trace the larger shifts related to health in antebellum America and explore the statements and theories of Thomsonianism, the first movement to oppose the modernization of medicine, thus shedding light on one aspect of the cultural situation surrounding food.

In part III I mainly explore hydropathy, which arose in the mid-nineteenth century following Thomsonianism. Hydropathy was intimately linked with many other activities of the same period, such as phrenology and nervous diseases, which I also examine from the perspective of food culture.

II. HEALTH CARE AND FOOD IN THE THOMSONIAN BOTANICAL MOVEMENT

A. Medicine in the Antebellum Period and the Emergence of Medical Sectarians

A significant change in medical treatment in the United States came with the rapid establishment of medical schools from the mid-eighteenth century onward and the emergence of physicians, known as "regular doctors." Physicians began to be trained at medical schools—set up by doctors trained primarily in Britain—in Northeastern cities such as Philadelphia.[14] As more and more states started to give licenses to practice medicine only to graduates of medical schools, others who had previously been involved in treatment and healing—orthopedic doctors, midwives, Indian doctors, herbalists—were placed in the category of "nonregular doctors" and called "quacks"; they often found their treatment activities restricted.[15]

Even so, the establishment of medical schools and hospitals did not necessarily advance medical technology. Medical theory did not evolve much at all, with fevers and swelling still regarded as an "excited stage" of the body. To quell such maladies, mostly supportive measures were applied, such as the use of bloodletting and mercury-based laxatives. The new physicians, who had completed only a short course of study at medical schools, lacked practical experience and did not necessarily carry out successful treatments or childbirth assistance. In addition, because cholera, one of the diseases that afflicted people in the nineteenth cen-

tury, was a debilitating disease, the supportive measures had the unintended effect of worsening patients' health and shortening their lives. Physicians who could not successfully treat patients used so-called heroic medicine, distinctive to the United States, in which large quantities of blood were let and drugs administered that had violent side effects.

One of the strongest critics of that situation was Samuel Thomson, a farmer who cleared his own woodland alongside his father, in the northeastern state of New Hampshire. He began the botanical movement that later came to be known as Thomsonianism. Criticizing the institutionalization of medicine, Thomson instead advocated "self-help" in the area of health care.[16]

Thomson saw his mother's health worsen after treatment by a physician (she eventually died), and a parade of regular doctors failed to cure his wife when she fell ill after childbirth. She only got better when cared for by "Dr. Watts" and "Dr. Fuller," who were called "root doctors."[17] Thomson believed that childbirth was not a disease but a natural state and that the role of the healer was to help the body demonstrate its power following the course laid down by nature.[18] He called for a return to the curing practices that predated the emergence of the modern physician.

Thomson believed that all diseases and disorders were caused by the body getting cold and losing its balance through gastrointestinal upsets. He thought that the way to treat that condition was to restore the body's "natural heat," which would allow strength to return. For that reason, he thought it was of the utmost necessity to maintain the body's healthful condition through a proper diet.[19] According to him, that method was in accordance with the ideas of Hippocrates in ancient Greece.

Specifically, Thomson prescribed six treatments—primarily based on the lobelia herb—that he said he had "discovered" as a small boy.[20] By means of herbal teas and sweat baths using hot stones, his treatments would adjust the condition of the body so that it could take advantage of fresh nutritious food and achieve regularity. Such methods had been long known by American Indians, and they were carried out by many self-reliant Americans on an everyday basis. At the height of the popularity of Thomson's movement, some one-third of all Americans used herbal treatments, and the number of people describing themselves as herbal doctors also grew.[21] In response to the force of the movement, some states even went so far as to repeal the system of giving licenses only to regular doctors.

Several reasons can be cited for the spread of Thomsonianism. The first was the popularity of two books of his that were first published in 1822: *New Guide to Health; or, Botanic Family Physician*, which he had dictated in plain language, and *A Narrative, of the Life and Medical Discoveries of Samuel Thomson*,[22] which described his life as a pioneering farmer. Another reason was that the information he provided could be used by people living in backwoods areas. Also, the gradual organization of the U.S. postal system made it easier for his books to be distributed widely.[23] The information contained in the two books was also conveyed to the Midwest and South by Methodist missionaries traveling along pioneer trails.[24]

B. Fireside Healing in Thomsonianism

Prescriptions for Disorders and Diseases

Thomson's thoughts about how to deal with disorders and diseases were deeply related to experiences he had in childhood. He grew up in an environment with no physician living within a ten-mile radius. The first healer he met was a "root and herb doctor," a midwife by the name of Benton, who had long been the only medical practitioner in the area. She taught him how to prepare herbal medicines.

Even before he was four years old, Thomson helped his father, who was a strict Baptist, in clearing the land. He could not go to school to learn reading and writing even if he had wanted to because he had to help his father in clearing land. Benton was an important teacher for him. He would accompany her as she walked around gathering medicinal herbs, and she taught him the efficacy and usage of each one for bringing the natural power of the human body into play, the only and most essential aspect of healing.[25]

Most of the herbs were used in teas to heat up the body. At nineteen, when clearing some wasteland along the Onion River in Vermont, Thomson sustained a severe injury to his ankle. A local healer suggested that he boil some apple-tree bark and wash his wound with it, but it only made it worse. After eight days, his father carried him on a straw bed over the snow to the herbal doctor Kitteridge, after first applying a plaster made from comfrey root and turpentine as a home remedy. Thomson lay for several days before the fireplace in the doctor's living room and recovered after being given a treatment using medicinal herbs.[26]

That experience attracted him to the power of the medicinal herbs that grew naturally around him and to the value of heat. He described such herbs as "friends of nature."[27] Thus was formed his belief that the herbs that grew in the American land could heal the people who lived there. He expressed his belief that "there is medicine enough in the country within the reach of everyone, to cure all the disease incident to it," and he prescribed to his family and to the neighbors. Later, he became an itinerant healer, using curative herbs indigenous to the North American Continent.[28]

That feeling of trust in nature contained elements that resonated with the "admiration of nature" expressed in the antebellum period,[29] which could be one reason why Thomson's theories became so popular among his contemporaries. Thomson frequently used the expression "the God of Nature."[30] While nature had been experienced by early settlers with a sense of awe and wonder, the gradual disappearance of the frontier and the progressive urbanization of the period started to inspire the idea that nature was something to be taken care of and preserved. Just as Thoreau aimed for a self-sufficient life at Walden Pond, there were others who went deep into the forest to live surrounded by nature.

Optimum Environment for Treatments

The places in which Thomson experienced treatment and healing were always warm rooms within a home, where the patient could stay with the healer always alongside. Benton would go over to Thomson and, if necessary, stay with the family, while Kitteridge would have his patients stay in his own home. In the United States through the mid-nineteenth century, Thomson's image of the best place of treatment was shared by most people. According to him, the healer needed to have a knowledge of the herbs and diet that would link the hospitality and experience of everyday life with the healing process.

In his *New Guide to Health* of 1827 Thomson particularly emphasized that his ideal for medical practice should also hold for childbirth, with a return to traditional ways with midwives, because he saw childbirth as a natural process not requiring medical intervention.[31]

The tradition for childbirth since colonial times in New England, so-called social childbirth, was to have a midwife and assistant come stay in a room known as the "borning room," which was adjacent to the family's living room with its fireplace. Only women were allowed into

the room during the birth, with light food such as "groaning cake" and "groaning beer" available to visitors and attendants.[32] To keep up the strength of the expectant mother, toast, buckwheat gruel, mutton, meat soup, and freshly laid eggs were served to her, while a cordial was provided to alleviate pain. Midwives rarely emigrated from Europe to the New World, so in the United States, women, including ministers' wives, would help one another in childbirth.

Although Thomson considered it natural to conduct medical treatment and childbirth at home, such practices were starting to disappear with the coming of the new age. "Social childbirth" carried out exclusively by women was quickly supplanted by regular doctors known as "man-midwives," while some women who could not afford to have a male medical doctor come to the house might even go to a hospital instead. The tradition of mutual assistance before and after birth became symbolic, with women visiting after the child was swaddled to wish the mother well.[33] Thomson wrote that he himself had to learn to assist his wife in childbirth, since no midwife was available. As a result of that experience, he included precise instructions on strengthening the power of nature in "home-birthing" in his 1835 edition of his treatment manual, *New Guide to Health*; the process could be carried out by husband and wife in case "the women fear giving a hand."[34] In the case in which husbands had to help their wives, Thomson believed the best thing they could give birthing women was good food and drink. For instance, one way to strengthen nature's power during pregnancy, he wrote, was for the woman to drink a tea made with tansy or mugwort and raspberry leaves mixed with ginger in order to warm the body. He said that the drink would help alleviate pain if labor had not yet begun, while if the baby was ready to come out, the drink would help to speed up the birth.

Additionally, Thomson recommended the formation of "herbal friends' associations" if everyday assistance from neighbors was not available, with the members helping one another out by studying his manual.[35]

Thomson also emphasized the importance of the home as the location of treatment, cure, and mutual cooperation. He called on people to accept medicine from the hands of women who had made bread, butter, and cheese at home by hand, just as it had been done in colonial America.[36] He said that "treatment is the same as cooking" and strongly recommended a way of life in which care was carried out on a self-help basis.

Thomson considered herbal treatments on the same level as "cooking" in everyday life.[37] He opposed the professionalization of life in all

areas—not just medicine—including politics and religion. He said that healing arts were desirable, with the kitchen and living room as "colleges" and women as the "teachers."[38] He fretted about people losing the tradition of self-help, saying that it meant that they would stop thinking for themselves.

This way of thinking resonated with the belief of many early Americans, especially Jeffersonians, that a yeoman farmer could live autonomously. Thomsonianism, which posited that thinking for oneself was the foundation of freedom,[39] received enthusiastic support in the early nineteenth century because people were seeking to live in the "country of the free."

However, people's lifestyles began to change, with the human relationships surrounding healing and childbirth also shifting. In an age in which medical professionals emerged, Thomson's insistence on keeping the traditions of self-help and mutual assistance with the home as the base was seen as an anachronism.

A childbirth manual written in 1835 by Thomas Hershey, a late-period Thomsonian, recommended that some capable women ought to become specialists in childbirth techniques. Alva Curtis (1797–1881), meanwhile, developed the so-called Eclectics method that combined the best of botanical treatments and the methods of regular doctors. More medical schools, which Thomson had rejected, were established, and the sale of medicinal herbs began. Botanical treatment lost its characteristic of being an alternative medicine movement with the strengthening of the position of specialists. Thomson lamented the disappearance of large patches of marsh rosemary from which to gather herbs for medicines.[40] He also pointed out the degradation of the environment, including contamination of meat and water as a result of urbanization, which he observed on a trip to New York City.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the popularity of Thomsonianism, the only U.S.-born popular health movement, began to wane with the emergence of other sectarian movements. In its place came homeopathy, a German alternative medicine movement, which advocated the power of nature; Austrian hydropathy, the water-cure treatment; and Eclectics. Although homeopathy emphasized the importance of the physician and patient sharing time for dialogue, it also recommended that drugs be prepared by specialists who had a good understanding of the theories on which homeopathy was based. The affirmation that the "common man" should follow nature and carry out his daily life on the premises of autonomy and self-help became impractical with the

changes in people's vocations and ways of life. This led to the demise of the Thomsonian movement that had sought a renaissance of American traditions.

III. Health Reform and Diet in Hydropathy

A. The Rise of Hydropathy

Hydropathy arose in the mid-nineteenth century. Joel Shew (1816–55), a native of Providence, in Saratoga County, New York, who moved to Philadelphia, worked in a daguerreotype shop for fifteen years and developed occupational health problems. He then attended medical school from 1840 to 1843, graduating with an MD degree. He became interested in water-cure as practiced by Vincenz Priessnitz (1799–1851) in Gräfenberg, Austrian Silesia. Shew went there to study it and brought it back to the United States, opening a water-cure infirmary in New York City in 1844. It followed Thomsonianism as a popular alternative form of healing and is distinguished by the special attention it paid not only to preventing disease but to "perfecting" people's health. It responded to the weakening of the body and spirit under the influence of radical changes in the environment brought by urbanization and industrialization. It paid particular attention to the peculiar trait of the "European race" to fall prey to "nervous diseases," as suggested by the "new sciences" such as phrenology that attracted much attention from hydropathists and health reformers. It proposed health reforms aiming to create the perfect healthy body that could survive physically and mentally in an age in which people were moving to crowded industrialized cities where husbands might work outside the home while wives remained at home all day in a small apartment.

Hydropathy was introduced into the United States in the 1840s by physicians who had studied orthodox medicine and had doubts about it, Joel Shew and Russell Thatcher Trall (1812–77). Shew introduced the Priessnitz system into the United States and refined it especially for childbirth at the first hydropathic institution that he opened in New York.

Priessnitz was a farmer who treated and healed his own injuries and disorders solely by applying water. In the 1810s, after he succeeded in healing a serious injury to his ribs that his doctor had given up on, he began to treat his animals and his neighbors with cold water and became locally known. Gradually, people of high status, including the emperor's

brother, Anton Victor, were treated by Priessnitz, who built a sanatorium in what had been his father's house. As his water-cure method became increasingly popular, he established a water-cure practice in Gräfenberg called the Water University.[41]

Shaw published *The Hydropathic Family Physician* in 1854.[42] He was also active as editor of the *Water-Cure Journal* (*WCJ*). That publication, the main journal of hydropathy, is thought to have had more than one hundred thousand subscribers at its peak in the 1850s.[43]

Russell Trall was a New Englander, living in New York, who had experienced poor health when he was young. He studied medicine with a preceptor, graduating from Albany Medical College in 1835 with an MD degree.[44] While practicing the regular medicine of the era, he became suspicious of treating symptoms through "heroic therapies" such as bloodletting and purgatives. He abandoned the drug system and began to explore preventive treatments and ways to improve people's physical condition. He paid much attention to diet, in 1850 organizing the American Vegetarian Society and serving as its vice president. In 1849 Trall succeeded Shew as editor of the *WCJ*. He opened the coeducational New York Hydropathic and Physiological School in 1853.

In his mission as a reformer, Trall relied on three fields of popular scientific knowledge about human physiology of the day. The first one was the water cure originated by Priessnitz and further refined by hydropaths in America. The second was "vegetarianism," refined mainly by Sylvester Graham (1795–1851). Graham had been a Presbyterian minister and was enthusiastic about vegetarianism because he believed the human body became too excited from eating meat, which could lead to nervous disease. His way of diet, "Grahamism," was introduced and practiced in many water-cure institutions. The recipe for his invention, Graham bread, first appeared in *The New Hydropathic Cookbook* (New York, 1855). The third field was phrenology, originated by Franz Joseph Gall (1788–1828) in Austria and further developed by George Combe (1788–1858) in Edinburgh.

While confirming the changes in people's lifestyle, the proponents and practitioners of hydropathy concurred with the concepts of Shew and Trall, which reviewed the new sciences of the age and tried to reform human beings as a whole. They included many people who were interested in reforming society and individuals mentally and physically. Those reforms included topics that were debated vociferously from the

mid-nineteenth century onward, such as dress reform, abstention from drink, reform in medicine and education, and the liberation of slaves.

Catherine Esther Beecher (1800–78), who founded an academy for women to study physical and moral development, was in sympathy with hydropathy; she was deeply concerned about the health and living conditions of women. She visited more than two hundred cities and towns to collect information about women's health and found that scarcely any women enjoyed good health.[45]

Beecher and her sister Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811–96), the abolitionist and author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, especially worried about the new type of nervous diseases seen among middle-class women living in cities.[46] Hydropathists took notice of clothing as well. They recommended dress that would keep American women healthy. Harriet N. Austin, MD, who was secretary of the National Dress Reform Association, was also active as the editor of the *Laws of Life* and a writer for the *Water-Cure Journal*. She claimed that women's first great right was the right to health and to wear the "American Costume," that is, the bloomer, a short dress worn over long loose trousers gathered closely about the ankles.[47] The focus on women's health was based on health being an important individual right as well as women's duty to give birth and raise the next generation as active and beautiful American citizens.

Dr. William Androus Alcott (1798–1859), a cousin of the reformer Bronson Alcott, also eagerly taught people health management so as to lead happy family lives. He received his MD from the Yale Medical College and was active as a health reformer and the first president of the American Physiological Society, which was founded in 1837 by Boston reformers inspired by Graham's ideas.[48]

Much attention was paid to eating habits. Diet is a foundation of health and is a concrete expression of one's beliefs, as well as visible proof of one's efforts. Vegetarianism was described as a "universal reform" because people could easily grasp such a dietary change, and it served as the foundation for all other reforms.[49]

B. Concerns about the Weakening of Body and Soul as Lifestyles Modernize

What did hydropathy consider problematic, and what prescriptions did it propose? As with Thomsonianism, the advocates of hydropathy viewed the intervention of physicians or any practitioners as a bad thing,

but they also worried about the adverse effects of changes to the environment and people's lifestyles, as well as the problem of nervous disorders. They especially looked to lifestyle, focusing on people's diets, as a way to deal with those problems.

Concerns about the Decline of the Power of Nature

Hydropathy viewed the frequent incidence of women having difficulties during childbirth as a problem, just as Thomsonianism did. One person who particularly took a deep interest in childbirth was Shew. Along with his wife Marie, who had suffered difficulties in childbirth under the assistance of regular doctors, his goal was for women first of all to build strong bodies through water cures, allowing them to avoid the need for the services of such doctors or any outside assistance. However, Shew thought it was not only the intervention of doctors but also changes in the environment and working habits that were having an adverse effect on people mentally and physically. He gathered and analyzed information about the lifestyles and health of various peoples around the world, including American Indians, looking at what work they did, how they used their time, and how relationships affected general well-being.

Shew believed it would be impossible to find perfect health in a civilized country:

> It is a sad reflection upon civilization to assert, that the more cultivated and refined man has become thus far in the world, the more sickly and diseased he is found to be. Impure air, want of out-door exercise, bad food and bad water, these may be stated as being among the prominent predisposing causes of such attacks.[50]

Shew investigated the causes of several mental illnesses, including hysteria, convulsions, epilepsy, chorea, trance, and ecstasy, and found that convulsions were more frequent in large towns and cities than in rural areas. He collected information about people all over the world who led different kinds of lives and concluded:

> In regard to the health of the different races, we find a vast difference in different parts of the world. In the same race also, varying according to a multitude of circumstances, the health of nations is found to differ in almost indefinite degree, according to the dietetic and other voluntary habits of the people.[51]

Shew found that Poles and Russians, who ate simple dishes made of vegetables and potatoes and who worked hard in severe climates, seemed to enjoy better health than Americans. He also observed that "red men" (i.e., American Indians) did not experience gout and rheumatism until they began to drink rum, a European introduction.[52]

Moreover, he observed that even in the United States, people who were engaged in agriculture and who did not strain their brains and moved in the fresh outside air had healthier bodies and souls than nonfarmers. He firmly believed that doing different work each day depending on the weather, living peacefully in the countryside, avoiding the cares of the world, and, most important, being able to determine the rhythm of one's own life, were closely related to mental health.

Nervous Disease and "Race"

Hydropathists observed an increase in the number of people with hysteria, convulsions, epilepsy, and similar mental diseases, along with an increase in population and rapidly changing living circumstances.

One reason for the change was thought by hydropathists to be inappropriate diet. People were starting to enjoy such foods as coffee, tea, and rich cakes, and they were using large amounts of spices to make meat more delicious. A relationship between insanity and indigestion was taken quite seriously by health reformers.

Trall pointed out what he saw as the bad aspects of eating meat. In the chapter on "Hydropathic Cookery" in his *Hydropathic Encyclopedia*, he wrote, "All flesh-eating is a departure from the physiological laws which the Creator has implanted in the constitution of man."[53] He explained the evils of flesh-eating. First, he said, "all the objections to animal food may be summed up in a single word—*impurity*."[54] In the middle of the nineteenth century tainted food was an urgent health problem for city dwellers.

Second, meat was a typical food responsible for bad health:

> All animal broths, soups, teas, all pickled, salted, and smoked meats, all kinds of shell-fish, all fried dishes, all dishes cooked in butter or other grease, all minced or other meat pies . . . all and every thing pertaining to the swinepork, bacon, lard, sausages, etc., . . . are to be considered as among things prohibited.[55]

Therefore, all meat, especially the pork popular with many Americans, was out of the question. The same went for gravies, fried food, pies, and cakes.

In the history of food culture in the United States, the act of eating a whole roasted animal and dividing the meat among many people sitting at a copious table was seen as a sign of success and presented a tableau of happiness.[56] Meat dishes, the centerpiece of the meal, became more delicious with the addition of spices. The use of spices and the habit of drinking coffee after dinner also became rooted as the new culture of luxury, and enjoying such things was seen as an expression of wealth. Trall warned of the bad effects of both the traditional meal and the adoption of new luxuries.

The vegetarian Graham, who worked with the hydropathists, warned that greasy food would give people indigestion and would cause them to succumb to "nervous disease." Greasy meat was also supposed to make people sensitive to sexual stimulation, and with the violent excitement, people would become insane.[57] Since he believed that sexual indulgence and alcoholism also affected the mind and nerves, he drew up strict diet programs. "Grahamism" was introduced and practiced in many water-cure institutions.

Trall emphasized the problem of nervous disorders just as Graham did. However, the reasons he gave did not merely stop at the problems of a meat diet. Having considered some phrenological information, Trall presented a classification of temperaments and their explanations. He concluded that the nervous temperament was dependent on the extensive development of the brain and nervous system: people who were blessed with a highly developed brain might also be inclined to nervous disease and irritability.[58]

Above all, for hydropathists, the Caucasian race (the five races were Caucasian, Ethiopian, American, Malay, and Mongolian) needed the most care as they had the best brains. Convinced of the superiority and the leadership of this "race," and with a sense of anxiety about the deterioration of its members, Shew and Trall made a fresh resolve to guide their followers in learning how to live well.

C. Food as Foundation of Well-Being

Food as the Departure Point for Health Reform

Hydropathy was just as critical of orthodox medicine as was the herbal movement. Many members were trained as orthodox doctors, but they did not believe in the way such medicine was being applied. However, it differed greatly from herbalism in that it did not merely attack regular doctors or nostalgically attempt to revive traditional healing. The movement was promoted during a period of rapid industrialization, when the power of nature was perceived to be in critical decline. Not only did hydropathy seek a way to help people survive during a time of great transformation, but it also aimed for the attainment of a "healthy" and "perfect" body. Trall stated that "[e]very organized being is beautiful in its perfect development, and health is the sole condition of such development."[59] In urban life, according to the teachings of hydropathy, it was essential for each individual to build up an entirely new "second nature" in order to attain a whole body that would not need care by a doctor.[60]

Hydropathists developed various strategies to promote health and prevent the deterioration of the body. They had a program of preventive treatment called "preparatory treatment,"[61] which began with a regimen of a large intake of water, "proper" (i.e., vegetarian) diet, exercise (including swimming), and plenty of sleep. For example, it was proposed that city people should take "rain baths" by not carrying umbrellas in the rain so they could touch the power of "natural" water. The regimen was considered as a time for purification, as well as an opportunity for lifestyle reform and personal improvement.

Most of all, much attention was paid to eating habits, because food could trigger nervous disorders. Vegetarianism was considered an effective means of diet reform. Health reformers organized the American Vegetarian Society,[62] which provided a wealth of information on how to eat appropriately. Those who joined the Vegetarian Society were not only interested in diet reform but also in clean living, temperance, dress reform, and abolition of slavery. The membership also included "Bible Christians," that is, members of the Bible Christian Church, a Methodist denomination, who had led the vegetarian movement in England. They followed the teachings of William Cowherd (?–1816), a religious reformer from Manchester. The teachings reached America in 1817 with the minister William Metcalfe (?–1862). Metcalfe published *Abstinence from the Flesh of Animals* in 1821, and in 1823, he founded the Bible

Christian Vegetarian Society. Also, after 1830, Sylvester Graham, who had studied medicine in Philadelphia, began to serve as a lecturer with the society.[63]

Diet reform was perceived as the "cornerstone" of all reforms. At the Eleventh Annual Meeting of the American Vegetarian Society, held at a Bible Christian Church in Philadelphia in 1860, the following statement was included as one of the resolutions: "That the object of all true and successful reform should be to make men healthier, wiser, better, and happier."[64]

Proper Cooking and Eating at Home

Vegetarians who had a strong tie with the hydropathists (Trall was deeply interested in vegetarianism for health) tried to eliminate foods thought to have a deleterious effect on health. Bad food was not limited to meat. Such ingredients and spices as salt, pepper, ginger, mustard, and Worcestershire sauce were also considered bad, because they would increase one's appetite for meat.

Enjoying cakes, coffee, or tea was also not good for the health. Isaac Jennings (1788–1874), a physician who was an active member of the American Vegetarian Society and who also served as mayor of Oberlin, Ohio, warned: "[T]he action of tea and coffee is primarily upon the brain and nerves, affecting directly the sensibility."[65] According to Jennings, "slaves to the teapot" often suffer from periodic headaches. New luxuries introduced since the eighteenth century were thought to cause deterioration in people's health.

Bread commercially produced from white flour was subject to censure as well. The main menu item of the optimum diet, it was believed, should be high-quality bread made from whole wheat, not from refined flour. Trall gave the following explanation about the best kind of bread in the chapter on "Hydropathic Cookery" in his encyclopedia:

> Unquestionably the best bread is that made of coarse-ground, unbolted meal, mixed with pure water, and baked in any convenient way. . . . The inhabitants of new countries where flouring-mills are not to be found . . . have a sweet and wholesome article when they do not spoil it with grease, or shortening. Many of the New England housewifes formerly had a method of making bread without raising or fermentation of any kind.[66]

Trall insisted that "the inhabitants of new countries" could eat "a sweet and wholesome article when they did not spoil it." Some vegetarians even mentioned that whole wheat worked like a medicine to refresh the brain and nerves. For Trall, the eating habits of new settlers ought to be respected, as they put virgin land to the plow long before urbanization. He said that the simple way of making the best bread (without additives such as yeast and sugar) and called the "New England custom" should be maintained and passed down from mother to daughter.[67]

To obtain and enjoy the best bread, Trall suggested that people relearn how to make it by themselves from scratch, at home. At that time, bread was already readily available to people at groceries and bakeries. However, such bread was often made with shortening to make it more delicious. Trall warned people not to rely on stores or to visit luxury hotels:

> The fine Indian meal often found at groceries and provision stores does not make good bread or cake. . . . At ordinary hotels and boarding-houses . . . nearly all the farinaceous parts of the food are brought from the baker's shop, or prepared according to the recipes of "French" and "domestic" cook-books, which teach little else than the art of compounding dishes so as to produce the greatest possible amount of disease in the human body.[68]

"French" and "domestic" cookbooks were believed to show people how to cook fatty and impure bread in a way that would cause disease.

A flood of manuals were distributed to those mothers and wives who were prepared to devote themselves to good vegetarian recipes. In their domestic-advice manual, *American Woman's Home* (1869), Catherine Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe insisted that women had to become "scientific" mothers and wives so as to make their family happy. They wrote about the responsibilities of mothers and wives in the chapter on "Healthful Food":

> The person who decides what shall be the food and drink of a family, and the modes of its preparation, is the one who decides, to a greater or less extent, what shall be the health of that family.[69]

They believed that since the body and soul were in close contact, both should be given much attention.[70] Thus, they presented the "scientific way" of cooking and home management as a "domestic reform."

William Androus Alcott also insisted on a strict vegetarian diet devoid of coffee, alcohol, or spices. In a chapter entitled "Domestic Reform" in his manual for women, Alcott spoke out against cookbooks full of luxurious menus, instead recommending that mothers and wives prepare simple meals by following Graham's *Bread and Bread-Making*, for example.[71] In a chapter on "Love of Home," Alcott also suggested that wives and mothers ought not to rely on servants, because they might forget how to arrange the breakfast table properly.[72]

Alcott thought that the main responsibility of a woman was to be a teacher at home, saying that "the first school" would best be realized at home.[73] At the beginning of another of his advice books, this one for men, he described a family at home, comfortable in front of a fireplace, and the scene was entitled, "There is no school like the family school."[74] Proper family life was believed essential to the cultivation of good habits, starting with the way of eating.

In the 1830s and 1840s, the white middle-class population was drawn to the word "home" in an age of the "empire of the mother."[75] Though the "home" seemed to imply the nest of each family unit that composed society, we can assume that hydropathists, or health reformers, also dreamed of the "home" as a place where all people could retire from the outside world, reconsider their way of life for a while, and resolve to learn the way of living to transform themselves. Shew described the water-cure establishment as a "home."[76] For Shew, a "home" would serve as a "school" to provide all the necessary information and practical help that each family member or pupil would ever need.

CONCLUSION

In the United States, during a period when health treatment changed significantly, two movements saw those changes as problematic and suggested responses. In both of those movements, the way of thinking about food was considered to be important.

Samuel Thomson proposed one type of lifestyle surrounding food that was linked intimately with treatment. He asserted that in an age of medical specialization, with drugs supplied from overseas, it was precisely the utterly ordinary act of taking a meal that was the most appropriate way to assist the body's natural power. His meaning of everyday meal

meant those things drawn from the American land—that is, eating things that come from where one lives. It also meant things made by the hand of one's mother or wife, just as in colonial times. In addition, it was based on the spirit of hospitality, in which the treatment-giver helps to restore a sick person by welcoming him or her in front of the fireplace with a cup of hot herbal tea.

That kind of behavior was associated with one type of American lifestyle, in which immigrants and people migrating westward worked out their own lives through the act of opening up new lands. Such people, to survive while maintaining the freedom of governing all their own time, had to eat what they harvested from land they had cleared themselves, while helping out their neighbors.

However, Thomson's ideals were not all realizable. Thomson, himself a pioneering farmer who opened up new lands with his father, made medicines from plants taken from the land, but doing that was difficult in an urban environment. Even in the countryside, it became harder to find abundant stands of herbs. The original orientation toward only allowing medicines made purely from handmade foods thus changed, as buying medicines became more common, with the sale of herbal medicines introduced by late-term Thomsonians. It also became impractical to maintain the custom of staying at the house of a treatment-giver for a long period, as people's relationships with their neighbors weakened.

In hydropathy, developing a perfect, strong body and soul that required no treatment led to a reevaluation of lifestyle customs, with food culture serving as the linchpin. That was because it was believed that the weakening of the soul and nerves, especially the fragility of the nervous system of "superior" whites, was strongly related to food culture. As for food culture, three points were emphasized: (1) refraining from eating meat and drinking alcohol, both which were customs in the United States; (2) eliminating luxuries in the form of foods such as delicious and "beautiful" white bread, meat with flavorful seasonings, and cakes with much sugar and cream that were gradually being introduced; and (3) avoiding contaminated foods and additives by making food at home by hand. That meant that maintaining a disciplined, regular lifestyle of making things by hand at home became the departure point, with a focus on the role of the women who primarily organized and controlled life at home. Cookbooks were published that instructed mothers and wives in how to make appropriate foods by hand. Thus, food made at home from

vegetarian recipes was supposed to be full of the mother's nurturing spirit, and also reflected self-discipline and the best scientific knowledge of the day.

With the world tending toward an urbanized environment, with people no longer farming for a living, and with an increasingly prominent division of labor between men and women in which family members spent less time together, the lifestyle promoted by hydropathy meant a change in how time was spent so that the family could be together more. The connection with food was seen as a specific way by which one could master the self-management needed to live that kind of life, expressed by the actions of cooking for oneself and eating with the family.

The old-established enjoyment of getting together with a lot of people and eating a heavy meal, combined with the new endeavor of making mealtime even richer and more fun through favorite foods, as well as the joy of trying unusual foods when eating out, were all condemned by the proponents of hydropathy and vegetarianism in the name of attaining a "perfect" body and soul.

The lifestyle advocated by hydropathy created an exclusive association. By doing such things as refraining from hiring servants from the pool of newly arrived immigrants to America, hydropathy tended to give the cold shoulder to people who did not share the same food culture, as well as to those who did not want to transform themselves.

In the nineteenth century, when society was rapidly modernizing and health was a major concern, people in America sought a lifestyle that was different from that of their pioneering ancestors as well as that of the newer immigrants who came after them. By the mid-nineteenth century recipes were presented as a symbol of the new dietary culture. Food and dishes led people to a culture of eating and self-fashioning in a manner that was easy to understand. People recognized the existence of borders as well as the possibility of integration, looking at a clear image of everyday life. Fully worked-out recipes served to unify the followers of those movements, who believed that attaining good health would allow them to perform as essential members of a changing American society.

NOTES

[1] Studies focusing on food and culture include: Deborah Lupton, "Theoretical Perspectives on Food and Eating," in *Food, the Body, and the Self*, ed. Deborah Lupton (London: Sage, 1996); Carole M. Counihan, *The Anthropology of Food and Body: Gender, Meaning, and Power* (New York: Routledge, 1999). How food and cuisine prescribed and shaped the social roles (gender) of American women, and how race, ethnicity, social class, and region have come to influence food culture are presented in Sherrie A. Inness, ed., *Kitchen Culture in America: Popular Representations of Food, Gender, and Race* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001); and Donna R. Gabaccia, *We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998).

[2] Susan Williams, *Food in the United States, 1820–1890* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 2–3.

[3] In the southern United States, the food cultures of the Old World and New World had fused in the seventeenth century, with influences from France, Spain, and Acadia. See Williams, *Food in the United States*, 3–5, 97–104.

[4] Amelia Simmons, *American Cookery* (Hartford, CT: Hudson and Goodwin, 1796) in *The First American Cookbook: A Facsimile of "American Cookery," 1796 by Amelia Simmons* (Mineola, NY: Dover, 1984); Richard Pillsbury, *No Foreign Food: The American Diet in Time and Place* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1998), 120–21.

[5] Williams, *Food in the United States*, 46.

[6] Ibid., 29–31.

[7] Since the 1970s, many books and articles have investigated alternative medical movements in American history. See James H. Cassedy, "Why Self-Help? Americans Alone with Their Diseases, 1800–1850," in *Medicine without Doctors: Home Health Care in American History*, ed. G. B. Risse, R. L. Numbers, and J. W. Leavitt (New York: Science History Publications/USA, 1977), 31–48; Norman Gevitz, ed., *Other Healers: Unorthodox Medicine in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988); Ronald G. Walters, *American Reformers, 1815–1860* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1997); James C. Whorton, *Crusaders for Fitness: The History of American Health Reformers* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982); James C. Whorton, *Nature Cures: The History of Alternative Medicine in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

[8] William G. Rothstein, "The Botanical Movements and Orthodox Medicine," in Gevitz, *Other Healers*, 29–51; Joseph Kett, *The Formation of the American Medical Profession: The Role of Institutions, 1780–1860* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 110–11.

[9] I have made a comparative examination of the perspectives of Thomsonianism and hydropathy in relation to birthing practices. See Nanami Suzuki, *Shussan no rekishijinruigaku: Sanbasekai no kaitai kara shizenshussan undou he* [Historical anthropology of childbirth, from the deconstruction of midwifery to the natural birth movement] (Tokyo: Shinyosha, 1997), 167–77.

[10] John S. Heller, *The People's Doctors: Samuel Thomson and the American Botanical Movement, 1790–1860* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000).

[11] Samuel Thomson, *New Guide to Health, or Botanic Family Physician* (hereafter cited as *NGH*) (Columbus, OH: Jarvis Pike and Co., 1835), 13; *Boston Thomsonian Manual and Lady's Companion* 5, no. 9 (1839): 137.

[12] Samuel Thomson, *A Narrative of the Life and Medical Discoveries of Samuel Thomson* (hereafter cited as *Narrative*) (Boston: E. G. House, 1822), 141; Thomson, *NGH*, 1835, 177.

[13] Susan Cayleff, *Wash and Be Healed: The Water-Cure Movement and Women's Health* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987); Jane B. Donegan, *"Hydropathic Highway to Health": Women and Water-Cure in Antebellum America* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986).
[14] Rothstein, "Botanical Movements and O*rthodox Medicine*," 34; Richard Wertz and Dorothy Wertz, *Lying-In: A History of Childbirth in America*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 30.
[15] William Rothstein, *American Physicians in the Nineteenth Century: From Sects to Science* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1972), 74–80; Richard Harrison Shryock, *Medical Licensing in America, 1650–1965* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1967), 3–42.
[16] Thomson, *NGH*, 1835, 10.
[17] Thomson, *Narrative*, 25–26.
[18] Thomson, *NGH*, 1827, 114–15; *NGH*, 1835, 160.
[19] Thomson, *NGH*, 1835, 13, 164–67.
[20] *Lobelia inflata* (Indian tobacco, wild tobacco). Thomson, *Narrative*, 16–17; Ronald L. Numbers, ed., *Medicine in the New World: New Spain, New France, New England* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1987), 141.
[21] Kett, *Formation of the American Medical Profession*, 103–6.
[22] Thomson, *Narrative*; *NGH*, 1827; (St. Clairsville, OH, [1829]; 1835).
[23] Cassedy, "Why Self-Help?" 45–46.
[24] Robert Fuller, *Alternative Medicine and American Religious Life (New York: Oxford University Pre*ss, 1989), 20–21.
[25] Thomson, *Narrative*, 15–16.
[26] Ibid., 19–23.
[27] Thomson, *NGH*, 1835, 166–67.
[28] Thomson, *Narrative*, 32, 40.
[29] Useful books about the yearning for a return to nature are Charles A. Miller's *Jefferson and Nature* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1988) and Perry Miller's *Nature's Nation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967). Catharine L. Albanese discusses the spiritual aspects of yearning for nature in *Nature Religion in America: From the Algonkian Indians to the New Age* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).
[30] Thomson, *NGH*, 1835, 6–7; Thomson, *Narrative*, 14.
[31] Thomson, *NGH*, 1827, 114–15.
[32] Catharine M. Scholten, "'On the Importance of the Obstetrick Art': Changing Customs of Childbirth in America, 1760 to 1825," *William and Mary Quarterly* 34 (1977): 433; Wertz and Wertz, *Lying In*, 1–28. Researchers have called the American traditional childbirth practices "social childbirth."
[33] Thomson, *NGH*, 1835, 178; Scholten, "Obstetrick Art," 444–45.
[34] Thomson, *NGH*, 1835, 156–80. Thomson pointed out that it became hard to find a midwife as well as women who were not afraid of attending a birth rather than just visiting a mother after she gave birth.
[35] Samuel Thomson, *The Constitution, rules and Regulations to be adopted and practiced by the Members of the Friendly Botanic Society in New Hampshire and Massachusetts, Printed for the Society*, Dover, N. H, 1815.
[36] *Boston Thomsonian Manual and Lady's Companion* 5, no. 9 (1839): 137.
[37] Ibid., 137; Thomson, *NGH*, 1835, 8–9, 13, 166–67.
[38] *Boston Thomsonian Manual and Lady's Companion* 5, no. 9 (1839): 137.
[39] Kett, *Formation of the American Medical Profession*, 110–11.
[40] Thomson, *Narrative*, 141.

[41] Cayleff, *Wash and Be Healed*, 21. Concerning the water-cure movement and women's health, also see Donegan, "*Hydropathic Highway to Health*," 19.
[42] Joel Shew, *The Hydropathic Family Physician* (New York: Fowler and Wells, 1854).
[43] Cayleff, *Wash and Be Healed*, 3. Many hydropathy-related journals were published in the United States from 1845 to 1913. Thirty-four volumes of the *Water-Cure Journal* (hereafter cited as *WCJ*) were published between 1845 and 1862, including: *Water-Cure Journal* (Dec. 1845–Apr. 1848), *Water-Cure Journal and Herald of Reforms* (May 1848–Dec. 1858), *Water-Cure Journal and Herald of Health* (Jan. 1859–June 1861), *Water-Cure Journal: A Guide to Health* (July 1861–June 1862), *Hygienic Teacher and Water-Cure Journal* (July–Dec. 1862). During this period, hydropathy was carried out actively as an alternative treatment by doctors who had been trained in regular medical schools but were dissatisfied with the harmful side effects of some common treatments.
[44] Donegan, *"Hydropathic Highway to Health*," 24.
[45] Catharine Beecher, *Woman's Profession as Mother and Educator* (Boston: Geo Maclean, 1872), 211–23.
[46] Catharine Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe, *The American Woman's Home, or, Principles of Domestic Science* (Hartford: J. B. Ford and Co., 1869; repr. Hartford: Harriet Beecher Stowe Center, 1975, with a new introduction by Joseph Van Why), 260 (the page is from the 1975 edition). At first Americans imported household advice books from England. In the 1830s and 1840s, American woman began writing domestic-advice books employing the word "American" in their titles, such as Lydia Maria Child's *The American Frugal Housewife* (1828) and Beecher and Stowe's *American Woman's Home (*1860). See Sarah A. Leavitt, *From Catharine Beecher to Martha Stewart: A Cultural History of Domestic Advice* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 5–6.
[47] Harriet N. Austin, "Letter No. 16," *WCJ* 27 (1859): 69. About bloomer costume and the activity Austin did in favor of the reform dress, see Carol Mattingly, *Appropriate[ing] Dress: Women's Rhetorical Style in Nineteenth-Century America*, (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2002), 37–38, 80.
[48] Daniel Sack, *Whitebread Protestants: Food and Religion in American Culture* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 189; Walters, *American Reformers*, 155.
[49] Isaac Jennings, *Medical Reform: A Treatise on Man's Physical Being and Disorders* (Oberlin, OH: Oberlin Press, 1847), xiii.
[50] Shew, *Hydropathic Family Physician*, 20.
[51] Ibid., 20.
[52] Ibid., 20–21.
[53] R. T. Trall, *The Hydropathic Encyclopedia: A System of Hydropathy and Hygiene in Eight Parts: Designed as A Guide to Families and Students. And A Text-Book for Physicians*, vol. 1 (New York: Fowler and Wells, 1851), 421.
[54] Ibid., 420.
[55] Ibid., 421.
[56] Williams, *Food in the United States*, 5.
[57] Sylvester Graham, *A Lecture to Young Men* (Providence, RI: Weeden and Cory, 1834), 45–47. On Graham's concerns about greasy meat and sexual stimulation, see Stephen Nissenbaum, *Sex, Diet, and Debility in Jacksonian America: Sylvester Graham and Health Reform* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980), 32–36.
[58] Trall, *Hydropathic Encyclopedia*, 287–88. The aim of hydropathy was to make people's health "perfect." See, for example, Mary Nichols, "Maternity: And the Water-Cure for Infants," *WCJ* 11 (1851): 57–59.

[59] Russell Thatcher Trall, "The Natural State of Man," *WCJ* 12 (1851): 25.
[60] Thomas Nichols, "Practice in Water-Cure," *WCJ* 10 (1850): 189.
[61] Ibid., 190.
[62] In 1849 a public meeting of the newly formed American Vegetarian Society was held in Philadelphia: "President: Dr. Wm. A. Alcott of Massachusetts; Vice-Presidents: Dr. R. D. Mussey of Ohio, Sylvester Graham of Mass., P. P. Stewart of Troy, N. Y., H. H. Hite of Va., Dr. Prince of Missouri, Joseph Wright of New Jersey, Dr. Joel Shew of New York, Wm. C. Chapin of Rhode Island, Joseph Metcalfe of Pennsylvania; Recording Secretary: Dr. R. T. Trall of New York; Corresponding Secretary: Rev. Wm. Metcalfe of Kensington, Philadelphia; Treasurer: S. R. Wells, of New York," William A. Alcott, "American Vegetarian Society," *WCJ* 10 (1850): 6.
[63] Colin Spencer, *Vegetarianism: A History* (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 2000), 255–56.
[64] Russell Thatcher Trall, *The Scientific Basis of Vegetarianism: Eleventh Annual Meeting of the American Vegetarian Society* (n.d.; repr. St. Catharine's, ON: Provoker Press, 1970), 15.
[65] Jennings, *Medical Reform*, 183–85.
[66] Trall, *Hydropathic Encyclopedia*, 423.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Ibid., 419, 424.
[69] Beecher and Stowe, *American Woman's Home*, 119.
[70] Ibid., 255–62.
[71] William Androus Alcott, *The Young Wife, or Duties of Woman in the Marriage Relation* (Boston: George W. Light, 1837), 179–91.
[72] Ibid., 90.
[73] Alcott, *Young Wife*, 87.
[74] Alcott, *The Young Husband, or Duties of Man in the Marriage Relation* (Boston: George W. Light, 1841), centerfold.
[75] A discussion of domesticity and women's roles can be found in Mary Ryan's *The Empire of the Mother: American Writing about Domesticity, 1830–1860* (New York: Harrington Park Press, 1985).
[76] Shew, *Hydropathic Family Physician*, 805–6.