

**DISCOURSES ON PRACTICAL PHYSIC.
I. ON PHYSICAL DISEASE FROM
MENTAL STRAIN; II. ON RESEARCH IN
MEDICINE; III. ON INTERMITTENT
PULSE AND PALPITATION**

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Discourses on Practical Physic. I. On Physical Disease from Mental Strain; II. On Research in Medicine; III. On Intermittent Pulse and Palpitation by Benjamin W. Richardson

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BENJAMIN W. RICHARDSON

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BY

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PREFACE.

THE Discourses herewith presented to the reader were delivered on different occasions to audiences of medical men; the first to the members of the Psychological Association, the second to the St. Andrew's Medical Graduates' Association, the third, as now revised, to the Medical Society of London.

The Discourses are re-published in a separate volume simply because I have been often asked for them by members of the profession, both at home and abroad. They were to have appeared last year, but increasing professional work has hindered me in their production.

Such as they are I give them at last, and if they become in the smallest degree useful I am content.

B. W. R.

LONDON,
12, *Hinde Street, W.*,
Feby. 28th, 1871.

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ON PHYSICAL DISEASE FROM MENTAL
STRAIN.

DISCOURSE I.

ON PHYSICAL DISEASE FROM MENTAL STRAIN.

In an address I had the honour to deliver before the St. Andrew's Medical Graduates Association in December, 1868, I took the opportunity briefly to direct the attention of those practitioners of medicine who are not specially engaged in the treatment of the insane, to the great importance of recognizing the influence of mental action on physical disease. I ventured to press the fact that the most scientific physicians have fallen into the error of studying, with too exclusive a care, the observable conditions of the body, healthy or diseased, and those agents or agencies for curing diseases which produce the most obvious effects—such as knives and other instruments, anæsthetic vapours, active drugs, heat and cold, electrical shocks, and the like. I admitted that as the pure physical existence is the groundwork and the primary necessity of the highest form of living thinking thing, it is by nature the first duty of the healer to make that corporeal frame pure and whole, but I insisted that it is equally his duty to study what shall enter by the senses or windows of the mind, and though invisibly entering, be potent forces for evil or for good. Because an agency is not visible, not tangible, is it, I asked, less real? If a man lose his mind by the loss of his blood, that, it is said, is plain to understand, for