

FLANNEL, a kind of light, porous, woollen stuff, woven on a loom with two treddles, in a manner similar to baize.

This is unquestionably one of the most useful articles of wearing apparel; and it is much to be regretted, that it is not more generally worn, as we are fully persuaded, that it would be the means of preventing many diseases.

The principal objection to the wearing of flannel appears to be, that it irritates the skin, and occasions disagreeable sensations:—these, however, continue only for a few days, and the subsequent advantages, thence resulting, amply compensate for such temporary uneasiness. Both young and aged would derive from it equal advantages.—We do not, however, mean to insinuate, that flannel next the skin should be *universally* and indiscriminately worn by infants and young persons; though it is an ill-founded assertion of its adversaries, that it has a tendency to produce eruptions; as it evidently opens the pores, promotes perspiration, and thus removes the principal *cause* of cutaneous diseases that originate from an obstructed and irregular state of the skin.

There are, however, certain cases in which *flannel* cannot, with strict propriety, be used as an under dress. In order to enable the reader to ascertain whether its constant use be advisable or not, we shall point out the leading circumstances which may, in this respect, influence his determination: it is a *salutary* dress to all those, in general, who have passed the meridian of life, or the 55th year of their age; though they should not have been accustomed to it from their infancy; to persons of a cold and phlegmatic habit, or leading a sedentary life; to such as are subject to fits of the gout, rheumatism, frequent colds and catarrhs; to individuals very susceptible of impressions connected with the vicissitudes of air, weather, and climate; as well as to nervous patients, and those who have recently recovered from severe chronic diseases.—On the contrary, the wearing of flannel next the skin may be *injurious* to constitutions so organised that they are liable to profuse perspiration, on taking even moderate exercise; or to those who are already afflicted with scorbutic or other eruptions of the skin; or, lastly, to all such irritable and whimsical persons as possess neither bodily nor mental vigour sufficient to overcome the first uneasy sensations which it occasions. But we are fully warranted to assert, from daily experience, that the habitual use of this beneficent texture has essentially contributed to the recovery of numberless ricketty children, not less than to the saving of others who were born of feble and enervated parents. In short, there is every reason to believe, that a *more general* adoption of this salutiferous cloth might prevent many fatal inflammations of the throat, breast, lungs, &c. to which the poorer class of people are remarkably liable; and thus preserve the lives of multitudes who now become a prey to our damp and variable climate. [Good advice.—T. C.]