

**HOW A PERSON
THREATENED OR
AFFLICTED WITH BRIGHT'S
DISEASE OUGHT TO LIVE**

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JOSEPH F. EDWARDS

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SHOULD TO LIVE
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By JOSEPH F. EDWARDS, M. D.



PHILADELPHIA:
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1012 WALNUT STREET.

1881.

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*With the hope that it may convince
him that the seeds which he
planted have not fallen
on barren ground, this first public fruit of his
teaching is affectionately and respectfully
dedicated by the author to his
friend and former
preceptor,*

Dr. Walter F. Atlee.

PREFACE.

The necessity for this little work has been suggested to the author by many considerations: among them—

1. The great prevalence and fatality of Bright's Disease of the Kidneys.

2. Its insidiousness; the disease in many cases becoming irrevocably fixed and far advanced before it develops symptoms of sufficient importance to induce the patient to seek professional advice.

3. The fact that in many instances a person with a well marked case can, by leading a proper life, live in comfort and comparatively good health for many years.

4. That very few diseases are so liable to be aggravated by neglect of hygienic rules.

5. That being, as a rule, a protracted disease and one in which but little discomfort is experi-

enced until toward the end, the advice of the physician is apt to be neglected.

These and other considerations have induced the author to give, in this small work, in familiar, non-professional and easily understood language, a little history of this disease and some rules of life the faithful observance of which will insure to the sufferer *from this disease* the longest lease of life and the greatest amount of health of which he is capable. If repetition may render the reading tiresome, I will say that all the precepts which are repeated are of very great importance, and that this very repetition will serve to impress them the more firmly on the mind.

JOSEPH F. EDWARDS.

Lansdowne, Del. Co., Pa.,

October, 1880.

HOW A PERSON THREATENED
OR AFFLICTED WITH
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PART FIRST.

GENERAL REMARKS.

There are several diseases of the kidney, differing in the appearances which the organ presents after death, but so similar in their symptoms, progress and result, that they are generally grouped, and, indeed, are only known to the non-professional public, under the generic term of "Bright's Disease." This disease has received its name from Dr. Richard Bright, of London, who, in the early part of the present century (1828), added much to the previously limited knowledge of this affection. This disease no doubt existed prior to the time of Bright, and has probably existed for many years. In the older records of death we find many cases set down as occurring from causes *unknown, suddenly*, or from some cause which can

be attributed to Bright's Disease ; therefore, it is but fair to infer that some of these deaths may have been due to the disease under consideration ; but the means of recognizing its existence being but little understood before the time of Bright, and certain cases not presenting the symptoms of any other disease, have been set down as *unknown*.

Many people, and even some physicians, have a bad habit of confounding a symptom of disease with the disease itself. For example, you often hear of a person dying from dropsy ; now dropsy is not a disease in itself, but only a symptom of disease of some organ. Thus a contracted liver will press on the blood vessels passing through it, and interfere with the free passage of the blood, while the heart, acting from behind, will force the blood against this obstruction ; now you can readily understand how this will cause a damming up, a congestion of the blood, and some of its water (seventy-nine per cent. of blood is water) will ooze out through the walls of the blood vessels into the surrounding tissue, and we have dropsy ; but you see the disease is really seated in the liver, while the dropsy is only a symptom. Again, you will often hear of a person dying of

convulsions. Here, too, the convulsion is only a symptom of the disease which causes it, and not really a disease in itself. Thus, in many cases of Bright's Disease the urea which is retained in the blood, being carried through the circulation to the brain, will irritate this organ and cause convulsions, and the patient may die in one of them. Here we really have death produced by Bright's Disease of the kidney, but the convulsion being the most prominent symptom, and the other manifestations being comparatively slight, they are lost sight of, and we have the effect given as the cause, and death attributed to the convulsion. Now, when we consider that this error is very common at the present day, as evidenced by the fact that in the Report of the Board of Health of the City of Philadelphia, for 1879, there appear 626 deaths from *convulsions*, for which no cause is assigned; and remembering how little the physicians of the last and the early part of this century knew about the symptoms of Bright's Disease, does it not seem very likely that some of the cases of death which were then returned as due to sudden or unknown causes, to dropsy or convulsions, were in reality due to this Bright's Disease? Now, I tell you this